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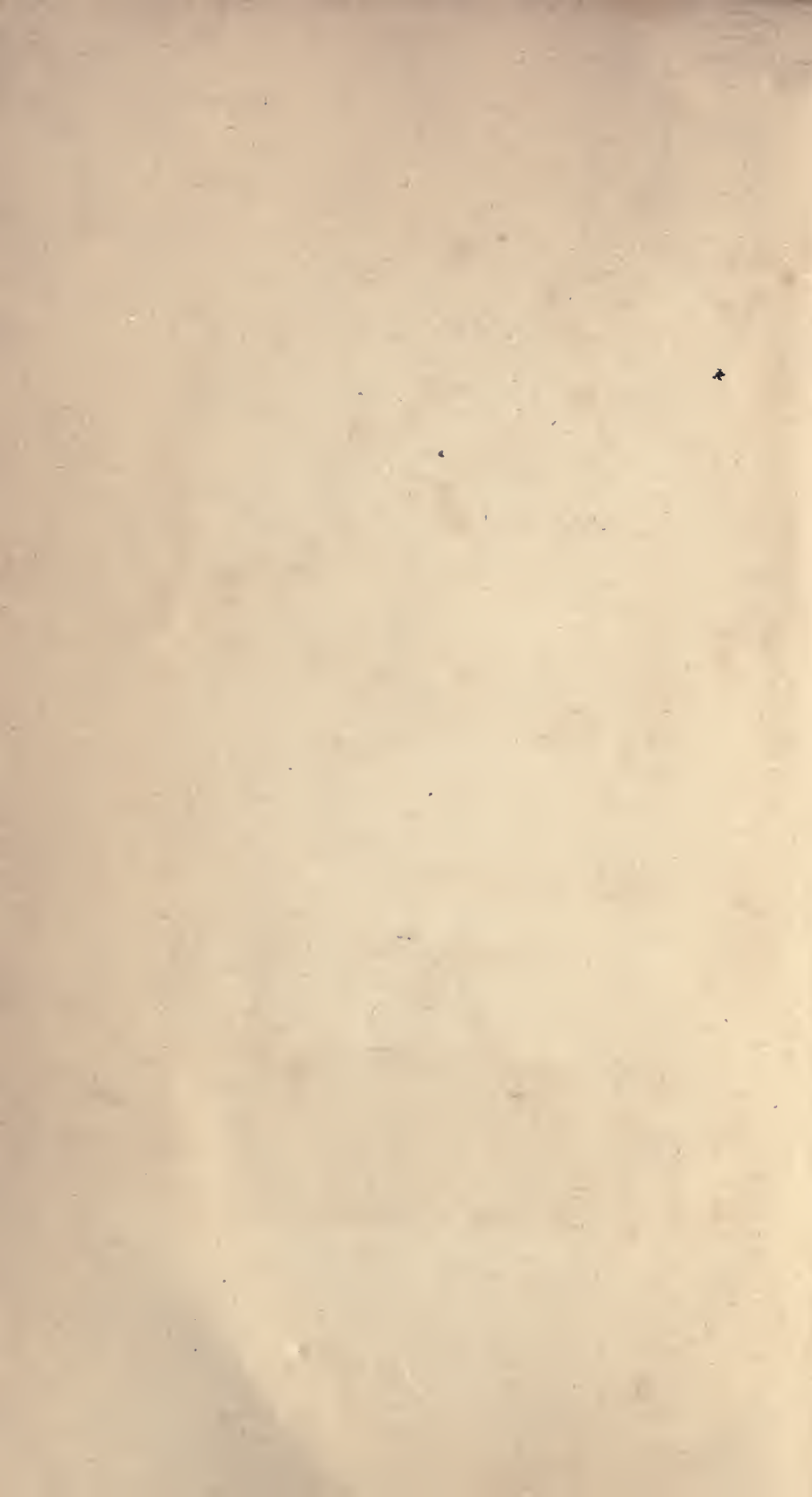
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THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.



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THE  
COVENT GARDEN  
JOURNAL.

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“ To clap or hiss all have an equal claim,  
“ The cobbler’s and his lordship’s right the same ;  
“ All join *for their subsistence*; all expect  
“ Free leave to praise their worth, their faults correct.”

CHURCHILL’S APOLOGY.

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“ The hurly-burly’s done !”

SHAKESPEARE’S MACBETH.

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EMBELLISHED WITH FOUR VIEWS.

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LONDON:  
PRINTED FOR J. J. STOCKDALE,  
41, PALL-MALL.

1810.



GOVERNMENT GARDEN

JOURNALS

The following Journals are published by the Government Garden  
The Journal of the Government Garden  
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Published by the Government Garden

Published with the Government Garden

Printed at the Government Garden

11, Pall Mall

Galabin and Marchant, Printers,  
Ingram-Court, London. 1810



TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

*George, Earl of Dartmouth, K. G.*

LORD CHAMBERLAIN OF HIS MAJESTY'S HOUSEHOLD,

*&c. &c. &c.*

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 see the second Volume with signature A.

ERRATA.

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## ERRATA.

- Page 49, line 16, *for* Copeland *read* Copland.  
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THE  
PREFACE.

TO

THE COVENT GARDEN JOURNAL.

THE influence of the stage upon the morals, the manners, and the public principles, of a people, has been a point so often insisted upon, and so universally allowed, that it would be needless to descant upon it here, or to detain the reader's attention from the interesting narrative, upon which he is about to enter, by idle details of long-established principles and truths.

The bulk, however, which the following volume has assumed, and the importance which thus becomes attached to a matter, which may have appeared to some, from the ephemeral mode adopted of communicating the circumstances attending it, merely a temporary and

fortuitous concern, requires, from the editor, a few previous remarks, as well in vindication of himself as of the permanent and important interest which it is the object of the present publication to give to the subject which it handles.

Had the late histrionic war happened in the days of Holinshed, it would, indubitably, have afforded an accession to that magazine of black-letter information so eagerly ambitioned by the present taste, and, indeed, under every circumstance of human appetite for research, so laudably promoted in the ranks of literature.

Facts are, not unfrequently, now considered by the squeamish epicures of the present day as blunting that sharp interest which attaches to a well-told tale. In the pompous wordiness of the transatlantic tourist, Moore, (see his Poetical Epistles,) they would not

“ —— contumace the appetite’s acidities;

No, no, — The Muse too delicate bodied is

For such commodities.”

The object of the editor has been to methodize and arrange such documents of public opinion as would convey, to the future reader, an idea of the judgement formed, in the nineteenth century, on dramatic right, and on the necessities of the stage.

To compass this intention, he has sedulously



consulted the progressive comments and narratives as they appeared in the leading newspapers of the metropolis, and has, he trusts, so far gratified the popular curiosity, that, from the date of the destruction of the late, to the completion of the present, Theatre Royal Covent-Garden, those even who have not seen shall still be well acquainted with it.

The struggle which has taken place between the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, on the one hand, and their masters, the public, on the other, is, perhaps, a subject of as lively and important interest and concern, both to the present and future generations, as ever occurred without the pale of legislative discussion; and would certainly have come, as it may still do, under the consideration of parliament, if a truce, though an unsatisfactory one, had not taken place between the high-contending parties. We call the truce which has taken place unsatisfactory, because, after the stand the public were compelled to make against the arrogant claims of tyranny and avarice, they were entitled to see the whole, instead of a part, of their object attained; but which cannot be said to be the case, while the higher visitors of the theatre are compelled to pay an advanced and unjust price of admission, and while the lower description of them are, in effect, shut out altogether from their station in the theatre.

This naturally leads us to consider the mode and the authority by which the existing arrangements were brought about.

Of the many interesting features with which this transaction abounds ; of the many instances of hardihood and presumption which it records ; the proceedings of the self-elected junta at the Crown-and-Anchor, and the unauthorized recognition of its authority by the managers, are, perhaps, the most remarkable.

This select committee, it is reasonable to suppose, was formed of persons whose circumstances place them between the highest and lowest seats in a theatre ; and it was, therefore, with true selfish arrogance, that, in their parley and treaty with the managers, they wisely overlooked altogether the frequenters of the boxes and upper gallery, who have a just and undoubted right to protest against the decision of an assembly in which they were unrepresented. By what right the managers could think they had authority to recognise, in this tavern-crew, that public, whom their writers had all along been denying was to be found within the walls of the theatre, we are unable to account for in any other manner than from the common observation of the near connection that generally exists between upstart arrogance and grovelling meanness ; and thus we have seen, in the present instance, the same persons one day threatening to play the

fire-engines upon a British audience, the next day meanly cringing to a self-elected crew of political maniacs, and (all but self-) reformers.\* All that these persons have effected has been to mar what the public themselves would have entirely accomplished.

Whether the subject will be again agitated in Covent Garden Theatre will depend, in all probability, upon the conduct of the managers, who, should their avarice tempt them to deviate from the fair and literal interpretation which can alone be put upon the cession of the private boxes, will have again a storm to contend with, which, it is to be hoped, will only be allayed by a proper, full, and decent, submission to the public, *in the theatre*. But another, and perhaps a third, theatre remains to be built, and it is to its erection and management that the subject of the present volume points with the strongest and most lively interest. In this theatre, every thing, but the theatre itself, must be old. The price of the boxes must remain as before; and, above all, such an upper gallery must be built as will restore to the lower orders of society their antient, just, and indubitable right of attending theatrical representations at a price

\* The committee are said to have consisted of the same persons who conducted Sir Francis Burdett's election for Westminster!!!

sued to their finances, and the salutary relaxation from laborious employment. When these objects shall have been accomplished, in either of the theatres which remains to be built, the managers of Covent-Garden will feel themselves obliged, however reluctantly, to give way, and yield those points upon which the gentlemen at the Crown-and-Anchor saw no occasion to insist.

The most important feature in the following discussion, undoubtedly, is that of the private boxes. Laying out of the question all facility to improper conduct, which they were said to afford, it was a matter of the highest national concern, whether an attempt to separate, for ever, the higher and middling ranks of society, in the only place where they appear upon an equality, should be yielded to or resisted; and that it has been effectually resisted will form a lasting monument to the existence, the rectitude, and the firmness, of that old British spirit, which so many persons are for ever telling us is wholly lost and extinguished. Were there no other reason for placing upon a permanent and imperishable record the fleeting circumstances which led to such an important result, this alone would be sufficient.

There is another and a more painful topic, which appears but too prominent in this work, but which it is equally necessary and im-

portant to preserve: we mean the apparently unwise and unpopular use of the *power* opposed to the public voice upon this memorable occasion. We call this, most truly, a painful subject, partaking as we do, in common with our countrymen, in a reverential feeling and respect for every species of constituted authority, emanating from the glorious constitution under which it is our pride and happiness to live; and being anxious more especially to see those parts of the government most pure, unimpeachable, and blameless, with which the bulk of the people have the most frequent and familiar intercourse. From whatever cause it arose, whether from an error in judgement, from an over anxiety to do right, or from some error inherent (or only *for a time* inherent) in its establishment, we fear, however, it cannot be denied, that the police completely mistook its course upon this occasion, and has brought upon itself a degree of discredit and unpopularity, which must shake, to a certain degree, the confidence of the people in this part of the government. Unfortunately, too, on this occasion, its efforts, being misdirected, only tended to aggravate the mischief and the ferment it was its object to allay. Upon this branch of the subject it has always appeared to the editor, that there was a line for the police to pursue, which he should call the most obvious, were it not that it seems to have es-

caped the notice of any of those intrusted with the exercise of this important machine. How far it might have been proper or advisable for the police to have abstained altogether from interfering in the matter; or, in other words, whether a private knowledge is reconcilable with an official ignorance, it is not necessary to inquire; because the managers having rudely, indiscreetly, and unadvisedly, called in the magistrates, in the first instance, the latter, as we humbly conceive, had no other proper course to pursue than to consider the Theatre Royal Covent Garden, as a *disorderly house*, and to proceed against it as they would against any other house of that description, by holding its owners and keepers responsible to the law for the conduct of their visitors, in the same manner as a publican and his sureties are. But this, it will be said, brings us back to the old question of right; and we shall be told again that the managers had a right, upon this occasion, and the public none. As far, however, as the question of right affects this part of the case, it may be easily disposed of. The royal patent can no more be construed to sanction improper practices in its holders than could the license which was formerly given to public stews indemnify the owners of them from a like responsibility. And the analogy between these cases becomes still closer, and is capable of the easiest demonstration, either by the

magistrates themselves or any individual who will bring it to the test;—for we take upon ourselves fearlessly to affirm, that there is not a night on which this or any of our theatres are open, when the managers are not liable to an indictment for keeping a disorderly house, under its most usual acceptation, viz. a brothel; and that of the most loathsome, mischievous, corrupt, and disgusting description.

If this be so, what distinction can or ought to be made between different species of the same offence? We should like to hear what either a judge or a jury would say to those who should produce a patent to sanction that species of evil to which we allude. In case then the contest in the theatre constituted what the law esteems, to be a riot, the managers, and the managers alone, were responsible to the law for the consequences; more especially when it is considered that they nightly opened their doors with a full pre-knowledge that it would take place.

The length to which the foregoing observations have extended leaves but little space wherein to discuss the broader question of right, which naturally presents itself to our notice. We have been told from very grave and high authority, that the managers were fully authorized to demand whatever prices they pleased, and that the public had no right to insist upon their reduction; and this has been triumphantly confirmed by the assurance

that our attendance at the theatre is optional, and that if we do not like the prices we may stay away. This would perhaps be not unsatisfactorily answered by alleging, that the drama is part of the long-established usage and custom of the country, and that national games and amusements have, in all ages, claimed the attention of governments; and that it is reasonable to suppose that the law which regulates the price of the first necessary of life would not be mis-employed in securing to the people public amusements and relaxation from labour at a fixed and reasonable rate. Fortunately the question resolves itself into a more narrow compass, and leaves us obliged neither to insist upon the above ground, nor, by a comment upon the patent, to contend, as we might successfully do, that its very terms contradict the right it has been brought forward to establish. With all due submission to those who so strenuously contend for the right of the managers to demand whatever prices of admission they think proper, we humbly conceive that such a right is totally irreconcilable with the *monopoly* which their patent secures to them. The only ground upon which such monopoly can be defended, or ought for one moment to exist, is the means it gives to its possessors of catering for the public amusement at a cheaper rate than they could do if their trade were open and unlimited.

The patent of a theatre is, both in its nature



and terms, widely different from a patent for an invention; and the moment it ceases to secure public as well as individual benefit it ought to be abrogated as a right, founded in wrong.

That the advance of prices was not only unjust, but unnecessary we trust will appear from the next and last point to which we shall call the reader's attention.

In the outset of this dispute, the managers rested their case upon the plea of necessity; that the concern would be in a bankrupt state if their demands were not acceded to; and this plea was attempted to be bolstered up, in a way which we shall presently have occasion to notice. Perhaps it might be thought illiberal to oppose to this plea of poverty and bankruptcy the style of living, and the rank of society, in which these persons are, as individuals, to be found: we shall, therefore, take a wider and a fairer ground, and assert that, supposing their plea to be just, its cause has originated wholly with themselves, and that they had no more right to look to the public for indemnification than any other bankrupt would have to live upon his creditors; and that their complaints against the public, on this score, are about as moral and well-founded as those of a man who should upbraid with her unchasteness a woman whose virtue he had previously undermined. This, we think, will be apparent to those who consider, that the increased

expenses of our theatres have been almost entirely produced by the avarice of their managers, who, by enlarging them to an extent which has rendered them unfit for hearing, have thereby driven the legitimate drama from the stage, and, in its stead, have found themselves obliged to substitute a species of empty pageantry, buffoonery, and pantomime, which, while it has corrupted and vitiated the public taste, has alone drawn upon them that additional expense, which they have now the assurance to expect the public to bear.

Who called upon them to produce their Pizarros, their Blue-Beards, their Sleeping Beauties, and Cinderellas? Not the British public:—not those, or rather not the descendants of those, whose polished and correct taste had already consecrated, to after ages, the imperishable fame of Shakspeare, Otway, Dryden, Jonson, Vanburgh, and a long line of poets, unrivalled in the dramatic annals of any age or country. To this case the *caveat emptor* most strongly applies; and if the managers, at last, found their error in these respects, they had nothing to do but to diminish their theatres and their expense, and to restore to the public the unembellished charms of its native and legitimate drama: above all, they need not have backed their plea of poverty with the engagement of a foreign singer, the pensioned hireling of Buonaparte, at a salary unheard of at an English

Theatre, and to the exclusion of native talents of the highest excellence.

It is by no means clear, however, that, even under this mismanagement of their trust, the theatre was not sufficiently productive to afford ample remuneration to every one engaged in it.\* At all events, no proof that it was not so can be found in the report of the respectable committee, who undertook gratuitously, but so unwisely, the office of investigating the accounts of the theatre. Over this part of the subject we would, willingly, draw a veil of everlasting oblivion, were it not for a hope that its remembrance will

\* With a wish rather to benefit the proprietors, by affording a new proof of the vast magnitude of the concern generally, than to gratify further public information and curiosity, the editor requested of the manager, that he would communicate to him a few facts respecting the salaries and number of persons employed in the theatre, such as those of the actors and servants, and the cancelled agreement with Catalani. His note laid for some time under consideration; and he was much surprised to receive an answer, not from the gentleman to whom he had addressed it, but from the *body corporate*, intimating that, upon due consideration on their part, they were sorry the request could not be complied with. After the voluntary offer of an examination of their accounts, this is a circumstance carrying conviction in itself, that "Conscience doth make cowards of us all." The requested statement was never meant to be made matter of calculation of profits, but to shew how great a claim so grand a speculation had of proportionate reimbursement. The refused acquiescence has certainly removed every doubt as to the profits of the concern from the mind of the editor.

be a warning to British merchants, never again to hazard their own reputation, and that of their country, in its most important light, by becoming the dupes of persons, who were so deeply interested in the object they had in view as to render them, it is to be feared, on this occasion, neither the friends of Plato nor of truth.

To advert again to the execution of this work, it is divided into regular compartments of intelligence, to which a comprehensive appendix is annexed. In the latter are comprised the speeches, letters, and poetical effusions of those who figured on the pregnant theme. Possibly it may be no slight gratification to the many who were drawn into publicity on this occasion, that their mention is carefully and impartially made.

It was also the editor's intention to have given a critical essay on the present state of the stage, its principal writers, and performers; but, having fortunately called to mind that meritorious sketch of the drama, *THE THESPIAD*, which has accomplished the task with a degree of poetic elegance, and just accumen, that has not been displayed on this subject since the days of Churchill, he ventures to recommend that poem to the lovers of the histrionic art, satisfied that it will fully answer their most sanguine expectations on this head, and be admitted a welcome substitute for any thing which his pen could have produced.

For what reason he cannot apprehend, the edi-

tor has received intimations, from several quarters, that it would be desirable that this work should be suppressed.

If he were aware that the publication would be productive of consequences injurious to the community, he feels himself entitled to say, that he would, without hesitation, have cheerfully sacrificed his labours at such a patriotic shrine ; but, as he is sensible that these wishes can only have had birth in the conscious apprehensions of interested individuals, he has not thought himself justified in giving way, and has, therefore, ventured, without sparing either expense or labour, to present the public with a strict, impartial, and minute, history of their triumph and campaign.



## DESTRUCTION

OF THE

## OLD THEATRE.

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“ Quis cladem illius noctis, quis funera fando,  
“ Explicet ? aut possit lacrymis æquare laboris ?”

VIRGIL.

*Antiqua ruit multos dominata per annos.*

Who can the carnage of that night explain ?  
Or sing its toils in corresponding strain ?

The antient building falls, which many a year  
Confest as equal to its proud compeer.

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THIS noble building, which was built in the year 1733, and enlarged, with considerable alterations, in 1792, was, on the morning of the 20th September, 1808, reduced, by a most tremendous conflagration, to a heap of shapeless ruins. The performance of the preceding night was Pizarro, a spectacle wherein all the creative powers of the machinists and decorators had been exhausted

at both the theatres. It is supposed, that the melancholy catastrophe occurred in consequence of the wadding from a gun (fired in course of the performance) having lodged in some part of the scenery, which the prying eye of the strictest investigator, could not possibly have provided for. The portrait of Cervantes was the afterpiece, and both performances were received with eclat by a crowded and elegant audience. During the representation, which was over by eleven o'clock, nothing transpired indicative, in the least degree, of the mournful sequel. About twelve, Mr. Brandon paid his usual visit of circumspection to all parts of the house, and, conceiving that every thing was perfectly secure, retired shortly after to rest.

The same unsuspected tranquillity prevailed at two o'clock in the morning, at which time the watchman sedulously "*paid his sober round,*" and discovered nought whereon to ground alarm. About four, however, a poor frail sister of the Cyprian band perceived the flames bursting forth with concentrated impetuosity, and communicating her terrific tale to the guardian of the night, the latter instantly called up Mr. Brandon. Now a dense volume of smoke, and, shortly after, wreathed columns of flame, were seen to issue from the ventilator, on the topmost part of the roof. Within the space of ten minutes, this portion of the building was, distinctly, observed



on fire in different parts ; and, in half an hour, the whole edifice presented to the view a fiery furnace, from which the flaming pillars rose, forming, in the most awful style of destructive elemental architecture, a truly worthy *temple of the sun*.

Though it was then broad day, so intense and furious was the conflagration, that it was perceivable in many of the most distant environs of the metropolis.

The alarm became universal. The engines of every fire-office in town, and of all the adjacent parishes, rattling through the streets, with busy din, awakened the inhabitants to the view of this scene, which rivalled, in ruddy splendour, the glory of the opening day.

Thousands presented themselves before the theatre, eager to manifest their zeal in arresting the baleful progress of the raging element. In vain;—for, the houses, which so deeply surrounded the building on every side, prevented the ardour of exertion from being attended with success. The roof fell in about six o'clock ; and, so unexampled was the progress of the consuming invader, that, before eight, the whole interior of this splendid building, audience-part, stage, different entrances, treasury, music-room, &c. were totally annihilated.

Perhaps there is no recorded instance of so complete a destruction, of similar extent, in so

short a space of time. Every composite material of the building was, however; fuel to the fire, and the large area served to ventilate it to that unsubdued pitch at which it had arrived. All hopes of rendering service in this quarter becoming now unavailing, the firemen directed their efforts to prevent the increase of the calamity, as the houses which squared about the theatre were manifestly endangered. Owing to their height, it was found impracticable for the engines to play over them; but, the leather pipes being conveyed up the stair-cases to the third floors, and their ends being thrown down and fastened to the engines below, an ingenious facility of effective action was contrived. Nothing, however, could prevent the communication of the flames with the houses in Bow-Street, to which side the "Malus Auster" had an unfriendly inclination. Several of them were connected with the theatre, by a respective appropriation to different parts of the establishment. They, with some others, became victims to the manes of the mother-edifice. The fire raged with more violence at the eastern side of the upper part of Bow-Street, where the house, No. 9, belonging to Mr. Paget; Nos. 10 and 11, attached to the theatre; No. 12, belonging to Mr. Hill; No. 13, the Strugglers Coffee-House, wherein Mr. Donne lost almost his whole property; No. 14, belonging to Mr. Johnson, the

fruiterer; and No. 15, the house of Mr. M'Kinlay, a book-binder; were all completely destroyed, and scarcely "left a wreck behind." The three latter houses, with the exception of Mr. Donne's part of the property, were insured in the Hope, for £2650. Some of the others were entirely uninsured, and some only partially so. Nos. 16 and 17, in the same street, were seriously damaged.

In Hart-Street, four houses opposite to the theatre attracted this fire magnet at the same instant, and were only, by the greatest activity on the part of the firemen, secured from farther damage than a severe scorching. The "*proximus ardet Ucalegon*," and the "*tua res agitur*," were promptly attended to with respect to Drury-Lane Theatre, which, it was apprehended, from the number of flakes carried thither by the wind, would share in the sacrifice to the god of fire, and receive the Salmonean punishment for a priority, in imitative effects, to outshine the enraged deity.

A great number of people had mounted the roof of the Theatre of Drury-lane, in order to open the large cistern of water there in case of necessity. The windows of that building were also stopped with wet cloths, to prevent the entrance of the flames,—a precaution by no means unnecessary. All the people in the immediate vicinage kept their servants employed on their respective roofs

to pick up the flakes of fire as they dropped on them.

This has been the whole extent of injury sustained in the neighbourhood; but as to the theatre itself, it was totally consumed; and even the walls on the Hart-street side were not left standing. In that angle of the edifice, the Ship-tavern and part of Mr. Brandon's, the box-keeper's, office, are the only remains. The amount of the insurances did not exceed 60,000*l.* and the savings from the Shakespeare premises amounted to about 3500*l.* the entire being but one-fourth of the sum necessary to replace the great loss sustained.

In addition to the usual scenic stock was a great quantity of beautiful new scenery for a melo-drame which was to be shortly forthcoming. Of the original pieces of music of Handel, Arne, and many other celebrated composers, no copies had been taken; and of many others, which had also been destroyed, only an outline had been given. Several capital dramatic productions, the property of the theatre, were for ever lost. The organ, left by Handel as a bequest to the theatre, which was valued at 1000 guineas, and never played but during the Oratorios, was likewise consumed. Mr. Ware, the leader of the band, lost a violin worth 300*l.* which for the first time in ten years he had left behind him. Mr. Munden's wardrobe, which cannot be replaced under 300*l.* shared the general fate; as did Miss Bolton's

jewels, and other performers' property, in the aggregate amounting to a very considerable sum.

We now come to the most painful part of the narration,—the dreadful havoc committed on human life by the falling of the burning roof. At an early stage of the fire, the great door under the piazza in Covent-garden was broken open by a party of firemen, and an engine belonging to the Phoenix fire-office, being introduced within the passage, was directed towards the galleries where the flames raged most fiercely: horrid to relate, the burning roof of that same passage, in which they were, fell in with a tremendous crash, burying the unhappy and too daring firemen, with others who had rushed in along with them, under its ruins.

A considerable time elapsed before the rubbish, which now obstructed the doors of this fatal passage, could be removed. When effected, a scene of horror was presented to the view. The mangled bodies of dead and dying appeared through the rubbish, or were discovered in each advance to remove it. At twelve o'clock that day, eleven dead bodies had been carried into the church-yard of St. Paul's, Covent-garden. Some miserably mangled creatures, with broken limbs and dreadful bruises, were conveyed to St. Bartholomew's, and some to the Middlesex, hospital.

It would shock humanity to draw a faithful picture of the situation of those wretched persons

who were dug out of the ruins alive; they were, in general, so much burned as scarcely to be recognized by their nearest relatives; and in many instances their flesh was literally peeled from the bones. The dead bodies taken from the same place were nearly shapeless trunks. The strictest examination, for the purposes of identity, was vain, in those who came to claim the "*sine nomine corpus*."

The coroners for London, Middlesex, and Surrey, sat on 19 bodies destroyed at the fire; viz. 12 at Covent-garden, 3 at St. Bartholomew's, 2 at the Middlesex-hospital, and 2 at St. Thomas's. Many persons were conveyed, in the most hopeless situation, to their own houses. The waste of human life, on this lamentable occasion, falls not short of thirty persons.

From the evidence of William Addicote, one of the stage-carpenters of the theatre, and William Darley, one of the firemen belonging to the Eagle Insurance-Office, and one of the jury, an eye-witness of the falling in of that ceiling by which the unfortunate men were burnt to death,—it appeared that the firemen and others who perished had been employed in endeavouring to extinguish the flames at the room called the Apollo, which had fallen in upon them. The surmises with respect to barrels of gun-powder having exploded were proved to be unfounded, no more of that article being ever kept in the house than was sufficient for the consumption of a single night.

On the next day, another victim was added to the list, by the fall of the wall in Hart-street; several others were bruised severely, though they had all been warned of their danger to no purpose. The names of the deceased sufferers, as well as could be collected, are:—

Mr. T. Harris, jun.	}	Optician, of Hyde street, Blooms-
		bury, Serjeant of the Blooms-
		bury Volunteers.
Mr. R. Davis	}	A Gentleman lately from Wales
		to London on a visit.
— Musket	}	
William Ricklesworth		
George Kilby		Firemen belonging to the
John Seyers		Phoenix-Office.
James Stewart		
Samuel Stevens		
Richard Cadger		
T. Holmes		
James Hunt		
William Jones		A Printer.
James Evans		
J. Crabb		
T. Mead		
T. James		
Richard Rushton		A Tailor.
Mr. Hewitt		A Plumber.
J. Beaumont		A Soldier, 1st Regt. of Guards,
Richard Bird	}	Coachmaker in employ of Mr.
		Hilditch, Long-Acre.
James Philkins		Coalheaver, aged 20.
John Oakley		A Smith.

Another person, a private in the guards, was taken to the Military Hospital, where he died in three or four hours. These were the names as nearly as could be gathered. Several were still missing. Mr. Richards, clerk to Messrs. Shaw and Edwards, St. Paul's Church-yard, was so dreadfully scalded by the water falling from the burning materials, that he died about 12 o'clock the same day.

The firemen and others were employed for some days in pulling down the tottering ruins which threatened destruction to the passengers in Bow-street. On the following Saturday two more bodies were dug out of the ruins. The books of accounts, deeds, and the receipt of the preceding night, were fortunately preserved by the exertion of Mr. Hughes, the treasurer.

Though a considerable number of engines were in constant and prompt attendance, yet, owing to the main pipe having been cut off with the intent of laying down a new one, more than an hour elapsed before some of them could be supplied. During this defect in the supply of water, the neighbours derived the most essential assistance from the pump of the Bedford Coffee-house and Hotel. The utmost effect was perceived from the playing of the engines for about an hour, when all hope was lost by the crash which announced the falling-in of the roof, and the consequent destruction of the elegant interior.



The Bedford and Piazza Coffee-houses owed their preservation to a wall, some time since erected for the purpose of insulating the theatre from the back of these premises. Among the other losses sustained, the Beef-Steak Club, which held their meetings at the top of the theatre, and has existed for many years, lost all their stock of old wines, valued at 1500*l.* beside their sideboard, and other implements. Pieces of scenery and other decorations were carried through the air to immense distances. A fragment of carved wood, all on fire, fell near St. Clement's church, in the Strand. The figure of Apollo, on the dome of Drury-lane Theatre, was a strikingly-illuminated object, as the fiery shower fell around it.

Great praise is due to the volunteer corps and the detachments of horse and foot guards who attended. Several miscreants, taking advantage of the confusion, attempted to plunder, but were held in custody.

The whole property destroyed amounted to considerably more than 100,000*l.* and, at the utmost, was covered by insurance to the amount of 75,000*l.* The dark prospect of the proprietors may yet be cheered by light, but "when shall it shine on the night of the grave?" A subscription was opened for the relief of the sufferers. The King's Theatre was very liberally offered to Mr. Harris by Mr. Taylor; and the Covent-garden

Company played there till the commencement of the Opera-season.

The plan of a new theatre on the scite of the old one, to be completely insulated, was ordered and accepted by the proprietors.

ACCOUNT OF THE RISE

COVENT GARDEN NEW THEATRE.

CEREMONY OF LAYING THE FOUNDATION-STONE.

ON Saturday, the 31st of December, 1808, the foundation-stone of this superb theatre was laid by his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, as Grand Master of the Masonic Order. The Duke of Sussex, Earl of Moira, with several other distinguished noblemen, graced the procession of the brotherhood, which, by its attendance, conferred no inconsiderable interest on the spectacle. The proprietors having sedulously attended to every necessary pre-arrangement, the whole was well conducted, and the ceremony passed off with great eclat. The occasion had attracted a great concourse of spec-

tators ; the neighbouring streets and houses were completely thronged, and upwards of a thousand persons were admitted, by tickets, within the inclosed area, where they were accommodated, in a temporary covered building, opposite to the foundation-stone.

A distinct building was provided for the Free Masons, and a marquee was erected for their august Grand Master. The surrounding scaffolds were manned by several hundreds of the workmen employed. The exterior was guarded by detachments of the military, and the grenadier-company of the first regiment of guards was stationed within the ground, at the Prince's entrance. The whole scene was exhilarated by the music of different military bands.

The foundation-stone is situate at the north east angle of the building ; it is of oblong form, and weighs upwards of three tons. It hung suspended over a basement-stone. At half-past twelve o'clock, the masonic brotherhood proceeded from Free-Masons Tavern, in Great Queen-Street, and arrived, shortly after, in the area of the intended building, adorned with the various ensigns and bearings of that order. The Chevalier Ruspini was the sword-bearer, and the whole was preceded by a military band playing masonic airs.

At one o'clock, his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales arrived on the site, and was received by

Earl Moira and other superior members of the order. A discharge of artillery, and loud acclamations, welcomed his approach, while the uniting bands struck up "God save the King." The path, from the entrance to the marquee, was covered with green cloth. The royal mason appeared in excellent health, and was brilliantly decorated with the insignia of the order. Having arrived at the marquee, he was presented, by the architect, Mr. Robert Smirke, the second son of the celebrated painter, with a plan of the building. His Royal Highness then advanced, and, in the basement-stone, deposited a brass box, containing two medals, one of bronze, on which was a portrait of his Royal Highness, and on the reverse, the following inscription.

" Georgius  
 Princeps Walliarum,  
 Theatri, Regiis, Instaurandi, Auspiciis,  
 In Hostis Benedictinis  
 Londini,  
 Fundamenta, Sua Manu Locavit,  
 MDCCCVIII."

The other medal was deeply engraved, in copper; on one side is inscribed.

" Under the Auspices of  
 His most Sacred Majesty, Geo. III.

King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain  
and Ireland,

The foundation-Stone of the Theatre, Covent  
Garden, was laid by his Royal Highness  
George Prince of Wales,

MDCCCVIII."

And, on the other side—

“ Robert Smirke, Architect.”

Here were deposited also gold, silver, and copper coins, of the latest coinage. Free-masons, after this, spread mortar over the lower stone; and, a silver trowel being presented by the deputy Grand Master, Earl Moira, to his Royal Highness, the Prince, as Grand Master, finished spreading it, and the stone was slowly let down. The Prince next having, in the accustomed forms, used the plumb, the level, and the square, finished the laying of the stone by three strokes of a mallet. He now poured over it the antient offerings of corn, wine, and oil, from three different silver vases; and, having returned the plan into the hands of the architect, graciously desired that the edifice might be completed conformably thereto. His Royal Highness then, addressing Messrs. Harris and Kemble, expressed his wishes for the success and prosperity of the undertaking. The ceremony being con-

cluded, the Grand Master withdrew, after having impressed every one present with the highest admiration of his graceful and dignified demeanor throughout.

———— soon had formed within the ground,  
 A various mould, and, from the boiling cells,  
 By strange conveyance, filled each hollow nook :  
 Anon, out of the earth, a fabric huge  
 Rose, like an exhalation,  
 Built like a temple, where pilasters round  
 Were set, and doric pillars overlaid  
 With golden architrave, nor did there want  
 Cornice or frieze, with boss ysculptures grav'n.

MILTON.

Upon the plan of the ingenious Mr. Smirke, and under the superintendance of Mr. Alexander Copeland, this immense pile towered to the air, and was completed in all its parts, agreeably to the promise of the proprietors, on the 18th of Sept. The classic genius of the architect, as carried into almost instantaneous effect by the builder, equalled, in the eyes of many, the executive power of Aladdin's lamp. To those, whose round of variable residence estranged them for a few months from the capital, the appearance of this national ornament seemed as the visionary structure of some eastern enchanter. Investigation, however, evinced its solidity, and the wishes of the tasteful many, opposed to the frantic imprecations of the *methodistical* few, breathed, from the heart, for its duration.

The theatre stands upon an area of about 220 feet in length and 170 in breadth; and is insulated on the west by Prince's Place, a new street-way, 40 feet wide; on the south by an avenue, of irregular width, named Bedford-Avenue; and on the north and east by Hart and Bow Streets.

The principal front is next to Bow-Street, in the centre of which is a portico of four columns, of the Greek Doric order. These columns are of Portland stone, and larger than those of any modern European building, being each 5 feet 6 inches in diameter. It is said that Mr. Smirk has taken, for his model, a charming specimen from the ruins of Athens: the grand Temple of Minerva situated in the Acropolis. The ornaments on the tympanum and frieze, and at the corners of the pediment, are omitted, as is also the interior row of columns, the street not allowing room for a sufficient projection of the portico. The lower part of the whole building is of stone; and the upper parts of cement, coloured so as to imitate stone.

EXPLANATION OF THE SCULPTURED BAS-RELIEF ON THE FRONT OF THE THEATRE.

THIS beautiful specimen of the fine arts is divided, by the intervention of the portico, into



two compartments ; that on the north side representing the antient, and the other on the south the modern drama.

ANTIENŒ DRAMA.—In the centre of the piece sit three Greek Poets, two of whom, looking towards the portico, represent the old and new comedy ; Aristophanes is the representative figure of the former, and Menander, (the nearest to the spectator) of the latter. Before these, Thalia presents herself with the crook and comic mask, as the object of their imitation : She is followed by Polyhymnia playing on the greater, and Euterpe on the lesser, lyre ; Clio with the long pipes, and Terpsichore the muse of action or pantomime.

These are succeeded by three nymphs, crowned with the leaves of the fir-pine, and in succinct tunics, representing the hours or seasons, governing and attending the winged horse Pegasus. The third sitting figure, in the centre of the piece, looking from the portico, is Æschylus, the father of Tragedy ; he holds a scroll open on his knee, and looks fixedly on Minerva, representing wisdom, seated opposite to him. The Goddess is distinguished by her helmet and shield. Between Æschylus and Minerva, Bacchus stands leaning on his fawn, because the Greeks represented Tragedies in honor of Bacchus. Behind Minerva stands Melpomene, the Muse of Tragedy, holding a sword and mask : then follow two Furies, with snakes and torches,

pursuing Orestes, who stretches out his hands to supplicate Apollo for protection. Apollo is represented in the quadriga, or four-horsed chariot of the sun. These last figures relate to part of Æschylus's Tragedy of Orestes.

MODERN DRAMA.—In the centre, looking from the portico, Shakspeare is seated, the comic and tragic masks, with the lyre, are about his seat; his right hand is raised, expressive of calling up the following characters in the *Tempest*:

First, Caliban laden with wood; next Ferdinand sheathing his sword; then Miranda entreating Prospero in behalf of her lover: they are led on by Ariel above, playing on a lyre. This part of the composition is terminated by Hecate, the triformed goddess, in her car, drawn by oxen, descending. She is attended by Lady Macbeth, with the daggers in her hands, followed by Macbeth, turning with horror from the body of Duncan behind him.

In the centre, looking towards the portico, is Milton seated, contemplating Urania, according to his own description in the *Paradise Lost*. Urania is seated facing him above; and at his feet is Sampson Agonistes chained.

The remaining figures represent the masque of *Comus*; the two brothers drive out three bacchanals, with their staggering leader *Comus*. The enchanted lady is seated in the chair, and

the series is ended by two tigers, representing the transformation of Comus's devotees. The designs of both are classical, and the execution is masterly.

The sculptured frieze, on each side of the portico, is from the design of Flaxman, and executed, in stone, by him and Rossi. The statues of Melpomene and Thalia, as tragedy and comedy, 7 feet high each, are placed in niches at each extremity of the front; the former is executed by Rossi, and the latter by Flaxman.

Tragedy, on the south wing, is a fine figure, holding the tragic mask and dagger. Comedy, on the northern wing, holds the shepherd's crook, or pedum, on her right shoulder, and the comic mask in her left hand; The body of the building rises considerably higher than the fronts next the east and west. The great centre roof (about 100 feet span,) is so constructed as to discharge whatever water or snows might fall, through a series of arches, into reservoirs upon the side roofs.

The entrances are as follow :

TO THE BOXES.—In front, through the great portico in Bow-Street; and, on the western side, from the Piazza in Covent-Garden.

TO THE ANNUAL BOXES.—One in Bow-Street, north side of the portico, and the other in Prince's Place.

TO THE PIT.—One entrance in Bow-Street,

north of the portico, and the other from Bedford-Avenue.

TO THE GALLERIES.—The entrance is from Bedford-Avenue.

In the construction of the interior, the security of the audience is consulted, in every part, as far as is practicable and consistent with the nature and uses of such a building. The basement, or cellar, story, is chiefly arched, and all the principal stair-cases are of stone.

The dressing-rooms for the male and female performers are each separated from the rest of the building by party-walls, and the communication is through iron doors. The stage is separated from the audience in every part, except where it is connected with the pit and proscenium. It surpasses the old one considerably in space, and is finished in a style which reflects the highest credit upon Mr. Saul. By means of slides it can be opened, at any part, to admit of sinking the scenes or for the traps. About 10 feet below this is another stage, where the machinery, for the working of the traps and wings, is placed. Under both these stages is a cellar, sufficiently deep to allow a scene, the entire height of the stage, to be sunk down. Above are two commodious tiers of flies, where the machinery for raising the drop scenes and borders is situated; and so complete and simple is all this machinery, that a scene, the whole extent of the stage, will,



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GRAND STAIR CASE OF COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.



Pub. 1 March 1820 by J.J. Stockdale 41 Pall Mall.

Arch. ac. Strass.

at the magic touch of harlequin's bat, disappear in a moment, either by sinking, rising, or going off at the side.

The entrance-doors are chiefly made to slide into the walls. Fire-pipes, constantly charged with water, are placed into all the corridors, and in different parts of the stage. A main pipe, from the New River, surrounds the whole building, with boxes and fire-cocks at intervals.

The principal entrance to the boxes, from Bow-Street, is about 40 feet square, and entirely cased with stone. The stairs, ascending to the boxes, are 17 feet wide. On each side of these is a range of Ionic pillars, Porphyry, each 17 feet high. The walls of the staircase-entrance are painted in imitation of light-veined Italian marble; and the whole entrance is lighted by antique lamps, suspended by each column. The anti-room is decorated with pilasters, corresponding with the columns on the staircase. In the centre is a statue of Shakespeare, by Rossi, placed under an arch. It is quite a new design, and the face more resembles the Felton than the Chandos likeness: the figure standing in a graceful attitude, folding his drapery round him.

The Allegro and Penseroso are painted in bas-relief, over the door-way leading to the corridors and windows opposite. The west entrance to the boxes from the Piazza leads by a double

flight of stone steps to the west corridore. All the corridores are in direct lines, and are each 8 feet high, paved with stone, and communicating with the great saloon at the south end. The corridores in Drury-Lane Theatre were only 5 feet 6 wide.

Four smaller stair-cases lead to the upper circles of boxes.

The great saloon is 60 feet long and 20 wide, and is furnished with sofas on each side, within the recess of arches. Over each recess are paintings, from scenes in the plays of Shakespeare, in bas-relief. The saloon is ornamented beside with eight elegant statues, from the antique. The prevailing colour of the walls is green and white, with gold. There are four circles of boxes, as in the old theatre; their height is the same, and the general form a semicircle, 50 feet in diameter, having the sides prolonged towards the stage. There are no boxes upon the stage. The Proscenium is decorated by two pilasters, in imitation of Sienna marble, on each side; the capitals gold antique, supporting an arch, 42 feet in diameter. This arch supports a solid wall of brick-work, carried up through the roof.

The soffit is enriched with sunk pannels and flowers, gilt. The king's arms, supporters couchant, are placed above the arch. The drapery is of scarlet cloth, painted, hanging within the



SALOON OF COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.



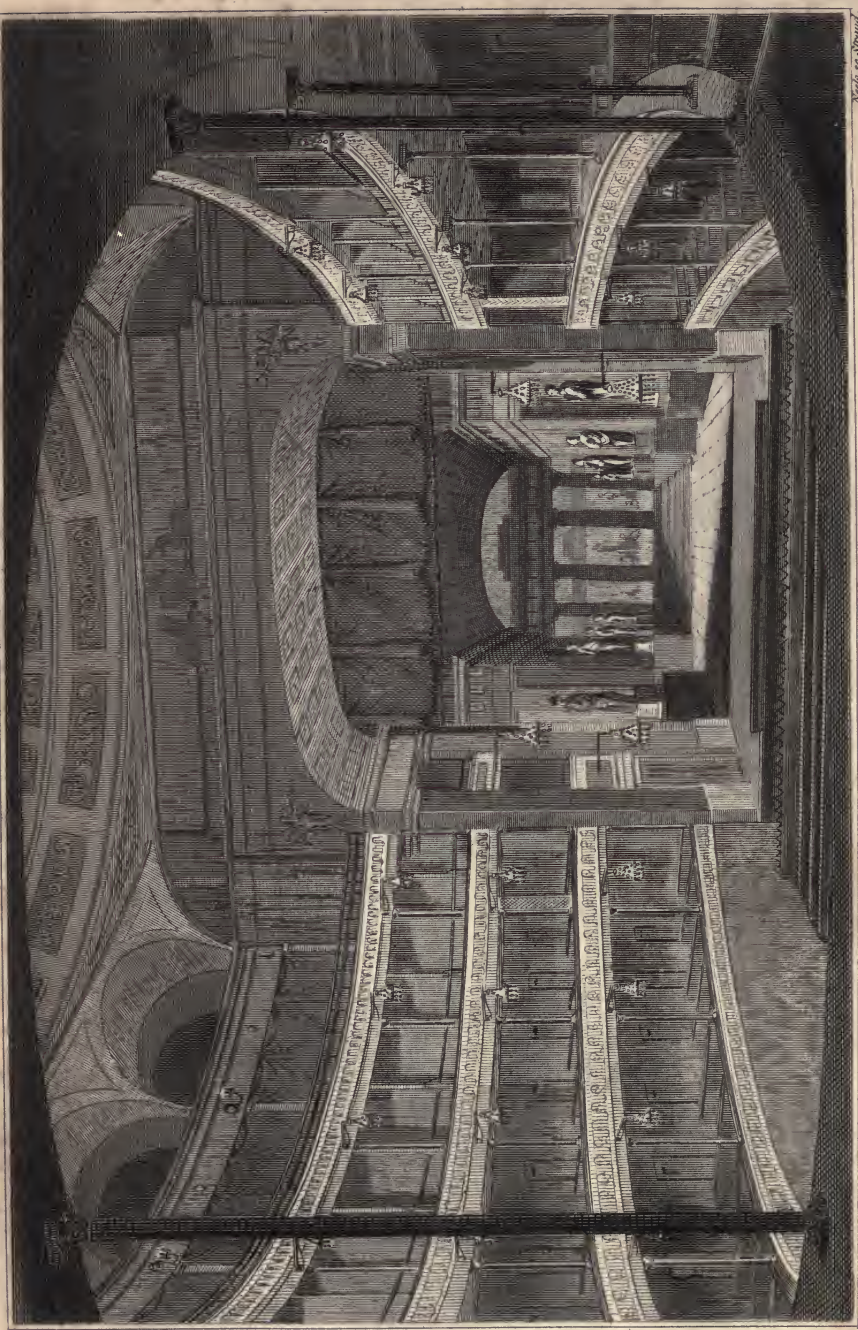
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See also Strand.





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Pub. 43: March 1850 by J.J. Stockdale of Pall Mall.

arch, and enriched with gold wreaths.\* The fronts of the boxes are white, having a Greek ornament, continued through their whole length, with gold upon a light pink ground. The styles are deeply enriched with stars, and the mouldings richly gilt. The architrave is of a warm cream-colour, supported by slender fluted and gilt columns: from the top of each runs a gilt iron bracket, suspending a superb gold and glass chandelier. The stage-doors are white and gold, and, over each, is suspended a magnificent lustre. The sides of the pit, below the boxes, are painted in imitation of yellow stained marble. In the centre of the gold wreaths, over the arch of the proscenium, is the motto of the stage, "Veluti in Speculum," written in gold letters. A range of arches supports the cieling, which is formed into a circle, and painted in concentric compartments.

The first and second circles of the boxes are appropriated to the public. In each box are three rows of seats, covered with light blue cloth.†

\* The drop-scene is peculiarly grand. It represents a temple, dedicated to Shakespeare; in the back of which is seen his statue, from Westminster Abbey, supported by Tragedy and Comedy: and between pillars, on each side, are statues of Æschylus, Plautus, Lope Da Vega, Ben Jonson, Moliere, &c.

† The backs of the boxes are pink-coloured, and the doors solid mahogany.

The third is a circle of boxes, separated entirely from the rest, and let annually. The principal entrance to these is, by a semi-circular stone staircase, from Prince's place. They are each separated from the corridore by a small anti-room, about 6 feet wide; the object of which was to remove the spectators from the noise of the corridore. These anti-rooms, scarcely large enough to contain three small chairs, their only furniture, have been the subject of great misrepresentation.

To this circle is a saloon, provided for the use of the renters, nearly of the same size with that attached to the lower circles, and filled up with sofas, extending, on each side, between pedestals, on which statues are placed. The walls of this room are cream-coloured, with gold. It also contains niches with busts, and paintings in bas-relief, from the three great poets, Homer, Virgil, and Milton. At each end are columns and pilasters, of green Syrian marble. The whole of these boxes are to be thrown open to the public, at the end of the present season, with the exception of three on each side next the stage.

The lower gallery occupies the centre part of the south circle. The seats of the upper gallery are in the arches which support the cieling, not one of which is provided in such a manner as that the spectator may not have a complete view of the stage. The comparative admeasurements

of the several parts of this house with the old theatre and that of Drury-Lane have been published by the proprietors, as follow :

The boxes are calculated to hold as many spectators in the present as in the old theatre, but one hundred and forty more persons are provided with seats in the lower circles. Six feet six inches is the average depth allowed to the three rows in each box. Six feet three was allowed in the old theatre, and six feet in Drury-lane.

In the old theatre, twenty seats were contained in the pit, their whole declivity three feet. In the new theatre, there are also twenty seats, but their declivity is four feet nine inches.

In the two-shilling gallery, a person seated in the back row of the old theatre was 88 feet from the stage-door, in the present theatre, he is distant only 86, and in Drury-Lane he was 100.

In the upper gallery of the old theatre, the last row was 93 feet from the stage-door, in the present only 85, and in Drury-Lane it was 104.

The house is lighted by glass chandeliers in front of each circle; 270 wax candles are consumed in them every night. Three hundred patent lamps light the stage and scenery, and nearly as many more are fixed in the corridors and staircases. The stage is provided, on each side, with arched recesses in which the scenes are deposited. The scenes are 22 feet high.

There are three green-rooms for the perform-

ers. The dressing-rooms for the men, their ward-  
robes, &c. are all on one side. The same for the  
women are on the opposite side of the house.  
The carpenters' shop and painters' rooms are  
at the extremity of the stage, and are nearly 80  
feet long.

The excavations for the foundation of this  
building began at the latter end of November,  
1808, the foundation-stone was laid by the Prince  
of Wales, on the 31st of December, same year,  
and the whole was completed on the 18th of  
September, 1809. The principal tradesmen in  
London were engaged in the execution of the  
work, and from 1000 to 1500 men were generally  
employed.

The distribution of the various artificers, and  
the applications of the several machines, were  
well calculated to expedite the carrying up of  
this extensive building, without incurring an  
extraordinary degree of labour. The workmen  
were divided into classes, each under the direc-  
tion of an able and experienced foreman. Horse-  
mills were erected to grind the lime, and prepare  
the mortar, without manual labour, which was  
used immediately, in a hot state, to prevent any  
ill effects arising from the frost. Courses of  
Yorkshire stone were also worked into all the  
walls, every four feet in height, for their better  
strength and security.

Horse-machines, of a very simple although  
excellent construction, were used in raising the



heavy weights, such as bricks, stone, lead, slates, &c. The use of these machines must be of a very considerable importance to those concerned in large buildings, as we understand that they were capable of raising, with one horse, one thousand bricks, to the height of 50 feet, in the short space of eleven minutes. Numerous engines, of various descriptions, were also used in several parts of the work, for raising the timbers, scaffolding, &c. ; the latter of which, when completely fixed in the body of the house, resembled the skeleton of a first-rate ship of war. The whole of the roof was raised and fixed in one month, and is particularly deserving of notice, from its great extent, being nearly 100 feet in length, and 130 feet in width ; it is calculated, that every pair of principal rafters has to sustain the weight of 30 tons. The stage, in point of size, accommodation, and excellence of machinery, is superior to that of any theatre in Europe.

Thus, in not quite ten months, was completed one of the most superb edifices in Europe, dedicated to the drama, conferring the highest honor on the skill of the architect, the arrangement of the builder, and the spirit of the proprietors, and giving to the metropolis of the empire an ornament truly national.

We cannot close this description without congratulating the architect, who, at such an early

age, only between 20 and 30, has attained nearly the head of his profession ; nor is less credit attached to the builder, also a young man, and first of his calling, who has, in this as in his other engagements, acquired a deserved, well-earned, and unenvied, fame.

## SUCCINCT HISTORY

OF THE

## CONTEST.

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“ Scire volunt secreta domus atque inde timeri.”

JUVENAL.

“ They search the secrets of the house, and so  
Are worshipp'd there, and feared for what they know.”

DRYDEN.

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THE denominations of Guelph and Ghibeline, of hats and caps, of Whigs and Tories, aye and even of All the Talents, must all give place to the introduction of a new-named faction in the chronicled history of parties. The foregoing designations were as literally remote and unmeaning, in their deduction, as perhaps the real objects of their agency were unallied to their ostensible designs. Not so the projects nor

the title of that party which we are now proceeding to describe.

Their aims being limited apparently, their train of action was throughout decisive and sincere, in result, most fortunately unaccompanied by the blood which traced the progress of the first-named feud, and in adoption of measures unmasked by the intrigue and inconsistency of the three others. Possibly, the numerical strength and importance of the late dramatic opposition may be under-rated, in consequence of their adherence to so modest a distinction-badge as the alphabetical ciphers of O. P. Be these things estimated hereafter as they may, it has proved sufficient for the avowed purposes of the militant, and now triumphant, party, that the issue of the struggle confirms the *integral* rights of a public auditory, and sets the usurpation of their servants at *nought*. In most eras of our national records, the character of our countryman has been remarked for submission to the schemes and dupery of projectors. He has, hitherto, launched on the South Sea in a frail bark of enterprize, overburthened with its freightage, and, through the neglect of his compass, has run on the shoals of bankruptcy. In all his speculations, the leading adventure is credulity, and the pilot an undoubting confidence. Yet he has been taught by his misfortunes, and is resolved no longer to be bitten by the

sharks of a Pacific Ocean. From this resolution, and from this moral change in the habits of our countrymen, has arisen the late anti-imposition war at Covent Garden Theatre.

The first step, on the part of the proprietors, to pre-engage the calculative powers of Mr. Bull, was the introduction of Madame Catalani into the national theatre, at an exorbitant salary. From this circumstance, the public were led to conclude, that retrenchments would be made in stimulating an advance to improvement in our own drama, and in renunciation to native performers of more than tinsel merit. The proprietors reckoned much on their zealous endeavour to gratify the unprivileged orders of the town with a sight of this *fish out of water*. The sober rejection, however, of the delicate exhibition, by those who were accustomed to experience pleasure from what they could understand, not surprize at what they were strangers to, determined the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre to compass by finesse what they could not openly atchieve, a precious derivation of profit from their establishment. Accordingly, when they perceived the public mind entirely hostile to this transalpine production, in an evil hour they listened to the trick of disembarassment suggested by a neighbour-manager.\* Pursuant to this ad-

\* Mr. Sh——n it is presumed.

vice, an advertisement \* appeared in the public prints, from the proprietors, stating, that, in consequence of their previous misfortunes, and the increased expense they incurred in the erection of the present edifice, they doubted not, that public liberality would assent to the trifling advance made in the prices of admission to certain parts of the house: and this rise they pleaded as an indispensable requisite. Popular opinion will, however, have its course; and, under the cloak of this latter proceeding, it was clearly perceived, that the proprietors were resorting to a multiplied system of innovation, in order that the concession of one contested point, made with becoming grace and condescension to the public, might secure the unquestioned tenure of the rest. The expected inculcation of a man in power, at the opening of a senatorial session, perhaps, never occasioned the interest which was excited in the *public* mind upon the approach of that day, which the proprietors fixed upon for the opening of the new theatre: when I say *public*, I mean, most unreservedly, to include that arithmetical portion of it resident in the western part of this metropolis; a portion of the utmost consequence, and dangerous, in the highest degree, to projected monopoly, *even from that habit of sitting at a*

\* See Appendix.

*desk in calculating mood*, so strongly reprobated for its vulgar unimportance by the *intelligent* writer of a certain *managerial* pamphlet. That day came, and with it the campaign on both sides. As the annunciation of the intended advance was prior to the opening of the house, so also were the comments with which the press, in this particular, almost unanimously prepared the public for a resistance to what was considered imposition. "An object, however small in itself, if placed near the eye, will engross all the rays of light; and a transaction, however trivial, swells into importance when it presses immediately on our attention." Thus it was with the late theatrical dispute; for, though completely irrelevant to the concerns of nine out of ten, yet that prevailing curiosity, which fancies itself affected by the theme, soon created a diffusion of interest, at first confined, through the various orders of society. This was the principle, ever attendant on humanity, which caused the gallery-audience to wave the compliment bestowed on them, and unite with the party aggrieved. On the 18th of September, 1809, a vast multitude presented themselves so early even as half-past four o'clock for admittance to the theatre. For a time, the presiding passion of indignation was calmed by the striking grandeur of the exterior;

“ ————— the work some praise  
And some the architect.”

but all concurred in the expression of displeasure at the exotic association, the separate exclusion, and the unwarranted advance. The fever of irritation was a second time allayed when the interior splendours of the house burst upon the admitted, with the attractions of novelty, and the recollection of its late chaotic appearance. Indeed, the ingenuity and taste of the youthful architect deserved such a recognition. But, will the proprietors pretend to say, that their avidity of being early in the market has not created a great waste in materials, and an unnecessary compensation for extraordinary exertion, both of which are the never-failing attendants upon a hurried work?

From the different documents contained in the appendixes to this work, it appears, that the proprietors have, in fact, been re-established in their concern, without ground for that mighty apprehension of risk, upon which they have attempted to erect the hope of indulgent non-resistance to the new prices. For, have not the subscribers to upwards of half their capital waved, with extreme generosity, all claim to the funded principal of the subscription, content



with drawing a trifling interest thereon, for a comparatively limited period? The old edifice would have soon perhaps fallen, from decay, (indeed, the last repairs only propped it on crutches,) and, in this case, the proprietors would possibly have had to undertake the rebuilding of it on terms not quite so advantageous; because, a set of subscribers might not, under such circumstances, be stimulated to so generous a sacrifice as has been made by the present. Upon the whole, it will strike the calculating reader, that the fire has been a very good friend to the sharers in this concern.

The comparisons which have been drawn between a theatrical establishment and that of a private trader are pointless and inapplicable, with relation to the same bearing of justice, in the ad libitum rise of commodity in both. The exclusive patent of the former shuts out the competition which is justificatory of any advance made in the latter. The avarice of the imposing tradesman carries with it its own punishment, in the desertion of his shop, for that of the fair dealer. That cannot be the case with a theatre at present, though there is no reason under heaven why it should not hereafter. Two of those dealers, in what was once "the feast of reason," possess, between them, a juggling monopoly, by means of which they can combine in the practice of whatever extortion they may think fit on

the public. In case one only should commence this malversation, the possibility of recurring to the fair primitive process of common trade is shut out, because rivalry, in all other respects, makes room for a strict coincidence, in this point, between the privileged monopolists. That this species of dealing has been the basis of the late advance on admission to the new theatre is more than suspected.

The public, as parties to the management of a concern, privileged, by their sovereign, for their entertainment, at a *reasonable* rate of admission, have, most unquestionably, a right to inquire into the causes of any innovations which have been made therein. Upon this reasonable presumption, the public, on the first night of opening the new theatre, loudly and strenuously opposed the system of the late alterations in gross. Upon the following five nights, the voice of disapprobation was not hushed by any conciliatory propositions, or judicious and timely concessions: so far from it, that, on the first night, the magistrates of Bow-street on the stage with Riot-act in hand, and a posse of their myrmidons in the orchestra, grinning defiance at the outraged audience, were the arbiters, thought proper, by the proprietors, to interfere between them and the public.

Multiplied gratis admissions were issued to the lowest of the people, who were crammed into the

ci-devant seats of respectable frequenters of the theatre, in order to create a false appearance of assimilation, in the public mind, to the views of the proprietors. Now, it has been said, that the opposition to managerial innovations did not comprize any but the lowest orders of society: allowing this assertion to be true, then "Greek met Greek." But it is evident, to every impartial observer, that the sans culottes, who were nightly seated in the *boxes* and pit of the theatre, were not the *paying* representatives of the public.

The alienation of an entire tier of boxes from public occupancy was by no means a secondary cause of public grievance. Were such a proceeding to be established into precedent, in a short time the whole might be turned into a private concern: rival prejudices would arise in the rival classes of society upon these exclusive appropriations. The public part of the auditory would become quite vulgar, and it would be a dreadful thing for Mrs. Such-a-one to go with the mob, when her neighbour, Mr. Such-a-one, was seated within the pale of distinction. This, it is clear, would be attended with rather disagreeable consequences to the proprietors themselves. Any contrivance, indeed, deserves credit and approbation which secludes the respectable matron and her innocent family from the glaring obscenities of the lobbies. But the private boxes alone will not remedy this; there are still, it is to

be hoped, numerous families, besides the annuitants of those privileged seats, who possess claims upon protection from Cyprian indecencies.

In the fervour of exclamation, many indecorous allusions were made to the purposes of this tier. They proceeded, evidently, from the imagery of jealous and irritated minds, which generally establish the most ungrounded fancies into proofs "as strong as those of holy writ." The obnoxious furniture, ideally assigned to the anti-rooms, as has been shewn in the description of the building, had no existence. It is, however, a dangerous precedent to hold out such a bonus to the vanity of classifying distinction, in a place where all orders of the community assemble for the purpose of forgetting their separations, and where all are united by the same motive, that of rational self-enjoyment.

Madame Catalani was the first sacrifice made at the shrine of popular indignation. From the precipitancy with which this lady was given up by the proprietors, it is imagined, that a collusion subsisted between them and the opera-manager on this head, in order that the latter may be enabled to gain this lady's services on his own terms, and this, more particularly, as the former were convinced that she could never appear on their stage.

The public were certainly right in preventing

the denationalization of their theatre; but the individual was inveigled and aggrieved. It would be usurping upon the detail of the subjoined journal to go into particulars of each night's confusion and disturbance. Instead of having met public sentiment in the repulsive and ungracious manner they did, it would have been much more to the benefit of the proprietors, and, perhaps, have effectually cast oil upon the troubled wave, if the statement, which was wrung from them, had been made as soon as possible after the first ebullition of disapprobation.

The proprietors, in like manner, acted with an ill-becoming non-deference to their supporters, in not appearing before the auditory in a more respectful manner than by representative delegation. It is astonishing that the good sense of Mr. Kemble, and a pride, which, on such an occasion, would be truly dignified, did not prevent him from becoming the extra scape-goat of popular indignation. The attendance of the proprietors, *in corpore toto*, would convince the public, that the obnoxious cause of dissatisfaction proceeded, at least, from the concertations of the whole, and were not, (as it was ungenerously considered by many, and, in fact, thus nearly admitted by the rest of the proprietors,) the act of an individual holder in the concern.

Mr. Kemble, throughout the fracas, has been, in this respect and in many others, ill treated; in

some instances, however, he gave great cause of irritation to the public.

No one has ever heard of acoustic defects in the organization of his frame; and it is reasonable to apprehend, that his ear would perform its functions rather diligently, on an occasion where learning was his interest, and reading, perhaps, his duty. His conduct, in the instance alluded to, called into play the exercise of every possible insinuation, which might be pungent to his feelings. He was branded as a *vagabond* by that very public, which, for some years past, derived triumph from having *fixed him* in his wanderings. His amatory failings, were all in judgment before the tribunal of the out-raged audience, who took a pleasure in the double injunction of "*Decamp* \* so frequently thrilling through his ears. From his native place, the waggery of insult applied to him a parodied admonition. His complexion was another denominative source of epithet; and, last of all, it was

\* Some years since, and not long after Miss Decamp first appeared on the stage, her modesty induced an application to Mr. Kemble, that he would dispense with her parading the stage in a state representing nudity in the character of Godina, in Peeping Tom. This he proposed to accede to on the terms of a salute, and immediately began to take improper liberties, and to use considerable violence. Her cries brought assistance, and the result was, that Mr. Kemble made a public apology in all the newspapers, beginning, "I, John Philip Kemble, of Drury-Lane Theatre," &c.

recollected, that he performed Wolsey with perfect ease, because he was himself a PAPIST.\* In a word, Mr. Kemble acted the part of a Nisus to the managers.

“ Adsum qui feci,  
In me converti te ferrum.”

With the unvarying scene of strengthened opposition on one side, and the adoption of counter-insurrectionary measures on the other, the first week elapsed. Many persons had been taken before the magistrates, under charges of riot, supported by the attestation of Mr. Brandon, the box-keeper, and the mechanics in the employ of the theatre. Of these persons the greater number, having put in the bail required, were discharged till the opening of the Westminster sessions.

Of the right on the part of the magistrates, to consider the alleged conduct of those persons at the theatre as breaches of the peace, a considerable doubt was entertained. The daily prints teemed with letters on the subject, and cases of precedent were adduced to establish the presumptive privilege attached to that conduct, which, on the present occasion, was considered

\* As this History is meant for the information of future ages, the editor thinks proper to state, that the question of “ Roman Catholic Emancipation,” as it is called, is now in its zenith in England.

criminal. The managers were not backward in their efforts to meet these documents, and accordingly we shall find them, in the course of the past week; putting the following hand-bill in circulation, most injudiciously and inconsiderately :

“ CAUTION.

Lord *Mansfield*, on the trial of the rioters in the case of Mr. MACKLIN, stated a British Audience had a right to express their approbation or disapprobation of plays and actors, in the usual way ; but, if it could be proved that any person or persons went, night after night, to the theatre, for the purpose of preventing an actor exercising his profession, or TO INJURE THE MANAGERS OR PROPRIETORS, such person or persons would NOT ONLY be subject to AN ACTION AT LAW, but might be INDICTED FOR THE OFFENCE.”

And in the case of the prisoners in the King's Bench, Lord MANSFIELD stated, “ if the parties concur in doing the act, although they were *not previously acquainted* with each other, it is A CONSPIRACY. Supplement to Viner's Abridgement.”

This *Caution*, the proprietors calculated, would produce a talismanic effect on the public mind. Law, however, sometimes meets with different commentaries. Lord Mansfield certainly never



was possessed with the idea, that an arbitrary mutation of value set upon theatrical representation should be considered as PROPERTY. This was the only species of property attempted to be violated; and the learned lord laid down the law in such wise, that an infringement on real property should alone be visited by the penalties of the Riot-act.

There was also another cause of complaint against the *retailers* of justice. It was evident from the distinction made between those who supported and those who opposed the advance, that retribution was not dealt out to both with equal weight. In cases of bail for assault, only half the forfeiture attached to the managerial party in consequence of non-appearance; and, in one instance, namely, that of Capt. Hewitson, one of the *native genius's* of the theatre, that gentleman was bound only in the tenth part of what was imposed on the person who made the complaint, and against whom the captain recriminated the charge. In other instances, where a manifestation of deliberate conduct and sagacity appeared in the persons apprehended, the magistrate fluttered and blushed for the inaccuracy of his officer. Among these were the cases of Mr. Thomas, a gentleman of the Temple, and Mr. Clifford, an eminent barrister.

But to return to the transactions of the week: each night succeeded the other with increased

rancour on the side of the popular part, whose ingenuity was ever employed in devising either a new placard for the night's, or a new song for the day's, entertainment. In the midst of those proceedings, several gentlemen harangued the audiences; among the most favoured were Mr. Leigh, Mr. Smith, Mr. Ross, and Mr. O'Reilly. Each of these gentlemen made statements to the public, which, at length, Mr. Kemble noticed, and made his long-expected appearance in consequence. But, having *innocently waited to know the demands* of his auditors, after fruitless attempts at persuasion, and counter-statements to those already gone abroad, the manager thought it prudent to retire.

The whole family of the Kembles now came under public displeasure, and no greater sin was requisite, for the damnation of a performer, than an alliance with this obnoxious family.

At the conclusion of the first week of the campaign, Mr. Kemble re-appeared, and notified to the public, that Catalani's engagement was relinquished. He also declared it to be the intention of the managers to submit their affairs to a select committee, who should report thereon, and that, until the result should be made known, the theatre was to be closed. There was some shew of deference in this proceeding, which, though agreeable to several, did not perfectly satisfy the mind of the majority. A committee

was appointed, and by whom? Not, as in justice and fair policy it should, by the public on one side and the proprietors, on the other:—No. this inquisitorial council was at the sole nomination and under the uncontrolled influence of the proprietors: not, that it is meant to say the members of that committee were venal to the purposes of the managers, but that the latter, unchecked by the prying eye, or the intelligent suggestion, could conceal from men, unused to the development of such concerns, the documents which a stricter committee of scrutiny would demand.

The proprietors very politely complimented this respectable divan upon their accurate and zealous attention; they could never say too much in their praise; the column of a journal would not suffice for their encomiastic tribute of gratitude: not so the public:—they believed pretty generally in the honour and integrity of this board; but their anxious perspicuity and qualifying information were not points admitted in the public creed.

The report was not just glanced over, and then taken upon trust: it was thoroughly taken asunder and investigated. The consequence was that something *rotten was discovered in the state of Denmark*. Instead of specific items of expenditure and receipt, general heads appeared. Instead of deductions being accounted for, they were *lumpishly* thrown into the aggregate terms of

“outstanding debts,” or “sums drawn by the proprietors.” “We manage things quite in another way east of Temple-bar,” said John Bull; “and I vow that even a petty grocer’s balance-sheet is more *tangible* than the accounts of this elaborate committee.” The people did not conceive outstanding debts, from the improvidence of the proprietors, should affect them.

Among the receipts, too, of the concern, it was stated that the receipt of the season 1808-9 was inferior to the expenditure. Was it the fault of the public that their expenditure should be increased by the excessive fripperies of such a dramatic piece as the *Exile*, which *banished* men of taste from its representation? or was it fair to include, among the average-receipts, that of a *wandering* season? The Great Mogul may as well calculate his revenue, if he were driven to the deserts, from those of his former establishment, when fixed in his seat of empire. It is sufficient for the purposes of this sketch to say, that the public, disbelieving the premises of the report, did not assent to its conclusion. After a lapse of ten days the house was re-opened; but the voice of clamour re-opened also. From this time forward the proprietors determined to meet the opposition with pertinacity,

“Et vim repellere vi.”

For this purpose reams of orders were distributed

in different parts of the town, to those who would accept them, on condition of *fighting* under the managerial banners. This proffer operated principally on the hawking Jews of the metropolis, who, in a great measure, defeated the intent of their application, by selling them, *below prime cost*, to persons every way disposed to join in the opposition to managers, and who thus obtained their wishes for a trifle. But however mismanaged this *ruse de guerre* had been, by the Israelitish avidity of turning the *monish*, yet the pugilistic part of the tribes, a formidable train, carried terror and confusion each night, by their presence, among the adverse part of the audience. At the head of this motley band were Mendoza and Dutch Sam, notorious professors of the pugilistic science. For a while they terrified and dispirited their opponents; but, at length, resolution returned to the O. P.s, who forced the Jews to withdraw.

The enraged public now vented their indignation against the introducers of such a ruffian crew. The assertions of the different journals were, however, combated by the affidavit of Mr. Brandon, that such orders came not from him, nor were issued, to his knowledge, by the managers; who, he believed, knew nothing of them. Mr. Bish met this deposition by a note, which purported his having seen the signature of Mr. Brandon to one of the orders hawked by the Jews

near the Royal Exchange. Other testimony, such as that of Mr. Powell, of Camden-town, was adduced, sufficient in its tenor to convince the public, that the managers could not be unacquainted with, and, consequently, that they encouraged, these transactions. Does any one imagine that such loose reins are given to the superintendance of this concern, as to conceal from the fountain-head the admission of more than three hundred persons for a series of nights gratuitously!

“Credat JUDEUS MENDOZA—non ego.”

Mendoza may believe and swear to it, but the public will not accord with such credence.

Scuffles, of some consequence, ensued from these proceedings. The house became entirely forsaken; and indeed was so, nearly, from the opening, by any of the fair sex, save those who flaunt it in the lobbies. Even these, accustomed as they were to overlook the mercenary shilling when combined with a one pound note, now manifested a strong resistance to the same trifling consideration on a seven-shilling piece. All orders and descriptions felt the grievance, and all joined to oppose it.

The placarding system was more widely diffused than ever; and, though Mr. Kemble had told tales out of school of the Bank clerks, yet many of them re-appeared in the lists. Nor were the consequences entirely faultless of blood; for

in one night's encounter two youths were wounded severely, by being forced on spikes placed, in the rear of the pit, to prevent access, on that side, to the boxes. One, the son of Mr. Lorimer, a silk dyer, in the Strand, was considered to be dangerously hurt.

The captures by the police increased in proportion to the increased vigour of the *row*. Even the softer sex could not divert the cerberian avidity of the Bow-street officers from multiplying their victims by the addition of a female to the number. A servant-maid, named Mary Austin, though not armed *cap-a-pie*, yet, being furnished with a rattle, in the gallery, was considered a Joan of Arc,—committed to prison,—and, wonderful to relate, escaped being burnt for a witch by the sagacious magistrate. Though the disturbance had now lasted upwards of a month, yet no alteration was observed in the property, save the uncovering of the pit-benches, occasioned by the unusual attrition of feet in the mystic dances of O. P. It is impossible but that, on occasions of great public agitation, there must be some display of the meaner and grosser passions. On one night Mrs. C. Kemble escaped, narrowly, being struck by an apple, thrown by some unknown ruffian. On another she was taunted for her family-appearance, as adding another being to the objects of public resentment. Mr. Liston, on another occasion, received a blow from a can-

dle thrown at him: these were the only circumstances of personal insult offered to the performers, and no one will attempt to reconcile them with the actions of the O. P. party, by whom they were strongly reprobated.

Suggestions were made, with a view to destroy the clamour, that revolutionary politics had identified themselves with the opponents of the manager. A faction ever on the watch to do mischief had indeed, when the violence began to subside, forced itself upon the O. P.s, but, to their credit, it must be added, was by the most reputable portion of them indignantly rejected. Loyal subjects certainly were apprehensive of the consequences which *might* result from confusion so long prevalent, and now systematizing itself within the metropolis of the empire; but their fears were happily groundless.

By degrees the house was cleared of its Jewish disturbers, and through no operation of circumstance was this effect produced more than by the sagacious interposition of the Jewish High Priest, Dr. S. Hirschell. He struck a great number of the offending tribe off the charity-list, for six months, and menaced excommunication to future transgressors. Mr. Kemble certainly was by no means concerned in the introduction of those vagrants; but, as he was now the butt of every proprietary indiscretion, he bore the unmerited imputation of this.



In the progress of commotion, another soothing appeal proceeded from the concern. It went on in the general plea of impossible retrenchments, questioning in what quarter, or what department, they could be made. Letters of the opposite tendency followed this interrogatory appeal. In some of them, the spirit of anti-dramatic party appeared more tinctured with methodism than with good sense. Of this description were the letter signed—"a Layman of the Church of England," immoderate in assertion that the principle of dramatic exhibitions was unfavourable to morality. It is indeed a known and lamentable fact, that the *grosseur* of our comedy has excited even the surprize of a neighbouring nation, perhaps more depraved than this, but certainly preserving more decorum in depravation.

The proprietors ask, "In what items retrenchments might possibly be made?" The fair answer is—in each and every one—"Retrench the improvident and corrupt remuneration of productions which are destructive of public taste,—reduce the finances of a mimic to a proper level in the construction of society,—rescind all species of spectacle,\* so absorbent of expenditure and militant against nature; thus shall you render your con-

\* A ludicrous satire on the absurd melo-dramas of the present day will be found at page 17, of "The Comet,—a mock newspaper."

cern wealthy in its returns of your labour, and worthy of the public frequentation creative of those returns."

One defensive argument, upheld by the supporters of the late advanced price, is, that the admission-charges to the French theatres which, in Paris, are so numerous, considerably exceed the proportion of ours.—True; but the French government make the drama a source of revenue, and there are no independent licences given for arbitrary purposes. Now the British theatre contributes in no manner to recruit the national finance, by a tax on its representatives, and consequently cannot put in a plea of parity to the right assumed by the Gallican stage. Neither have we heard that *Talma*, the greatest of their performers, has established a mine of wealth, from the result of his public labours; but it is known that, to uphold his finances, he receives from the government a pension for his merits. The following reference to the scale of remuneration, 100 years ago, will not fail in suggesting the propriety of proportionate application to that bestowed on actors of the present day. The statement appeared as an advertisement, "concerning poor actors, who, under pretence of hard usage from the patentees, are about to desert their service." It was as follows:

"Some persons having industriously spread about, amongst the quality and others, what

small allowances the chief actors have had this last winter, from the patentees of Drury-Lane Playhouse, as if they had received no more than so many poor palatines, it was thought necessary to print the following account :

“The whole company began to act on the 12th of October, 1708, and left off on the 26th of the said month, by reason of Prince George’s illness and death ; and began again the 14th of December following, and left off, upon the Lord Chamberlain’s order, the 4th of June last, 1709 ; so acted, during that time, in all 135 days, which is 22 weeks and three days, accounting six acting days to a week.

<i>In that time</i> Mr. WILKES, by salary, for acting and taking care of rehearsals, received - - - - -	168	6	8
By his benefit play - - - - -	90	14	9
	<hr/>		
Total - - - - -	259	1	5

To Mr. BETTERTON, by salary for acting, £4. a week for himself, and £1 a week for his wife, although she does not act, paid - - - - -	112	10	0
By a benefit play at common prices, besides what he got by high prices, and guineas paid - - - - -	76	4	5
	<hr/>		
Total - - - - -	188	14	5

To Mr. EASTCOURT, at £5 a week salary, paid	112	10	0
By a benefit play - - - - -	51	8	6
	<hr/>		
Total - - - - -	163	18	6

	£	s.	d.
To Mr. CIBBER, at £5 a week salary - - - -	111	10	0
By a benefit play - - - - -	51	0	10
Total - - - -	162	10	10
<hr/>			
To Mr. MILLS, at £4 a week for himself, and £1 a week for his wife, for little or nothing - - -	112	10	0
By a benefit play paid to him, (not including therein what she got by a benefit play) - - - - -	58	1	4
Total - - - -	170	11	4
<hr/>			
To Mrs. OLDFIELD, at £4 a week salary, for 14 weeks and one day; she leaving off acting pre- sently after her benefit, viz. on the 17th of March last, 1708, though the benefit was intended for her whole nine months acting, and she refused to assist others in their benefits, she was paid - - - - -	56	13	4
In January she required, and was paid, ten guineas to wear on the stage, in some plays, during the whole season, a mantle petticoat that was given her for the stage, and this she left off three months be- fore she should, yet she hath not returned any part of the ten guineas - - - - -	10	15	0
And she hath for wearing, in some plays, a suit of boy's clothes on the stage - - - - -	2	10	7
By a benefit play, paid - - - - -	62	7	8
Total - - - -	132	6	7
<hr/>			
Certainties, in all - - - -	1077	3	1
<hr/>			

£ s. d.

Besides which certain sums above-mentioned, the same actors get by their benefit plays, as follows:

Note.—Mr. BETTERTON having had £76 4s. 5d. as above-mentioned, for two-thirds of the profits by a benefit play, reckoning his tickets for the boxes at 5s. a piece, the pit at 3s. the first gallery at 2s. and the upper gallery at 1s. But the boxes, pit, and stage, were laid together on his day, and no person admitted but by his tickets, the lowest at half-a-guinea a ticket; nay, he had much more, for one lady gave him ten guineas, some two guineas, and most one guinea, supposing he would not act any more, and he delivered out tickets for more persons than the boxes, pit, and stage, could hold: it is thought he cleared £450, at least, over and above the £76 4s. 5d. - - - - -

450 0 0

'Tis thought that Mr. EASTCOURT cleared £200 besides the said £51 8s. 6d. - - - - -

200 0 0

That Mr. WILKES cleared, by guineas, about £40 besides the said £90 14s. 9d. - - - - -

40 0 0

That Mr. CIBBER got, by guineas, about £50 besides the said £51 0s. 10d. - - - - -

50 0 0

That Mr. MILLS got, by guineas, about £20 besides the said £58 1s. 4d. - - - - -

20 0 0

That Mrs. OLDFIELD got, by guineas, £120 besides the said £62 7s. 8d. - - - - -

120 0 0

In all - - - - - 880 0 0

So that all these six comedians, who are the unsatisfied people, have, between the 12th of October and the 4th of June last, cleared in all the following sums:

	£	s.	d.
Acted 100 times, Mr. WILKES, certain - - - -	259	1	5
And more by computation - - - - -	40	0	0
	<hr/>		
Both - - - -	299	1	5
	<hr/>		
Acted 16 times, Mr. BETTERTON, certain - -	188	14	5
And more by computation - - - - -	450	0	0
	<hr/>		
Both - - - -	638	14	5
	<hr/>		
Acted 52 times, Mr. EASTCOURT, certain - -	163	18	6
And more by computation - - - - -	200	0	0
	<hr/>		
Both - - - -	363	18	6
	<hr/>		
Acted 71 times, Mr. CIBBER, certain - - - -	162	10	10
And more by computation - - - - -	50	0	0
	<hr/>		
Both - - - -	212	10	10
	<hr/>		
Acted ——— times, Mr. MILLS, certain - - -	170	11	4
And more by computation - - - - -	20	0	0
	<hr/>		
Both - - - -	191	11	4
	<hr/>		
Acted 39 times, Mrs. OLDFIELD, certain - -	132	6	7
And more by computation - - - - -	120	0	0
	<hr/>		
	252	6	7
	<hr/>		
In all - - - -	1957	3	1
	<hr/>		

The above document bears the signature of Zachary Baggs, the treasurer and receiver of the said theatre. In that time the treasury of a theatre was more frugally conducted than it is now. Six prime comedians are stated to have been paid for the season, including benefits and all, as a matter of exorbitant receipt on their part, the sum of £1957 : 3 : 1!! What would be said of one actress receiving more than treble that sum, exclusive of a benefit? And yet is so wide a disproportion proved to exist in the merit of actors, the charge of admission, or the frequentation of the drama, to support the warrantability of the lavish salaries at present known to be paid? As much difference is there in merit between a Blanchard and a Betterton as between Farley and Farquhar; and yet both those, comparative inferiors, are remunerated for buffoonery and hair-brained pantomime, excessively beyond the manufacturer of the mirror, and him who "held it up to nature."

In 1660, when the proprietors of the Cockpit Theatre, in Drury-lane, imposed exactions of advanced price from the public, it appears, that a complaint against them was noticed by Sir Herbert Herbert, the then Master of the Revels. He directed them, in the king's name and authority, to refrain from such exactions, and to abide by the accustomed prices. Now, this historical

precedent is not surely in favour of innovation, ad libitum, under the sanction of a patent.

About the middle of October, it was signified, from the proprietors, and appeared in the public prints, that persons, either bailed or committed for the charges, alleged against them, of theatrical riot, should be prosecuted with the most rigorous severity. A bar of lawyers, mostly on the crown side, led by Mr. Attorney General, was appointed for the conduct of the prosecution. This proceeding intimidated a great number of the insurgent forces from taking the field as usual. In consequence of their apprehensions, the O. P.s gave some interval of half-disturbed tranquillity to the sock and buskin. The green room might haply now become as arbitrary in its measures as the star chamber, were it not for the appearance of another Hampden in the cause of disenthralment. Mr. Henry Clifford, a barrister of anti-regal eminence, *pitted* himself against the above-mentioned lawyers, and advocated the cause of *OPism*. From the moment that such a sanction acceded to the popular side, the influx of opposition rose to flood tide, and the clamour was more violent than before. The hero was led captive, but his professional terrorism burst through the cearments of official infallibility, and the succeeding evening announced his victory amid the applauding party, who delighted in the echoes of his name.



On Thursday, the 26th of October, the commencement of the Westminster Sessions, the following Grand Jury, remarkable for their near residences to Covent Garden, was sworn in.

JAMES SUTTON, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden,	Gentleman.
Thomas Wilkinson, Charles-street, ditto, (1)	ditto.
Henry Robins, Covent Garden, (2)	ditto.
J. T. Barber, Southampton-street, ditto, (3)	ditto.
Thomas Field, Henrietta-street, ditto,	Wine Merchant.
Richard Mortimer, Charles-street, ditto, (4)	Gentleman.
John Howell, King-street, ditto, (5)	ditto.
William Buer, Chandos-street, ditto, (6)	ditto.
James Wood, ditto, ditto, (7)	ditto.
Edward Marter, Covent Garden, (8)	ditto.
Thomas Attwood, Henrietta-street, ditto, (9)	ditto.
William Bingley, Tavistock-street, ditto, (10)	ditto.
Robert Joy, Covent Garden,	Vintner.
Benjamin Lepard, James-street, ditto,	Stationer.
George Erck, Henrietta-street, ditto, (11)	Gentleman.
Robert Bentley, Bedford-street, ditto,	Laceman.
William Keene, James-street, ditto,	Tailor.
John George Halentz, Southampton-street, ditto.	ditto.
John Hummel, King-street, ditto,	Hosier.
Thomas Kennerly, Bedford-court, ditto,	Mercer.
G. S. Griffenhoffe, Covent Garden,	Laceman.
James Mason, Maiden-lane, ditto,	Carpenter.
John Bowley, Bridge-street, ditto,	Auctioneer.

(1) Formerly a Haberdasher, but retired from business. (2) Auctioneer.  
 (3) Miniature Painter and Agent. (4) Draughtsman. (5) Man's Mercer  
 and Tailor. (6) Butcher. (7) Whalebone Manufacturer. (8) Lottery  
 Office Keeper. (9) Woollen Draper. (10) Linen Draper.

These certainly may be gentlemen, and so may equally be all the others  
 who are designated by their respective trades. *11 Tailor*

The usual proclamation having been read, Mr. Mainwaring, the Chairman of the Sessions, addressed the jury to the following purport.

“ Gentlemen of the Grand Jury.

“Before you proceed to the discharge of that duty for which you have been summoned here, and are now sworn to execute, I think it is proper to make some observations to you upon a subject which, from its continuance, and the mischief which has taken place, has become of considerable importance to the community at large, as well as to some individuals who are more particularly interested, and to which your attention may be called, during the present sessions, as the Grand Jury for the City and Liberties of Westminster.

Gentlemen, it is a matter of public notoriety, that, ever since the opening of the New Theatre of Covent Garden, for the reception of the public, great disturbance, disorder, and breaches of the peace, have taken place; that it has been declared, by a large body of persons, assembled there for the express purpose, that, unless the proprietors, or those who have the management of the theatre, would admit the audience at the prices which were taken previously to the destruction of the late play-house by fire, they will not permit theatrical representations to be performed and exhibited, or, at least, will not suffer them to be heard, for insisting on the

old prices : that the most violent outrages have been committed, and a large body of the audience have been kept every night in a state of constant alarm and terror, by reason of demands, which, as it is said, are claimed as matters of right.

“Gentlemen, upon what ground such claim of right is founded, I know not; it is said, indeed, that every one, at a play-house, has a right to express his approbation or disapprobation; be it so : certainly, custom has given a sort of sanction to such a practice, and the audience has been in the habit of expressing its approbation or dislike to whatever is brought before it, by clapping of hands, or hissing, or some evident marks of applause or disapprobation, and this custom is always submitted to, and, perhaps, it is found to be the best or easiest way of expressing its sentiments upon such an occasion, as it prevents more of discussion and amplification which might otherwise take place.

“Gentlemen, this usage can, in no way, be applied to the claim now made, namely, admission to the theatre, at a particular price. As to the audience determining what the prices of admission to the different parts of the theatre shall be, and compelling the proprietors, who have risked their fortunes, and embarked in a hazardous undertaking, even supposing the house were unanimous, which I understand is by no means the case, it is a demand neither founded in law,

in equity, nor in justice: no act of parliament, no case, no dictum, fixing the prices can be found to sanction such a demand.

“Gentlemen, the law I take it is most clear, that they have no such right. The audience of a public theatre cannot be considered as a court of justice recognized by the law of the country: it has no legal means of enforcing its decrees, or compelling obedience to its orders. If it might settle the price of admission, what is there it might not do? Might it not settle, for example, the salaries of the performers, the expense of the dresses, the manner of lighting the house, and so on through the whole management of the theatre? and who is to say that what the audience of one evening declares right would not be rescinded and undone by that of the next? But, gentlemen, if there were such a right existing in the audience, a supposition in my opinion extremely absurd, if it did exist, it could not be maintained by riot and a breach of the peace; for, even just and lawful rights cannot be established by unlawful proceedings. By the law of this country, no man can be a witness in his own cause; no man, in his own case, can take the execution of the laws into his own hands, except in the single instance of self-defence. If he have a right to establish, or an injury to complain of, it must be done by means of legal proceedings, and not by the use of that dangerous

engine, a riotous mob, for any purpose whatever.

“Gentlemen, this question of right, (if it be a question,) as to the price of admission to a theatre, is not one for discussion in this court. We are not competent to decide upon it in this place, and, therefore, gentlemen, I cannot help cautioning you not to entangle yourselves and your judgment in the dispute respecting the price of admission. If it be thought unreasonably high; if it be considered that too much money has been laid out upon the building, and that the internal decorations are too costly, or whatever be the matter in dispute, it cannot be investigated by you in this court.

“But, gentlemen, if indictments be laid before you, charging particular persons with riotous proceedings, and with unlawfully assembling to disturb the peace and good order of the theatre, or with the commission of any unlawful acts, to the injury of the proprietors of the theatre, or of any other persons, these are matters for your serious consideration, and are properly cognizable before you in your capacity of jurors. Your’s, therefore, is a straight forward line, merely to examine witnesses on the indictments laid before you, and to determine whether the charges be sufficiently proved to call upon your return of the bills as true, in order that the accused party may be put upon his trial.

“Gentlemen, in common conversation, we all pretty well know how the terms, “riot,” “unlawfully assembling,” and other legal terms, are understood. But, as it is important, at this time, that you should have clear and distinct ideas of what constitutes this offence, I think it my duty to state the law upon the subject; and I chuse, in so doing, to adopt the language of a learned writer, who well understood the criminal law of this country, and who is often quoted in this, as well as in other, courts. I mean Mr. Serjeant Hawkins, in his Treatise on the Pleas of the Crown, under the head of Riot.

“He says, a riot is a tumultuous disturbance of the peace, by three persons, or more, assembling together, of their own authority, with intent mutually to assist one another, and afterwards actually executing the same in a violent and turbulent manner, to the terror of the people; whether the act intended were of itself lawful or unlawful. He says, too, wherever three persons, or more, use force and violence in the execution of any design whatever, wherein the law does not allow the use of such force, all who are concerned therein are rioters, and it is not only lawful but also commendable to assemble a competent number of people, in order, with force, to suppress them. He says, if a man, seeing others actually engaged in a riot, joins himself to and assists them, he is as much a rioter as if he had first as-

sembled with them for the same purpose. It is further laid down by him, that, if there are three or more persons joined in doing an act which is not in itself unlawful, such as removing a nuisance, which may be lawfully done in a peaceable manner, yet if it is unnecessarily done in a violent and tumultuous manner, to the alarm of his majesty's subjects, it is, in the consideration of the law, a riot; so careful is the law to prevent disturbance and breach of the public peace.

“This is clear and intelligible to every capacity, and is recognized and confirmed by a variety of authorities and cases on the subject.

“Gentlemen, as to an unlawful assembly, that is, where three or more persons get together to do an unlawful act, this assembling is an unlawful proceeding, and is punishable by fine and imprisonment, even though they separate without doing the act intended; and this mode of assembling together, for such purpose, is as much unlawful in a public theatre, as to the persons concerned in it, as it would be in any other place. The unlawful design creates the offence, and, therefore, the place is immaterial.

“Gentlemen, I am without information of what proceedings are to take place in this court, in consequence of the transactions which have occurred. Some persons have been committed, and, I understand, many more have been bound, un-

der recognizance, to answer for the offences charged against them.

“I have stated to you, gentlemen, what I conceive to be the law upon these extraordinary transactions, which have of late created so much dread and alarm. I can only say, if indictments should be laid before you, they will require your most serious consideration, which I doubt not you will give. You will do it, because it is a duty incumbent upon you, and upon us all, to endeavour at the preservation of peace and good order, and you will do it according to the solemn oath which you have just now taken.

“Gentlemen, I will not detain you longer, you will now be pleased to retire and deliberate upon the cases which will be brought before you.”

The reader shall be left to deduce his own observations on this oration, and make his application accordingly.

On the 27th, (the following day,) the court was unusually thronged, by persons anxious to learn the fate of those bills laid before the Grand Jury. A gentleman of the latter addressed the court, and begged to know if it were competent for them to find a true bill against one and not return against another defendant included in the same indictment. Mr. *Alley* said, he had so framed the indictments, that the jury might judge the case of each defendant separately. The



chairman concurred in this opinion, and the inquirer returned to communicate it to his fellow jurors.

The Grand Jury, being all impannelled *de vicineto*, that is from the neighbourhood of the place laid in the bills, were certainly more apt to intermix their prejudices and partialities in the trial of RIGHT. Though the old law was in favour of such a practice, yet, by the 24th Geo. II. c. 18, it is *only* required, that the Jury come *de corpore comitatús*, FROM THE BODY OF THE COUNTRY AT LARGE. Of the forty-one bills of indictment preferred, the following is the statement of their disposal.

Mary Austin and a man, (the only prisoners in custody,) were not indicted. The several persons against whom bills were found postponed their trials till the next sessions.

## FOUND.

Against George Baker.

M. Bryant.

John Brown.

—— Clack.

—— Turville.

—— Clumms.

—— Dwyer.

Charles Gurney.

W. Hillhouse.

W. H. Jones.

J. Johnson.

W. Lloyd.

## NOT FOUND.

Against John Black.

W. Blackburn.

—— Birnie.

—— Burslem.

—— Coats.

—— Corry.

—— Crisp.

—— Cheeks.

Samuel Dudfield.

—— Desmardyre.

—— Eyre.

J. Gooday.

## FOUND.

Against Alexander Ross.  
 ———— Scott.  
 S. F. Stallard.  
 ———— Curville.  
 T. Waugh.

## NOT FOUND.

Against ——— Hooper.  
 ——— Kenyon  
 ——— Pocock.  
 J. Rose.  
 James Ransom.  
 J. Ray.  
 ——— Rees.  
 ——— Savage.  
 ——— Soane.  
 Sellon Smith.  
 W. Smith.  
 ——— Vinoll.  
 James Wells.

The name of William Redgrove was returned by the Grand Jury, as not appearing when called. It is to be observed, that many captures were considered by the proprietors sufficient for the grounding of indictments. Pending their proceedings, the theatre was in some measure directed by the faction; but another alteration soon took place in the system of opposition;—after Mr. Clifford's accession, new spirits were diffused, and clamour again became predominant at the half price. It was now the fashion of each night to mob the offending newspapers, by groaning opposite the printing-offices, and to cheer the espousing prints which continued faithful to their advocacy. This street display of opposition was, however, extended to very improper length; and Mr. Kemble's dwelling-house was

assailed in the most indecorous and riotous manner. Even supposing that he were the trespasser throughout, yet it was an evident endangerment of the public peace to carry the question, or punishment of the trespass, into a scene where the atrocious propensities of ignorant and malicious persons would have an open scope. Some of the offenders were apprehended, and no doubt can attach to this question of committing such pseudo supporters of public right. A reward of one hundred pounds was offered by the magistracy for the apprehension of the principals. It is, however, unquestionable, that the offending party was not that which clamoured *within* the walls of the theatre. The nights on which Mr. Kemble's house was attacked were those of Saturday the 4th, and Monday the 6th, of November. Little damage was, however, done,—a few panes of glass only being broken, and the doors and windows covered with mud.

Mr. Mainwaring's charge to the Grand Jury of the Westminster sessions procured his name by no means an honourable mention among the placardists.

About the middle of November, an address, stated to be one intended to be delivered by the manager, appeared in the Times newspaper. More credit will attach to its authenticity, when, upon comparison, it will be found to tally exactly with the ultimate concessions of the pro-

prietors. Why it was not delivered at the time spoken of can only be accounted for by supposing that Mr. Attorney-General may, by this promised remuneration of the oppositions, induce the misguided proprietors to hold out with greater obstinacy. By that gentleman's advice, the system of prosecution, it is understood, was altered, and the offenders were all to be tried under a general indictment, for *conspiracy*.

The following is the copy of the intended address alluded to :

“ Ladies and Gentlemen,

“ I am authorised, by the proprietors and managers of this theatre, to address you in the language of submission, and to propose such conciliatory terms as they trust will secure the return of your favours, and tend to obliterate all past animosities.

“ 1st.—Upon the subject of *your displeasure*, the managers have no hesitation in confessing how sorry they are that any part of their conduct should seem to have deserved it; and if, in the moment of executing what they deemed it their duty to enforce, some improper examples have been pitched upon, and some cases of severity have been exercised to the injury of the individual, they repent of such precipitancy, and implore your pardon and forgiveness for it. Moreover they are willing, on the ground of atone-

ment, to remove all further prosecutions in the business.

“ 2ndly.—On the subject of annual private boxes, the managers are ready to admit the principle of giving up private advantage to public benefit; and, since it coincides with your will, in this particular instance, they will endeavour to conform to it as soon as possible; but, the engagements being made for the season, they hope you will permit their ratification till the close of it; after which period the number of private boxes shall be confined, as formerly, to the upper tiers within the extent of the orchestra.

“ 3dly.—Upon the subject of the prices of admission, the managers, anxious to remove the impression that an unfair advantage has been taken of an opportunity, when no rival theatre is in existence, will give way to the pressure of the moment; but, confident that the intention of the public does not go to the extent of a wish to destroy their legal claims and rights, they beg leave to wave only the exercise of them for the present, limiting their obedience to a more plausible opportunity when another new theatre is opened for competition. In the mean time, with the profoundest respect, they presume to solicit the returning favours of a generous and forgiving public, under whose patronage they will endeavour to carry on the concern at old prices.”

It is very possible that such was the intended

language of the proprietors ; but they never once thought of the effects created by the idea of competition, till their own merited disfavour with the public became a stimulus to the adventuring part of society. In the very beginning of the theatrical troubles, a plan for a subscription theatre was submitted to the public, and the best proof of its projects being plausible, was that scarcely a month elapsed from its being first set on foot when the books were closed, and the necessary subscriptions advertised as full. The proprietors feared not an early rival in old Drury, broken in finance, and, perhaps, willingly remaining unemulous, through a hope that the Covent-Garden system would take root. But, when a vigorous establishment menaced them with rivalry, and appeared even Herculean in the cradle, the proud *soi disant* National Theatre covered its lofty hopes. Mr. Kemble, it was reported, had given orders to his solicitor to dispose of his share in the concern, to the best advantage ; nay, his retirement altogether from the stage was spoken of. Another rumour prevailed, that, in consequence of a conversation, held on the subject between the Secretary of State and the Lord Chamberlain, the managers received a notification from the latter noble Lord, to the effect of requiring the close of the theatre, or a compliance with the public demands. Little credence was, however, given to either report.

A subscription had, for some time, been opened, to enable the persons labouring under theatrical prosecutions to meet the respective suits against them.

The different signatures to each item of subscription afford a strong specimen of the varied rancour which possessed the minds of the O. P. party. Great interest was excited by the approach of the Michaelmas term, at which period Mr. Clifford intended to bring to issue an action which he had entered against Mr. Brandon, the box-keeper of the theatre, for false imprisonment. Tremblingly alive to an affair which would be generally decisive of their cause, the O Pists awaited the event, but without any relaxation of effort to force a conclusion through their clamour in the theatre. The managerial bravos again appeared, and again cases of aggrivement were stated to be the result of their agency. Among the leaders of this respectable corps of terrorism, were Hewitson, of Battersea, and White, of Park-Street, Westminster, the former author of the "Blind Boy," and the latter in the employment of the theatre. The wife even of the first-named terrorist distinguished herself by the espousal of the proprietor's side, and *threw in a facer* or two in the face of common decency and sexual decorum.

To the credit of the *general* female company present, this lady was the only one guilty of no-

torious *poissarderie*. No exertions were made by the proprietors to restrain the attendance of any who would bawl for them; but every possible means were used to cramp the oppositionists. It will hereafter be read with astonishment, that, in an enlightened age and nation, as Mr. Kemble has allowed it to be, discretionary action should be disallowed in persons qualified by discretionary age and situation; for, not long after the opening of the campaign, an application was made by the proprietors to the directors of two great national concerns, requesting that they would prevent their clerks from going to the theatre. The reason given was, that these gentlemen added strength to the opposition of new prices. In one instance, that of the BANK, the request was undignifiedly acceded to; but, in that of the TREASURY, with becoming knowledge of mankind, it was rejected, upon the principle of non-interference with the concerns of their clerks out of doors. Similar applications were also made to private persons, and a young man, of the name of Dwyer, brother to a bookseller of that name, on Holborn-Hill, was, in consequence of such an application, dismissed from the service of Messrs. Cadell and Davies, booksellers, in the Strand.

Mr. Justice Grose, in the Court of King's Bench, on the 13th of November, seemed to oppose the popular sentiment, regarding the oppo-



sition, in a charge which he delivered to the Middlesex Grand Jury. This, however it might operate on the numbers, by no means affected the energies of the party.

Mr. Clifford's suit against Brandon underwent some preliminary agitation in the Common Pleas, on the 15th of the same month. Mr. Serjeant Sheppard moved the court for a rule to shew cause why the action brought by the plaintiff against his client, the defendant, should not be set aside on the three following grounds of pleading.

Firstly, That the theatre was duly licenced and authorized to represent comedies, tragedies, &c. and the managers to demand such prices as they should deem most expedient for the admission of an audience to different parts of their house.

Secondly, that the plaintiff, accompanied by three other persons, on the night stated, did, illegally, commit a trespass in the said theatre, for the purpose of obliging the managers to reduce their prices; for that, during the exhibition of the farce, the said persons did create a disturbance and riot, to the interruption of the performers, and the great annoyance of the peaceable persons there assembled to enjoy the amusements of the evening; and that the defendant, being a principal servant of the house, did, as he conceived to be his duty, give the plaintiff in charge to a constable, in order to restore and preserve



the peace of the house, and prevent the further progress of riot.

Thirdly, that the plaintiff did, on the same evening, instigate many other persons, by his example, to make disturbance and riot, and to interrupt the performers on the stage.

Sir James Mansfield readily granted the rule, as the usual mode of proceeding adopted in such cases. His lordship remarked upon what he understood to be the opinion of some learned council; "that it was lawful to pull the theatre to pieces, and even knock the performers on the head," merely with the view of expressing how essentially his lordship differed from such doctrine. He observed, that, if, instead of holding them to bail, the managers had brought actions against such as would be able to pay damages, the result would be very different from what was commonly supposed.

On the night of this day, a severe contest took place, at the theatre, between the police and the malcontents, in which a respectable man, of the name of Cowlan, received considerable injury, but not to the extent so injudiciously reported. A statement appeared, from some persons who had, on the same night, adjourned from the theatre to the Temple Coffee-House, in which it was declared, that this assault, on the above individual, was premeditated, as they con-

ceived from malicious expressions dropped on this occasion. It is now generally believed that this was not the case, and that the gentleman was only an unfortunate victim of the war-chance, which it is surprising was not attended with danger, nay fatality, to many more. It was certainly malicious to diffuse a report of murder, which might probably entail the effects of retributive execution, both by *mobile* and *administrative* law. On this principle, Mr. Winholt, who, for some time, held a chieftaincy among the O Pists, received a smart reprimand from the magistrate, for his indiscretionary mention of an unauthenticated fact.

Mr. Attorney General, on the 20th of November, moved the Court of King's Bench for a rule to shew cause why criminal procedures should not be instituted against Messrs. Clifford, Winholt, Scott, Savage, and Ridley, for a conspiracy against the property of the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, by attempts to compel the reduction of admission prices thereto. His motion was grounded on several affidavits, stating the attendance of the parties at the theatre, and the means they used for the before-mentioned purpose; as also the recognition of Mr. Clifford, by the audience, in quality of leader, and the address by which Mr. Clifford admitted that title. The Attorney General dwelt, rather sharply, on the

conduct of this gentleman in lending the vigour of professional sanction to such proceedings.

On the 28th, the Court of King's Bench was crowded to excess, by an expectant multitude, but the above rule being made absolute, through policy, the cause remained over till the ensuing term. In adopting this step, the managerial bar avoided furnishing their opponents with the system of defence necessary to be pursued. The day preceding this, eleven bills of indictment were examined, in the Crown-Office, and eight returned as true.

Notwithstanding such left-handed divinations, the spirit of O Pism still stalked abroad, and the Bow-street bailing-system was every night increased. A theatrical medal was struck to commemorate the era, and worn by several. Mr. Harris, senior, who returned from Bath much about this period, though considerably improved in health, seemed to suffer proportionate diminution of policy and good sense, when he declared that he would risk his entire fortune sooner than concede the points of contest. Personal violence to those who thwarted the dictatorial designs of the proprietors was again resorted to. Numerous cases of outrage, on persons of this description were every night complained of, at the public office, in Bow-street, and some respectable men became a coat *minus*, in their

wardrobe, through the ferocious *tearing* system of those *low* engendered battles. Those acts were still rendered more glaring, by the after conduct of the apprehending parties, who, in some instances, coolly replied, to the refutation of their charges, "*that if it was not that gentleman it was some other.*" But, when the aggrieved and innocently-insulted party applied for redress against those jesters with their feelings and liberty, the magistrates admitted the joke and refused the cognizance. If any thing could lead to the intemperate acts alluded to, rather unjustly by a certain law-lord, it would be this apparent stagnation in the stream of justice. If it may be allowed to speak comparatively of what is sacred and profane, the situation of the unfortunate O P ist resembled that of the expectant cripple, disabled by infirmity from participating in the benefits of the *troubled pool*: there is this difference, *angels did not trouble both.*

Such was now become the rage for O P ism, that every retail shop in the town made use of the symbolic initials, as a magnet to the custom of passers by. It was, for some time, rumoured that Mr. MASH, the Lord Chamberlain's secretary, had given notice of his lordship's positive orders to close the theatre, if the proprietors should not comply with the public mandate. Mr. Mash, however, soon contradicted this unwarranted

report; and, indeed, throughout, it was supposed, by the best informed on the subject, that no interference was even so much as spoken of by the proper controller of this department.

The bills of indictment, on the 27th of November, brought before the Crown-Office, Westminster, were disposed of in the following manner.

Those against the under-mentioned persons were found.

David Foster, 66, Basinghall-street, Merchant.

Owen Jones, 424, Strand, Shopman to Messrs. Donnage and Larkin, Hatters.

John Pain, 12, Devereux-court, no profession.

John Ford, 5, White-Hart-court, Castle-street, Leicester-square, Shoe Maker.

John Hobson, 2, America-square, Ship Owner.

George Hindle, 28, Chancery-lane, Auctioneer.

Thomas Jones, 5, Bowling-lane, Haberdasher.

Those preferred against the following persons were not found.

James Pitman, alias James Johnson, Leadenhall-market, Fishmonger.

John Tyler, 49, Crutched Friars, Fish Salesman.

John Brown, 21, Great Poland-street, and Croydon, Surrey, Gentleman.

William Tolley, George-street, Richmond, Saddler.

This, however, was all fist-fighting on the side

of the managerists, whose opponents awaited the coup-de-main promised by the *honest counsellor*, in the event of his cause proving successful.

To such a crisis had the affair now arrived, that the O P ists resolved to call forth all their energies, in a manner which should stamp confirmation upon their previous actions. Rattles and catcalls were thought insignificant weapons for the contest, and it was formally announced, that a decisive conflict, *à la fourchette*, should seal the destiny of the anti-tumbril party.

“In vino veritas” is the old adage, and to this the O P ists determined to adhere. Throughout the entire progress of the dispute the (all-but-self) reformers adopted precisely the same modes of action as the purifiers of parliament.

Committees, dinners, speeches, subscriptions, were the order of the day. The feast was, however, protracted till the trial of Clifford’s action should be determined; but the journal of nightly skirmishes, and the Bow-street proceedings, will furnish a pretty ample ground of proof, that the spirit of O P ism was not wholly evaporated, in consequence of temporary afflictions.

At length, the important 5th of December arrived, a day solemn in the annals of free agency, in dramatic disenchainment. To the hissers it was indeed a day,

“Lineâ albâ notandus.”

The trial of the *honest counsellor's* action, against Brandon, came on before Sir James Mansfield, and a special jury, in the court of Common Pleas. The plaintiff, Mr. Clifford, was understood to say, that, if there were an *impartial* man to be found in the Court of King's Bench, he should stand by its decision in preference, but, in failure, he resorted to this tribunal. The Jury was composed of the following gentlemen.

Stephen Pitt, Esq.	William Best.
William Day, Esq.	Thomas Ryans.
Thomas Rogers, Esq.	John Leyanson.
Edward Jennings, Esq.	George Reader.
George Scott, Esq.	Richard Norton.
Mark Cooke.	Thomas Greenway.

Not only the Court, but Westminster Hall was excessively crowded, at a very early hour in the morning. It is not necessary to say, of what interest the attending crowd was composed. Mr. Clifford himself was absent, being employed in the conduct of a case, in the Court of King's Bench. His counsel were Serjeants Best and Runnington and Messrs. Warren and Runnington; his solicitors, Messrs. Clarksons, of Essex-street. The counsel for the defendant were Serjeants Shepherd and Laws, with Mr. Gurney; his solicitor, Mr. Humphreys, of Barnard's Inn.

During the first hour, the time of the court



was occupied by the reading of the different pleadings on both sides. The several counts of the plaintiff's plea stated, in the usual dilated phraseology of forensic men, the assault committed, on the 31st of October, by defendant, on the body of the plaintiff, and the illegal and forcible detainer and imprisonment of his person, in the Bow-street office, for a considerable space of time. This plea stated the matter in several distinct counts of separate assaults, the plaintiff stating, that defendant, "on the same day, &c. again beat and ill-treated him, and other wrongs, &c."

The defendant commenced by a plea of abnegation and the general issue. In the next place, he rebutted the distinction of plaintiff's counts, making out different assaults, there being but one, as also with regard to similar pleading made in the matter of imprisonment, &c.

The defendant, justified by the statement of privileges attached to the theatre, namely, representation of various stage-pieces and considerations of admission in money from those visiting the said theatre. In further justification, he alleged the riotous and illegal means used by plaintiff, with divers others, on the day stated in the plea, for the purpose of compelling the proprietors to reduce their terms of admission in certain parts of said theatre. That, during a performance therein, on the night of the day

aforesaid, the plaintiff, with divers others, having annoyed the peace of the said theatre, defendant felt himself bound, by the duty of his service, to give the said plaintiff into the custody of Samuel Taunton, a constable; and that, in consequence, plaintiff was brought before James Read, Esq. at the public office, Bow-street, being the most convenient, and that the said plaintiff was, necessarily, there detained during the period of his examination.

The plaintiff's replication answered the first part of defendant's plea in the same general manner.

To the other justificatory parts, plaintiff replied, that defendant ought not, by reason of such allegations, to derive benefit therefrom; that the person described by defendant as a peace-officer was not such; and that the different trespasses, mentioned in the introductory plea, were committed in manner and form as by plaintiff therein stated; wherefore plaintiff prayed judgment and inquiry, &c.

Mr. Runnington opened the pleadings to the jury. The plaintiff laid his damages at one hundred pounds.

Mr. SERJEANT BEST addressed the court in behalf of Mr. Clifford. If this question were fairly met on the other side it would be one, in his opinion, of great importance. Of the issue he had no doubt, and the only question to be

considered was, the quantum of damages which his client should receive. The learned counsel here entered into a warm panegyric on the plaintiff. The defendant was in the employ of the Covent-Garden managers, and, perhaps, it would be better to make the cause one of trial between his client and those managers; in point of fact they were the real defendants. The learned counsel did not mean to contend, far from it, that conduct, however illegal on the part of those persons, should be resisted by riot. If the defendant's pleading were strictly proved, he could not object to their finding against his client. He was, however, confident they could not be proved.

If, in fact, the jury should find for the managers, in the case of a riot which they had themselves occasioned, the administration of justice would stand in a very unsatisfactory situation. From this dilemma they would, however, be relieved by proofs of more uproar and riot proceeding from the stage than from the auditory. His client had received considerable insult and indignity, and his dismissal by the magistrate, in the first instance, decided the case of wrongful imprisonment. In the cases of no riot at all existing, or, if any, that the plaintiff had no share therein, then it would lie with the jury to consider the damages, upon the principle of considering by what motives the managers were

actuated. That their capture of Mr. Clifford proceeded from personal malice he should show, and therefore he lamented that his client, through delicacy, had been so moderate in the sum which he laid. Even should that be given, he doubted not but it would be expended in supporting the injured rights of the public.

The learned counsel here expatiated upon the circumstances of the old and new Covent-Garden Theatre, and made some acrimonious remarks upon the address of the proprietors to the public.

He did not mean to confine the term of the public to the private box-renters, but to the great popular mass. He had himself attended the two-shilling gallery, on one of these nights of pretended riot, and, though of nervous habit, he felt no cause of alarm. He denied that the accommodation of persons in this part of the house was consulted: for the purposes of seeing, the assistance of a telescope was, in fact, necessary. This was caused by the construction of the private boxes. His learned friends on the other side might call him as a witness on the subject if they pleased.

The obtrusion of their address on the public could be considered in no other view than that of giving that liberty of opinion to the public, which should either incline them to favour or to disapprove their conduct. Under every other circumstance it would be mockery and insult. It was in

consequence of this appeal that the public assembled in the theatre to render that decision which was there rejected, and which they candidly expressed. The private boxes alone, he insisted, would render, in their revenue, the proprietors independent of advance in other parts of the house: but the learned counsel disapproved of their erection in toto. They would not be appropriated, as was said, to the wives of noble personages, but to those whose tenure was more flitting and more frail. The circumstance of the king's box being open to those who should chuse to pay for admission, on nights not honoured by the royal presence, was a circumstance of all others most strongly demonstrative, that there was no such exclusive right of seats as that attempted to be set up. This conduct was an obvious breach of patent, (and the learned counsel doubted if they were able to shew any); it was a wrong, and that wrong was the cause of disturbance. He would not justify this effect; but when the spirit of resistance to innovation ceased to exist in the bosoms of Englishmen, adieu to the preservation of their liberties.

The noise which took place at the theatre was not, however, to be considered riot. In order to carry that meaning, it should be attended either with immediate or threatened violence. Not a chandelier was broken; and if the managers could prove such damage, or any done to their

property, he would allow them to call it a riot. From the long prevalence of this noise, his client, after having dined, on the day mentioned in the pleadings, with Mr. Bosville, was induced, by Mr. Hipkins, to go to the theatre, for the purpose of seeing what passed. They did go to the pit, and though there was a noise, yet it was harmless, and uncreative of alarm. There were a number of O P hats and Mr. Clifford wore those letters in his hat. The learned serjeant might possibly have hissed, but, considering his situation in life, he should not have worn that insignia. Mr. Clifford, however, held no conversation with any but the gentleman who accompanied him. That gentleman would prove, that Mr. C. was as quiet and peaceable as any man in the house. What was sworn in other places, the learned serjeant could shew to be gross and abominable perjury. The letters which Mr. Clifford wore could not alone constitute him a rioter; if they did, the wearing of election-ribbons was to be construed into riot. If the ensign were a badge to distinguish, on a precedented plan of mischief, then indeed the case of riot might be made real.

The jury would be told, by respectable evidence, that no concerted plan was formed by the plaintiff before he got to the theatre; afterwards it could not be, for he conversed with no person about him, save the person who fixed the letters

O P into his hat ; and that conversation would be proved to be an interference in favour of the public peace.

The learned serjeant insisted that his client was not apprehended, even if he were so rioting, *flagrante delicto*, which was the time, by law, allowed for apprehension in that case. He was taken without a warrant, which could not legally be done, and by a private person, contrary to law. Neither Mr. Brandon nor Taunton were constables. A private person, during a riot, may seize the offending party, but after it is over, his authority, by interference, is at an end. Mr. Clifford had left the theatre, and passed the pit avenue, when he was apprehended, without a warrant, therefore his apprehension was illegal ; and if he had made resistance, the apprehending party would have to answer for the blood which might be spilt. The play was over, and Mr. C. departing quietly, being actually out of the house, when Brandon cried out, " That is Clifford, take him." Taunton replied, " He has been doing nothing, I have watched him ; he has been very peaceable all night." Brandon rejoined, " Never mind,—that's Clifford, take him, d——n your eyes." Thus it was, because he was Mr. Clifford, that he must be taken. He could not conjecture on what grounds his client should be singled out. Under all the disagreeable circumstances of a professional man's appearance there, Mr. Clifford

was dragged to the Bow-Street office, for an outrage against the law. Mr. Brandon had other quarry in view, and did not immediately come into the office. Mr. Read's conduct, on this occasion, rendered him perfectly a witness for Mr. Clifford. Mr. Brandon, having arrived, makes a flippant charge of riot. He is desired to swear to it by Mr. Clifford, who warned him of the consequences. Mr. Brandon, when he took the book, would not make further charge than that plaintiff wore the letters O P which he did not at all deny. Mr. Read asked whether there was any thing else, and being informed there was not, said, "I discharge Mr. Clifford."

If then it is pretended that plaintiff was a rioter, Mr. Brandon himself should disprove it. The learned serjeant again denied that the theatre was opened under a legal patent.

After a conclusive, personative, and warm appeal to the gentlemanly feelings of the jury; which he was happy to see was special, the learned counsel terminated an able and eloquent harangue.

ROBERT LEE HIPKINS, Esq. was sworn, and underwent a tedious direct and cross examination. The general terms of his testimony proved the putting of the O P into Mr. Clifford's hat, by some person unknown to him, the peaceable demeanour of Mr. Clifford, and his being apprehended *after* quitting the house. Many un-



necessary questions burthened the latter point of evidence, and it was clear that the place meant by Mr. Hipkins, as out of the theatre, was the steps ascending to the money-bar, previous to entering the internal avenue to the pit. He described it as a *chevaux de frize*, by which term he designated the bar where the constables stand, to prevent confusion in entrance. If they were descending those steps, as witness said, they were exactly out of the *theatre*. This gentleman did not perceive any thing going forward on that night like violence. It came out that Mr. Clifford's hat was taken off by a stranger, and the letters O P put therein. Being asked whether there was harm in wearing them, Mr. C. replied there was not. Upon Mr. C's entrance, way was made for him, till he seated himself in the centre of the pit.

This witness went, in company with Mr. Clifford, to the theatre, at the request of the latter. Upon interrogation as to that point, he said, that, though the pit was full when they entered, yet that the people there made respectful way for them, till they came to the centre, and greeted Mr. Clifford by the title of the honest counsellor.

CHRISTOPHER ELWIN was next sworn, and the general but of his testimony went to confirm the peaceable demeanour of the plaintiff while in the theatre. The place where he was arrested,

witness said, was the centre door of the pit entrance, between the king's and the prince's side on the lobby, surrounding the pit.

The other evidence adduced for the plaintiff were Mr. Bone, bookseller, Mr. T. Fisher, attorney's clerk, (who stated that Mr. Clifford advised a person against the springing of a rattle,) Joseph Jolly, William Harris, and William Philpot. Their examination afforded nothing material in addition to former testimony.

Mr. Serjeant Shepherd addressed the jury on behalf of the defendant. Mr. Brandon, he said, was a servant of the managers, and, as such, felt bound in duty to the conduct which was now matter of crimination against him. The learned Serjeant wished strongly to impress the necessity of legal explanation coming from the presiding judge, and not varying according to the different opinions of gentlemen, at different periods, summoned to the jury-box. He trusted that those gentlemen, whom he now had the honour to address, would not suffer any preconceived opinion of their own to defeat the construction of the law.

The speech of his learned friend, he was sorry to say, was directed to prejudices which had for weeks degraded and disgraced the characters of some persons, who, in other respects, may be honourable members of society. He felt sorry that, in what fell from his learned brother, on the

subject of Covent Garden Theatre, he should have mentioned extortion and tyranny in such a manner as may leave dangerous impressions on those who thronged the court, and may induce them to suppose, that they should be the self-constituted judges of such conduct; and that, having so presumed, they had a right to the execution of their own sentence, by any depredations they should think proper to commit. God forbid that such a precedent should rule the general practice in the country, and that the law should be stripped of its wise and provident ministration.

He lamented much that a person of Mr. Clifford's great endowments should be a participator in such disgraceful instigations to riot and tumult. Much more lamentable it was, however, that the misguided persons should be led to suppose their acts to be legal, as having the countenance of the plaintiff, considered both as a man of talents and as a lawyer. It was no other power than Mr. Clifford's own free will which subjected him to the notice of Mr. Brandon; and surely, in this instance, Mr. Brandon acted consistently, as that person, of all others, was the fittest object of apprehension, who suffered himself to be the index of the party.

The question of trial turned on no point but that of right to the disturbance of persons embarking their property in such a concern as the theatre was;—in fact, if the persons claiming a

right to correct what was termed extortion on the part of the managers wished to reduce the price of admission from seven shillings to sixpence, they had as much right to do so as they would have in reducing it to six shillings. When a right becomes vested by law, no matter whether the decision upon that right be founded in justice or otherwise.

With regard to the private boxes, the present was neither the time nor the mode of trying that question. If it were so, from the division of opinion, in the public mind, on that subject, equal assertions of right to support or oppose them would be made. Those self-created bodies would turn the question out of the decision by law; for that, by riot and personal conflict, trial by battle, without any of its ceremonies, would be again revived in this country. If the managers were acting wrong, the law was open for repressing them. Their patent may be repealed by a *scire facias* proceeding, if the abuse complained of were alleged against them, and it were proved to be an infringement of the public.

(Sir James Mansfield said the question in a case of *scire facias* to be tried, would, in such an instance, be whether they abused the patent or complied with its express or implied conditions. Mr. Arkwright's patent, for example, was one case, and there were many others of modern times.)

Mr. Serjeant Shepherd, in continuation, denied the right of individuals begging the question of abuse, and so taking the redress of it into their own hands. The theatre was public, and if the patent, so much doubted, were desired to be seen, those of the side opposite had access to it, at the patent-enrolment office, in Chancery-lane, they may even have an official copy of it for any purposes they please. This being the state of the case, the question was, whether a riot took place in the said theatre, and whether the plaintiff did not promote it by his conduct.

With regard to intentions, the learned serjeant said, that, if a person acted so as that necessary consequences must ensue, it was to be presumed he had the intention of doing what the act denoted.

After going into the whole of the evidence, he insisted that, notwithstanding the ignorant supposition of some, in regard to legitimate expression of disapproval, &c. there was a riot in the theatre for the purposes before spoken of. Though Mr. Clifford's mouth might have been sealed up, yet it was well known that a silent leader would do as much mischief as an active one. Mr. C. wore the letters O. P. and were it common sense to suppose that, by so doing, he did not mean to demand the restoration of what formed the ground of the tumult?

The ensign in the hat was an important thing.

In the time of Lord George Gordon's riot, in 1780, the blue cockade was the ensign, and convicted numbers, who merely stood by, without the commission of, or aid in, any actual violence. But, as the honest counsellor had given advice in one point about the springing of a rattle, why not give it in another?

The remaining question was, whether Mr. Brandon had a right to take up the plaintiff. With all their anxiety for that circumstance, it would appear that Mr. Clifford was, at any rate, within the walls of the theatre at the time of his arrest. He would put a case of supposition, that riot of a worse kind occurred, and it were thought necessary to take the rioters, and prevent them from escaping; and that, for this purpose, the pit-door were closed. Would any one say, that, because one of the rioters had got beyond it, he was not guilty and liable to be taken?

In such an action as the present, it was not to be considered what was the opinion of the justice before whom the person had been brought. Mr. Read thought there was no foundation for the charge, but he, (the learned serjeant) if he had seen the circumstances, should have said the same thing as Mr. Brandon had alleged. The learned serjeant could not help saying, that the worthy magistrate had acted wrong in refusing the charge. The person (Taunton) to whose custody the

plaintiff had been committed, attended as a peace officer, as was proved.

The cause was of great importance to the public justice of the country, and the learned counsel hoped that the verdict would set straight the heads which, on this subject, had been turned awry.

After some interchange of various opinions, between Mr. Serjeant Best and Sir James Mansfield, the latter made a general summary of the evidence, which he directed to the jury. In his lordship's entire address, there was little difference from that of the counsel for the defendant. It was a complete advocacy of the managerial interests, directly upon the same grounds. In the points respecting the legality of the defendant's acts, his lordship was of the same opinion with the learned serjeant who preceded him. His lordship, in case of a return for the plaintiff, requested the jury to say whether it were on the ground of Mr. Clifford not being concerned in the riot, or of his not being apprehended till he were out of the theatre, &c.

After the jury retired, Sir James Mansfield desired to impress on those who might think themselves qualified to act in the manner, hitherto, evident, that, notwithstanding the delusion they might lie under from Mr. Serjeant Best's observations, they would be subjected to very severe punishment.

Mr. Serjeant Best explained himself, and wished that the managers had acted so as that a jury might decide upon the whole of their conduct.

THE JURY RETURNED WITH A VERDICT FOR THE PLAINTIFF, — DAMAGES FIVE POUNDS. (Here there was a loud acclamation from the people assembled in the court.)

The foreman of the jury replied to his lordship's former query, and said, that being unanimous on the subject of Mr. Clifford's illegal apprehension, they did not decisively discern the other point of his implication in the riot.

The learned judge felt hurt at the matter being left as equivocal as ever, and apprehended that the dangerous delusion already gone forth, might, in consequence of this sort of decision, still continue.

Mr. Kemble, who attended in Westminster-Hall, but could not possibly obtain admittance to the court, by reason of the crowd, met with salutations of no very agreeable nature. It may fairly be presumed, that such a triumph did not fail to invigorate the opposition.

#### O P DINNER.

On Tuesday, 14th December, a very numerous party of persons, styling themselves "Enemies to managerial insolence and oppression," dined together at the Crown and Anchor Tavern.



Mr. Clifford, the barrister, took the chair; and, immediately after dinner, gave "The King," which was drank with the utmost applause.

Mr. Clifford then informed the company that, in consequence of the situation to which they had the kindness to elect him, he had received a message from Mr. Kemble which terminated in an interview. Mr. Kemble had, in words and manner, expressed his disposition to conciliate, as far as he should be authorized (*plaudits*). As Mr. K. had signified his desire of being permitted to attend that meeting, in order to deliver his sentiments therein, it might be more proper to postpone the particulars of the conversation which took place at that interview. Mr. Kemble was now waiting in the house; and, provided he received assurances of their forbearing from incivilities, he (Mr. Clifford) should be happy to introduce him.

The applause of the auditory manifested their wish to comply with this suggestion.

Though it had been partially agreed upon to receive Mr. Kemble with silence, yet, upon his entrance, he was greeted with considerable applause. A short time after he had seated himself, at the right hand of Mr. Clifford, a number of strangers entered the orchestra of the room, but were soon compelled to retire.

The Chairman now rose again to submit the circumstances of the interview he had already

mentioned. He stated that Mr. Kemble appeared then very ready to comply with the public wish, as far as laid within his power. Before the present meeting, there was some difficulty in coming to an understanding; but, when Mr. K. learned that the dinner was set on foot for the purpose of considering the points in dispute, he wished to be present, as he recognized in that company a body of men from whom he hoped to obtain a precise knowledge of the terms to be agreed upon between the managers and the public (*applause*).

In the course of the conversation which Mr. Clifford had held with Mr. Kemble he gave it as his opinion, that the prices were a mere secondary question; and that the great points on which the public felt sore were—the appearance of Magistrates with the Riot-Act, and the violent prevention of expressing their opinion, by the introduction of police-officers and hirelings (*applause*). To this Mr. Kemble had answered, that as to the first point it was the act of the magistrates themselves, and that he heard nothing of it till the next day. Upon this species of interference he was ready to make every reparation in his power.

The other topics, upon which their conversation turned, were the private boxes and the new prices. Mr. Clifford had observed, with respect to the former, that the public entertained an opinion of these being, in time, converted to purposes militant

against the morality of the country. Mr. Kemble had asked him whether the public would be satisfied if the private tier of boxes were done away, so far as reducing them to the number in the Old Theatre. Mr. C. had said that, for his own part, he was contented with such an arrangement, and was ready to submit it to the meeting.

[Here a considerable tumult arose, with the cries of "No, no; let the private boxes be as they were before Mr. Kemble came to the Theatre.]

Mr. Clifford, in continuation, said, that, though out of doors he had been styled the leader of mobs, he never presumed upon his influencing the public either on this or on any other question. He considered it as his duty to state to the meeting, over which he had the honour to preside, the substance of those propositions which had been made. As to the prices, he was well assured, it was not their wish that the managers should suffer an injury (cries of no, no). It had been said of John Bull, "that though often wrong-headed he was never wrong-hearted." He hoped this character would be manifested by an accommodation of differences, mutually advantageous to the public and to the proprietors. Conceiving, as he should, any incivility offered to Mr. Kemble a want of kindness to himself, he hoped when that gentleman should address them, he would be heard with attention.

A person, whose name was not understood, but

who it is since said is Mr. Fildes, of Lamb's-Conduit-street, stood up and said, that the public would never be satisfied with any thing short of a public apology from the managers, and the dismissal of Brandon: observations which seemed pretty generally assented to.

The Chairman, having spoken with Mr. Kemble, announced, to the meeting, that there was no objection to the apology; but that, without consulting the remaining proprietors, the other proposition could not be sanctioned by Mr. Kemble.

After some confusion, it was agreed that the Subscription-Committee should draw up such propositions as should appear necessary to be presented, on the part of the public, by Mr. Kemble, to the proprietors.

The committee having retired for this purpose, an excellent song was sung, and the following toasts were drank:—

“The liberty of the subject.”

“The antient and indisputable right of the pit.”

“The stage.”

Upon the return of the committee, the chairman rose to state the propositions, which were—

1st. The private boxes shall be reduced to the same situation as they were in 1802 (loud applause and unanimous assent).

2nd. With regard to prices, that of the pit should return to what it was, 3*s.* 6*d.* but that of the boxes should be continued at 7*s.*

[Very few hands appeared for the affirmative, and when the negative was put a sort of O P dance took place, which rather emphatically answered the question.]

3rd. An apology must be made to the public, and Mr. Brandon must be dismissed (loudly acclaimed).

4th. That all actions at law, and prosecutions, shall be at an end on both sides (received with applauses).

Mr. KEMBLE then rose and said it should be his task to lay, immediately, before the proprietors those propositions acceded to by the meeting. From the bottom of his heart, he declared, he wished for a definitive reconciliation between the public and the proprietors of the theatre. (*applause*). Having now ascertained the sentiments of the company he should withdraw, in order that there might be time to prepare for publication, in the papers of the ensuing day, such propositions, from the proprietors, as he trusted would restore the harmony he so much desired.

This short address was well received, and, his health having been drank, Mr. Kemble returned thanks and retired.

The "*stirrup cup*" being proposed for the chairman's health; —

Mr. Clifford was immediately "*on his hobby*," and having modestly reviewed the state of his

nerves declared them inadequate to the return of his grateful feeling upon this occasion, however strong they might be where tyranny, in any shape, were to require their exertion. The learned gentleman retorted the attacks made upon him out of doors, particularly, by Mr. Jacks, in the Common Council. The mention of his name was incidental to the introduction of *contracts*; upon which topic Mr. C. seemed pleased to have the 'vantage ground of Mr. Jacks, as to *purity* of politics. He concluded by returning thanks to the company for the honour they had conferred upon him.

On the next day, Dec. 13, the following APOLOGY, from the proprietors, appeared, at the end of all their play-bills, and in the newspaper advertisements, together with a declaration of the change in the pit price of admission:

“At the end of the present season, that part of the front boxes which is now occupied by annual boxes will be restored to the use of the public, as it was in the old theatre. The proprietors beg leave to say how sincerely they lament and how sorry they are for any *irregularities* that may have taken place during the late unhappy disputes; and, that no trace or recollection of past differences may be left, they will immediately give directions for stopping all legal proceedings, on their parts, to which the late circumstances compelled them, reluctantly, to have

recourse. The proprietors most respectfully rely on the protection of a liberal and enlightened public, and humbly hope their attention may now be employed solely in the producing of such entertainments as may be worthy of a British audience."

Mr. Kemble made his appearance, in character, on this night, for the second time since the opening of the theatre. He formally announced the *retirement* of Mr. Brandon from his office of box-keeper, and apologized for the introduction of improper persons during the late contest, with a promise to prevent its recurrence in future. The 15th December witnessed THE DEFINITIVE TREATY OF PEACE.

We cannot help thinking that Mr. Brandon has been unfairly used. He was merely the agent of the proprietors, on whom alone the public displeasure should be visited. As the proprietors have been forgiven the deputy ought not to be excluded from the benefit of the amnesty. We could cite other cases of recorded riot in a theatre, (as it is the fashion to term every opposition to dramatic nabobs,) but we shall content ourselves with the following. It forms a striking similarity between the *magisterial* department of 1749 and 1809.

*Account of the contest, in 1749, at the Haymarket theatre, upon the attempted introduction of French actors, at a period when the English ones were actually in want of bread, the former acting too as per advertisement, by authority, in a time when the same theatre and that of Goodman's Fields had been shut up on the national performers. From Victor's History of the Stage.*

People went early to the theatre, as a crowded house was certain. I was there, in the centre of the pit, where I soon perceived that we were visited by two Westminster justices, Deveil and Manning. The leaders, who had the conduct of the opposition, were known to be there, one of whom called aloud for the song in praise of English roast beef, which was accordingly sung in the gallery, by a person prepared for that purpose, and the whole house, besides joining in the chorus, saluted the close with three huzzas. This Justice Deveil was pleased to say was a riot, upon which disputes commenced directly, which were carried on with some degree of decency on both sides. The justice first informed us, that he was come there as a magistrate to maintain the king's authority; that Colonel Pulteney, with



a full company of the guards, was without, to support him in the execution of his office, and that it was the king's command the play should be acted, and that the obstructing it was opposing the king's authority; and if that were done he must read the proclamation, after which, all offenders would be secured by the guards in waiting directly. To all these most arbitrary threatenings, and the abuse of his majesty's name, the reply was in the following effect: That the audience had a legal right to shew their dislike to any play, or actors; that the judicature of the pit had been acknowledged and acquiesced to time immemorial; and, as the present set of actors were to take their fate from the public, they were free to receive them as they pleased. By this time, the hour of six drew near. The French and Spanish ambassadors, with their ladies, the late Lord and Lady Gage, and Sir Thomas Robinson, a commissioner of the excise, all appeared in the stage-box together. At that instant the curtain drew up, and discovered the actors standing between two files of grenadiers, with their bayonets fixed, and resting upon their firelocks. At this, the whole pit rose and unanimously turned to the justices, who sat in the middle of it, to demand the reason of such arbitrary proceedings. The justices either knew nothing of the soldiers being placed there, or else thought it safest to declare so. At

that declaration, they demanded of Justice Deveil (who had owned himself the commanding officer in the affair) to order them off the stage, he did so immediately, and they disappeared. Then began the serenade; *not only catcalls, but all the various portable instruments that could make a disagreeable noise* were brought upon this occasion, and were continually *tuning* in all parts of the house; an attempt at speaking was ridiculous; the actors retired; and they opened with a grand dance of twelve men and twelve women; but even that was prepared for, and they were directly saluted with a bushel or two of peas, which made their capering unsafe. After this, they attempted to open the comedy; but, had the actor a voice of thunder, it would have been lost in the confused strains from a thousand various instruments. Here, at the waving of Deveil's hat, all were silent, and (standing up on his seat) he made a proposal to the house, to this effect: That, if they persisted in the opposition, he must read the proclamation; that, if they would permit the play to go on, and be acted through that night, he would promise, on his honour, to lay their dislikes and resentments before the king, and he doubted not but a speedy end would be put to their acting. The answer to this proposal was very short and very expressive. "No treaties; No treaties." At this, the justice called for candles, to read the pro-

clamation, and ordered the guards to be in readiness; but a gentleman seized Mr. Deveil's hand, stretched out for the candle, and begged of him to consider of what he was going to do, for his own sake, for our's, for the king's; that he saw the unanimous resolution of the house, and that the appearance of soldiers in the pit would throw us all into a tumult, and must end with the lives of many. This earnest remonstrance made the justice turn pale and passive. At this pause, the actors made a second attempt to go on, and the uproar revived, which continuing some time, the Ambassadors and their ladies left the box, which occasioned an universal huzza from the whole house; and, after calling for some time for the curtain, down it fell."

"The glorious independent spirit of a British audience was perhaps never exerted to better purpose nor in a better cause than the above; may that august tribunal, authors and actors, ever remain the same! Jealous of its prerogative and impatient of contempt, may it continue to raise merit and diffidence from the ignoble situations too frequently allotted them by envy, prejudice, or ignorance."

It would be unfair to conclude this sketch of the general proceedings without mention of an *honourable* sort of tyranny attempted to be practised by the proprietors on a fellow-sufferer, in that conflagration which proved fatal to so many.

Among the persons damaged by the destruction of the houses in Bow-Street, situate where the front of the present theatre stands, was a man named Donne, an Hibernian by birth, by humour, and by feeling; he kept a public room, for the purposes of entertainment, in one of those houses. His tenure was by lease, and the term was unexpired. Through some oversight in the proprietors, his claim was never dreamt of till he applied, soon after the laying of the foundation, for a remunerative sum of money. He was refused, and defied to the process of the law. In consequence of this he sued for and obtained an ejectment against the proprietors. The walls of the theatre had now risen pretty high, and it was thought, by those gentlemen, high time to look into the nature of Mr. Donne's claim. This industrious man applied himself sedulously to work, and soon cleared a passage through the wooden paling to that part where his premises laid. Hither he had arranged vast quantities of good brown stout, which he sold, in his former capacity, to the numerous visitors attracted by the novel occurrence and the rarity of its humour. At length the managers submitted to the claimants original demand, viz. £700. which he refused; the Sybilline method of bargain was resorted to by the proprietors, and met in as Sybilline a way by the eccentric humorist with whom they had to deal. Offer succeeded offer, and was succes-

sively rejected, till at last the proprietors were forced to pay down FIVE THOUSAND POUNDS by way of compensation.

Does this sum form any part of their alleged *outstanding debts*? Or shall it be charged under the head of purchasing the copy-right of "THE AUCTIONEER," a comedy?

We have thus brought to a conclusion the comprehensive view of a dramatic contest, unequalled in the history of the stage. May it furnish a profitable lesson.

early period, till at last the paper was  
 found to be much less perfect for the  
 first of composition.  
 This was soon taken out of the shop  
 and was sold for the best of the  
 kind of paper in the shop of the  
 printer, a comedy.  
 It was the first of a certain kind  
 and was the first of a certain kind  
 equal to the history of the city. They  
 found a profitable trade.

The first of a certain kind  
 and was the first of a certain kind  
 equal to the history of the city. They  
 found a profitable trade.

THE  
**COVENT GARDEN JOURNAL.**

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“ Nulla recordanti lux est ingrata gravisq :  
Nulla fuit cujus non meminisse velit.”

MART.

No days remembrance shall O. P. regret,  
Nor wish one hour at Bow-Street to forget.

ANON.

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**FIRST NIGHT, September 18.**

AT four o'clock, every avenue to the house was besieged by numerous crowds, manifesting the most eager impatience for the opening of the doors. In front of the Bow-Street arcade, the blockading party determined on a coup-de-main, and actually stormed and carried, by escalade, the iron railing which separated them from an approximation to the land of promise. Great con-

fusion ensued, in consequence of confining the admission of the countless pit-visitors to one entrance, that of Bedford-avenue; the other, north of Bow-Street portico, being injudiciously closed. Providentially, however, no material injury was sustained by any individual; and even among the first who gained the area of the pit was a female, the only one in that part of the house, who, for the night, relieved the eye from the gloom of masculine array, by the contrast of her gossamer drapery.

The interior of the house was brilliantly lighted up, and served, most impressively, to display the beauteous order of the edifice raised by the creative powers of the architect from a late dismal chaos. The groups of admiring spectators, as they entered, instinctively burst into the warmest expressions of applause, and, for some time, no sentiment obtruded but that of self-complacency and the satisfaction arising from novel enjoyment. Before six, the house was overflowing full; and yet at least three times the number of those admitted remained in the entrances and lobbies, making vain endeavours to obtain farther entrance. In the boxes, some of the fine mahogany folding doors were broken, and a few lamps in the passages shared the same fate.

His Royal Highness the Duke of York was noticed by the external mob, as he alighted from his carriage, which was private, and his ears were



grated by the exclamations of "Dukey," "My Darling," &c. Many personages of distinction, exclusively male, honoured the theatre with their presence.

Soon as the wandering eye was sated with observation, and the charms of immediate novelty were dissipated, it was easy to perceive "the brooding of the storm." It would have been a wise and politic arrangement to keep the audience, from the time of entrance, in good humour at least, by the soothing strains of the orchestra. Much indignation was evinced at the non-compliance of Apollo's sons with the strenuous demands of the auditory for their favourite anthem of "God Save the King." After a most ungracious delay, and unassisted by the vocal band, the fiddles were put in requisition, but their sounds were lost in the loud and repeated calls of "Song." At length the curtain drew up, and exhibited the whole "corps-de-voix," with whose exertions the audience combined their own, and gave the grandest effect to this sublime and loyal air. "Rule Britannia" succeeded, under the advantage of the same full chorus. The drop-scene, which was much admired, was the sole partition between tranquillity and tumult. Its removal was tremblingly anticipated, and apprehension was fearfully realized when it drew up.

Mr. Kemble now made his appearance in the costume of Macbeth, and, amid volleys of hissing,

hooting, groans, and catcalls, seemed as though he meant to speak a \* steril and pointless address, announced for the occasion. Whether he did so or not, it was impossible to discern. His attitudes were imploring, but in vain. Cries of "No imposition,"—"No Catalani:" and, for the first time, the symbolic watch-word of "Old prices," resounded in alarming unison through the house, and obliged him to desist.

The play proceeded in pantomime; not a word was heard, save now and then the deeply modulated tones of the bewitching Siddons. On her entrance she seemed disturbed by the clamour; but in the progressive stages of her action, she went through her part with wonderful composure. Kemble appeared greatly agitated, yet in no instance did his trouble interrupt him in carrying on the "cunning of the scene:" Perhaps a finer dumb shew was never witnessed. In the scene where C. Kemble, as Macduff, triumphs over the fallen usurper, the audience took considerable delight. Many cried out, "Well done, kill him, Charley," and exulted in the ideal pangs of the dying Macbeth.

The scenery was particularly fine, and the dresses superb. The regalia of Macbeth are said to have cost 500 guineas; and Mrs. Siddons's dress is reported to have been an accurate copy of

\* Vide Appendix.

a bridal suit worn by the unfortunate Queen of Scots. The performances of the evening closed with the entertainment of the "Quaker," who was as dumb as though "the shout did not move him." The whole was over before ten o'clock.

After the curtain dropt, the audience kept their seats, in expectation of the managers coming forward. They were loudly called for, yet did not condescend to appear. However, two or three new *actors* presented themselves in the persons of respectable magistrates, with a dramatic entertainment, called the "Riot-Act." Notwithstanding a pressing recommendation, it was loudly and meritedly *damned*. No violence was committed, which could warrant this mode of proceeding. The only excess in which the spectators indulged was a noisy disapproval of, what they conceived to be, unjustifiable innovations on their prescriptive rights; they continued clamorous even after midnight. There was a complete rivalry between the public and the managers, in exhaustion of patience.

When Mr. Kemble made his first appearance to speak the address, a paper was handed to him from the pit; he glanced at it, and, as it is supposed, found it not to be friendly, for he blushed, and huddled it into his pocket. This was all that happened in the paper way. The audience singled him out as the object of their peculiar disapprobation, and, in the entire second act, stood up

with their backs turned on him. Indeed, through the whole play, they kept a standing position on the benches, with their hats on. A candle was thrown at Mr. *Liston*, during the performance of the Quaker.

When the magistrates appeared, the indignant cries of "No police in a theatre" induced those ill-advised men to make their congés, and retire. Constables attempted to clear the pit and galleries; in the former they met with opposition, and evasion in the latter; the tenants of the upper gallery dropping themselves quietly into the under.

By degrees, the uproar subsided into the loyal effusion of "God Save the King," when those who remained retired, and the house was cleared at half-past twelve.

Upon the grand contest, the "Times" newspaper has the following remarks:—"It was a noble sight to see so much just indignation in the public mind, and we could not help thinking, as Mr. Kemble and Mrs. Siddons stood on the stage, carrying each £500 in clothes upon their backs, that it was to feed this vanity, and to pay an Italian singer, that the public were screwed. They, however, resented the imposition last night as became them; and the only resource they now have is, as the proprietors of the theatre take no notice of them, that they take no notice of the proprietors of the theatre. Let the company play to empty benches; let the public agree

to desert the theatre, and we shall see which can do without the other the longest. The proprietors must come down; they are over-shooting their mark; and they had better gracefully give up what, in the end, *will be ignominiously wrested from them.*"

Some persons were taken in custody to Bow-Street. From the noisome smell of the fresh paint, great inconvenience arose: the theatre has been opened too soon. The magistrates who went on the stage were troubled by "the rising of the lights." The unexpected blaze from the lamps, which rose suddenly, produced a most singular appearance in the attitudes of one of the quorum.

## SECOND NIGHT, September 19.

Though the house was not so crowded as it had been last night, the vociferation was as general, as incessant, and as effectual towards the end in view, that of drowning the performers' voices. Not a syllable was heard from the beginning to the end.

The play was the "Beggar's Opera;" and, amidst the unremitting noise of catcalls, howling, whistling, and stamping of feet, not a word or note was heard. The performers were spared all exertions, and they shortened both play and farce,

without the least observation on the part of the spectators, so as to conclude the whole before ten o'clock. The company, however, resumed their seats, after the fall of the curtain, and the clamour continued, with unabated violence, to a very late hour.

The theatre was not full till half price. The company, as on the preceding evening, stood on the benches, with their hats on, and sat down uncovered during the intervals. Papers were continually thrown on the stage, some of which were taken up by Messrs Munden and Incedon, who, it is understood, received instructions from those in the pit, by way of dialogue, to deliver these papers to Mr. Kemble and Mr. Harris. Promises were made to obey those directions. Papers, with the words "Old Prices," were exhibited, as standards, and exalted by the audience. Nothing came of all this, however, and no Mr. Kemble appeared. A paper, with the words "Old Prices" in extremely large letters, was pinned to one of the front boxes, a lady furnishing the pins. Shouts of approbation followed this proceeding, but, no notice being taken of it by the managers, it was handed to the front of the pit, and, being there held up, a boy, belonging to the orchestra, snatched it from the holder's hand and ran off. All this took place after the conclusion of the performances. Upon the last proceeding, the cry of "Get upon the

stage" became general, and the managers had recourse to instruments of terror, letting loose a posse of Bow-street officers from the stage-doors, and, (incredible to relate,) setting open the several trap-doors of the stage, so that any person laying siege thereto might be caught. This awed the public; and, in a short time, the Bow-street officers quitted the stage, and took stations in the orchestra.

A gentleman,\* from the boxes, addressed the audience. The speech was well received; but nothing could overcome the pertinacious contempt with which the managers treated the public voice. At about eleven o'clock, the constables were sent in to clear the theatre, and succeeded in securing and carrying off several persons with placards, &c.

Upon a closer examination, the extreme inconvenience resulting from cutting off one entire tier of boxes from the public will be found a most intolerable grievance, if the monopoly be preserved. It, in reality, reduces the number of boxes into which families can go to two tiers, for the *slips* and *pigeon-holes* above the *privileged tier* are not boxes, though open to those, who, at the expense of seven shillings a piece, may chuse to mount aloft: and as to the nuisance of the

\* Mr. Leigh, vide Appendix.

basket, which is preserved, *no decent person can frequent it.*

### THIRD NIGHT, September 20.

The expression of public discontent, already noticed upon Monday and Tuesday nights, was still louder and more general on this. It seemed to be the proceeding of a well-disciplined and a well-combined corps, acting under judicious and resolute leaders. Every one appeared to understand the justice of the cause for which he struggled, and the means by which was it to be attained. The rising of the curtain was the signal for commencing operations. Hissings, whistles, and catcalls, as usual, reinforced by trumpets and bugle horns, immediately proclaimed the war, and rendered the performance totally inaudible. The performers, however, did not appear to feel, in the least degree, disconcerted or offended, but rather indeed relieved, as there was no necessity for speaking. They were occasionally assured, by persons among the audience, that there was no intention to offer *them* any offence; and this we were happy to hear, particularly with respect to the female performers, some of whom, upon their entrée, exhibited signs of timidity.

So little was the necessity of attending to



dialogue or ordinary forms felt, that both play and farce (Richard the Third. Poor Soldier.) terminated by half-past nine o'clock. Throughout the night, every box, on the first and second tier, presented placards of "Old Prices." "Opposition, persevere, and you must succeed." "John Bull against John Kemble." "No foreigners to tax us, we have taxes enough already," &c. &c.

Soon after the conclusion of the farce, Mr. Kemble, in consequence of reiterated calls for the manager, made his appearance upon the stage, and, after some uproar, obtained a hearing. He said, that he came forward to assure the audience of the anxious solicitude, on the part of the proprietors, to accommodate themselves to the wishes of the public. This declaration was received with applause; but, when he added the following sentence; "Ladies and gentlemen, *I wait to know what you want,*" the loudest and most universal hissing ensued, mixed with exclamations of "What a ridiculous and insulting affectation." The house became inexpressibly indignant, and Mr. Kemble found it his convenience to retire. A gentleman, of the name of LEIGH, then addressed the audience, from the lower boxes. He is, by some, said to be a respectable merchant, by others, an attorney. His speech was saluted, at every sentence, by acclamations of applause, unalloyed by a single hiss, which cir-

cumstance furnishes a tolerable conclusive proof as to the general feeling of the audience.

After some interval, Mr. Smyth, a barrister, by a few impressive observations, addressed to the auditory, succeeded in obtaining an unanimous promise, that, if Mr. Kemble were to come forward and be told the cause of their discontent, he should be favoured with a hearing. Mr. Smyth, in consequence, requested a person in the managers box to communicate this to Mr. Kemble, who, accordingly, came forward, and again premised a long address by intimating his desire of knowing the wishes of the audience. Mr. Leigh replied, that he should be made acquainted with them in three words "THE OLD PRICES." After delivering a counter-statement to the observations of Mr. Leigh, on a former evening, and pleading in general the hazard, expense, and insecurity, of the concern, Mr. Kemble made his bow and retired, amid universal execrations and hooting.

After above an hour, spent in venting their discontent, the audience gradually dispersed. Upon the two former evenings, the theatre might be said, by some, to present merely a contest between two parties; but last night the audience were unanimous, and not a voice was to be heard that was calculated to afford the slightest encouragement to the obnoxious views of the managers. During the last act of the play, a *pigeon* was let fly

from the *pigeon-holes*, to intimate that the public were *pigeoned*.

#### FOURTH NIGHT, September 21.

The only theatre to which a British audience can now resort was, this night, for the fourth time, a scene of uproar and confusion. The play and farce passed, like those which have preceded, amidst continued marks of displeasure from the spectators. All might as well have been pantomime, for the voice of the actor was never heard, and he kept the stage; contending against one of the most decided and numerous audiences ever met within the walls of the theatre. It would be vain, therefore, to criticize either the play or the actor; and it must be sufficient alone to state what could be heard.

At an early period of the evening, the orders, disposed of by the proprietors, had filled the pit; and most of the boxes; with persons, as they supposed, friendly to the advance of prices. Never was there seen such a motley groupe as that which concentrated itself in front of the pit, and contributed to the support of their employers, by outrages of no ordinary kind. The squalid appearance of some, who took their seats even in the boxes, beggars all description. Many of them appeared as if just

after cessation from their daily labour. The respectable part of the audience expressed loud indignation at the introduction of those terrorists. Cries of "No hired mob" resounded in every quarter. The uproar was considerably enriched by the accompaniment of watchmen's rattles, horns, and whistles, with which the audience had previously provided themselves.

The pageantry displayed by the spectators consisted in about twenty large placards, suspended from almost every pillar of the boxes. The principal novelties of inscription upon them were: "Britons be firm." "No theatrical taxation." "DICKONS for ever, no Catalani." "No imposition on the public." "Be silent, Mr. Kemble's head AITCHES." "No annual boxes, or Italian singers." "Harris will, but Kemble won't."

"Kemble hear, John Bull's advice is,  
To save your fame and sink your prices."

"Kemble, remember the Dublin tinman," &c. &c.

The opera was "Love in a Village," but the performers politely repaid the former attentions of the public, by to attending them now and not interrupting them by a single word.

The commencement of the farce seemed to be the signal for a continuance of the tumult, and, on the appearance of Mrs. C. Kemble, it, if possible, increased. At the conclusion of the perform-

ance, a host of orators presented themselves to the audience, from the galleries, the divisions of the boxes, and the benches of the pit. One, however, whose strength of lungs obtained for him a temporary superiority, addressed them as follows.

“ Ladies and Gentlemen,

“ I am glad to see that we are again assembled with the same spirit in which we parted, namely, to repress this most flagrant imposition. The proprietors have not assigned a single valid reason for the increase, if they had, no man would oppose them; but it is perfectly ludicrous to hear Mr. Kemble talk of capital on the stage. Oh, gentlemen, he talks very differently of it in the treasury. But if, as he says, he has really expended so much capital on this theatre, will he not be repaid ten fold, by the profits he will derive from it hereafter, that is, provided he is moderate in his demands, provided he pesters us with no Italian squallers, provided he desists from his intolerable obstinacy. Poor Mr. Kemble pretends ignorance of capital, and yet no man knows it better; he disdains money and yet no man loves it better. But I trust we shall shew him that *we* also can appreciate its value, and that a British audience never will submit to unwarrantable imposition.”

This speech was loudly cheered, during its

delivery, and, on its conclusion, the speaker was greeted with a loud chorus of catcalls, watchmen's rattles, French horns, &c. The uproar continuing as vehement as ever, Mr. Kemble, at length, made his appearance, and, after an unanimous salutation of hisses, groans, and every species of abuse, he declared, "that he was extremely sorry, that the considerations which he had the honour to propose last night had not met their approbation. He begged, however, to remind them, and hoped they would liberally consider"—(Here the audience, perceiving that no acquiescence in their wishes was intended, burst into a renewed uproar, in the midst of which, bowing respectfully to all parts of the house, Mr. Kemble was compelled to retire.)

After order had been, in some degree, restored, the orator, who had addressed them just before, resumed.

"Gentlemen, you have not gained all you wished, but you have gained much: in the first place, the \* fire-engines have been withdrawn; next, a kind of apology has been made in the bills of the day, and, lastly, the Bow-street officers are visibly diminished."

\* These had actually, though perhaps not designedly, been shewn to the audience, at the stage-doors; the pipes pointed outwards, as if designed summarily to *throw cold water* on the flame of insurrection.

The mention of Bow-street instantly called up another speaker, who insisted on precedency. "Gentlemen, (said he,) you see you must finally conquer, be firm and you must be victorious. I need not ask you to be moderate, for I believe there never was an instance in which the public opinion was so unanimously expressed, and in the expression of which so little injury has been done. You are men of sense, and, therefore, though firm, you will not be outrageous. Mr. Kemble shall not lay the hands of the law on you, nay, that very law, with which he threatens us, declares that the mighty and magnanimous John Philip Kemble is neither more nor less than *a vagrant*. Such a declaration is consistent, and is the only check we can have upon such fellows. Gentlemen, you have been unanimous, I hope you will be *harmonious*."

This last expression had scarcely escaped the speaker's lips, when the *usual instruments* were instantly put into requisition, and the evening concluded with a full chorus, all the audience striking up "God save the King," and "Rule Britannia," in concert with the rattles and French horns. The audience separated about eleven. An allusion being made by one speaker (who was so indistinct as not to be perfectly heard) to the case of the King, v. Leigh and others for a theatrical *riot*, tried before Lord Mansfield, the 11th of May, 1775, it may not be irrelevant to

subjoin a short extract of his lordship's opinion on that case. He says, in his charge, "For, as I told you before, certainly every man who is in the playhouse has a right to express his approbation or disapprobation instantaneously, according as he likes either the acting or the piece; it is a right due to the theatre, an unalterable right, and they *must have it.*"

#### FIFTH NIGHT, September 22.

Junius has observed, that the people of England are patient to a certain point, but that, when provoked beyond it, their resistance is not to be withstood. The managers of this theatre appear to be of a different opinion. They seem resolved to carry provocation to the utmost extreme, apparently regardless of consequences. Indeed, notwithstanding the loud complaints of the people, and the riotous expression of anger into which they have been goaded by a demand, which at least appears to be an imposture, the managers did not, until this night, condescend to propose any thing in the shape of concession, explanation, or compromise; the audience was more numerous, and, if possible, more clamorous than on any preceding night. In addition to the usual placards were the following:



“ Let the first causes of disturbance be sent to Bow-street: these are the managers.”

“ Let the managers play to empty benches and they will come to their senses.”

“ Support King George but resist King John. The former gives us, through his ministers, some statement of the causes which render increased taxation necessary, and the objects to which its produce is to be applied; the latter deals only in the loose and general plea of necessity, and scorns to enter into explanation.”

Several other pungent and appropriate placards were exhibited, which, joined with the martial music of trumpets and bugle horns, and the frequently-repeated challenge of the great belligerent power, rendered it at length necessary, on the part of their opponents, to make an overture of negotiation: of this overture, the great leader himself of the proprietors forces became the bearer. Towards the close of the play, lo! he came forward. Mr. Kemble appeared upon the stage, and still was the voice of the people to hear his lofty eloquence. He said, “ That the proprietors, in order to restore the public tranquillity, were ready and desirous to submit the inspection of the state of their affairs to a committee of gentlemen, of unimpeachable impartiality and honour; such, for instance, (if they

could be prevailed upon kindly to undertake the trouble of investigating their accounts,) as the Governor of the Bank of England, the Accountant General of the Court of Chancery, Sir Francis Baring, Mr. Angerstein, the Attorney General."

At the mention of this latter name, there was an universal hiss, which rendered it impossible for Mr. Kemble to proceed further. He was, consequently, obliged to retire, after explaining himself to some persons in the stage-box, on the nature of the desire he had expressed.

The placards now began to rustle, and the *populares auræ* fanned them into favour. Among them we noticed

A representation of Mr. Kemble, gibbited, and, underneath, this motto, "A cure for all *aitches*."

"The voice of the public, in this house, shall never be silenced by the obstinacy of managers."

"The house that Jack built."

"Britons live and let live." (The only favourable one yet exhibited in the managerial interests.)

"Raising the Wind, the part of Jerry Diddler by John Kemble."

A caricature of Messrs. Kemble and Harris as Macbeth and Banquo.

"*Mach*. Thou canst not say I did it.

"*Ban*. A lie, a bl—dy lie, upon my soul a damned lie."

"Angels and ministers of grace defend us from new prices."

“ No Kembles.”

“ Performers support us and we will support you.”

“ Old prices or empty benches.”

“ No compromise, come to the point.”

“ Would there be a rise of prices if Old Drury were not burnt ? ”

“ No Italian depravity or French duplicity, but native talent.”

Several well-dressed females, in the boxes, evinced their support of the common cause, by supplying pins to fasten the placards on the cushions of the box-fronts. One of these papers was so long as to extend from the upper boxes to the pit. In the latter part of the house, a dance, instead of a song, made up the finale of the entertainment. The attrition of feet, on this occasion, completely destroyed the green cloth which covered the pit-benches.

Before eleven, the theatre was completely emptied.

### SIXTH NIGHT, September 23.

The uproar this evening, Saturday, was repeated with as much vehemence as ever ; and the appearance of the theatre was positively changed by the numerous hangings with which the audience adorned it. On one of these was sus-

pended a list of the salaries and benefits of Catalani, the Kembles, and Mrs. Siddons, amounting to £25,575.

The English are a calculating nation ; they understand debtor and creditor accounts ; and no assertion about averages will satisfy them. The trumpeters of the second booth sent out the following good parody :

“ John Bull, John Bull, John Bull,  
 Be merry, bold, and resolute ;  
 Fear not to shew disapprobation,  
 But freely keep your noisy station.  
 For none of Kemble born can gull the British nation.”

A third quoted Latin :—“ Vox populi suprema lex.”

A fourth was witty ; he sent out the emblem of a coffin and cross bones, with the following inscription :

Here lies the body  
 of  
 NEW PRICE,  
 an ugly child, and base born ;  
 who died of the  
 WHOOPING COUGH, on  
 the 23d of September, 1809,  
 aged  
 Six days.

On a stick, surmounted with laurel, was inscribed :—

“ Court of Justice,

John Bull, v. John Kemble.

Verdict for the Plaintiff.”

On another placard of painted cloth, well mounted and accoutred, was written:—

“ Britons who have humbled a prince, will not be conquered by a manager.”

Another suspended the pamphlet, written in favour of the managers, which had been distributed through the house, labelled thus:

“ To be burnt by the common hangman next Monday.” — Others were:—

“ Old Kemble begins to tremble.”

“ Kemble awake, arise, or be for ever fallen.”

“ Old Prices,— we seek no change, and least of all such change as they can give us.”—Kemble hem !”

“ Bring down Kemble’s pride and prices.”

“ Mountain and Dickons—no Cats nor Kittens.”

“ Lower your prices, and we will raise the wind.”

(The farce was—“ Raising the Wind.”)

At the conclusion of the whole performances, which took place soon after nine o’clock, the stage was covered with papers, thrown there by the audience, from an anxious desire that every part of the house should share in the cry against imposition. About a quarter of an hour after the performance was over, was showered down from the boxes, a ream of printed hand-bills, of the largest type, inscribed—

“ THE BANK CLERKS HAVE BEEN FORBIDDEN THIS THEATRE, THROUGH J. P. KEMBLE.”

Soon after, a gentleman who addressed the audience on a former occasion, attempted to deliver a very bad speech, in which he abused Mr. Kemble with very little judgment, and was coughed and hissed down. In about another quarter of an hour, Mr. Kemble obeyed the powerful spell of the audience, and came on the stage. "Ladies and Gentlemen," said he, "here I am always ready to obey your commands." (Loud applause.) "Ladies and Gentlemen, an imputation this evening has been laid upon my character, which I cannot pass over in silence, lest it might be construed into acquiescence; it is that I have treated the audience with contempt. I appeal to the last 25 years of my life, as an actor, and to many of those years as a manager, for an answer to this charge; and, I trust, my conduct, during that long period, will plead my acquittal with all who now hear me. (Universal applause.) The proprietors, I sincerely assure you, are most anxiously inclined to do every thing, in their power to meet the public inclination and to restore the public peace. For this purpose they are willing, that a committee of the most respectable gentlemen may be appointed to inspect the state of the concern; and, from the profits thence derived, to say whether the advance is necessary or otherwise." (Hisses and cries of "No, no," during which Mr. Kemble kept calling, "I intreat you to hear me," which was met by "Hear him

out," from the audience.) "Ladies and Gentlemen, the proprietors thought they could not do a fairer thing by the public than to make them as well acquainted with their concerns as they are themselves.—(Applause.) "Ladies and Gentlemen, as this seems to be the sense of the majority," (cries of "No, no,") "as this seems to be the sense of the majority."—(Hisses and cries of "No, no.") "Ladies and Gentlemen, let me add,"—(a wag interrupted, "No, you can't add,") "till this examination is over, the theatre shall be shut."

A gentleman then spoke to Mr. Kemble from the side boxes, and presently the manager re-addressed the audience: "Ladies and Gentlemen, a gentleman from the side boxes has very properly suggested, that the accounts ought to be printed for the public; they shall be so."

The uproar now became a mixture of applause and disapprobation, in which the latter predominated.

Mr. Kemble continued. "As to Madame Catalani, Mr. Harris, when he entered into an agreement with that lady, (hisses,) had been actuated solely by a wish to evince his gratitude to the public; to promote their amusement; and to fulfill their wishes by the acquisition of talents which every body must acknowledge to be the most splendid and pre-eminent." (Hisses and ap-

plause.) "Finding, however, that this was not congenial to the public mind," Mr. Kemble would have said, "her engagement is relinquished," but the tumult cut that sentence short. Mr. Kemble retired.

The spectators hurled up their hats, and "though they had lost the best half of the affair, went away, and said how much was done."

The Governor of the Bank, the Solicitor-General, and several other gentlemen, having agreed to assist in inspecting the books of Covent Garden Theatre, the managers, by advertisement in all the papers, signified that the house would remain closed till their decision was given and made known.

#### SEVENTH NIGHT, October 4.

The public have not been satisfied with the decision of Mr. Kemble's committee. Upon the re-opening of the theatre on this, Wednesday, evening, their discontent was most loudly expressed.

After the dumb shew of play and farce had terminated, at the usual early hour, the audience raised an outcry for Kemble, accompanied by the noise of catcalls, trumpets, rattles, dust-bells, and every other hostile instrument, so actively employed previously to the late armistice. The



temporary cessation of hostilities seems to have afforded, to the popular combatants, an opportunity of refreshing themselves, as they have returned to the scene of action with recruited vigour. After considerable uproar, Mr. Kemble came forward, and there was a general cry of "Hear him," mixed with exclamations of, "you shan't hoax us," &c. When silence was obtained, Mr. Kemble spoke to the following effect :

"Ladies and Gentlemen, the proprietors, for the satisfaction of the public, have laid an unreserved state of their affairs before a committee of honourable gentlemen." (What? Sylvester an honourable gentleman?" exclaimed a thousand voices.) "The report of that committee, Ladies and Gentlemen, is now before you, accompanied by the documents?" (A general cry of, "Where are the documents?") "From this report it must be evident, that the ruin of the proprietors would be inevitable, unless they were to adhere to the new prices of admission." (Shouts of disapprobation,—"No, no, it is an imposture." "I throw myself upon the candour of the most enlightened metropolis in the world; and I must think it impossible that you would call upon us to incur a loss of three quarters per cent upon our capital."

Here the shout of "imposition," "imposition," became so loud and general, and continued so long, that Mr. Kemble retired, with, however, a mixture of applauses and hisses.

After the retirement of Mr. Kemble, the audience were addressed by Mr. O'Reilly:—

This gentleman observed, that "if the report alluded to by Mr. Kemble were to be attended to, the new prices were really too little, and the proprietors should ask more. From this report it would seem, that poor Mr. Kemble and his partners were engaged in a bad speculation. He wondered therefore that they did not express a willingness to give it up. If so, he rather thought they would find many bidders even upon the old prices. But, no doubt, their perseverance, under such disadvantages, proceeded entirely from a desire to serve the public, whom Mr. Kemble was as sincerely anxious to please as any other actor. To be serious, however, he did not give any of the corps much credit for sincerity, and he conceived that more noise was made about them than they deserved. They appeared to him to be over-talked of, over-thought of, and considerably over-paid. It was intolerable, to his mind, that while gallant officers of liberal education and sentiment were fighting the battles of their country for 5s. and 7s. a-day, 50*l.* and 70*l.* a-night should be given to a *mimic* (applause). He did not wish to degrade the stage below its proper

level, but he thought it was raised too high in this country; and he begged Englishmen to consider, that the freest nation of antiquity lost its freedom and independence by attending too much to theatricals. The recollection of this circumstance should strike the public with peculiar force, particularly in the present crisis of the world. So much for politics and theatricals; he now begged to say a word or two about morals. He intreated the audience to look at the private boxes; the sort of company they held (several notorious women were quite conspicuous) and to consider the apartments annexed to them. He did not know that the patent of the managers intitled them to *interfere with other places of accommodation and amusement in town* (laughter and applause). With respect to Madame Catalani, he observed, that his calculation was correct; the managers had got rid of her as they desired. But it was remarkable that, even when the theatre was to be subject to her great salary, Mr. Kemble stated the prospective profits of the theatre at 5*l.* per cent.; yet now, that her salary was done away, Mr. Kemble's committee calculated those profits only at 3½ per cent. This contrast he left it to the public to consider."

The above gentleman was succeeded by Mr. Savage, who enforced the observations particularly on morality, in a very impressive strain of eloquence.

The company did not disperse until eleven o'clock; the performance was over at nine; and numbers were heard to promise that "they would meet again at Philippi."

The termination of the contest can now be hardly calculated. It may at all events be advisable, in the managers, to make the experiment of publishing the items and documents which they have alleged to be laid before their committee.

The contrast, which this night's assemblage in the pit formed to the respectable and judicious body of opponents on the former evenings, afforded matter of painful observation to the real friends of *unmixed* dramatic rights. Subjoined to a placard, which contained the annunciation of an already-practised drama, called "Who's the Dupe," the intelligent and well-judging few read, with emotions of violent displeasure, the following attempt to depreciate, in national esteem, a great national festival:—

"And, on the 25th instant will be brought forward a new FARCE, entitled the JUBILEE!!"

#### EIGHTH NIGHT, October 8.

The audience were, if possible, more vocally clamorous on this than on any other of the evenings since the re-opening of the theatre. Several

dirty, squalid, wretches were seated in the pit, no doubt by the managers, to excite their *impartial criticism* on the *performances of John Bull*. There were nearly 200 of these ragamuffins in the pit, while the boxes of the theatre, at least, contained 400 of *the people*. In the private boxes only six persons were discernible.

A few persons from the lower gallery were taken out of the house to Bow-street; but no instance of riot had occurred, which could warrant the detention of any. Some persons attempted to raise the cry of Jacobinism against the whole mass of theatrical opposition, without considering that, for the most part, it is the rich and better sort of people who are engaged in resisting the exaction complained of. The poor can have no concern in the business. It is for them, in the present unfortunate times, to consider rather the advanced prices of provisions and necessaries than of admission to a theatre. Upon this system, perhaps, those who venture to expose the schemes of Quack Doctors, or fraudulent projectors, may be fairly denominated Jacobins.

The inaudible performances terminated at the same early hour as usual; and the house was cleared soon after. Some hard knocks were given and received. It is said that, on this and the last night, the greater part of the corps pugilistique were present to assist the managers.

They were mostly of the tribe of Israel. No novel placards made their appearance.

### NINTH NIGHT, October 9th.

The disposition of the people to resist the object of the managers apparently increases in proportion to the resolution of the managers to persevere. This evening the tumult was much louder and more general than has been witnessed on former nights. The boxes and pit presented, throughout, one continued scene of uproar; and it must be said that the malcontents had more the appearance of gentlemen than those who were most forward to oppose them. Their adversaries indeed had that complexion which belongs to their character. They formed a crowd of the lowest order of Jews;—of those whose study and profession is pugilism. These were the *militant* friends of the managers. If they are to be trusted, they had indeed an order for their exertion not only on this but on Friday night. Several notorious pugilists were this evening noticed, challenging, nay courting, quarrels with individuals, whose only trespass was a hiss or expression of disapproval at the obnoxious rise of prices. It is rather surprising that none of these fighting rioters was taken notice of by the officers of the police, by those whose duty it is to *preserve the*

*peace*, while those persons who ventured to oppose the ruffian crew were grasped at eagerly, and violently dragged out of the theatre.

In every part of the house the clamour of indignation was loud and continued; of course not a word of the performances was audible. The Bow-street officers were much more active than on any former evening. Several persons of respectability were taken before the magistrates, from the house.

Among the placards were the following:—  
 “No Monopoly.”—“Let us know how you dispose of 307,000*l.*”—“If your claim be just, the people are too just to resist it.”—“Concealment justifies suspicion.”—“Fair accounts and fair prices.”—“Old prices and better times.”—“In an English theatre every one should see and be seen;—no private boxes.”—“The public will never be satisfied with the partial report of the elected few.”—And among others was highly observable this celebrated couplet:—

“The drama’s laws the drama’s patrons give;  
 For they who live to please must please to live.”

The latter was printed, in very large letters, on several sheets of paper joined together. It sprang from the pit, and, being handed up to the boxes, was there “by a mousing owl hawked at” and torn. The remnant however was saved; and the tearer was quickly dragged out of the box, at the

expense of having the flap of his coat torn off. This flap was thrown from the box as a "sop to the many-headed monster of the pit;" who barked loud applause thereat. Presently there were "three Richards in the field;" for the pit published two more copies of the great distich, which met a more gentle destiny. Victory was decidedly on the side of the O P ists.

The entertainments were John Bull and the Poor Soldier; but not a syllable of either of them was audible. They met the same fate as all the other pieces, since the opening of the house. Gesticulation being the order of the stage, it was thought necessary to give a specimen of it likewise in the pit. The night's entertainment in that quarter was marked throughout by a series of pugilistic exhibitions. Some notorious characters in that line avowed themselves the champions of the proprietors. Several severe conflicts took place. In one of these, two young men were forced back, by the extraordinary pressure, on to the spikes of the orchestra. One of them, the son of Mr. Lorimer, a silk-dyer, in the Strand, a fine young man, nineteen years of age, received two severe wounds in the back part of his thighs, and was, with difficulty, removed, from the theatre, to his father's house, in a very agonizing condition. The other person was wounded, by one of the spikes, in the back.

The whole concluded at half-past ten o'clock



with a fight in the boxes. The two Tripoliné envoys were present, but retired soon after the conclusion of the play.

### TENTH NIGHT, October 10.

This night presented a continuation of the same vocal and instrumental performances as usual on the part of the audience, with the exception that it was less varied. The wrath of the proprietors against horns, bills, rattles, &c. which had been exhibited in the forbidding forms of Bow-street officers, by whom some of the possessors of those instruments were taken into custody, had tended to diminish their number.

The vocal part of the performance, consisting of whistling, groaning, hissing, &c. with the accompaniment of a few catcalls, was as loud as ever, particularly after half-price. In the early part of the evening, a few words of the opera (*The Woodman*) were now and then heard; but, subsequently to the half-price coming in, all was, as usual, dumb shew on the stage.

The activity of the police succeeded in preventing placards from being affixed to the boxes; nor was one exhibited, for some time, in any part of the house. Towards and after the close of the farce, however, two or three made their appearance in the pit, where they were, for a short time,

held up to public view. One of them, alluding to the admission of a number of Israelitish pugilists, had on it—

“And lo ! it came to pass, that John Bull was sorely vexed, and smote the Israelites.”

Printed hand-bills, in allusion to the same subject, were circulated among the audience ; the person who distributed them had been taken into custody and carried to Bow-street.

Another placard was inscribed—

“Lads in the pit,  
Do not submit,”

And another contained this distich—

“The TIMES and POST are bought and sold,  
To KEMBLE’S pride and Kemble’s gold.”

A large key was exhibited on paper, with an inscription—“Removed from Chandos-street.” This was accompanied with several exclamations against the private boxes.

The performance, on the stage, lasted till almost ten o’clock. The farce was *The Village Lawyer*, of which about three words were heard.

Some pugilistic contests took place in the pit ; and there was a general exclamation of “Turn out the fighting Jews.” No one came forward on the part of the proprietors : soon after ten the

audience began to disperse, and the theatre was cleared in the course of an hour.

The house was by no means full during the whole evening; before half-price there were not 150 persons in the pit, and, at the dropping of the curtain, there was good room for many more. Absence is the best opposition.

#### ELEVENTH NIGHT, October 11.

The rioters did not, this night, commence operations until the admission at half-price. The audience, previously thereto, enjoyed the pleasing novelty of hearing the three first acts distinctly, but, on the beginning of the fourth, a violent hissing, unaccompanied however by any catcalls or rattles, arose. The noise completely drowned all articulation during the remainder of the performance.

The boxes exhibited no placards. In the pit were the following, affixed to long poles.

“ John Bull be firm, defy the ruffian throng ;  
Thy rattle’s safe,—they cannot touch thy tongue.”

“ Oppose Shylock and the whole tribe of Israel.”  
“ Fair play and fair prices.”

“ Who support the managers? Profligate Jews,  
hired ruffians.”

During the farce, and at its conclusion, a gentleman in the boxes, evidently intoxicated, addressed the audience rather incoherently. He vouched, however, for the appearance of "one hundred and seventy-three" Jews in the pit the evening before last: and another gentleman asserted that box-orders were to be bought at five shillings, and pit at two shillings, of Jews, under the portico of the theatre. A third, from the pit, spoke as to there having been 300 Jews in the front rows last night, and said that he heard them encourage each other—"Clap away, we are well paid for it." Another gentleman directed the attention of the pit to Harry Lee and Mendoza, whom he pointed out.

Several long and ingenious placards were circulated, in the form of hand-bills, through the house.

The pantomimic performances of the stage finished about ten o'clock; but great part of the audience remained for some time afterwards, cracking their jokes, and exclaiming, as they had done all night, "Turn out the Jews." One Hebrew hittite in the pit gave a sort of general challenge, and placed his fists in train for combat; a ring was formed, but no fight took place, and the audience soon afterwards dispersed.

In the early part of the evening, a person was taken into custody for making use of a whistle. Amongst other ingenious devices, handkerchiefs

have been printed with the inscription of "Old Prices," and fans have been made bearing the same inscription; thus combining a placard with an article of convenience, which cannot be taken from the owner without the commission of robbery.

A professional gentleman, who has been several years engaged in writing a theatrical history, exhibited in the pit a new tragedy handkerchief, with "Old Prices" inscribed on it; and threaten the prize-fighters with a charge of theft, if they interfered with his repeated exhibition of it for the purpose of blowing his nose. The Duke of York was in one of the private boxes.

#### TWELFTH NIGHT, October 12.

The serio-comic opera of "John Bull in a Rage" was repeated this night by a great number of popular performers. The opera of "Love in a Village" went on rather quietly for some time, but, towards its conclusion, was compelled to yield the palm to the more audible sounds of the rival performance in the body of the theatre. "Animal Magnetism" succeeded; but was found not to possess sufficient attraction for the purpose of diverting the public attention from its own favourite piece: it therefore sank into complete pantomime. Prior to the conclusion of "Love in a Village," an in-

terlude took place in the pit, where a battle royal was exhibited. The consequent *decorations* of the *figurantes* were black-eyes, &c. This was the leading cause of two contests in the lobby, in which victory crowned the champions of the "Old Prices."

The power of the human voice, when strenuously exerted, was this night demonstrated; no instruments were used: the noise however was equal to, if not greater than, that of the preceding evening. It gradually increased to the conclusion of the after-piece, when it burst climactically into a loud greeting of the performers on the fall of the curtain.

Soon after the termination of the farce, the audience were addressed from the boxes by a Mr. Ross, a gentleman of respectability in the city. "He earnestly exhorted the opponents of imposition to confine themselves to the legitimate mode of expressing their disapprobation in a theatre, and they must succeed through perseverance. He requested the people to reflect, that those who were betrayed into any illegal act contributed, by its commission, to the benefit of the managers. The urgency of their agents in creating such proceedings, and the alacrity with which those agents seized upon the victims of their own irritation, were manifest proofs of his assertion. He dwelt upon the altered tone of some of the public prints, which he had no doubt had been tampered

with. One paper, in particular, he said, (the Morning Post) was as glaring in its inconsistency as it was feeble in its efforts at palliation of that inconsistency. He concluded with adverting to Mr. Bish's statement, published in the Morning Chronicle. Coming, as that statement did, from a gentleman as respectable as any of the managers' committee, it was entitled to peculiar attention. Every observation from this gentleman was loudly applauded.

Another orator, whose name was not known, but who said he was a clerk in Friday-street, spoke from the pit, and strongly urged the gross impropriety of sending hired ruffians into the house to overawe and insult the audience. He also was much applauded. Repeated exclamations now came from the audience of "Turn out the Jews;" and a ruffianly Hebrew, who was in the pit on the preceding night, and then gave a general challenge, now again grossly insulted the whole audience. This insolence was immediately resented, and a scuffle ensued, in which the Jew alluded to was turned into the lobby; he endeavoured to regain his former situation, but was knocked down, and he then made a precipitate retreat, together with some of his companions. A cry soon resounded from the pit, signifying that the Jews were turned out, and three loud huzzas were given immediately by the audience, followed by "God save the King," in universal chorns.

“ Good night ” was then the word for separation, and the audience, the greater part of whom had remained throughout, left the theatre clear at about a quarter past eleven.

The placards were but few ; one was affixed to the upper boxes with this inscription.

“ A long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether. ”

It received repeated cheers. Amongst the others, were ;

“ Bish for ever, Mendoza never. ”

“ The public voice will not be silenced by foul means. ”

A gross outrage was committed on a gentleman who used a handkerchief with the following inscription.

“ Your prices reduce,  
Your annuals surrender,  
The public will then  
Support you for ever. ”

A police officer attempted to take away the handkerchief, but, on the gentleman assuring him, that, if he did, he would prosecute him for the robbery, the former thought proper to desist: the handkerchief was, however, torn in the struggle.



## THIRTEENTH NIGHT, October 13.

“Speed the Plough,” and Speed the Row, were jointly performed this night. In the early part of the evening the former had its advantage; but afterwards the latter took its turn. The comedy was followed by the pantomime of *Rosina*; the dance in the first act of which was accompanied by a dance in the pit, where, if they did not display much grace, they at least succeeded in kicking up a dust. A similar ceremony accompanied the final dropping of the curtain. The noise, which commenced in the fourth act of the comedy and continued till the conclusion of the performances on the stage, was much greater than on the preceding night. The cheers given to the placards were more universal than on any former occasion. Ladies in the boxes were seen waving their handkerchiefs, and, even in the private boxes, rank and fashion sided with the public. Among the placards were the following:

“ John Kemble through the Jews has gained applause,  
And Infidels insult our laws,  
But we will follow the holy band,  
And shew that Christians shall command.”

“ No Morning Post  
Nor hireling host

Shall e'er John Bull dismay,  
 His cause is just  
 Succeed he must,  
 Old prices or no play."

"Be determined and you will be victorious."

"The new prices shall have the fate of Catalani."

"The Covent Garden Synagogue, Mendoza the Grand Rabbi."

"The Morning Post has, to the public cause, proved a traitor."

"Old prices, old morality, no private boxes."

"A fair account and we'll submit,  
 Imposture shall not gull the pit,  
 If Kemble shews his claim is just,  
 Our will's to pay, but he shan't say MUST."

"Shall Britons be subdued by the wandering tribe of Jerusalem."

"BISH, the detector of fraud, v. MENDOZA, the leader of hired pugilists."

Placards of "Old Prices," were visible throughout the house, in boxes, pit, and gallery. A printed copy of the letter, which appeared in the Morning Chronicle, relative to the distribution of orders among the Jews, was circulated through the house. Some ineffectual efforts were made to disturb a gentleman who addressed the audience from the pit, not with any degree of

novelty, but yet in very temperate and forcible terms. The pith of his speech consisted in strenuously recommending the people to permit the managers to send in their orders, as they had for some time back done, on the opening of the house, and that the opponents of the present exaction ought not to come in till half price, by which means the managers would soon be brought to their senses.

The cry of "Vive la Republic" was distinctively observed to proceed from a Jew, whose object, no doubt, was mischievous, and suggested to him; it met the fate it merited, being universally scouted by the cry of "No Politics."

Lord Yarmouth and the Hon. Berkeley Craven were understood to be in the pit, and there was a loud demand for a speech from Lord Yarmouth, but his lordship declined the exhibition, and retired soon after the curtain had dropped, not without encountering some jokes which were past upon him, by the wags of the pit and front boxes. Mr. Craven, upon hearing his name called out, said he was there and did not come in with an order; he also retired at the same time with Lord Yarmouth.

The Israelites, who attended the pit for several nights, seem, at length, ashamed of their occupation, or their employers have, at least, discovered the mischievous folly of their conduct. There were not many of them in the house this night.

The police were, as usual, on the alert; but, from the increased spirit of the audience, it would be supposed, that, for one person taken into custody, two more came to the theatre to enlist under the banners of "Old Prices." The audience dispersed, very quietly, about eleven o'clock.

#### FOURTEENTH NIGHT, October 14.

The aspect of the uproar becomes now more serious than could possibly be anticipated by those, who, at first, in the prospect of its speedy termination, enjoyed their laugh at the effusions of popular wit and *placard eloquence*. There was but little *variety* in the entertainment. The placard-bearers, printed handkerchiefs, and cuffing matches, were as numerous as ever. Several persons appeared in the boxes with the letters OP (old prices) most conspicuously gilt on their waistcoats. The following inscriptions were successively handed about the pit in great triumph.

"*Patriot's motto*, Conquer or die."

"Zeal in a just cause  
Merits applause."

"Kemble must stoop to conquer."

Two large figures fighting, with the motto  
"Christian, v. Jew."

"Himself in £500 and two sureties in £250  
each, for hissing."

"England expects that every man will do his  
duty."

"On Monday next, his Majesty's servants will  
act the play called 'Kemble's Trial,' to which  
will be added the farce of 'John Bull diddled.'"

A large profile of Kemble; "What do you  
want?" answer boldly John Bull, "Old Prices."

"No innovation, no distinctions, no painted  
sepulchres in the private boxes."

And from the box pigeon holes :

"This pile, inscribed to Shakespeare and the nation,  
Demands from all a liberal approbation."

There were several *set-to's* in the pit; and a  
severe contest took place between some gentle-  
men in the front boxes and the oppositionists in  
the pit; victory decided in favour of the former,  
who had rather the 'vantage ground; but, dis-  
graceful to manhood, two ladies, occupying front  
rows in the boxes, were struck with sticks, per-  
haps not intentionally, from the pit. One of  
them was severely wounded and obliged to be  
carried out of the house.

Towards the close of the night, a young mid-  
shipman addressed the audience, from the two

shilling gallery, in the following terms: "Ladies and gentlemen, we are Britons and must be insulted no longer, we have borne it too long already: *Jack* Kemble must strike to our *Jack*, I mean the union jack; it is now hoisted, and if you're true blue you'll stick to it while there is a single shred of it together (loud applause.) We are Britons, I say, we have a patriotic king, but still we must fight in defence of our own proper rights and privileges, while we have a drop of blood to spill for them. (Cries of bravo.) Gentlemen, there's no use in talking, one word's as good as twenty, and so I say you're *bl—d flats* if you suffer *black Jack* to knock you down with one hand, while he picks you're pockets with the other. He must give up and that's the end of it." This oration was rapturously cheered, and, on the *orator* retiring, the pit struck up "Rule Britannia," "Britons strike home," and a variety of other tunes, and then separated, vowing vengeance on Monday night.

This is but an imperfect outline: to impress the conception of a reader, the waving of the multitude must be seen, and the outrageous discord heard. There was a dance, as usual for some nights back, in the pit. The house was perfectly clear a short time after eleven o'clock.

## FIFTEENTH NIGHT, October 16.

This night exhibited the grandest row yet presented to the public; even so early as the second act of *Richard the Third*, John Bull began to roar, and, by the fourth act, it was all *dickey* with the actors; they were superseded by a more numerous set of performers, among the audience, who irresistibly asserted their superior claims to be heard. "Bravo Cooke" was frequently repeated, as if to distinguish him individually; but *Cooke*, like all the rest, was doomed to fret his hour upon the stage unheard. A roar, that almost shook the house, burst forth when Charles Kemble appeared in the character of *Richmond*, and continued during his presence to the end of the tragedy.

The farce of the Farmer followed, but not a single syllable of it was heard. Never was a more unanimous determination evinced on the part of any audience. Loud huzzas from all parts of the house, upon the exhibition of a placard, bore testimony to the general sentiment. A placard was thrown up from the pit to one of the boxes in the first tier, and taken under the protection of a gentleman, who placed it in front of the box, to which, by the assistance of a lady in the front row, it was pinned. The police im-

mediately flew to the box and endeavoured to take the gentleman into custody, but they were compelled to retreat. They returned reinforced, and were again defeated. A third time they charged with increased numbers, but the gentleman stepped down on the area of one of the lustres, thence into one of the lower boxes, and made his escape. Loud huzzas from the pit cheered these repeated victories, and were reiterated from the boxes. Among the placards were the following, peculiarly expressive of the unabated spirit and observation of the audience.

“Kemble remember how Wolsey was proud  
Of his *patent right* and very high station,  
But how lowly was Wolsey when the King and the crowd  
Bore him down to the language of humiliation.”

It would be unreasonable, however, to apply the pertinacity of the proprietors to Mr. Kemble alone, and, consequently, the consummation of the passage alluded to them in one of his own favourite characters, cannot be *devoutly* wished for.

The others were :

“Mendoza to fight  
And Brandon to swear :  
John Bull's in the right,  
And he don't care.”

“Genius of Britain support our cause,  
Free us from Kemble and Jewish laws.”



“ England expects the Lord Chamberlain to do his duty.”

“ No seven-shilling gods.”

“ Old Prices ” was not only circulated in placards, but O P appeared on the waistcoats of a vast number of gentlemen ; nay, cockades of the same initials were worn by several. Numerous cries for “ the items ” resounded through the house.

After the conclusion of the performance, on the stage, a performer in the pit claimed notice, and his claim was attended to. He addressed the audience quite in the phraseology of a seaman, and appeared to belong to that profession. He observed, that, when ashore, he wished to bring his *Poll* to the play, and, d—n his eyes, it was too bad to be done out of a *tester*, which would do for a glass of grog. *Poll* and he were up to a thing or two, and could not be hoaxed by the humbugging report of the committee, of which folks talked so much. He knew it was all *fudge*, and he could not *stand* it. But the imposters could not succeed, if the whole crew would act together, and he hoped his messmates aloft would support him in his resolution to resist the New Prices every night during their continuance. If they persevered, he had no doubt but the men of play must yield to the men of war, and that the imposing managers must soon strike their flag. — A very whimsical handbill was circulated

through the house. Amongst other placards was the following :

“ King John of old, by sturdy barons aw'd,  
 Our British rights in Magna Charta sign'd ;  
 To stage crown'd John, in insolence and fraud,  
 Shall our dramatic rights be now resign'd ?  
 From British favour has thy pseudo king  
 His fame, his wealth, his impudence, deriv'd ;  
 By British spirit let this empty thing  
 Of all his borrow'd feathers be deprived.”

“ King John out-lives our liking.”

The house was cleared about a quarter past eleven o'clock.

#### SIXTEENTH NIGHT, October 17.

Though the audience was not nearly so numerous as on the preceding night, yet the tumult was as great. The pit hardly exhibited one hundred spectators till half-price, when it immediately filled, and the clamour commenced. In the progress of the play, several pointed allusions to the actual state of the theatre were instantly applied by the audience : among others, where *Goldfinch* asks *Old Dornton* what the world says of him ; — the answer, “ Very strange things ; it says, you have fallen into the hands of *Jews* and *Swindlers*,” was hailed with loud ap-

plause. Again, when *Goldfinch* wishes to borrow money from *Sulky*, *Sulky* asks him, "What security will you give me, *Goldfinch*?" "I will give you 50 per cent. interest." The pit instantly exclaimed, "Aye, 6 per cent. legal interest, without a committee." In the third act, where the tradesmen are bringing in the bills to *young Dornton*, one of them inquires "shall we let the old one look into our charges?" The other answers, "Oh, no! I do not like that:" this was also loudly applauded.

The play concluded amid the wildest scene of uproar and confusion yet witnessed. After the fall of the curtain, the pittites alternately amused themselves with a song and a dance, and occasionally handed about the following placards with great acclamations;—

"What has broached this tumult — but thy pride, O *Kemble*?"

"Then may we pipe for justice."—*Titus Andronicus*.

"This house to let, inquire of *Mrs. Noodle*."

"A new song will be sung by *Mr. Bull* tomorrow night, called 'Go *Kemble* I can't endure you.'"

"PUBLIC-OFFICE, BOW-STREET. — On the 25th day of Term, will be exhibited, the suppression of imposition;—Chief Magistrate — *JOHN BULL*."

There were innumerable other placards, but

none a whit better than the above. There was less fighting and peace-breaking than usual.

One of the placards was snatched and torn by a little boy in one of the boxes, who was afterwards taken out of the theatre crying.

A new placard made its appearance, rather late in the evening, as follows:—

“Orders last week.

General Post-Office - - - - 1000

Bank clerks (not trusted) - 600

Longman and Co. - - - - 1700

Mendoza and Co. - - - - 3000

Thieftakers - - - - 600

4000 shirts washed for genteel people.

Lost, last week, 1500*l*.”

Besides the following—

“New Prices the Road to Ruin” (this was the play).

A caricature head was exhibited in the pit with O P on it in large letters. O P hats and O P bonnets were again sported, and loudly cheered. “Old Prices” were repeatedly placarded.

The naval officer, whose observations have been given in yesterday’s report, again offered himself to the attention of the audience at the close of the performance. He was dressed in the uniform of a master’s mate. As soon as he had mounted one of the seats of the pit, there was a general cry of “silence! hear him.” He spoke to the following effect:—

“Ladies and Gentlemen:—From the attention with which you honoured me last night, I am encouraged again to address you. The lying Post set sail this morning with a parcel of false dispatches, which I have had the honour to have chiefly levelled at me. But I never mind that; I will still continue to sail with you, and I have no doubt but the success of our voyage will gratify the wishes of our country, and sink the enemy to the bottom. That staunch vessel, “Old Prices,” must return triumphant. Some of our comrades have been seized by pirates, and carried into Bow-street port; but never mind that; for d—n me if I don’t think the port-admiral will be yet overhauled for his doings, and brought to a court-martial (*applause*). We are shortly to have a jubilee in honour of our beloved Sovereign (here an interruption took place by the cries of ‘Kemble and young Harris are in the private-boxes,’ accompanied by a general hiss, and ‘Turn them out, turn them out’). Do not, my lads, let the jubilee be damped by the triumph of theatrical tyranny (*applause*). I am informed that Captain Jack is determined not to strike his proud vessel, while he has two planks left. But let us go on my boys, and we shall sink him and his planks together. What are Englishmen, struggling against injustice, to be bullied by hired ruffians, to be beaten down by the very dregs and refuse of the twelve tribes? No, let us

persevere in our opposition, by all lawful means, and we must be victorious: let each of us stand to our quarters and act according to law, and we cannot fail. Now I beg you to join me in chanting the popular song of "God save the King." Let us sing to the praise of him who will not fail to take care of our public liberties while we take care of our private rights." (*loud plaudits.*)

After being strenuously cheered, there was a cry of "Protect him," and immediately a stout band of a hundred pit-men escorted him in the midst of them, out of the house. God save the King was then sung by the audience with hats off and standing; Rule Britannia followed, and the audience quietly dispersed a little before eleven. The performances were entirely over at nine o'clock.

#### SEVENTEENTH NIGHT, October 18.

The uproar commenced, as usual, at half-price, and rendered the remainder of the performance completely pantomimical. Not a word of the two last acts of the play, nor of the entire farce, could be heard; and the curtain fell, as on the former evening, during the loudest confusion.

Placards were displayed by the pit, but their inscriptions were so long and their exhibition so



short, that they were read by few except those immediately around them. One intimated "that there were furnished apartments to let on the third tier of the house;" and another said of John Bull "that soon who's who he'd let them know." Many of them were snatched at by favourites of the managers, and became bones of the most severe contention. The scuffles they occasioned were, as viewed from the upper boxes, truly martial. Every movement excited a concussion which was felt by the whole pit. The opposition were always riotous; but the friends of the managers are very ill-advised thus to dare their antagonists to action. The attempt to pull down the placards is much more likely to continue the ferment than if they were suffered to remain up. God save the King is the never failing resource of the audience to recruit their spirits, but they sing it wretchedly out of tune. A man of taste in the pit discovered this, and, when the performance concluded, took advantage of a stillness, (with much labour procured for a pit-orator, whose heart failed him at last,) and pitched the song in its proper key, when he was immediately joined by the whole house standing, and the first verse was really well executed. This done, the audience treated themselves with many rounds of applause, and, in the gaiety of their hearts, ventured upon "Rule Britannia;" but they had tasked themselves too highly and

pitched the song too low. They meant well, however, and applauded themselves accordingly. There was no other orator but the abortive one in the pit. The following are the only new placards that could be well observed.

“The Drama’s laws” no longer are respected  
 It’s “patrons” are abused, insulted, and neglected;  
 But—Englishmen have laws they will not lose  
 Tho’ trampled on by thieftakers and Jews.”

“The Public Voice.”

“Townsend’s gang shall not frighten us,” &c.

Watch ribbands are an additional article on which “Old Prices” begin to be sported in gold letters, on a dark blue ground. Amongst other ingenious devices a number of toothpick catcalls have been made, serving the mouth for a double purpose. A whimsical parody on God save the King was put in circulation.

The house was cleared soon after ten.

#### EIGHTEENTH NIGHT, October 19.

The “Merchant of Venice” was the play this night, but whether Cooke, in *Shylock*, was the “Jew that Shakspeare drew,” or any other Jew, it was impossible to ascertain; the *Performers* who played the characters,—*hissers, groaners, &c.*



being determined that themselves alone should be heard, particularly in the two last acts. "*Who wins ?*" followed, which was clearly in favour of the performers before the curtain, who decidedly won the night, not a word of the farce being heard.

The same system and the same etiquette, in the conduct of the row, were observed, as on the former evenings. Mr. C. Kemble's appearance as Bassanio was the prompter's bell that summoned the exertions of that extraordinary vocal overture exhibited this season in the front of the house. The zeal of his opponents, to do them justice, was served up *hissing hot*. The concert was led by a *hound* in the two shilling gallery who opened in the true *tan yard* style, and was ably seconded by a female of the same genus, who *gave tongue* from the same quarter. The din of discord was principally confined to the pit and two shilling gallery. The applause from the boxes both above and below, which were much crowded, was very general.

The display of placards, mottos, epigrams, and other signals for revolt was trifling and few, compared with the former evenings, as was the number of them:—the scarcity of wit and spirit was still more remarkable. Only two leaders ventured to appear in the pit, with cards in their hats, bearing the printed letters O P; the cabalistical characters of "Old Prices."

Among the few placards exhibited, was one, representing on it a gibbet proper, a rope pendant, and a figure at the end with these words printed, "Kemble's deserts for extortion." Another exhibited the words "This theatre to be let, Kemble and Co. retiring from business." On another appeared the emblem of a *large key*, and announced, "Convenient apartments; removed from the Key,\* in Chandos-street. On another was printed "Cooke merits our pity, but Kemble our contempt." The placards seemed to meet no interruption, and soon disappeared from the mere want of opposition.

It is supposed that the subsidizing aid of the *boxing Jews* has been withdrawn.

The only pugilistic contest that occurred this night was between a *hisser* and a *clapper* in the front boxes. A single round decided in favour of the clapper.

When the play ended, the storm of yells and hisses was revived, with more violence than before, until an *Orpheus*, in the upper side boxes, drew forth his walking stick, in the shape of a German flute, and played, in admirable style,

\* A notorious brothel, which shared the fate of old Covent Garden Theatre about two years since, being destroyed by fire through the inadvertence of a bona roba. Like the new theatre it rose from its ruins with increased elegance, and it may be presumed that, having so far kept pace in destiny, it will imitate the temple of Apollo, by raising the *prices of admission*.

the plaintive Irish air of *Coolun*. It was heard with mute attention, and, like oil cast on the troubled waves, seemed to soothe the multitude into quiet. Indeed, they appeared like persons bitten by a tarantula, for music alone seemed to have any effect upon them, and the most boisterous part of the noise they made was by singing, in full chorus, the loyal air of God save the King.

It was not a little ludicrous to observe the emulation between the performers *on* and the performers *off* the stage, and the mutual indifference with which each treated the other.

After the final dropping of the curtain, a gentleman, in one of the side boxes, rose to propose three cheers for their *fair advocates*. This was received with extraordinary applause, and put in practice *sur le champ*. An orator in the gallery next proposed the same honour to Mrs. Clark, but it was overruled by an orator from the pit, who observed that such a proceeding might be construed into an approbation of the *private boxes*. Immediately arose a shout of "No Keys," "No \*\*\*\*\* houses," which continued some time. After this the pit gradually thinned, and the house was completely cleared by half past ten o'clock.

## NINETEENTH NIGHT, October 20.

This night gave little earnest of a termination to that unexampled contest which has been exhibited since the opening of the new theatre. The opposition is become perfectly systematic; for the first three acts, the house is generally thin and quiet, but, immediately, on the commencement of half-price, the confusion begins. This evening, during each of the songs in the opera, (the *Duenna*,) the pit united in a grand chorus of "God save the King," in which, of course, the voices of Incledon, Bellamy, and Mrs. Dickons, were completely lost.

The following placards appeared in the pit :

"No hired Jew,  
Or prices new."

A striking likeness of Mr. Kemble in acute pain, superscribed "Pity my aitches."

"If Captain Bull continues his nightly cruize, he will regain his old *prices*, and capture the *private-tier*."

## DIALOGUE.

MR. KEMBLE.—"Well now, Mr. Bull, after all we have done won't you pay the new prices?"

Answer.—MR. BULL.—"If I do I'll be damned."

“ No wonder John Kemble  
Don't chuse to be civil ;  
Set a beggar on horseback  
He'll ride to the Devil.”

“ No catching by charity on the 25th.”

The pit was the scene of several conflicts, and there was always room enough to form a ring for their performance. They mostly ended in smoke. That the rings however might not be formed for nothing, several persons amused themselves by running, as fast as they could, down the pit-benches, from one end to the other, falling into the arms of those on the opposite side. The benches exhibited a very rude appearance, being wholly despoiled of the baize which covered them. The noise was, as usual, mostly vocal. Once or twice indeed the sound of a horn, or perhaps the imitation of it, issued from the gallery, and was hailed by applauding welcomes.

After the fall of the curtain, at the close of the performance, a person stood up in the pit to address the audience. Having obtained silence, he began : “ Ladies and gentlemen, I intreat your profound silence.”—He “ could no more,” and sat down. The house was cleared soon after ten o'clock. A very humourous hand-bill was distributed through the house.

## TWENTIETH NIGHT, October 21.

This night (Saturday) has closed upon the confusion of another week's performance; and if a pre-judgment could be formed, from the confusion of the evening, there is as little prospect as ever of its final termination.

The first three acts of *Othello* were not considerably marred by interruptions, except a few passages of Cassio, in the drunken scene, where Mr. C. Kemble laid claim to the approbation of the major part of the audience. This provoked from the Anti-Kemble party a violent hiss. At half price the usual tumult commenced, and left little room for critical observation on the drama for the rest of the evening. The pit never presented so outrageous a scene; and, perhaps, since the beginning of the contest, so many actual breaches of the peace have not occurred as on this occasion, every five minutes exhibiting a boxing-match. If any unfortunate pugilist lost a hat, it was a signal for all the rest to attack and turn him out, just as turkey-cocks assail any hapless companion, whose head is disfigured. The combatants were too much engaged to exhibit many placards: the following, however, were visible:

“ Oh! John Kemble! hadst thou but served the

public with half the zeal thou'st tried to fill thy purse, John Bull would never thus have used thee!"

"A grand jubilee will be held here, for the victory over new prices. Boxes 6s. Pit 3s. 6d."

"Nought, my lads, shall make us tremble,  
No—not the hired host of Kemble."

"The unexpired term of the lease of this house to be let."

After the entertainment, an orator offered to address the pit, if they would promise to protect him.

They were, however, too busy in binding up their wounds, many having been received in the conflict, to give him any assistance to that effect. He accordingly retired, exclaiming loudly against their ingratitude and want of spirit.

"And now their mightiest quell'd the battle swerv'd,  
"With many an inroad gor'd; deformed rout  
"Enter'd, and foul disorder;"

MILTON.

The combatants on both sides, from mutual exhaustion, drew the battle; and, after they had sung odd ends of "God Save the King" and "Rule Britannia," the house was perfectly cleared about eleven.

By TWENTY-FIRST NIGHT, October 23.

At the usual time the uproar re-commenced, and continued, with unabated violence, to the conclusion of the performance. The two first acts of the opera were, however, heard with very little disturbance, as being previous to half-price admission. At its introduction, and on the commencement of the third act, a placard, of "Old Prices or no Play," was hoisted in the pit, and from that instant tumult reigned triumphant. The whole pit, according to established usage, danced and sang, and even seemed more determined upon the attainment of their object than they have for some time been. The following placards were conspicuous :

" And John Bull said unto John Kemble,  
' thou art the man."

" Lads in the pit,  
D'ye think 'tis fit,  
That our King's Jubilee  
Should be King John's?"

" Be Britons on the 25th,  
And rally on the 26th."

" No mock charity on the 25th."  
" Only six and three-eighths per cent.  
A lie,—a gross lie."



“The proprietors have some snug private rooms to let, for the night.”

This was carried about the pit, and finally beaten to atoms with sticks. A gibbet was then displayed, with a figure suspended, and the inscription of “A Cure for my Aitches.” Shortly after its exhibition, a person in the boxes exclaimed: “Kemble for ever.”—“New Prices for ever.” “You are all cowards in the pit; instead of pulling off your hats to make a noise, you should keep your thick heads warm.” This bold orator proved to be a stock-broker, and was instantly assailed by the mal-contents of both pit and boxes, with all the opprobrious epithets possible to be bestowed. Some exclaimed, “Put him in the *Stocks*, he is a *Jew*.”—“Throw him into the pit.”—“How much per cent. do you get?”—“Make him waddle out like a lame duck as he is.” And many others of a violent description, which he bore with the greatest composure, and firmly maintained his seat.

The managers, being determined that the audience should not be the sole manufacturers of pantomime, got up that of Oscar and Malvina, with great splendour, hoping to dazzle the opposition dumb. The latter were, however, blind to every thing, except the one object they kept strenuously in view.

In one part, where a mysterious pedlar's box is shut by one of the actors from the sight of

another, a wag cried out, in evident double allusion, "No *Private Boxes*." Oscar and Malvina is full of gladiatorial, so was the pit of pugilistic, combats. The latter were all sham, and, perhaps, as innocent as the former; but the concussions were so truly awful in the pit as to give no mean idea of the shock of two opposing armies in the field. As the whole pit were standing up, some persons in the back rows were frequently pushed with violence on their front rank men, these fell upon those before them, and so on to the front of the pit, the push gaining force in proportion to the declivity.

"So when the child whom nurse from danger guards,  
Sends Jack for mustard with a pack of cards,  
Kings, queens, and knaves, throw one another down,  
Till the whole pack is scattered and o'erthrown."

FIELDING'S TOM JONES.

At the conclusion of the pantomime, the shout was sufficient to rend the curtain as it fell, and the pit sported an assortment of groans and cheers; the former for Mr. Kemble, the private boxes, &c. and the latter for Old Prices, their noble selves, &c. After this they sat down every one, and rested their feet but not their legs; when each went his own way, bawling "Old Prices," even till they got outside the doors, and braving the police. The house was wrapped in silence and darkness shortly after eleven. Many of the

leading oppositionists wore the letters O P, surmounted by a crown, cast in silver, and more in pewter, in their hats.

The only variation to the usual vocal howl is occasioned by the regular beat of a march, in quick step, upon the seats of the pit.

#### TWENTY SECOND NIGHT, October 24.

The proprietors were, on this occasion, presented with a melancholy omen, as to the probable consequences of the long-pending contest between them and their audiences. On the rising of the curtain, the house appeared almost deserted, and, at half price, the pit was not half filled. The few who appeared were unanimous, and loud in their disapprobation, which, as usual, rose to an extraordinary pitch upon the appearance of Mr. C. Kemble. Very few placards appeared, as, in consequence of the deserted state of the pit, the officers had roaming room enough to endanger the security of the exhibitors. Several scuffles took place in the course of the evening, and were, alternately, varied by a dance or a song. The thinness of the pit, this night, may be accounted for, from the report of the awful concussions which shake this part of the house during the nightly broils. The difficulty of upholding the uproar was apparent, but proceeded

more from weakness of number than from weakness of lungs. The pit did their best, and seemed to think

“The fewer men, the greater share of honour.”

During the representation of Oscar and Malvina, which was this night repeated, they supported their spirits by singing their two usual favourite airs, with the addition of “Hearts of Oak.” They dwelt upon the following passages with peculiar vigour :

“For Britons never will be Slaves.”

“Steady boys, steady,

We always are ready,

To fight and to conquer again and again.”

The house was cleared soon after the conclusion of the pantomime ; the pit only staying to indulge in their usual application of cheers and groans, and their accustomed round of choruses, once more.

## TWENTY THIRD NIGHT, October 25.

### JUBILEE.

It is lamentable to record the continuance of confusion on a night of such universal enjoyment and hilarity. The charitable purpose to which the profits of this evening's entertainments were

allotted might have been expected to produce a different effect on a British audience. It was not however the case, all was uproar.

“ Ab ovo usque ad malum.”

Macklin's comedy of the “ Man of the World,” with all its popularity and attractions, from the unrivalled performance of Cooke, could not command attention nor drown one prejudice in the vortex of another.

The first-price audience, contrary to the usual practice for some time, though not crowded, began to exhibit marks of disapprobation. “ Rule Britannia” and “ God Save the King” were, for the first time, rather appropriately chaunted by audience and actors together. During the night, Mr. C. Kemble never opened his mouth without receiving manifest signs of an illiberal personal attack, for his crime of consanguinity. On one of these occasions of uproar, the police-officers rushed into the centre of the oppositionists in the pit, and carried off two young men to the public-office, Bow-Street. This mode of preserving the peace seemed to increase the opposition. From that moment the tumult became tempestuous, and nothing could allay it; hisses, shouts, groans, and catcalls, completely drowned the actor's voice, who strutted and fretted his hour, and then was heard no more.

Some placards were hoisted in the pit, the only ones, of any novelty, which we observed were the following :

“ The Road to Ruin.”

“ King George for ever,  
The managers never.”

An after-piece, calculated to meet this happy anniversary, and called *the Jubilee*, was represented, but clamour rendered it inaudible, and completely superseded the duty of the critic's pen. The last scene in this little piece was particularly splendid, representing a sea-port town, and a ship of war, most brilliantly illuminated; the vessel fired a royal salute, and immediately a procession of soldiers and sailors, bearing inscriptions, which designated all the victories and important acquisitions of the present reign, advanced to the front of the stage, singing, “ God Save the King” and “ Rule Britannia.” A dance followed, in which, as well as in the song, the pitites zealously and emulously joined.

The new theatre was this evening lighted up with much taste and simplicity. All the windows in front of that fine edifice were ornamented with a double row of lamps, which, lining the sides of the windows throughout, had a most pleasing and brilliant effect. The view from Bow-Street was fine, and corresponded well with the magnificent simplicity of the building.

## TWENTY-FOURTH NIGHT, October 26.

At length the tumult at this theatre seems to have subsided, and the public think that the most effectual method of attaining their object is to desert the house altogether. Even at half-price the pit did not appear half full, and, except a few partial hisses now and then, the principal noise was directed against the *orders* in the boxes. A placard was displayed but quickly taken down, and the whole play was heard throughout. Not so the new entertainment of the Jubilee, during the performance of which there was so much noise and scuffle as to enable a person to form as little judgment on its merits as on the preceding evening.

As a spectacle it is an insult to the taste of the town; in the last scene two processional cars, bearing emblematical figures of the four quarters of the globe, were actually drawn round the stage by lamplighters, scene-shifters, &c. in their own costume! Amongst the allegorical figures of the British constitution, painted on boards, appeared that of LIBERALITY; when, immediately, an exclamation was heard of "Off Liberty, take it from the stage, put it last in the procession."

A large paper was erected in the course of the

evening with a skull and cross bones, and underneath these words,

“Resurgam,

Boxes 6s. Pit 3s. 6d.”

Another caricature was introduced of a person sitting in a magisterial chair, with a label from his lips, containing this inscription,

“What not applaud?—Commit him.”

And under the figure,

“*Read this!*”

“The good old king for ever, huzza! and old prices.”

The pantomime of Oscar and Malvina went off with little or no interruption; the enemy, in the pit, being so weak as to be incapable of making an uproar. A groggy seaman, from the boxes, made a speech, in which he said that he came there to be merry and wise, but that his dislike to the Bow-street officers inclined him vastly to a row. Like the other nautical orators, his address was occasionally interlarded with sea-phraseology; and he succeeded in slipping his cables from along-side the constable. Upon the whole the spirit of the opposition is become faint, and the number of its advocates evidently diminished.



## TWENTY-FIFTH NIGHT, October 27.

This night the house was better attended. The pit was more than *half* full at *whole* price and *wholly* full at *half* price.

The musical entertainment of the Jubilee, for the first time, met a hearing, the managers having judiciously placed it first in the bill of fare.

It acts better unheard; and, as it is a mere slight vehicle for music and naval loyalty, should not have run beyond the evening which gave it birth. The performance, both of this and the *Beaux Stratagem* which followed, was heard without interruption till the half-price came in, and then the oppositionists could make very little stand. The last two acts of the comedy were however much disturbed, and, during that period, there was one case of concussion in the pit. The pantomime of the former nights met with less interruption, the oppositionists quitting a field where their numbers were so few. Not a placard was exhibited.

## TWENTY-SIXTH NIGHT, October 28.

On this evening were represented the Jubilee, the comedy of the *School of Reform*, and the

farce of Raising the Wind. The popular tumult within these walls having, in a measure, completely subsided, some critical cognizance of what passes may not be unacceptable. The prelude, which it has been thought proper to call the Jubilee, bears no more analogy to the illustrious anniversary, of which it assumes the title, than it does to the festivities of harvest-home. Several Covent-garden shepherds and shepherdesses walked on and then walked off, each singing a ditty, expressive of their being love-sick, though the letter of the argument could not be understood; but, if a judgment may be formed of the lyric effusions by a comparison with the nature of the colloquy, the result must be highly unfavourable to the author. Yet there is a glimmering of propriety visible in his forbearing habits; he will not publish the words of his songs, which is a clear demonstration, that, though he may not possess the brilliant faculty of wit, he is not wholly untinged with discretion.

“ Oh! Discretion thou art a jewel,  
 Much thou dost for mercy's sake;  
 For, when the critics would be cruel,  
 Thou hold'st the victim from the stake.”

Mr. Liston personates a drunken boatswain; and indulges in a variety of nautical jokes that

may be comprehended any where but on the fore-castle.

This ghost of a trifle terminates with a sort of small illumination that looks more like a Lilliputian port, on a rejoicing night, than a British haven in splendour.

The opposition to the new prices seems entirely worn out. The discontented appear to have lost all their former courage and perseverance, quite on a sudden. The entertainments were not, in any manner, disturbed till half past nine, to which period the admission of half-price was prolonged. After that, the malcontents gave signs of the living spark not being entirely extinguished; but their efforts were neither strong nor continued. When the curtain fell, at the end of the play, some dozen voices in the pit clubbed for a shout.

Though the house was very full, this has been the most quiet evening since the opening of the theatre.

#### TWENTY-SEVENTH NIGHT, October 30.

The long-promised appearance of Mrs. Clarke from Manchester, in the character of Euphrasia, in Murphy's heavy play of the Grecian Daughter, took place this night. The lady was ushered in by the following prologue from Mr. Cooke,

most injudiciously alluding to what it was pleased to call the late "hostile rage."

" Though hostile rage so long within these walls  
 Has rais'd a tempest that each heart appals,  
 A female candidate comes forth to night,  
 Who knows your kindness equals all your might.  
 Hence on that kindness she e'en now relies,  
 While the winds roar, and while the billows rise;  
 For, whatso'er may Britons rouse and vex,  
 With pride they still protect the gentle sex.  
 But, though our novice ventures free from dread  
 Lest the storm burst on her defenceless head,  
 Yet, when her arduous enterprize she views,  
 The danger awes her and her power subdues;  
 For fear that critics, a terrific train,  
 Her efforts should reject as rash and vain.  
 Success indeed those efforts oft have found,  
 And hope has cheer'd her on provincial ground;  
 But here, 'tis said, that judgment holds her seat,  
 And sages more profound and rigid meet;—  
 Well—still she dares to urge her humble plea,  
 Since mercy softens every stern decree."

The obnoxious words of this prologue were instantly caught by the pit, and it was throughout interrupted by expressions of disapprobation.

Mrs. Clarke possesses a good face, and a majestic figure; but her attitudes are generally false. Her voice is good for as much as there is of it; but she is obliged to exert it rather painfully in order to be heard in so large a theatre. It is

difficult to shew much tragic genius in a play possessing so little, but we fear that Mrs. Clarke has not much theatrical talent, and painful conviction must pronounce her elocution to be positively bad.

The play was dressed in that perfect Grecian costume so familiarised to the public by the figures of FLAXMAN and HOPE.

The scene representing Eudocia's tomb was of the strictest and chastest Grecian architecture.

Its design is attributed to the ingenious architect of the theatre.

The house was crowded at whole price, it being Monday night; at half-price the opposition rallied; and, between their screams and their adversaries' applause, the last two acts of the play were completely inaudible. The tumult was principally directed against Mr. C. Kemble, whose death as Dionysius occasioned great exultation.

The farce was more distinctly heard than the last two acts of the play, but there was yet some opposition and more applause. The audience left the theatre immediately after the performance was over.

#### TWENTY-EIGHTH NIGHT, October 31.

This night the last new operatic drama of the Exile and the Portrait of Cervantes were per-

formed to a very crowded audience. The dress boxes exhibited a display of beauty and fashion, and every thing went on tolerably well till the commencement of the fourth act of the play, when the opposition began to rally, and howls and hisses became the order of the night. In the course of these proceedings a Mr. Ridly was taken into custody and carried before the Bow-street magistrates, charged with blowing a child's trumpet, and with having the letters O P in his hat: he was bailed by two of his friends.

During the fifth act six or seven hats were exhibited in the pit with the O P cypher in front. They were, in a cluster, nearly in the centre part of the pit, and in the midst of the groupe was a barrister who wore the cabalistic initials with as much dignity as he would his wig and gown. Between the acts he was generally noticed by more than half the pit, who rose with hat in hand and gave three distinct cheers of "Clifford for ever."

As the evening advanced the noise increased, and Liston's fun, Munden's drollery, and Jones's flippancy, were exerted in vain. The oppositionists literally began to *crow* at their success. At the conclusion of the performances they gave three cheers and straightway dispersed.

## TWENTY-NINTH NIGHT, November 1.

The comedy of Every Man in his Humour, sustained by the whole comic strength of the company, afforded a rich treat to the admirers of the drama. The three first acts were heard with the greatest attention; but a partial discontent, in the pit, at half-price, in some degree interrupted the remainder. The noise gradually increased towards the commencement of the pantomime, in consequence of the applause of a great number who seemed not to consider that the contribution of their cheers only swelled the uproar which they wished to drown. The beautiful overture to Oscar and Malvina was however audible.

Several placards, to which the tumult was entirely confined, were handed about the pit; the following are specimens.

“ O P.—Clifford for ever.”

“ Death or victory.”

“ Rally and conquer.”

“ The Devil is black  
And so is Jack.”

The O P hats were very numerous; upwards of a hundred appeared in the pit and several in

the boxes. Small metal ornaments with O P surmounted by a crown were also worn. Some hats sported the inscription of "Old Prices" at full length.

The tumult acquired strength as the evening advanced and the malcontents quitted the theatre with the insignia of their party remaining in their hats.

### THIRTIETH NIGHT, November 2.

The uproar still increases. This night it began as usual with the entrance of half-price. The pit was, till that period, very thinly attended, but it soon filled, and on no former occasion has it displayed a more unanimous opposition than on this.

Almost every other hat, in this part of the house, was inscribed with the symbol of opposition, and several old placards made their re-appearance. One announces as follows :

"A new edition of placards with considerable improvements is in preparation, and will speedily be produced."

Several small rings were formed in the pit for the display of mock fights, and, towards the end, a very large one was cleared for the amusement of running up and down the benches. The boxes also were more noisy than usual, and a



placard was, for some time, held, even there, at the end of a gentleman's stick.

At the conclusion of the performances, not a word of which was intelligible from the moment the half-pricites entered, three cheers were given for Mr. Clifford, and three groans for Mr. Kemble. After this a person suggested that the O Ps should depart in procession, two and two, an idea which was instantly caught at, and the array was marshalled accordingly. In this manner they proceeded, huzzaing and calling out "Old Prices," through Bow-street to the Strand, where they gave three loud cheers at the Morning Chronicle office, three loud groans at that of the Morning Post. It was now proposed to go to the office of the Statesman, in Fleet-street, whither a great part of the procession actually went, acquiring strength as they proceeded, and loudly cheered the above named paper.

### THIRTY-FIRST NIGHT, November 3.

The aspect of the uproar varied very little from that of the last night. From half-price no more was heard; and the pit took to their usual amusement of leaving a long space in the middle of it for perambulation. It is surprising to see how expertly they hop from one bench to another, like a canary bird, on its perches, in a cage. The

house was of about that degree of fulness to allow the formation of this vacuum.

Many placards were hoisted, but none possessed the novelty which had been last night promised. The following was more remarkable for the conspicuousness of the letters in which it was written than for any thing else. The paper was some yards in length.

“ Since potent hisses prove the public mind,  
Which has of late been of the hissing kind,  
Let those hiss now who never hissed before,  
And these who've always hiss'd now hiss the more.”

The following were likewise noticeable,

“ No Morning Post.”

“ Arise ! arise ! or be for ever fallen.”

“ Loyalty and Old Prices.”

Between the play and the pantomime the pit struck up “ God save the King ” with more vigour than ever, and sang it so well that the whole house, boxes and all, stood up to a man.

Now a penny rattle was heard, now a two-penny, and now a watchman's ; and the degrees of noise with which these were each hailed in their turn was in the direct ratio of the noise made by the respective instruments. The introducer of the watchman's rattle was hawked at by the police ; a furious scuffle took place, but the opposition proved victors. The rattle was

passed about from hand to hand to evade the police, as the slipper is shoved about in the Christmas gambol to evade the hunter of it; each giving the rattle a spring. This instrument encouraged the appearance of a horn, which was blown amidst loud acclamations of delight.

The performance concluded but not the tumult. The O Ps, as they now style themselves, remained in the pit a considerable time after the curtain dropped, groaning for the newspapers which were inimical to their objects, and cheering those which are favourable to them. They also gave a groan for the neutrality of the galleries, and hooted the tenants of the private boxes till they were obliged to retire. This done, the proposition was made, as before, that the O Ps should leave the house in procession, which they did, quitting the theatre at the Piazza-door, and crossing Covent-garden into Southampton-street, groaning for all the newspapers in the vicinage which met their displeasure, and huzzaing for those they approved. Not thinking it worth their while to proceed into Fleet-street, the mob dispersed at Somerset-House.

### THIRTY-SECOND NIGHT, November 4.

This night the spirit of disorder again waved the banner of defiance, and the uproar was gene-

ral during the whole of the performance. The house was but thinly attended till half price, when the pit filled and presented an extensive display of the letters O P. Many who wore those ornaments took care to have them of the best quality. The cypher was sported, by several, embroidered in gold, on blue silk ribbons; others were formed in white silk, with spangles; and the additional words, "No private boxes."

The pitites appeared in the greatest good humour. At one time, they all joined in expressing a sort of mock indignation against a man, who appeared in the garb of a venerable Jewish rabbi. This dress, which was of course assumed, added variety to the confusion. He wore a large black beard, and slouched hat, and suffered himself to be pushed about the pit, by his companions, without betraying the slightest symptoms of displeasure. While he was the object of attack, many exclaimed, "a Jew! a Jew! turn him out." The sham Israelite kept up the deception until he was quite exhausted, when his many roaring followers allowed him to sit down and recover his wind. The row was also kept up by a very athletic man, who, after a long contest, was taken out by the constables, and conveyed to Bowstreet. He returned, however, in about twenty minutes, and never was an unexpected reinforcement received with greater rapture by an army on the verge of a defeat.

Having resumed his station, in the middle of the pit, he obtained silence and made a speech. He informed his auditors, that he had been taken out of the theatre, in the most violent manner, by Wood, the waterman, and other persons in favour of the managers, who conveyed him to Bow-street, where he had been released by the magistrate, on his promise to appear again at the office. He concluded by saying, that on Monday he should attend the magistrate and support his rights as an Englishman.

After three cheers were given for certain papers, the orator took his seat. After this oration, the pitites entertained themselves with a dance, which shook the house almost to its foundation. A person, at the same time, took his station close to the orchestra and brandished his rattle over the heads of the musicians, with one hand, while the other was employed in waving his hat. At the other extremity of the orchestra, in the pit, a person exhibited the representation of a large key with two figures dangling to it. This was presented to the stage. The rear ranks of the hostile phalanx were also distinguished by placards elevated as standards. Shouts of triumph rent the dome when they appeared. Some bore the common allusions, but others were inscribed with expressions at once indecent and disgusting. Among the moderate sort were the following.

“ Dartmouth compels Black Jack to restore  
Old prices or shut up the theatre.”

“ Boxes private  
Don't connive at.”

“ Shall the public strike their flag to a player  
and monopoly?”

In consequence of the insults offered to the ladies in the private boxes, many of them quitted the theatre upon the first volley of abuse, others remained, under a hope that the scurrility would subside, but, no pause in favour of modesty having occurred, every woman of delicacy left the house.

After the fall of the curtain, the O P's sallied out in procession as usual down Bow-street. Having set up a most dreadful howl at the door of the public office, in that street, they proceeded to those papers in the Strand which are now in the habit of receiving their nightly salutations. After this, they repaired to Mr. Kemble's dwelling house, in Great Russell-street, calling at the Recorder's, in their way through Chancery-lane, and giving him a groan *en passant*. In their route to Mr. Kemble's, they were desired by their leaders not to stay longer in Russell-street than ten minutes. This injunction was closely attended to by what may be denominated the *theatrical* part of the mob: but a considerable number of striplings, who had joined them in the

streets, remained about three quarters of an hour longer, shouting and groaning, and occasionally knocking at the door; and one or two of the more mischievous broke a few panes in the windows of the basement and ground stories. The relics of the mob were dispersed about a quarter past eleven, by the constable of the night, and the watchmen, aided by a few persons, who seemed to volunteer upon the occasion; among these was *orator* Gibbons.

### THIRTY-THIRD NIGHT, November 6.

This being Monday evening the uproar was greater than ever. The house was choked full at half price, and pit, boxes, and galleries, all joined in the noise. The placards were very numerous. Great applause was excited by one of an heraldic nature, which *quartered* keys, rattles, and trumpets, and was bemottoed "Loyalty and our rights."

"Terms of peace. Old Prices,—no Private Boxes,—and Brandon discharged."

This latter seemed to meet the sense of the whole house. Every species of pit-uproar and confusion was witnessed, and the boxes held placards which the galleries applauded. At the conclusion of the performance, which was not immediately perceived by the audience, on account

of their numerous other engagements, cheers of all sorts were given; "golden opinions were showered down upon all sorts of people," and those were relieved by an intermixture of groans. The pit cheered the boxes, the galleries, and lastly themselves. The private boxes, whose obnoxiousness seems nightly to grow on the town, were deprived of their inhabitants, either by gross exclamations, or by pointing at them, from the pit, the "slow unmoving" sticks of those who came so armed.

After groans and cheers were exhausted within the walls, the pitites left the theatre, and, in stronger force than ever, paraded out of the piazza, whence they took their usual newspaper-office route, performing at each shrine their customary tribute of adoration or execration. They afterwards made the same debouchement as on last night, but were anticipated, at Mr. Kemble's dwelling, by a great party of constables, who surrounded and took into custody some of the most active concerned in the operations of the body.

### THIRTY-FOURTH NIGHT, November 7.

The house was not so full as on last night; but the uproar began with the first rising of the curtain. A noisy party stationed themselves in the



centre of the pit, and, during the first act, effectually prevented every word of the opera from being heard, by their ironical calls for "Silence," and their loud laughter at the performance. They continued, for the first act, to brave the police, but, at the second, they were deprived of their ringleader, by the interposition of the officers. That portion of the opera was heard in consequence; but, at its close, the noisy oppositist returned triumphant, just in time to meet his congenial spirits, the half pricites; and, from that moment forward, all was discord. The tumult here arrived at its acme; and the rage of opposition became so great, that two hats were thrown from the pit into the orchestra. A clog was thrown upon the stage, and a penny piece, from some obscure part of the house, struck Mr. Fawcett on the breast.

The placards were very numerous, and were patronized by the boxes. They, in general, breathed a spirit of moderation, and more than one conveyed sentiments to the following effect:

"Be silent without,  
Be noisy within,  
And then without doubt,  
John Bull, you must win."

At the conclusion of the performance, the audience were thrice addressed, but none of the

speeches shewed any great judgment or education.

The first orator from the boxes read an account of the Bow-Street proceedings, from an evening paper of yesterday, and talked of Magna Charta and British liberty. The second from the pit was very vociferous, and seemed accustomed to the applause of his little senate at some debating clubs: he quoted Shakespeare's "Cloud-capt towers," and came off with a world of applause. The third, from the same part of the house, merely advised the O Ps to evade the police, by taking the insignia from their hats as they quitted the theatre, and then to go quietly home. They were wise enough to take this advice, and there was consequently but little street-parade.

### THIRTY-FIFTH NIGHT, November 8.

The disturbance was this night repeated, according to prescription; and the performance was utterly lost in the customary din of horns, rattles, groaning, barking, and other O P amusements.

The house was thin at the commencement of Inkle and Yarico, and, as the O Ps had not acquired strength, Mrs. Dickens was heard, with great pleasure, by the lovers of harmony, in the

duet, "O Simple Maid." Mrs. Liston, in Wowski, excited much laughter, and, in short, the opera altogether would perhaps have afforded a rich treat, if the oppositionists had suffered it to have been heard.

At half price the pit filled, and the murmurs, which had previously produced interruption, increased to peals of thunder, as loud as yet has been witnessed. The O P's commenced operations by clearing the centre of the pit, and, when sufficient room had been thus obtained, they practised feats of agility. One man actually made a standing leap over six seats. When tired of this display, they exhibited several single-stick matches, in the gladiatorial style. An old Roman would have fancied himself in the midst of a circus for these exhibitions. A new dance was also performed by the *extra corps de ballet*, to the tune of O P, a violent stamp with the right foot, was accompanied by the exclamation O, while the left beat the benches to the sound of P. During this heavy fandango, the house absolutely shook.

"God Save the King" was sung, and the several groans and hisses repeatedly served up to those papers which attracted their indignation. There were no speeches, at least none that was not silenced by the more grateful uproar.

Among the placards, which were principally

levelled at the private boxes, the only novel ones were—

“Virtuous Ladies will not feel hurt at our endeavours to censure the indecent Private Boxes.”

“Victory or Death.”

“J. K. shall see

That the O P

Ever will be

From New Price free.”

Mr. Winholt, who has taken a conspicuous part in the row, appeared in the boxes, and animated the O P s by waving his hat and singing “God Save the King.”

### THIRTY-SIXTH NIGHT, November 9.

Uproar as usual. This night Mrs. Clarke made her appearance as Juliet, but she is not expected to become quite a star in the firmament of Melpomene.

The voice of opposition was raised in full cry, and their rattles, horns, and whistles, were in loud requisition. Very few O P s were sported in the pit till after half price. Two were exhibited in the gallery at an early hour, but attracted no notice.

Several old placards were occasionally hoisted. The following one was new :

“ Sons of Britain ne'er give o'er,  
Have the prices as before ;  
Your opinions shew each night ;  
Fear not Read you're in the right.”

Another placard, which was also new, appeared to give much pleasure to the *cognoscenti* of the pit. It was divided into several compartments, with “ God Save the King ” at the head. In one compartment was a large gilt O P, with a large bell to the right ; in another a bull, *couchant*, with a gilt collar, in which were also the letters O P, and, on the left, a large watchman's rattle, with two lines below :

“ Our rights and independence.”

A gentleman made his escape from the boxes to the pit, in order to elude the pursuit of the officers, one of whom was prevented from following him by two or three gentlemen in the box, and, during the rude encounter, two ladies nearly fainted away. As soon as a counsellor, who has distinguished himself in the pit as well as at the bar, appeared, a placard was hoisted of, “ Clifford for ever.” A lady in the front of one of the upper boxes sported the letter O P on a white fan, which elicited three cheers from the pit.

The pitites have now a knack of reiterating O P in unison, the shock of which will be understood by those persons who have heard the boys of Christ's Hospital, when supping in public, pronounce the "Amen" to their prayer.

After the usual loyal anthem had been sung, and the accustomed duty of reciprocal compliment paid by the different parts of the house to each other, the audience quietly separated without any speechification. The private boxes are now almost deserted by men, and entirely by females.

### THIRTY-SEVENTH NIGHT, November 10.

There is no ebb observed in the tide of popular indignation." The pit was as uproarious as ever, and a few good placards made their appearance: such as

"New prices down to hell,  
And say old prices sent ye thither."

"John Kemble may finesse and cheat,  
But can't his prices save,  
For John Bull holds the king of trumps,  
Which always beats a knave."

"John Kemble in his drowning need,  
Relies upon a fragile READ."

The pit danced to the music of their O P, forming a long vacancy, up and down which they footed it in couples. The noise was kept up to the last, and the evening's entertainment concluded with hooting out the inhabitants of the private boxes.

### THIRTY-EIGHTH NIGHT, November 11.

Though the house was rather thinly attended this evening, yet the performance of *Love in a Village* was frequently interrupted; and, when the half-price folks obtained admission, the row was renewed in the loudest style. Several *Irish boys*, from St. Giles's, attended in their long great coats, with *shilalahs*, in expectation of a glorious fray.

The O Ps were numerous, and several females were distinguished by wearing the initials about their dresses. Two men, dressed like grooms, attracted much observation by sitting in the first tier of boxes, with O P in their hats. Several sparrows were let loose from the gallery, with small placards fastened round their legs. After making a circuit of the house, they settled on the stage, and were taken by the carpenters of the theatre. The contents of the billets of which they were the bearers were not generally known,

but were carried to the manager's room for inspection.

Placards were general, and the following were the most remarkable:

“Terms of peace.

Managers.—What do ye want?

Answer.—Old prices.

An apology for insults offered to the public by hired ruffians and fighting Jews.

Abolish the private boxes.

Relinquish the prosecutions, and trust to public liberality.

Sine qua non.

John Bull.”

“Statement of victories gained by the advocates of the public cause over King Kemble.

The hired Jews defeated;

Kemble driven from the stage;

Private boxes held up to the odium they deserve;

Finale,—John Bull triumphant.”

A caricature was also exhibited, of a bull, tossing the manager. Mr. C——, the barrister, appeared in the pit among the O Ps, from whom he received several tributes of applause. Horns, rattles, and catcalls, were heard the whole evening, but there were no scuffles with the police.



The performances, before the curtain, contained all the variety of martial dances, sham fights, bench-capers, and loyal songs. Those of the stage were over at half-past ten o'clock.

### THIRTY-NINTH NIGHT, November 13.

The favourite tragedy of Richard III. and the afterpiece of the Quaker, found themselves in very noisy company on this night. Till half-price, however, the attempts to disturb the performances were very feeble. In the early part of the evening, a person appeared in the pit with a red night-cap, which occasioned considerable mirth, but he was soon removed to Bow-Street office. A naval officer, in one of the boxes, attracted some notice, by calling out occasionally, "Turn out the blackguards: O P for blackguards, but N P for gentlemen." He was afterwards silenced by the entrance of half-price, when the house overflowed in every part. Then came the tug of war, with all the usual accompaniments of bells, rattles, and horns, and a continual succession of varied uproar and noise. A figure was exhibited in the stocks, on an elevated standard, with a large key by his side, and a motto at the top—

“ To guilty minds a terrible example.”

SHAKESPEARE.

And underneath—

“ For keeping a house of ill fame.”

This seemed to give much pleasure to the O P amateurs. The following also made their appearance:

“ No Blind-Boy Hewetson !”

“ No false-swearing informer,” &c.

“ The rascals, by demolishing my *panes*, have increased my *itches*.”

During the farce, Mr. LISTON being singled out by hooting, if possible, somewhat more deafening than that bestowed upon the rest of the performers, he at length stepped forward, and made as if he wished to address the audience. “ Silence ” was so long and loudly called for, at this overture, that it was thought it never would be obtained. At length Mr. LISTON did contrive to speak, as follows, interrupted only by shouts of “ Hear him,” from those who feared they would be debarred that pleasure :

“ Ladies and Gentlemen,

I cannot but perceive, from your conduct this evening, that I have unhappily fallen under your displeasure; but I trust that,

with your kind hearing, I shall be able to remove every unfavourable impression which misrepresentation has occasioned.

About three weeks ago there appeared a letter, in an evening paper, stating that I had averred, in a public coffee-room, "that the managers would have gained their point, had it not been for the *blackguard citizens*." This letter appeared on a Saturday, and my answer was printed, in the same paper, on the Monday following; wherein I denied the charge, and here I trusted the business would end; but, to my surprize, I found that the same charge was repeated in a morning paper of Saturday last. I have now only to declare, most unequivocally, upon the honour of a man, that I never in my life uttered such words as those imputed to me."

This speech was followed by huzzas, and Mr. Liston was again received into accustomed favour. In the middle of the second tier of boxes, several gentlemen, assisted by some ladies near them, employed themselves in pinning the placards along the front, which afforded much satisfaction to the applauding groundlings.

At the conclusion of the performance, the usual scenes were acted, interspersed with the usual songs, and the pitites quitted the theatre with O P and N P B (no private boxes) in their hats, and the same initials in their mouths. The major part of the company, in the boxes,

remained in the theatre until the whole of the ceremony was over.

#### FORTIETH NIGHT, November 14.

The house was rather quiet until half price, when a determined body of the O P advocates entered the pit, and commenced their usual serenade of howling, groans, &c. aided by the customary discordant instrumental sounds. A person of mean appearance thrust himself, in a most indecent manner, into one of the dress boxes, where he greatly annoyed two ladies of respectable appearance, by his vulgar expressions and filthy dress. He was requested, by several gentlemen in the box, to conduct himself properly, but he answered with a volley of abuse. In consequence of his determined effrontery, a general cry prevailed of "Turn him out." This ungracious task was undertaken by a spirited young man; a great scuffle and disturbance was the consequence, but the obnoxious person was driven to the adjoining box, and finally into the passage.

The O P symbols, on the present occasion, were extremely numerous. Many were gilt, and surmounted by a large crown. Others were of plated metal, and some again were printed in a striking manner. The friends of the *row* appear to have improved in their ideas of distinction.

In addition to the hat-initials, new theatrical medals were worn on the breast, suspended from the neck by a garter-blue ribband. This ornament cuts a very brilliant figure, and was worn by several ladies. One man in the boxes displayed a caricature in his hat, namely, a figure of John Bull, with a rattle in his hand, exclaiming "Old Prices." At his feet laid a man, whom John Bull was in the act of kicking.

The pit was not more than two thirds filled, and the vacant seats enabled the oppositionists to practice a new dance, which they named the rattlesnake minuet. This novel movement was performed by two persons, each holding a watchman's rattle. The first was followed by the second man, at the distance of about six or eight yards; and, by running over the pit, springing their rattles at intervals, they kept up a continual noise, which was invigorated by the clamorous approbation of their companions. The O P dance was not forgotten, and, in short, the voices of the performers were completely drowned.

In the farce of the Portrait of Cervantes, the appearance of Liston in a shroud, which was meant to create involuntary bursts of laughter, was totally disregarded. The placards were numerous: among them were—

" Be firm in the cause,  
Injustice not fearing;  
You have public applause  
In spite of *Mainwaring*."

“ John Bull can't be imposed upon,  
Threats won't make him dissemble,  
His voice has silenced many a don,  
So will it Johnny Kemble.”

“ Rally and conquer.”

After the dropping of the curtain, the pitites rested from their labours, and, having sung their usual airs, quitted the theatre and dispersed.

#### FORTY-FIRST NIGHT, November 15.

The row commenced in the third act of “Speed the Plough,” and, at half price, increased to the usual pitch. After much pushing and bustling, the pitites opened their ball with the O P dance. Wrestling, and broad-sword play with sticks, were practised in the highest style. During the scene of confusion, a party of constables sallied, with the intent of securing a few of the gladiators and dancers, consequently the conflict was severe, but the O Ps soon cleared the field. Mr. James Cowlam, a respectable linen-draper, of Queen-Street, Cheapside, received a serious injury on this occasion. It was said that, being opposed to one of the constables in this contest, he received a blow from the staff of the latter, which laid him senseless. He was soon after

taken out of the theatre, to the shop of Mr. Cole, Surgeon, Russell-Street, Covent-Garden, where he recovered his senses. It appeared that he had received severe bruises, but the greatest injury which he sustained was occasioned by the trampling of the contending parties. He was conveyed to the house of a friend at Charing-Cross, in a hackney coach.

Mr. Winholt made his appearance in the boxes, and pointed out a person in the pit as the man who had robbed him of his hat and assaulted him on a former night. The object of his remarks was not, however, taken into custody. A more determined spirit than the pit expressed on this occasion has been seldom witnessed.

A lady, who had made herself conspicuous on former occasions, by tearing the placards, again presented herself in the boxes. She was instantly recognized, and became the object of numberless free epithets. Instead of withdrawing, or taking no notice of the clamour, she, very improperly, made use of many significant gestures of contempt; and, the incensed O Ps at length rendering her situation untenable, she was compelled to leave the box.

The after-piece was Mr. Hewetson's Blind Boy, which it need not be said caused some accession to the noise and disapprobation. When the curtain dropped, a person rose in the pit, and stated to his companions, who remained seated, that a

Mr. Cowlam had been nearly killed that evening, and, as it was not expected that he would live till the morning, the speaker requested that those gentlemen, who had witnessed the scuffle, would meet at the Temple Coffee-House, to make a fair representation of the circumstance. After this, and a brace of loyal songs, the O P s dispersed.

#### FORTY-SECOND NIGHT, November 16.

The famous stock-play of Romeo and Juliet was again brought forward on this night, to the great delight of all true lovers residing within the bills of mortality. When the curtain drew up, and the love-sick bosom heaved with expectant pleasure, the demon of discord sounded his conch from the pit, where his myrmidons instantly took the cue, and rose, thick as potatoe-stalks in a Munster field, in the semblance of rattles, horn-blowers, and loud imitations of cats, dogs, and donkies. Terrified and shocked at this rude eruption on his domain, Cupid precipitately yielded the throne which he had occupied in the hearts of the young, to be usurped by palpitation and terror; and, mounting bouyant on his purple wings, clung to the cornice over the stage, and sheltered himself under the protection of the British lion. After surveying the tumult, which waved below, and wiping a few tears which dis-



titled from his immortal eyes, he sang the following invocation to his divine mother, in Paphos :

CUPID'S INVOCATION.

1.

Ah! mother, if you pass your blissful hours,  
In Paphian dales or amaranthine bowers,  
Where new-born transports ratify your powers :

Tell me shall violence my bow-string sever ?

Chorus from the pit :—" O P for ever !"

2.

Led by the witcheries of Shakespeare's muse,  
I've roam'd from Cyprus but to meet abuse,  
By Jove, dear lady, this is dismal news.

How shall I melt their ruthless bosoms ices ?

Chorus from the pit :—" Give us old prices."

3.

Shall I, to whom both gods and men have bow'd,  
The fair, the brave, the pious, and the proud,  
Be thus embarrass'd by a paltry crowd ?

How shall I make the sturdy varlets tremble ?

Chorus from the pit :—" Call out John Kemble."

4.

My brain is moider'd by these local ills,  
Here madness executes what folly wills ;  
Send me a draught from the Blandusian rills :

My throat is parch'd with dust, and I am dying.

Chorus from the pit :—" A fair statement and no lying."

## 5.

Mamma, these tumults make me foam and fret,  
 If you let hatred mesh me in her net,  
 By the mass we both shall be in the Gazette !

How shall I fight this maudlin minx and pose her.

Chorus from the pit:—"Three groans for Mendoza."

## 6.

At the Lyceum as I took a view,  
 There's the Idalian Queen, I cried ; 'tis true,  
 'Twas Mrs. Powell, but I thought 'twas you !

In these mistakes I may wound Horn for Braham.

Chorus from the pit:—

(Herald.)—"Zounds, they are dragging him to Justice Graham."

For the first three acts of the play, the performers had not only a patient hearing, but received their due meed of praise in the usual style of theatrical approbation. The O P s, however, entered in force at half-price, and noise and uproar gained the ascendancy, till all became a scene of confusion.

During a partial and temporary interval, a Baronet, in one of the dress boxes, conceiving a person in the second box to be a police-officer, insisted on his going out, addressing the audience, at the same time, on the supposed insult, and the impropriety of such company mixing in the boxes. He received three cheers from the pit, and the man soon after retired, though he

denied the charge of being an officer or of taking any part whatever in the business.

The musical farce that succeeded the play was dumb shew and pantomime all. On one or two occasions, where the fine voice of Inledon was faintly distinguished amid the roaring discord, the tumultuaries rallied with new vigour, and, at the risk of hoarseness, carried every thing before them. After the pitites, accompanied by some O Ps in the boxes, had sung a few verses of "God save the King," the gallery struck up the ode of "Rule Britannia." The dance, the race, and mock fight, made ample amends for the deficit of bell and rattle.

Towards the end of the farce a police-officer was discovered nearly in the middle of the pit; soon as the alarm was given, every effort was directed to that quarter, till the O Ps succeeded in pushing him almost to the door, where brandishing his baton, he made a long and desperate stand. He was several times driven down a few of the steps, but always rallied till nearly shut out. A reinforcement at last came to his assistance, but several gentlemen in the dress boxes above the pit-entrance door applied their sticks so effectually that the officers were all compelled to sound a retreat. Three general cheers of triumph from the pit followed, in which many from the dress boxes, and from all parts of the house, concurred.

After the dropping of the curtain the attention of the oppositionists was directed to a box on the third tier, where Mr. Hewetson was. A cry of "Turn him out," instantly prevailed through the house. Two gentlemen in the box instantly withdrew, and were shortly after followed by Mr. Hewetson. The usual severe language was directed against the private boxes, from which the few ladies present were compelled to retire. Among the placards were the following :

" Private boxes,  
For young cats and old foxes."

After the police-officer was put out the following one gave considerable pleasure to the triumphant corps.

" Do we but face the ruffian gang to night,  
Let O Ps be beaten, if they cannot fight.

A spike was several times displayed on the top of a stick with this label,

" Thou shalt do no murder."

He was an orator who made this emblematical display, and, in a speech ill heard, he was understood to say that the spike had been taken from one of their assailants on the preceding night.

These placards also attracted notice.

“ An attempt at murder—One thousand pounds reward.”

“ Indemnity for the past and security for the future.”

“ King John’s a beggar when the play is done,  
All will end well if but the end be won.”

“ O Ps strain every nerve, your savage foes repel,  
And drive them headlong to their native hell.”

“ Mr. Cowlam has nearly fallen a victim to your savage opponents ! Britons ! Britons ! are ye men and will ye brook this ? ”

A printed hand-bill was circulated, calling on any respectable person acquainted with the circumstances of the assault committed on Mr. Cowlam to communicate the same to Mr. West, attorney, of Clement’s Inn.

After going through the concluding ceremonies of O Pism, the audience began to retire. Comparatively few hats were decked with the insignia. A military one displayed in front, in large characters, “ Conquer or die.”

## FORTY-THIRD NIGHT, November 17.

The comic opera of the Woodman was, this night, represented. Mr. Munden personated the Essex magistrate with much humour and effect; for, by diminishing his ardour for excessive comicality, he was truly natural. The Woodman met a proper representative in Mr. Bellamy, who was correct both in the song parts and in the dialogue. Of Mr. Emery's Bob (the miller) too much cannot be said; the silent expression of his chagrin when Emily repels his passion was a perfect thing of the kind. Mr. Incedon was in good voice and went through his character with undiminished credit. The substitution of Mr. TREBY for BLANCHARD, in the part of Matthew Medley, was by no means favourable to the force of the opera. Mrs. Dickons and Mrs. Liston were spirited and skilful in the execution of their songs.

The disturbance at half-price commencing, puts it out of the power of the critic to be correct in the general draught of the performance. At that period of this night the greatest disorder prevailed, though the pit, at its best time, was not full.

During the first act of the farce a few placards

were exhibited, but for too short a time to be transcribed, and during the whole of the second, to the emptying of the theatre, no writing was to be seen.

The only novel feature in the uproar was the attempt of a female, wild and vulgar in her appearance, to address the audience. She at two different times rose on the benches and convened a crowd of persons, willing to be her auditors; but, from the attention to the noise in other quarters, she failed in being heard. Being encouraged by the applause of those around her, she had divested herself of her bonnet and shawl, which, again replacing, she left the house.

Having a little business of their own to settle the pitites remained some time after the dropping of the curtain, and betook themselves first to their cheers and groans and next quietly home.

#### FORTY-FOURTH NIGHT, November 18.

The house was very thinly attended till half price, and to that time was rather quiet. At this period of witchery the pit and the uproar were both very full. The first placard was very large; and, being held towards the front of the pit, where the *friends* of the proprietors were seated, was snatched at and destroyed before it could possibly be read. The man who snatched it was

immediately seized and thrust out of the pit, while the remnant of the placard was displayed in triumph. The next was as large as the first, and was the large caricature which was brought out when seven-shilling pieces were first introduced\*, and at the bottom "dedicated to the visitors of the private boxes." This had the instantaneous effect of scaring all the women from this part, and many from the dress public boxes. It is lamentable that such gross indecency was received by the men with the greatest applause. A small placard was sent out to apologize for its parent, upon the plea that modest women could not be offended by it, as none such visited the theatre now. A scroll was also hoisted to the following effect:

"Kemble;

"Hast thou words, or wit, or impudence,

"That yet can serve your suit; if that thou hast,

"Now use them; if not, ever after hold your peace."

On the reverse of this was a figure of Mr. Kemble, exclaiming "What do you want?" at the same time that a bull, with O.P. round his neck, was tossing him in the air. This animal was also represented as kicking a police-officer in the rear.

\* The figure of a naked woman on a sofa.



About the middle of the farce twenty or thirty ill-looking men were seen skulking along the edges of the pit, making observations and whispering among themselves. They were eyed with suspicion by the O Ps in this part, and soon thought it more prudent to retire to the two-shilling gallery, where there were several emblematic hats. They left the pit amid a general hiss, but the devoted O Ps of the gallery shortly afterwards fell victims to their rapacious incursion. No unusual circumstances attended the conclusion of the performance.

#### FORTY-FIFTH NIGHT, November 20.

Being Monday the pit was quite full and as noisy as ever. There were not three women in the entire part of the house. A few old placards were sported, such as

“Terms of peace.—Old prices,—No private boxes, and Brandon discharged.”

“Convenient apartments to let in the third tier,” &c.

Every tongue seemed animated in the cause of clamour, and instrumental music seconded the vocal.

In the pantomime of Don Juan, the white ghost was called *Black Jack*, *lucus à non lucendo*; and the pit was up in arms at every scene. At

the conclusion of the performance a person, in the pit, stood up to read some paper, the contents of which could not be collected. He ended however with "God save the King," in which all the audience joined, and they soon afterwards separated very quietly.

#### FORTY-SIXTH NIGHT, November 21.

This night the empire of tumult seemed to be on the decline. The play was heard through the fourth act, and even the fifth was pretty audible. There was considerable noise during the pantomime, but it was merely vocal. Two or three O P hats appeared, and Mr. Winholt was discernible in one of the boxes with an O P medal on his breast, but not a placard was to be seen.

The pit, at half-price, was tolerably filled, and seemed to put forth all its strength; it is however evidently palsied by the publicity of the proceedings in the Court of King's Bench. At the conclusion of the performance, three hisses were given for "excessive bail," with three cheers for the king, and the audience departed in peace.

#### FORTY-SEVENTH NIGHT, November 22.

The uproar has completely rallied. It began as

early as the first act, but was readily quelled by the interference of the police. After this the opera was heard very quietly till the half-price came in, when the tumult was as vehement as was ever remembered, though unassisted by instrumental noises. Between the opera and farce a person in the pit made "a bit of a speech," the recording of which was prevented by the noise in the house.

The police-officers entered with the design of taking this speechifier into custody, but it was understood that they had laid hands on the wrong person.

A few hats mounted the party initials and a few placards crept out, at the beginning of the clamour, but neither were held long to view. One of the placards ran as follows.

" A Caution.

Persons with colds are requested not to cough or sneeze aloud; they will otherwise be taken to Bow-street."

The pit was by no means full at any time. They transacted all their business of groaning and shouting between the two acts of the farce; so that they had little to do, at the conclusion of the performance, but to quit the theatre.

## FORTY-EIGHTH NIGHT, November 23.

The performances of this night were heard with more attention than since the last relapse. The Comedy of Every Man in his Humour was audible throughout. The presence of the party for old prices was solely evinced, at intervals, by a solitary hiss, which it now seems is considered the only *legal* method of expressing disapprobation:—*sneezing and coughing* were therefore studiously avoided, even where nature required the exertion; lest, suspicion attaching to the deed, a short trip to Bow-street might be the consequence.

The pit at half-price was extremely crowded; but the majority of the audience was far from being respectable. Two placards were hoisted and immediately torn down by the friends of the managers; so weak were the O P troops that this occurrence was passed by without crying "havock," and "let slip the dogs of war."

The after-piece of Don Juan received unusual attention, and passed off without much interruption.

## FORTY-NINTH NIGHT, November 24.

The uproar still subsides. It is like the abatement of water in a flooded current. The play was heard, and the pantomime was laughed at. The few interruptions given to the performance consisted but of hisses, and those rather trifling. The house upon the whole scarcely retains a feature of its late aspect.

“ Grim-visag'd war hath smooth'd his wrinkled front.”

And not an iota of tumult is left to be recorded.

## FIFTIETH NIGHT, November 25.

The opera of the English Fleet attracted, this evening, a tolerably numerous audience. It being the 50th night of the *row* the O Ps were determined to celebrate their jubilee by a grand muster of forces. No disturbance was given to the performance, however, till the commencement of the third act. When Messrs. Incedon and Belamy were singing the duet of “ All's well,” a person in the gallery joined in the chorus, which produced a general laugh.

When Munden began the song of "British sailors have a knack," the O Ps commenced their operations, and in an instant, every female, seated about the middle of the pit, made a precipitate retreat towards the orchestra. From this moment not a word of the opera was audible. The O Ps, upon the whole, were not so numerous as might have been expected, and they seemed to cast an anxious "lingering look behind," to the aid of the galleries, from which they received very little support. The police-officers then stepped forward to seize the most active in the opposition, and, after a severe scuffle, dragged two of them to Bow-street. Acclamations of applause were pretty general throughout the house, but it arose, principally, from many of the O Ps supposing that the peace-officers had been defeated.

Two placards were, for a few minutes, handed about in the pit, among the friends of old prices, but with very little effect, as they soon fell into the hands of the enemy. The instant the two gentlemen were dragged from the pit, the insignia of opposition vanished from the hats of those who previously mounted them, no doubt, from intimidation occasioned by the misfortunes of their friends.

## FIFTY-FIRST NIGHT, November 27.

Before half-price the theatre was crowded. The uproar began during the fifth act of the tragedy, occasioned, as was thought, by the appearance of Mr. Winholt, in one of the lower boxes, in a night-cap, and wearing a medal at his breast. Noisy cries of ridicule at the tragedy, and ironical calls of silence now filled the pit.

Between the play and the pantomime, placards were exhibited. The O P dance, to the united vociferation of O P was performed with the fullest energy. The placards were not held up very long, and one or two of them were knocked to pieces with the sticks of the *managerists*, to the certain occasionment of a scuffle. Of the two largest of these papers, one was too indecent and the other too libellous to transcribe. Those of a less exceptionable nature ran as follows.

“ Victory or Death,  
The first 50 nights or jubilee of the O Ps,  
Three more this season.”

“ The dead alive,  
O P the giant refreshed.”

“ Resurgam.” &c. &c.

During the performance of the pantomime of Don Juan, just at that passage where the pedestal of Don Guzman's statue shews the following inscription in letters of blood :

“ Don Juan, by thee  
Don Guzman bleeds,  
Heaven will avenge  
Thy bloody deeds :”

Up rose a placard from the hands of a whole posse of men with O P in their hats, it was thus inscribed,

“ What are Don Juan's bloody deeds  
Compared with Don John's bloody deeds ?”

This placard, seemingly long preconcerted, met with considerable applause. It was well printed in very large characters.

The originators of this ensign maintained their ground and their emblems unmolested throughout.

The pit appeared in fact too full for the insertion of the police-officers. In the course of the evening the O Ps sang God save the King, and, at the final fall of the curtain, expressed their continued dissatisfaction by three hearty groans. After this the theatre was speedily cleared.



## FIFTY-SECOND NIGHT, November 28.

The tumult of this evening was comparatively slack; Saturdays and Mondays only seeming to be the strong nights of the O P party. The pantomime was, with difficulty, disturbed, and not a single placard gave zest to the evening's entertainment. The pit was by no means full, and no O P hats made their appearance. What company there was, in that part of the house, however, stood upon the benches, occasionally getting up a scuffle, and once vociferating O P in unison. At the conclusion three groans were eked out for one thing and three cheers for another. This was the finale, and the theatre was soon left empty and undisturbed.

## FIFTY-THIRD NIGHT, November 29.

Uproar entered with the half-price folks, and interrupted the last act of the opera, the Exile, so as to mar its entire effect. The house was rather thinly attended, but the few, who were in the pit, came to the theatre for any other purpose but that of hearing the performance. They manifested their nonchalance by strutting about on

the benches. No O P hats appeared this evening and few placards. There were, however, several medals sported, and, on one occasion, an O P pocket-handkerchief was produced. A few stragglers were taken into durance vile by the police.

The finale of the Exile was finely contrasted with the dance and chorus of the opposition.

The success of Lord Collingwood obtained three general cheers for his lordship; and, after a few of their old exhibitions in the Stentorian way, the audience quietly dispersed.

#### FIFTY-FOURTH NIGHT, November 30.

Moderately full attendance of persons, rather moderately disposed. The entire play experienced not a single interruption. During the after-piece, which was a pantomime, the audience were as mute as the performers themselves. Of the O P humours, through their various branches, the best mode of description this evening would be by negatives. The company departed as quietly as they entered the house.

#### FIFTY-FIFTH NIGHT, December 1.

It should seem as though the hurly-burly were

arrived at an end, and the battle was finally won by the proprietors and lost by the public.

The noise this evening, in the theatre, did not exceed that hissing which usually salutes the intrusion of an unpopular piece.

#### FIFTY-SIXTH NIGHT, December 3.

The half-price folks of this (Saturday) evening made some noise; but the dread of remaining in the watch-house till Monday morning (as the magistrates sit no longer than till nine o'clock) visibly operated upon the spirits of the O P party. The after-piece was yet sensibly injured by the interpolations of *rival authors* in the pit, and the hydra of Covent-Garden cannot be said to have lost its hundred heads.

#### FIFTY-SEVENTH NIGHT, December 4.

The performance was undisturbed till the fourth act of the tragedy. At that period the pit was completely filled, and a batch of standers-up, at the back of the pit, wanted nothing but an *off-leader* to begin their operations. During the fifth act there sprouted up, on the opposite quarter, in the same part of the house, a correspondent party of the *patriots*, whose noisy ridi-

cule and burlesque commenced the opposition of the evening. A shout accompanied the fall of the curtain on the tragedy, and then the fandango was, by snatches, indulged in. A few mock fights were exhibited. At the commencement of the pantomime the whole pit were standing, but they more frequently attended to and laughed at the performance of the stage than played any part of their own. There were no groans nor huzzas, which forms an exception to the usual routine. The *audience* soon dispersed in good humour.

#### FIFTY-EIGHTH NIGHT, December 5.

The theatre was excessively empty at whole price; but, before the entrance of half-price, the uproar commenced by the pit-men standing on the benches, and communicating, from an evening paper, the event of that morning. (Clifford's trial.)

In the opera, the harmony of song was often borne down by the discord of the O P chorus; but, upon the appearance of the half-price auxiliaries, the tumult was at its height, which was proclaimed by three loud cheers. O P handkerchiefs were waved. Laurel was stuck up in hats. Cries of "Clifford has gained his cause"

were set up, and the following placards were hoisted:

“ A British jury for ever.”

“ Chorus of O P's—Tune, Hearts of Oak.”

Steady boys steady,

We always are ready

To turn out hired ruffians again and again.”

“ Shall Britons relinquish the contest after such a long and repeated resistance? and shall insolence, pride, and avarice, come off victorious? Oh! let it not be said.”

Upon the introduction of peace-officers, a skirmish ensued between them and the pitites. From the groans, with which the scuffle concluded, it was thought some persons had been taken out. The O Ps were, however, far from being intimidated. From their attitudes the whole night, as they stood up, onew ould imagine that the pit was of Shakspeare's days, when there were no seats therein. The vocal and instrumental noises were rather peaceful. The private boxes met with their share of furious hooting. Several men in the pit tied their handkerchiefs round their heads as night-caps, from an imitation of Mr. Winholt, who appears every night in that costume. All its pristine vigour distinguished the insurrectionary dance. The tenants of the orchestra were, several times,

disconcerted by the violent rushes made from the top of the pit towards them. The partition actually shook beneath the pressure.

The theatrical republicans gave what may be called their *carmagnol and ça ira* as usual. Some person, deeply intoxicated, afforded them amusement by his attempts at *utterance*, from the boxes; it may be literally said of him, "*Vox faucibus hæsit*," when the audience got tired of him they quietly dispersed.

#### FIFTY-NINTH NIGHT, December 6.

The comedy of the Man of the World was brought forward for representation this evening.

Mr. Cook supported the character of Sir Pertinax Mac Sycophant with his usual style of excellence; but, when the half-price commenced, the noise and confusion was so great, that it was impossible any longer to attend to the performance.

The historical spectacle of Oscar and Malvina followed amidst a clamour and uproar surpassing any thing we recollect to have heard, on any previous night, since the dispute began.

The house was thinly attended at whole-price, but the spirit of discord prevailed in the most forcible manner. The galleries took a very active part, soon after the curtain rose, and several large printed bills were thrown from the upper

gallery, which exhibited the event of the late trial between Mr. Clifford and Brandon. These were destroyed in the pit. A gentleman in the lower boxes made himself conspicuous by crying, "off! off!" and a violent disturbance took place near the spot, occasioned by the appearance of Mr. W——, a gentleman related to one of the proprietors. The pitites did not fail to brand him with the name of informer, and other epithets of a similar description. The noise which, at the commencement of the play, was nearly sufficient to confuse all the performance, increased to a loud pitch, and, at half-price, was as great as at any time since the theatre opened. Horns and a watchman's rattle again greeted the actors; the galleries also joined in the concert with whistles and a trumpet.

Symbols of opposition appeared in every part of the theatre. The boxes, pit, and galleries, were unanimous, and it was evident that the disturbance had assumed a more violent aspect, in consequence of the late verdict. Two persons in the pit wore white night-caps, and one of them exhibited a large O P cut out of pasteboard. The O he put round his neck, and held up the P in the most comic manner. His appearance was ludicrous in the extreme. The other knight of the white cap entertained himself by cracking a whip, and blowing a whistle in the handle. White pocket-handkerchiefs with O P were exposed in

every direction. A herald, who had been very busy in blowing his horn, when tired, was induced to throw his instrument at the performers on the stage. The horn struck Bologna, who was playing the part of Oscar; Farley, who was standing by, immediately took it up, and, looking at the audience with some expression, bowed, and made a dumb appeal to their liberality. The performance was suspended by this accident, and a considerable time elapsed before the pantomime could go on: the pit was soon after in perpetual motion. The officers had made their way into the centre, and a great scuffle ensued to turn them out, during which sticks were used, and many severe blows given. The O P party was triumphant, and the scene became dreadful. Many placards were elevated during the night; the most striking was the following:

“O P's of Westminster be firm as the O P's of the city, and you will triumph over the ruffians and vagabonds.”

The O P dance and the sham fight were then renewed, with all the effect produced on a former occasion. “God save the King” and “Rule Britannia” were sung by nearly all the persons in the pit. The shouts which succeeded shook the theatre. After cheers for Clifford and O P, and the usual groans for the obnoxious party, they marched out, singing O P, and dispersed.



## SIXTIETH NIGHT, December 7.

The disturbance was renewed with equal violence this evening.

At the commencement of the Woodman, the play announced for this evening's representation, about forty persons occupied the pit; the opposition was not however sufficient entirely to interrupt the performance, until half-price, when the pit immediately filled, and the discordant concert of horns, rattles, whistles, sticks, and trumpets, commenced, with their wonted *harmony*, to entertain the audience.

The white night-caps again made their appearance; they were cheered on their entrance, and they apparently enjoyed the honour conferred on them with as much satisfaction as the Grecian victors at the Olympic games.

The O P ball was then opened, Vestris or Deshayes might have acquired some information in *the new art of dancing*. The attitudes of the O P performers were distinguished by agility; and the corps de ballet of the Opera never gained more applause from the nobility than did the pitites from the mobility in the galleries. Sham fights were exhibited in the usual style, and several real fights laid some of the combatants prostrate.

A person in the first tier of boxes, on the

king's side, was taken out of the theatre, by the officers, for exclaiming "three cheers for Clifford!" When the curtain dropped, after the pantomime of Don Juan, the oppositionists sat down and sang "God save the King," and "Rule Britannia." They then gave three cheers for Clifford, three cheers for Sergeant Best, and three for O P. The concomitant groans for Brandon and Co. succeeded.

Several placards were exhibited during the evening, amongst the most prominent was:

"The foreman of Clifford's jury, Stephen Pitt, and may he ever be a favourite with the pitites."

They then marched off, singing O P, and dispersed.

#### SIXTY-FIRST NIGHT, December 8.

The Merchant of Venice and Tom Thumb the Great were represented this evening, and experienced a reception, similar to that of former entertainments. The boxes and galleries, which were filled early, manifested, at first, but little opposition, but the pit, which even at half-price was not filled, exhibited the usual clamour. Every possible effort was made to prevent the actors from being heard.

A young lawyer, Mr. Arthur Shakespear, in a barrister's wig, was seized by the constables and

held to bail: and another young man, named Cartwright, a bricklayer, was also taken for being active in the confusion. The latter made considerable resistance, though twenty constables actually were employed for the purpose of seizing him; it is true he received no small assistance from the *confraternity*. Several placards, written in extremely small characters, were held up during the night. Towards the conclusion of the farce a piece of stick was maliciously thrown at Munden, which narrowly missed his face. The usual canzonets, &c. were sung and danced, and the house was completely empty by eleven o'clock.

### SIXTY-SECOND NIGHT, December 9.

The Exile was reproduced, and followed by the Portrait of Cervantes. At the accustomed period tumult usurped upon tranquillity. A horn was repeatedly blown with great science, and always served to sound "Rally" to the flagging exertions of the O P s.

Among the placards which issued forth were,  
"The boxkeeper in the wrong box."

"B. C. Y.

Be courageous

Kemble must

Yield."

A blue silk standard was likewise hoisted in great

style, with the following inscription in gold letters:

“In a public theatre the public voice is the best law.”

A small placard, after having been handed about the pit, was thrown on the stage while Munden was performing, and several voices called upon him to take it up; he passed it however unnoticed. Another, intended for the same destination, fell into the orchestra and was immediately suppressed in progress by one of the Apollonian tribe.

Towards the beginning of the farce, his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester entered the manager's box, on the right of the stage, which being noticed by several O P s in the pit, they made a rush to the part and hailed his appearance with loud acclaim. His Highness looked towards the audience and bowed, which being more generally observed, the whole house joined in their applauses till they almost shook “its concave.”—After having been favoured with a sonorous chaunt of “God save the King,” and a vigorous specimen of the modern school in dancing, his Highness again bowed and withdrew. Another gentleman, who was not known, attended his Highness. After his departure the noisy warfare was carried on with usual unabatement. A person with a tremendous false nose, exceeding those described by Slaukenbergius, and a monstrous counsellor's wig, created much risibility. He also occasionally mounted a white night-cap, and seemed to engage

in earnest conversation with another man who wore a red silk handkerchief round his head. Towards the end of the farce a desperate fray took place, which was caused by the fruitless attempts of the police to seize the masked figure. A gentleman had his head very much cut by one of the constables, and another was forced out by the posse, but was afterwards set at liberty, not being the person intended to be seized. Two very tall and singular looking figures, in female attire, aided the noise considerably, and, being near the door of the pit, escaped during the scuffle. They afterwards returned, and, though generally supposed to be men, escaped the animadversions of the patrol, except in so far as regarded their opinion, that "it would be better for the ladies to mind other affairs." After the fall of the curtain the twin Momusses exhibited their fantastic insignia with the addition of O P handkerchiefs worn round the shoulders as appropriate drapery.

The O P's marched out from the theatre *en corps* to the tune of their favourite air, well whistled; they were greeted by numerous spectators outside, assembled through curiosity.

#### SIXTY-THIRD NIGHT, December 12.

The stage still continues blockaded. Very little military parade, comparatively with former nights,

was perceivable. Some old placards, like Mar-mion's pennon, "now fell, now rose;" and few of the O P hat-bands were sported. The entrance to the pit has, for some time since, been infested with a gang of the light-fingered corps, who, under the pretence of the confused rushes, made hitherto in the police-battles, profited by their dexterity in the several *lounges* and *passes*. One of them was this night detected in trespassing on a gentleman's silk pocket-handkerchief. Some of the Cyprian graces in the lobbies wore O P *cestuses*—quite a new article.

From the entrance of the *economists*, the players very sensibly economized their voices. It is now the habit with the O P s to condense themselves into small parties, and sit in different parts, for the purpose *propagandi fidem*. Mr. Winholt is yet constant in his attendance.

After the fall of the curtain, a few cheers, groans, and songs, were given, without the possibility of distinguishing which was the soprano or bass, in either of the three exertions made by the human voice *divine*. About eleven o'clock, the *protestants* separated without much tumult,—with the seeming intent, however, of compelling the *cellar* to be opened as usual, or driving the managers to the necessity of putting the *key under the door*.\*

\*See—"Tale of a Tub."

## SIXTY-FOURTH NIGHT, December 12.

During the comedy of John Bull, the highest decorum prevailed in the house, till second-price, except a joke from the upper part of the house, occasioned by the scene where Shuffleton presents the baronet with a pinch of snuff. A voice called out from the gallery, "Take care you don't sneeze." This caused a general laugh, as it alluded to late apprehensions of persons upon grounds of disturbance, by sneezing and coughing. When Job Thornberry asserts that he would stay in the baronet's house till the roof fell upon him, or somebody would come to him, the expression was instantly paraphrased by the O P s, who exclaimed, from the pit, "We'll stay here till the roof falls, for O P." Howling, shrieking, groaning, cat-calls, cock-crowing, and barking, were resorted to with great success during the farce. There were several mock attempts to turn out individuals. A sham boxing-match, in one instance, big with portentous mischief, terminated in a mutual horse-laugh from the combatants, to the no small amazement of the company. No police-officers appeared.

The only placard which was noticeable contained the inscription—

"May the freedom of the people ever be under the protection of a jury."

The private boxes were considerably annoyed in the usual way, by pointing, hissing, and hooting. Few of them contained any company. A few O P hats were distinguishable; one with the full letters of "Old Prices" cut out in paper. One of the sham martyrs to the turning-out system had previously half stripped himself, conformably to the ragged costume of appearance at the office in such cases.

#### SIXTY-FIFTH NIGHT, December 13.

The play, *Every Man in his Humour*, met with little interruption, and Cooke, as Kately, received his merited share of applause, though a few uproarious chieftains of the pit attempted to divert the attention of the audience by wearing O P handkerchiefs over their hats. A man, dressed in a coachman's coat and Welch wig, suffered himself to be pushed about the seats of the pit for the amusement of his partizans. The cries of "Off, Off" and "Old Prices," were re-established with the same dull though furious monotony as on the first nights of this unprecedented contest. The disturbance became quite sufficient to destroy the effect of the music in *Oscar and Malvina*. Considering the bad muster of the pitites, their exertions were indeed very powerful. A person, who was making loud calls for the managers, was



soon managed by the constables; but, on promise of behaving more peaceably, was not taken out.

The house was left by its noisy frequenters in the usual style of general *enfilade*.

### SIXTY-SIXTH NIGHT, December 14.

This night marked an epoch, if it did not put a period to the uproar of this theatre. The house was very thinly attended; and the performance was pretty quietly heard till the half-price came in: they brought uproar with them; and very soon several O Ps arrived from their dinner at the Crown and Anchor, and communicated to the house the capitulation which Mr. Kemble had there offered. The audience did not choose to receive this intelligence from the mouth of any one but Mr. Kemble, and henceforth the play was completely silenced, by a steady clamour for "Mr. Kemble! Mr. Kemble!"

The overture to "Tom Thumb" began; but the pit would hear nothing but Mr. Kemble, and actually compelled the musicians to break off. The curtain then drew up; but the actors could do nothing but walk through their parts. Mr. Munden had respect enough for the public to go up to the front row of the pit, and receive the wishes of the house, that Mr. Kemble should

appear. These he promised the pit to communicate to that gentleman the moment he left the stage: and, as soon as he had done so, and just after the players had sung—

“ Oh, this is a day of jubilee cajollery.”

in stepped Mr. Kemble, and walked to the front of the stage. He was received with loud huzzas; and, when he was about to speak, with such noisy calls of “ silence,” that it was utterly impossible to obtain what was desired, for many minutes. At length the preceptors of this silence condescended to practice what they preached, and silence ensued.

Mr. Kemble then addressed the house to the following effect:—

“ Ladies and Gentlemen,  
I beg to apologize for appearing before you in a dress so little consonant to the very great respect which I entertain for you (*applause*). (Mr. Kemble appeared in boots and a great coat.) The circumstance could appear only from my total ignorance that I should, to night, have the honour of appearing before you (*applause*). I have this day had the honour of attending the gentlemen, who have been dining at the Crown and Anchor, and I have there had the honour of proposing what I shall now propose here; that, the prices of admission to the boxes shall remain

at seven shillings, and that the old prices of admission shall be taken for the pit." [This proposition was received with a mixture of hisses and huzzas.] And Mr. Kemble proceeded to propose the restoration, to the public, of those private boxes, which they formerly possessed, and the stoppage of legal prosecutions, (in the very words of the advertisement, at the bottom, of this day's play-bills.) These terms of capitulation were received with huzzas by the pit, but did not seem to be relished by the boxes. The pit wanted nothing more than the discharge of Mr. Brandon, to which they repeatedly summoned Mr. Kemble's attention, without effect. That gentleman had scarcely left the stage, when he re-entered it, for the purpose, as it was supposed, of announcing that Mr. Brandon was discharged; but it was only to give out "The Wheel of Fortune" for the following night. The pit was not to be cheated of their stipulation, as to Mr. Brandon, and again they had recourse to that uproar which gained them something.

Mr. Munden, happening to be on the stage, was again made their mediator and ambassador; and a placard, inscribed, "Brandon discharged," was handed to him, which he said he should, "feel it his bounden duty to deliver to Mr. Kemble." The audience sat down, uncovered, to hear Mr. Munden say this; a mark of respect, which they had previously paid to Mr. Kemble; and

when he had said it, they rose and gave "three cheers for Mr. Munden."

When Mr. Munden again appeared, he told them that he had sought Mr. Kemble, but could not find him, and presently ushered to their notice Mr. Brandon himself. *Astutus astu non capitur.* Rage was up in arms at this imprudent appearance; and although Mr. Brandon made "courteous action" and "motioned his lips," not a word he said was heard. The pit made signs to him to depart, by waving their hands and sticks, till at last three or four canes and a hand-bell were thrown at him with great indignation. Mr. Brandon thought it prudent to retire from these hostilities, and Mr. Henry Harris stepped forth to address the house: he was received with great tumult, and all that could be heard from him was, "Mr. Brandon is a servant of my father." After he retired, the farce was huddled up, and the curtain dropped in uproars worse than ever.

The audience remained some time in the house, talking over the adventures of the night; the boxes considered themselves as no gainers at all by the treaty, and the pit changed their O P into a B D (Brandon discharged) dance.

## SIXTY-SEVENTH NIGHT, Dec. 15.

The comedy of the Wheel of Fortune was this night represented. Never was a theatre crowded to such an excess. Upwards of two hundred persons, in different parts of the house, were excluded from the possibility of obtaining seats. Expectation reigned universal among this crowded assemblage, as Mr. Kemble was to re-appear before the public, and to resume the exercise of his powerful talents.

Previously to the commencement of the comedy, several orators addressed the audience, but the most prominent among them was a gentleman in the pit.

The tenor of his argument ran upon the necessity of dismissing Mr. Brandon from his official situation, and of exacting an apology from Mr. Kemble, for the presumed violation of public rights, which had occurred during this contest; "Content with these grants," continued he, "we will sit down tranquilly with the olive branch in our mouths."

Upon the appearance of the musicians in the orchestra, the audience vociferously called for "God save the King." The band complied, and nearly the whole house joined in that loyal effusion, which they executed with more just-

ness, feeling, and expression, than on any preceding night. Upon the drawing up of the curtain, and the entrée of Mr. Kemble, general applause prevailed for some time: however, after this ceased, symptoms of displeasure being manifested, Mr. Kemble stepped forward, and, finding the main cause of it to be the continuation of Brandon in his place, he assured them that gentleman HAD RESIGNED. This declaration was received with loud huzzas.

At the beginning of the second act, as the tumult had not entirely subsided, Mr. Kemble again made his appearance, in his private character, and *apologized to the audience for the violence and irregularities that had occurred, giving them a solemn assurance, that it should be his, and the other proprietors', first duty to counteract such infractions within the walls in future.* He was rapturously applauded and the comedy proceeded uninterrupted, except by the novel circumstance of greeting to each of the performers upon their appearance.

In consequence of the audience complaining, that, by the pressure, they were grievously incommoded by some iron spikes in the back part of the pit, Mr. Kemble assured them, that they should be removed. He had then the pleasure of beholding placards wave in the air, with the following grateful inscription.

“WE ARE SATISFIED.”

He bowed and went through his part with the greatest spirit and effect, and respectfully retired amid thunders of acclamation.

“O! semper instabile vulgus.”

“*O quantum mutatus ab illo,*” who some time before was a vagabond and treated with the utmost contempt!!

Previously to the “Blind Boy,” Mr. Winholt attempted to address the pitites, from the lower boxes, but they would not attend to him. Many of them exclaimed, “Mr. Kemble has behaved with candour and we are contented.” A few, who were anxious for the revival of a row, exclaimed “Hear Winholt.” He was, however, soon obliged to sit down. Some disapprobation was expressed during the representation of the “Blind Boy,” and many vociferated, “No Hewetson; No Blind Boy.” But the disturbers expended all their breath in vain, and the house was cleared without the usual scene of noise and confusion.

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Thus have we brought the log-book of insurrection to its latest date. If there be readers

who sicken at repetitions, in the *noctuary* of these proceedings, all that we can say is, that things can only be expressed by correspondent words, and when there is a continuance of similar action there must, of necessity, be a continuance of the phraseology appropriate to its delineation. We now come to the celebration of that great conciliatory event which has just been described.

*OP Reconciliation Dinner to the Managers of  
Covent-Garden Theatre, January 4, 1810.*

This day the theatrical reconciliation was celebrated at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, where a very numerous assembly, amounting to between three and four hundred persons, dined together, to commemorate an event, which must at the same time contribute to the harmony of the public, and to the emolument of the managers. Mr. Clifford took the chair at five o'clock; on the right of the Chairman were Messrs. Kemble and Harris, jun. The dinner, and the wines which followed, deserved considerable praise, and we believe gave general satisfaction. Indeed, after the storms which have lately been witnessed in Covent-Garden Theatre, it was pleasing to see so



many who had been involved in them, one way or other, met together to celebrate a lasting and cordial reconciliation; while every one seemed anxious to bury in oblivion those heats and animosities which were so violent during their continuance, and which seemed to threaten such disagreeable consequences:—There could not be a more decided proof that even those who took a distinguished part in the late theatrical disturbances, so far from being obdurate or vindictive, were ready to meet half way the offers of conciliation, and to bury all the past in perpetual oblivion.

After the cloth was drawn, the first toast was “the King,” which was drank with applause.

The next was “the voice of the people.”

Mr. Clifford. — “Gentlemen, we are all so much interested in the present toast, that I hope you will drink it with three times three.” This address was followed by great applause, and the toast was drank with enthusiasm.

A song — “Pat. Murphy the piper,” by Mr. Jones.

Toast — “The stage,” with three:— great applause.

Next toast. — “The ancient and unalienable judicature of the pit,” drank with three times three, and continued applause. A glee — “Glorious Apollo,” by three gentlemen, the most prominent words of which were — “Unity and Joy,”

and which, as being symbolical of the meeting, were rapturously applauded.

Mr. Clifford. — “ Gentlemen, I beg your serious attention to the toast I am about to propose, and I am sure you will drink it with as much pleasure as I now propose it, for certainly no toast can be more appropriate to our present meeting, nor worded with more propriety than it is — Gentlemen, “ May this happy reconciliation be of equal advantage to the public in amusement, and to the proprietors in emolument.” — Drank with three times three, and with loud and continued applause.

Mr. Kemble then rose, amidst general plaudits from all parts of the room, and addressed the company as follows: — “ Gentlemen, Mr. Harris and myself concur most cordially in the toast now given, and we beg to have the honour of most respectfully drinking your healths.” — (Applause.)

A song — “ There was a lady,” by Mr. Jones.

Toast — “ The immortal memory of Shakespeare,” drank with enthusiasm.

A Mr. Green then favoured the company with a political song of considerable humour, on the late Parisian farce of “ Napoleon’s divorce of Josephine.” This parody on Napoleon’s speech to his senate, and his wish to obtain a more prolific consort than his late one, was conducted

with considerable humour, and produced corresponding laughter.

Mr. Miller then rose — “ Gentlemen, I am about to propose a toast, which I am confident you will drink with as much pleasure as that with which I now propose it, — “ Our worthy chairman, Mr. Clifford.” Drank with three times three, and universal and continued applause.

Mr. Clifford then rose, amidst loud and reiterated plaudits, and addressed the company as follows : —

“ Gentlemen, — I return you most sincerely my thanks for the honour you have done me, in placing me in my present situation, and for the kind and flattering manner in which you have done me the honour to drink my health. I consider it as very unfortunate for me, that it is perhaps necessary for the chairman of such a meeting as the present to say something more than merely return you thanks for the honour you have done me, and to add something on the subject that has called us together. I consider this as rather unfortunate, as no man wishes more than I do to bury in oblivion all that has happened ; and I should be extremely unhappy if any thing fell from me, on the present occasion, that could even be tortured into any thing like a severe recollection of what has passed, by any one that hears me. (Applause.) But there is one thing collateral to those unpleasant animosities which



I cannot help mentioning, though I hope these differences themselves will henceforward be consigned to oblivion. Gentlemen, you all know it was my lot to be plaintiff in an action arising out of these unpleasant circumstances. All I know of the proceedings in that action is derived from the newspaper reports of it, which you yourselves may have also seen. From these reports, I understand, it was publicly said, that I went to the theatre as the leader of an infuriated mob, combined to destroy all private property, to convulse society at large, even to overthrow the constitution, and to subvert the monarchy. (No! No! you did not, cried a number of voices.) Such, however, Gentlemen, was the purport of what you must have all seen stated in the newspapers. Now, I recollect full well, and you must recollect also, that, when Mr. Wardle brought forward his most important investigation in the House of Commons, Mr. Canning introduced a true, but a dangerous, expression, "that infamy much attach somewhere." Now, gentlemen, I must appeal to you, if the calamity of my being the leader of a dangerous and infuriated mob can attach to me?—(No! No!)—On the contrary, I believe I have the voice even of the theatre itself, of you, of the public, from the Orkneys to the Land's End, that no such calumny does attach to me. (Applause.) Why then, Gentlemen, if it does not attach to me, it must attach

somewhere; and let it attach somewhere, not like a bright and brilliant star, but like a dim and baleful halo, round the head of him who dared to utter such a calumny. I have only one thing more to say, and that shall be on the subject of popular applause. On the occasion of a late trial, I was surprised to hear the Attorney-General charge the counsel for the plaintiff (Mr. Wardle) with a wish to catch at popularity; while the counsel denied it, and assigned for his reason, that the breath of popular applause was too often bestowed without a reason, and withdrawn without a fault; that it was an honour as easily gained as withdrawn; but, gentlemen, I do not know one instance of such thoughtless fickleness. The truth is, the observation is a sophism founded on this, that the enemies of the people wish it to be believed, that popularity is merely an attachment to the individual, and not to the cause in which he is engaged. (Applause.) Give me, if you can, an instance in which any man continued steadily labouring in support of the great cause of the rights and liberties of the people; and the public applause was withheld from him. But when the people find that their interests are merely used as a kind of stalking-horse, to conceal the real object; that they are merely treated as a ladder to mount the summit of ambition, which is kicked from under them as soon as the object is reached, then are the just

clamour and disappointment of the people as great and as loudly expressed as the applause by which their former favourite was raised. Was it fit, then, to talk of the fickleness of popular applause? The change was not in the people, but in the man himself, and such a person, who complained of the fickleness of the people, reminds me of the landsman, who, on his first going to sea, thinks that the land is removing from him, while he is at rest, when the fact was exactly the reverse; and, in the same way, the man who deserts the people, and goes over to the treasury, is alone in motion, while you are steady; he is the apostate, while you remain fixed to your principles. (Applause.) True popularity is not that which merely arises from the subject of the day, but from a tried, constant, and steady adherence to the rights of the people, at all times and on all occasions. Right or wrong, this is my idea of popularity, and, as I have been charged with courting it by undue means, I have thought this not an improper opportunity for giving you my opinion on the subject. Not being quite well at present, I feel myself almost exhausted even by the little that I have said, and I shall therefore detain you no longer. The part which I have had in the business of this reconciliation will always be a source of peculiar gratification to me. I heard that there were great disturbances at the theatre, I went to it, and, at

last, was drawn into the heats which these disturbances gave rise to; but it will ever be a source of consolation to me that I have not fomented, that I have not forwarded, them, that I have not widened the breach; but that, on the contrary, I have had a share in restoring that harmony and peace between the proprietors and the public, which we are met to commemorate this evening. I now return you my sincere thanks for the honour you have done me, and have the honour of drinking all your good healths." Mr. Clifford's speech was received with loud and reiterated bursts of applause.

A gentleman then rose, whose name we learned was a Mr. Bonnar, of the Post-office, and begged leave to congratulate the company on the accomplishment of the great and original object of their meeting. It gave him great pleasure to reflect on the happy results of their last meeting, and he was no less pleased on the subsequent advertisement, that so many individuals, of a liberal mind, should have crowded together for the purpose of celebrating the happy reconciliation that had been effected. He trusted that so much liberality having been shewn on the part of the public, they would have no hesitation to complete the work they had begun, and to shew effectually that liberality, of which they had given so favourable a specimen. He was about to speak in favour of an individual connected

with the theatre, and he feared that, if strict justice were required, his cause would fail of success: but, when he appealed to the liberality of the company present, he trusted that what he had to offer, would not be heard without due attention. In making the proposition, he acted merely as an O. P. He was to all intents and purposes an independent man; he had no connection with the theatre, nor with any man belonging to it, and could have no motive distinct from those of a public nature for calling their attention to the subject. He invited investigation, and that investigation related to an individual that had not been included in the general amnesty lately agreed to. (Great noise, and in several quarters, Bravo!) If they were ever to distinguish between persons employed and their employers, now was the proper time. He would appeal to the candour of the gentleman who now so honourably filled the chair: in his legal suit for damages and redress, that gentleman had resorted immediately to the principals, and had obtained redress. Upon what principle of equity or justice then could they, after having made peace with the principals, continue to prosecute their resentment towards those who had been only acting servants on the part of them with whom they had agreed to a reconciliation. (Great and continued noise and uproar.)

The chairman then rose, and, after obtaining a



partial silence, stated that it was his wish, and for the honour and decorum of the meeting, that every man should be heard who had any thing to offer relative to the object of their present meeting. The gentleman addressing them had not as yet been very explicit; but if they would allow him twenty minutes longer, he might then perhaps get through his exordium, and inform them what he meant to propose. He begged that, in justice, they would listen to the gentleman, and, if possible, learn what he intended to submit to them.

Mr. Bonnar, in continuation, observed, that he should come to the point in a much shorter time than that mentioned by the honourable chairman. His exordium would be very short. He had only to say, that they did not act here individually, they were representatives of John Bull; and from the attachment he had to that personage, he was anxious they should do nothing derogatory to his feelings or honour. The case to which he wished to allude, was that of Mr. Brandon. (Loud hisses, and cries of hear! hear! and bravo!). He was aware that it might be said, that this objection to Mr. Brandon was not for his having discharged his duty as a person in the employ of Covent-Garden Theatre, but to the manner in which he had discharged that duty. (Loud cries, it was so! the manner! the manner!) He requested gentlemen to consider,

that Mr. Brandon's situation had been a very trying one, in which the passions were called into play, and they all knew how far the best of men might go in such circumstances. (No Brandon! No Brandon! and cries of hear! hear! hear!) The uproar continued for some time.

Mr. Clifford again rose, and having restored order, stated that he had wished to hear the gentleman, in order to avoid every appearance of partiality; but the meeting being now in possession of what was meant, as the object of this speech, he would observe, that the present was a meeting of harmony and good humour, intended to celebrate the happy reconciliation between the theatre and the public, that had taken place. The meeting was, therefore, meant to be every way social and pleasant, and that very point to which the gentleman had alluded had been debated among those gentlemen who had been among the foremost to call this meeting, and who, considering the diversity of opinion that might and did subsist with respect to it in the public mind, had determined to waive any proposition, in the present circumstances, on the subject. They foresaw that it would lead to discussions that ought, at this time, to be avoided. They had entered into a treaty with the principals, and he should be sorry to see the harmony that was now evidently restored interrupted by any such discussions. If what he

had stated accorded with the sentiments of the meeting, he should proceed to the great business of the day, which was to promote hilarity, by calling for a song.

Mr. Bonnar here attempted to explain and proceed, but was wholly overpowered by loud and reiterated cries of disapprobation.

The chairman then proposed the following toast: "May a brow-beating judge ever be opposed by an enlightened and impartial jury," which was drank with three times three, amid the most rapturous applause.

The duet of "All's Well" was then sung, in fine style, by Mr. Jones and Mr. Hill, and warmly applauded.

The chairman next proposed the following toast: "The bill of rights, and condign punishment to those magistrates who infringe on the rights of the subject, by requiring excessive bail."

It here appeared that the considerable noise and confusion that had taken place in a certain part of the room was owing to some attempt that had been made to turn out a Mr. Gibbons, who, during the riots, had distinguished himself by some informations at Bow-street. Gibbons was obliged to withdraw to the lower end of the room.

The chairman observed, that all the toasts that had been handed to him had now been

drank. They had been of a general nature, and he believed that it was the wisest plan that could have been adopted on such an occasion. Before he left the room, however, he should beg leave to propose one or two of a more personal nature, to which he was sure they would have no objection, and, at the same time, begged leave to apologize for withdrawing at an hour that might be deemed early, on account of a partial indisposition he had laboured under for some days.

He then gave the health of Mr. Kemble and Mr. Harris, which was drank with the greatest enthusiasm, and amid loud applause.

Mr. Kemble observed, that though he had already had the honour of thanking them on a similar occasion, it was with renewed pleasure and satisfaction he now returned them his warmest thanks, and begged leave to drink their good healths. (Applause.)

Mr. Harris returned his most sincere thanks for the honour they had done him, and expressed his heartfelt satisfaction at being present at a meeting, by which every difference was happily obliterated that had unfortunately subsisted between the public and the theatre of Covent Garden. (Loud applause.)

Mr. Hill was then called on for a song, which was much applauded. Mr. Clifford now withdrew, followed by Mr. Kemble, Mr. Harris, and a great majority of the company.

Mr. Scott was afterwards called to the chair, and a very social party formed, when the song and glee were renewed in great spirit, and conviviality protracted till a late hour.

Mr. Clifford left the room about nine o'clock.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

COVENT GARDEN JOURNAL

FOR THE YEAR 1811

IN TWO VOLUMES

The first volume of this Journal, containing the proceedings of the Covent Garden Journal, from the first of January to the first of July, 1811, is now published, and is sold by the Author, at the Covent Garden Journal Office, No. 10, in the Strand, London. The second volume, containing the proceedings from the first of July to the first of January, 1812, is now also published, and is sold by the Author, at the same place. The price of each volume is one shilling, and of the two volumes, two shillings. The Author is sensible that the Journal is not so generally known as it ought to be, and he trusts that the following notice will be of some service to him in this respect.

ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
PROCEEDINGS  
AT THE  
*PUBLIC-OFFICE, BOW-STREET,*  
Against Persons taken into Custody,  
At COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE,  
*On Charges of RIOT, &c.*

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BOW-STREET, September 19, 1809.

A number of young men were brought before the sitting magistrate, charged with aiding and abetting the riot at Covent-Garden Theatre last night.

The most serious charge was against a young man who is a clerk in the office of the commander-in-chief, it being alleged that he was discovered kicking one of the box-doors off the hinges. The prisoner pleaded inebriation and the inducement of general example, which led him to mix in the

clamour. He acknowledged his error and expressed regret at it, but was ordered to find bail, which he did accordingly.

The other charges were for making a noise, attempting to extinguish the candles, and other such misdemeanors. The prisoners had been all night in custody; and, upon procuring bail for their appearance at the sessions, were discharged.

September 23.

CHARLES ZAGNANI, an apprentice to a goldsmith, and JOHN GOODAY, shopman to a linen-draper in Cheapside, were this day brought before J. Nares, Esq. charged with behaving in a riotous and disorderly manner, at the new theatre, on the preceding night.

The complaint against Zagnani was that he, and several others, remained in the one-shilling gallery of Covent-Garden Theatre a considerable time after the performance was over, making a great noise, and that Zagnani took a lighted candle from one of the sconces suspended from the gallery. The prisoner Gooday, it appeared, also continued in the theatre after the conclusion of the performance, standing up in front of one of the lower boxes, and making a great noise with a watchman's rattle; that he then went into the pit, where he held up a banner, with the following inscription upon it:—

“ No Italian depravity or French duplicity— native talent and the old prices.”

The magistrate thought their conduct highly censurable, and ordered them both to find bail.

October 9.

This night a gentleman, named **SCOTT**, was brought from the theatre before Mr. Read, the sitting magistrate, charged with disturbing the performance, &c.

Mr. Brandon, the box-keeper, stated his having made particular remarks on the behaviour of the prisoner, this and the two preceding nights. By fixing placards in front of the boxes, he considerably added to the riotous agitation of the audience. Upon the corroboration of this statement, by another witness, Mr. Scott was ordered to find bail, which he did, himself in four hundred pounds and two sureties in two hundred pounds each. He was also charged with an assault upon two gentlemen in the same box with him, and obliged to procure similar bail as to the above.

A young gentleman, named **PATMORE**, was charged by Solomon Hinds, a Jew, with an assault. The prosecutor stated, that, being in the pit, and observing a gentleman distributing a quantity of printed papers, he snatched a parcel of them from him; but, being immediately beset



by numbers, was driven into the pit-passage, where Mr. Patmore, the prisoner, was, and struck him on the hand with a stick. This statement Mr. Patmore positively denied, and said that he had only that instant come in at half-price. Solomon Hinds being positive as to having received the blow from Mr. Patmore, he was ordered to find bail, upon procuring which he was discharged.

October 10.

A poor-looking creature of the name of ANDREWS was this evening brought, in custody of the officers, before Mr. Read, charged with distributing the following inflammatory hand-bill, in the avenues of the theatre.

#### MENDOZA AND KEMBLE.

“ It is a notorious fact that the managers of Covent Garden Theatre have, both yesterday and to day, furnished Daniel Mendoza, the fighting Jew, with a prodigious number of *pit-orders*, for Covent Garden Theatre, which he has distributed to *Dutch Sam*, and such other of the pugilistic tribe as would attend and engage to assault every person who had the courage to express their disapprobation of the managers' attempt to ram down the new prices. This shameful abuse in the ma-

nagers shall be proved to the satisfaction of the *Lord Chamberlain*.—Oct. 10, 1809.”

Mr. Brandon attended at this charge, and denied the contents of the above bill to be true. He stated on his oath, that, to his knowledge, no such orders were issued by Mr. Kemble; and that, if such orders had been issued, for the above purpose, he must of necessity have known it.

Andrews, in his defence, said the hand-bills were given to him by a gentleman near the Royal Exchange, with a shilling for his trouble, to distribute them near the theatre; that, observing the name of a respectable printer to them, he considered he was not doing wrong in circulating them; that he got his bread by distributing bills, having, for the last fifteen months, been engaged by Mr. Bish, who he made no doubt would give him a character.

The magistrate inquired if he would give up the name of the gentleman who employed him. Andrews affirmed that it was unknown to him; and, in default of being able to find bail, he was committed. He is a singular-looking object, being without a nose.

Mr. BLACKBURN, of the Borough, was charged with coming into the boxes at half-price, and ringing a dustman's bell.—He was ordered to find bail.

Mr. HEWETSON, the author of the *Blind Boy*, charged Messrs. HERBERT and MOSSINEAU with

assaulting him at the theatre. They gave a counter-charge against him for assaulting them.

The affray between the parties happened by Mr. Hewetson going out, during the beginning of the opera, and on his return Messrs. Herbert and Mossineau were, with the crowd, waiting to go in at half-price. A dispute arose about Mr. Hewetson passing them. The two gentlemen were ordered to find the *rioters' bail*, but bail was accepted for Mr. Hewetson in twenty pounds himself, and his surety (*Mr. Brandon*) twenty pounds !!!

A Clerk in the Navy-Office was also charged with riotous behaviour in the theatre, and ordered to find bail, which he accordingly did, and was discharged.

October 12.

This evening Mr. Read attended soon after ten o'clock. A gentleman, who said his name was DESMARD, was brought from the theatre, in custody of an officer, charged with making disturbances in the boxes.

William Hewetson, of Battersea, Surrey, Esq. said that, after the conclusion of the opera, the prisoner, who was in the front of one of the boxes, in the lower circle, got up, and, standing upon the cushion of the front box, addressed those in the pit in nearly the following words:—"Gentlemen, this is the thirteenth night that you have met here

with the most decided opposition to the new prices. Gentlemen, I neither fear Mr. Kemble nor Bow-Street—" (here the bell rang and the curtain drew up.) The effect of his speaking caused the people in the pit to cheer him, and cry out—"Bravo, go on," which, with others expressing disapprobation of his conduct, certainly created a tumult in the house for the time he was speaking. This statement was confirmed by Baron Peiltzar, of the Nine Elms, Vauxhall, and Mr. Brandon. He was ordered to find bail.

ALEXANDER CHEEKE, coal-merchant, of Hackney, was charged by Peter Fisher, of Castle-Street, Leicester-Square, with hanging a paper over the front of a box on the fourth circle, with the assistance of another person; and that then, standing up and waving his hat to the people in the pit, he said—"Now my boys, a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether," which was immediately followed by shouting from the pit and from other parts of the house, produced, as he supposed, by Mr. Cheeke speaking. This was confirmed by Mr. James Osborn, of Aldersgate-Street, and Mr. Bennet. Ordered to find bail.

THOMAS WAUGH was charged with assaulting Richard Wood in the pit: the latter stated that the prisoner struck him with a stick on his head and on his hand; there was a great noise and confusion in the pit at the time, and he observed him strike several other people. Ordered to find bail.

WILLIAM BURSLEM was charged by Townshend, the officer, who said that, during the performance, he heard a whistle blown; and, going into the passage between the basket-boxes and the front, he saw Mr. Burslem standing in one of the basket-boxes, and, after some time, saw him put the whistle to his mouth and whistle very loud. Townshend went round into the box and stood next the prisoner, who whistled twice more, but not so loud. He then laid hold of him, and, with the assistance of a party of the patrol, who were in attendance, took him out of the boxes, the audience being much annoyed by the noise he had made. Ordered to find bail.

CHARLES POCOCK, of Cheapside, was charged with a similar offence by Mr. Gibbons, of Marylebone Park, who stated that he observed Mr. Pocock, in the first circle of the boxes, blowing a whistle, which disturbed him and the rest of the audience very much. There was a great noise and disturbance in the house at the time, which Mr. Pocock encouraged by calling out *encore*, and kicking the seats with great violence. Ordered to find bail.

JAMES SILVERTHORNE, Kensington-Gravel-Pits, belonging to the Post-Office, was charged by Thomas Hunt, one of the patrol, with blowing a whistle in the one-shilling gallery, second seat from the front; he, in consequence, got down

from the back and seized him, when the prisoner dropped the whistle. Ordered to find bail.

SAMUEL STALLARD, of Smithfield, stock-broker, was brought, in the custody of Smith, one of the patrol, charged with blowing a horn.

George White, jun. of Park-street, Westminster, said he heard a horn blowing in one of the dress boxes by the prisoner; he had no doubt of his identity; he blew it very bad. He got hold of the horn and endeavoured to wrest it from him, but received a violent blow upon his arm, which obliged him to let it go. The door of the box was soon after opened, and he gave charge of the prisoner to the patrol.

Mr. Gibbons said he observed the prisoner, in one of the dress boxes: his conduct was extremely violent; indeed he encouraged the disturbance in the pit, by leaning over the front of the box, and exciting the audience in the pit to go on. Mr. Gibbons remonstrated with him upon the impropriety of his conduct, as there was no disturbance in other parts of the house at the time. The prisoner replied, that the managers were a set of blackguards, for he had purchased, of one of their hired ruffians in the street, for five shillings, an order, signed by Mr. Harris, to admit two to the boxes: and that this business would end in blood, for the managers had hired a gang of Jews, and all the ruffians in London. Several gentlemen proved his blowing a horn.

Mr. Graham ordered him to find bail, himself

in five hundred pounds, and two sureties in two hundred and fifty pounds each.

All the others entered into recognizances, themselves in one hundred pounds, and two sureties in fifty pounds each.

Mr. Humphries is retained by the managers to conduct the prosecution.

October 13.

Mr. MORRIS THOMAS, a gentleman of respectability, residing in Elm-Court, Temple, was brought up, on a charge of disturbing the peace and quiet of the theatre, by hooting, hissing, and kicking against the partition which separates the dress-boxes from the basket, during the performances.

Mr. Thomas submitted to the consideration of the magistrates the injustice and arbitrary interposition of the police-officers, to prevent the exercise of the fair opinion of the audience, respecting the performances in the theatre, as a conduct which was completely subversive of the rights of Englishmen, in a British theatre. He did not deny that he had kicked and hooted at the performance; on the contrary, he avowed that he did so, from a principle of unbiassed judgment. As, however, the charge was brought forward, he must insist on meeting it in the open

day. He had been dragged, ignominiously, out of the theatre, in a manner so rudely, that the most outrageous conduct, on his part, would not have warranted. Bail, to any amount, he was ready to put in, and he trusted the magistrates would not compromise the affair.

Mr. Graham said, that, in his capacity of magistrate, he was merely ministerial, and, therefore, it was not in his province to enter into a consideration of the justice or injustice of the conduct of the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre; all that he had to do was to determine upon the charge presented before him. From every attention he could give it, he saw no ground for charging him with any unlawful expression of his sentiments in the theatre, and therefore intimated to him that he was now discharged.

The son of Mr. SOAME, the architect, in Lincoln's-Inn Fields, was ordered to give sureties, himself in fifty pounds, to answer a charge of riot and disturbance, by hissing and hooting during the performances.

THOMAS HIGHMAN, a footman in livery, was dismissed upon a charge of exhibiting, from the two-shilling gallery, two placards, on which were inscribed, "Covent Garden Synagogue," and "Jews and Gentiles;" the evidence was not sufficient to identify the prisoner with the fact.

A young man, named RICHARD VINALL, a



clerk in a public office, was ordered to find bail for riotous conduct, and for exhibiting placards in the pit.

October 14.

Messrs. THOMAS and WILLIAM SMITH, of the Chapter House, St. Paul's Church Yard, were charged, by Mr. Bennet, of Carey-street, who said he was in the pit, and, during the performance, he observed both the prisoners, in company together, in the lower dress boxes, where one of them held up a placard, upon a stick, which immediately produced a general huzza from different parts of the house, particularly from the boxes and pit; he observed some writing upon the placard, but what the words were he could not tell: he endeavoured to snatch the placard, but could not obtain it, when he who held it up struck him with his stick: witness then went into the boxes and had this person secured. The other prisoner, William Smith, assisted in holding up the placard, and afterwards held up a placard himself, with the words "No new prices" written on it, which produced huzzaing and great noise, and tumult in the pit.

Mr. Hewetson, of Battersea, said, he was in one of the lower boxes, and, after half price, the two gentleman charged, in company with others,

came into the box where he was. They soon began to make a great noise, by calling out, "Off, off; no Jews." While the witness was endeavouring to tear down a placard, which was held up in the pit, they abused him very much. Mr. Thomas Smith and another gentleman then held up a large placard, and Mr. William Smith held up a small one, on which were the words, "No new prices;" the effect produced by this was great shouting, noise, and tumult, from the pit and boxes at the same time, which continued long, and which was so great as to cause ladies to leave the boxes.

Henry Fullion, an officer in the East-India Company's service; Charles Heak, of Marchmont-street, Brunswick-square; Francis Austin, of Holborn-court, Gray's Inn; and Francis Pike, of King-street, Covent Garden; were questioned, and all, with the exception of the first named Mr. Fullion, agreed in asserting, that Mr. Thomas Smith did not hold up any placard.

Mr. Read ordered both the prisoners to find bail, themselves in one hundred pounds, and two sureties in fifty pounds each, which they did, by the arrival of some friends, and were discharged.

### FORGED ORDERS.

JOHN DALE and JOSEPH FLETCHER, clerks to

Messrs. Allen and Wilson, of Bond-street, tailors, were charged with offering a forged order, at the pit-door, to admit two, written as follows :

Admit two, pit; J. Brandon : Saturday, Oct. 14, 1809.

It was immediately discovered, by the door-keeper, not to be the hand writing of either of the Messrs. Brandon, and he gave the prisoner into the custody of Smith, the conductor of the patrol.

Mr. James and Mr. John Brandon attended, and proved that the order was not written by either of them. The prisoners solemnly declared they did not know it was a forgery, but that it was given them as a genuine order. This was confirmed by Mr. Newcomb, an attorney, of Vine-street, Piccadilly, who stated, that he had every reason to believe that the order was written by a lad of the name of Charles Hine, who had done it out of a frolick; and he believed the order was written in his office, that afternoon, but without his knowledge; in fact, the lad had told him that he wrote the order as a trick upon the prisoners. Mr. Newcomb proposed, that he and one of their masters would be answerable for the prisoners appearance, on Monday, when the lad should be brought forward: this was agreed to by Mr. Brandon, and they were liberated.

October 16.

This day, the two young men, above-named, charged with forging pit-orders, were in attendance. Henry Hine, from whom the lads said they obtained the order, appeared, and acknowledged that he had written the order merely for the purpose of *quizzing* those lads. He declared he never saw Mr. Brandon's hand-writing, nor had he the slightest intention of defrauding the theatre; he had no expectation whatever that the order would pass, or that any worse consequence would follow than the disappointment of the young men.

Mr. Read observed, that many injurious reports had gone forth, of orders having been issued by Mr. Brandon for sinister purposes, which rumours probably originated in forgeries of this nature; some step therefore became necessary to check such abuses.

The young man solemnly declared his total ignorance of any such practice, further than the order he had foolishly written in a mere joke. The magistrate answered, that, even so, he exposed himself to be prosecuted for a misdemeanor, and he therefore held him to bail, by two sureties, in one hundred pounds each.

October 17.

MARY AUSTIN was charged with making disturbances in the one-shilling gallery by springing a rattle.

Robert Fry, one of the patrols, said that he was in the one-shilling gallery, and observed the prisoner making a great noise by hallooing, shouting, and springing a small rattle. Prisoner said a young man of the name of Smith, in Southampton-street, lent her the rattle. Fry's statement was confirmed by Robert French, a carpenter belonging to the theatre.—Ordered to find bail.

FRANCIS HALL was brought up, in custody of Anthony, who said that the prisoner was at the door of the office when a man was brought there in custody; and, upon his being refused admittance, insisted upon coming in, saying it was a public office. He made a great noise, and excited a number of persons, gathered round the office in consequence of the disturbance at the theatre, to hoot, shout, and cause a great tumult.—Ordered to find bail.

FRANCIS TRICKER, of Worship-street, Shore-ditch, was charged by Mr. James Brandon with making a disturbance in the theatre. Mr. B. stated, that, at the beginning of the fourth act

of Richard III, and while there was a great noise of whistles and catcalls in the two-shilling gallery, he went up, with Joseph Townshend, the patrole, to the back of the said gallery, and saw the prisoner blowing a whistle or catcall for above a quarter of an hour. Joseph Townshend confirmed this statement.—Ordered to find bail.

#### Same Night.

The orator who, in naval uniform, addressed the pit at Covent Garden Theatre, was this night, a little before twelve o'clock, brought up for examination. The persons who accompanied him from the theatre having left him at the Cecil-street Coffee-house, in the Strand, John Smith, one of the patroles who followed among the crowd, apprehended him as soon as his friends had deserted him.

After considerable difficulty on the part of Mr. Read and Mr. Graham to make him tell his name, he said it was *Samuel Dudfield*, assistant to Messrs. Kirk & Co. druggists, and that he lodged at Mrs. Barber's, Bunhill-row. From what cause this young man has assumed the dress, manners, and language, of a naval officer is a mystery yet to be explained.

Mr. William Folkard, of Great Queen-street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields, ironmonger, said, that, this

evening, he observed the prisoner in the pit, making a great noise and disturbance during the whole of the performance; that, at the conclusion, he stood up on one of the benches in the pit, and, after calling silence, he addressed the audience. He commenced with noticing his having obtained a former hearing, spoke at considerable length respecting the advance in the price of admission, and concluded with hoping that the approaching jubilee might not be tarnished by theatrical tyranny, and desired the audience to give three cheers to his majesty, for protecting their great rights, while they protected their lesser ones. The audience cheered accordingly, and then they agreed, particularly those in the pit, to take care of him, which they actually did, by carrying him out of the theatre in triumph.

Thomas Carpenter, of New-street, Covent Garden, saw the prisoner in the pit after the performance, standing up and haranguing the audience; and, addressing himself particularly to the galleries, requested them to join with those on the quarter-deck, meaning the pit, and they would make the admiral of the new prices strike, or knock under. He concluded by saying that he would head them in the Piazza, exhorting at the same time to persevere in the cause they had begun.

James Osborne, of Aldersgate-street, said he saw the prisoner in the same circumstances described by the foregoing deponent, and that, among other expressions, on Monday night, he said "D——n my eyes, my lads, if we can get within our grappling irons fairweather Jack, we will bring him to book." In his speech this evening, among other things, he said, "Persevere, my lads, and you will be successful;" and finished in the manner deposed to by the former witness. At his concluding there was a general huzza and cry of "Take care of him." The noise and tumult, after his address, were similar to that after half-price, and so loud that not a word could be heard of the performance.

Ordered to find bail, himself in 200*l.* and two sureties in 100*l.* each; in default of which the prisoner was committed.

October 18.

A brewer's clerk, named JAMES CAULFIELD, living in the service of Mr. Lyons, of the Neptune brewery, Bell-walk, Shadwell, was brought up on a charge of rioting at Covent Garden Theatre. The prisoner was taken out of the boxes by Nichols, the officer, who detected him in addressing the audience in the pit, and exhibiting



his watch, to which was attached a large purple ribbon, by way of watch-string, inscribed on which were the words "Old Prices" in gold letters.

For half an hour he continued his speeches at intervals, and, at the close of the performance, he wished the audience a good night in a loud voice, which produced a universal shout of "Take care of him," "Protect him;" and he withdrew, accompanied by several persons from the boxes. Shortly afterwards he again entered the boxes, at the opposite side of the house, and chanced to come within one or two of that wherein Nichols was, who immediately took him into custody. This statement was corroborated by two other witnesses.

The prisoner did not deny that he had exhibited his watch-chain, which was given him he said by his sweetheart; but declared that his conduct was otherwise pacific and orderly during the whole evening.

October 19.

The only theatrical case presented this evening for the consideration of the magistrates was that of a journeyman currier, named RICHARD DRAPER, who was charged by Mr. Brandon with annoying the audience, from the one-shil-

ling gallery, by the vociferous chaunt of God save the King, during the performance on the stage.

Mr. Brandon stated, that his remonstrance with the prisoner had no effect; that he received abusive answers from him, and that he repeated his advice to no purpose, as the prisoner, in defiance thereof, continued making a considerable noise. Upon the entrance of half-price, and the first ebullition of disapprobation from the people in the pit, the prisoner in the most triumphant manner exclaimed, "Now the bl—dy row begins." And, having wetted his throat with some porter, which he had in a bottle, he set up a hideous howl in concert with the pitites. Under these circumstances Mr. Brandon charged him in custody of an officer. He attempted to escape by removing two or three seats lower in the gallery, but was immediately seized and conducted out of the house.

The above statement was corroborated by two other persons present who witnessed the conduct of the prisoner.

For want of bail he was fully committed to Tothill-fields prison. He was in a state of intoxication.

October 24.

Mr. JOHN JACKSON, some years since well known as a celebrated prize-fighter, was brought in the custody of Donaldson before Mr. Read, charged with violently assaulting Mr. James Savage, of Walsingham-place, on the Surrey side of Blackfriars Bridge.

Mr. Savage stated, that, on the evening of the 18th of September, the time when Covent Garden Theatre opened, he went to the boxes of that theatre. When the performance had concluded, he was in the front row of one of the front boxes, and the pressure was so great that he and others, who were in the front rows, were obliged to stand on the cushions some time. A person came behind him, pulled him by his coat, and told him he was injuring his property, in standing upon the cushions; he replied that, if he were injuring his property, he was willing to make it good, as it was impossible to stand any where else, the crowd was so extremely great. In a few minutes after that, he was seized by the collar, by a man whom he did not know, and turned out of the theatre. At the time he was turned out of the theatre, he saw Macmanus, the officer. In two days after, he saw Macmanus again, and inquired of him whether he knew who it was that turned him out of the theatre, when he replied it was Jackson the prize-fighter.

A few days since he saw Macmanus again, when he repeated the same description of the man, and said that it was Jackson.

Mr. Read asked Mr. Savage, whether Mr. Jackson, who stood by his side, was the person who turned him out of the theatre? To which he replied, to the great astonishment of every one present, that he did not know.

Mr. Jackson, in his defence, said, that, on the 18th of September he dined with General Gwynne, Colonel M'Donel, Captains Barclay and Hanbury, and others, at the Piazza Coffee-house. After dinner they went to Covent Garden Theatre. He did not recollect seeing Macmanus in the course of the night. He and the other gentlemen left the theatre soon after the performance was over and returned to the Piazza Coffee-house at half-past eleven o'clock, to supper, which he could prove by the above gentlemen, the waiters of the house, and others, and that he was at home in Grosvenor-street, Pimlico, at the time when Mr. Savage said he was turned out of the theatre.

Some of the gentlemen who were in company with Mr. Jackson at the theatre attended to prove his statement.

Mr. Read said, if Macmanus would repeat what Mr. Savage had said, he should have another warrant.

Mr. Jackson said he should not be satisfied

with a discharge of the warrant, but called on Mr. Savage for satisfaction. The latter readily gave him his name and address. Mr. Jackson was accordingly discharged.

On the 26th, Macmanus, having returned to town from attending the celebration of the jubilee at Windsor, attended before Mr. Read to explain what he had said to Mr. Savage respecting his having been assaulted and turned out of the box by Jackson. It appeared that Macmanus was deceived in the person; the man who turned Mr. Savage out being a carpenter belonging to the theatre, whose person bears a strong resemblance to that of Mr. Jackson.

October 31.

Mr. J. Ridley, a respectable tradesman, residing in Compton-street, Soho, was charged by Mr. Brandon, who stated, that, about the middle of the second act, he was in the avenue behind the dress boxes, and, hearing a dreadful noise in the pit, he looked through one of the holes in the box-doors and saw the prisoner standing on the third seat from the boxes with his hat on, in which were stuck the letters O P, meaning Old Prices, making a violent shouting and uproar. In order to be more satisfied as to his identity, he went into the pit, and, as the prisoner still

continued his noise, he ordered the constables to take him into custody. On so doing several gentlemen in the boxes cried out, "Mr. Brandon, that is the man who has been interrupting the play during the last act, take him out." The constables performed their duty accordingly, and brought him out of the theatre. A gentleman, who was in the pit at the time, came forward, and corroborated Mr. Brandon's statement as to the prisoner's having worn the letters O P in his hat, but he did not hear him making any noise.

A journeyman paper-hanger, named Leedle, also identified the prisoner's person, and swore that he saw him blow a small penny trumpet during the performance, and that he wore the letters O P in his hat: as he was immediately behind the prisoner, he was enabled to watch all his motions, and he was positive that he was the person who made the disturbance.

Mr. Ridley, being called upon for his answer to this charge, observed, in a very independent tone, that he did not wish to skulk from a fair investigation of his conduct. He was ready to avow that he did wear the letters O P in his hat, and that he did express his sentiments on the performance, according to the best of his judgment, and, as he conceived, in a manner perfectly legal. So convinced was he as to the legality of his proceedings, that he would repeat it again

to-morrow night, and every night, until he was satisfied that he was breaking his majesty's peace, and then he was as ready as any other loyal subject to abide the consequences of his conduct. However, he expected to hear a higher authority than that of Mr. Read, before he yielded assent to *his* interpretation of the law on the subject. He was not an obscure and friendless individual, who would be borne down or terrified by the solemnity of finding bail. He should appeal to a higher tribunal, and stand the test of a trial, in the Court of King's Bench, where he was satisfied he should meet with justice.

Mr. Read asked the prisoner whether he meant to persist in his declaration that he would repeat the same conduct to-morrow? and being answered that he *should*, until he was conscious that, by so doing, he was breaking the peace: he was ordered to find bail, which he did accordingly.

At the close of the performance Mr. Clifford, the barrister, and four other persons, were taken into custody in the avenue leading from the pit, and brought before the magistrate. They were charged with wearing the letters O P in their hats, and making a violent noise and riot in the pit during the performance.

Mr. Clifford and his friends avowed the fact, and declared that they had expressed their disapprobation of the performance, but not illegally,

The magistrate without hesitation ordered them to be discharged; and, on leaving the office, they were hailed with cheers and acclamations, by an immense crowd of persons who had witnessed their capture by the officers, and conducted them away in triumph.

November 4.

This evening, about seven o'clock, a gentleman, who said his name was Winholt, entered the office, in great agitation, and complained to the clerk, that he had been violently assaulted and extremely ill-treated by several persons in the pit of Covent Garden Theatre, and applied for officers to go with him and take them into custody; the clerk referred him to Mr. Graham, the sitting magistrate, who heard his complaint, which was to the following effect:

That he was in the pit, and, not approving of some of the performance, he hissed; a young man sitting near him, whose name he since understood to be White, in company with Perry, the waterman, and several others, asked him what he hissed at, whether it was the play or the performers? He replied it was nothing to him. White observed, if he hissed again out he should go. He did hiss again, conceiving that White nor his companions had nothing to do with his



conduct; upon which White immediately seized him by the collar, and he was turned out of the pit.

Mr. Graham informed him that it was not in his power to order officers to go and fetch Mr. White out of the pit in custody, but that he would grant a warrant against him, which Mr. Winholt agreed to; Mr. Graham ordered the warrant to be made out, but, while it was filling up, White entered the office to meet the charge. He proved to be Mr. S. White, Joiner, Park-street, Westminster. When the prosecutor's charge was taken, he said his name was John Burkitt Winholt, of Thames Ditton, Surrey, gentleman, and that he was in the pit, during the performance of the Grecian Daughter, which he did not approve of, and therefore hissed, which he conceived he had a right to do; when several persons near him, among whom was the prisoner, desired him to cease hissing, or he and his friends would turn him out. The prosecutor, however, thought proper to pay no attention to what he said, and continued to hiss. The prisoner observed again: "If you hiss once more I will turn you out." The prosecutor hissed again, when the prisoner and all his friends bore down upon him, the prisoner seized him by the collar, and he was dragged a considerable distance towards the door, when he said he would go out, which he did for fear of farther violence, conceiving his life to be in danger.

Another charge was exhibited against the prisoner, by a gentleman sitting near Mr. Winholt, in the pit. He stated his name to be Jonathan Hardy, of Bird-street, West-square, St. George's Fields, and that he was in the pit when a number of persons were calling "Turn out Mr. Winholt," others called out "Turn out Mr. White." The prosecutor saw Mr. White among the persons who surrounded Mr. Winholt; and he (Mr. Hardy) called "Turn out Mr. White." Upon which White came up to him, knocked him down, and continued beating him across two-thirds of the pit, till he got out of the door.

Mr. Graham ordered White to find bail for both the assaults, himself in twenty pounds, and two sureties, for each assault, in ten pounds each.

Mr. Winholt observed, that feeling so extremely indignant as he did at Mr. White's attempt to dictate how he should behave himself at the theatre, he would go again there on Monday night, and would hiss; that he would take a pair of pistols with him, and, if any person presumed to interfere with him, as to hissing or clapping, they must abide by the consequences.

Mr. Graham requested that he would not repeat such language, or he must be under the necessity of ordering him to find bail to keep the peace.

November 6.

Mr. Winholt, having gone to the theatre this evening agreeably to his threat on Saturday, but whether with pistols or not is unknown, before seven o'clock came to this office, and complained of his having been extremely ill-treated, assaulted, and robbed of his hat.

Mr. Read informed him, that, if he could point out the person who assaulted him, he should have a warrant against him; but this he could not do; an officer, however, returned with him into the pit, to apprehend the person who had robbed him of his hat, but Mr. W. was not able to point him out, and was actually obliged to leave the theatre, and walk away without a hat.

November 7.

After the conclusion of the performance at Covent Garden Theatre this night, a person, who said his name was Robert Paddison, and that he was an attorney, of Louth, in Lincolnshire, was brought to the office, in custody, on a charge of exciting the audience to tumult in the theatre. Two respectable witnesses proved, that, after the curtain had dropped, and most of the company

were quitting the theatre, Mr. Paddison stood up in one of the boxes in the second tier, and harangued the audience, for some time, on the subject of the new prices and the private boxes, and concluded by saying that he and his friends would come again and again to the theatre, and make a noise till the private boxes were pulled down and the prices reduced. This conduct, the witnesses declared, tended to increase the noise and tumult, and was the cause of a number of persons returning, who were quitting the pit when he got up to speak.

Mr. Paddison said, in his defence, that he had no intention of making a disturbance in the theatre.

The magistrates (Mr. Read and Mr. Graham) thinking the prisoner's conduct very reprehensible, directed that he should find bail to answer the complaint at the session, himself in one hundred pounds, and two sureties in fifty pounds; but, it being then a very late hour, he was not able to send for his friends before the magistrates left the office, and was obliged to remain in custody till the following day, when two very respectable gentlemen appeared and entered into recognizances for him.

November 8.

Mr. Winholt appeared again at this office, and stated to Mr. Graham, that he was just come from the pit of Covent Garden Theatre, and brought a man in custody whom he charged with having robbed him of his hat in the pit on Monday evening.

Mr. Graham enquired if the circumstance took place when Mr. Winholt was engaged in a disturbance: Mr. W. acknowledged it did, but said that the man forced his hat off.

The magistrate replied, that, under these circumstances, he could not possibly think that the hat was taken with a felonious intent, and therefore could not receive the charge of felony. Mr. Winholt, however, could have his remedy, for, if he persisted in his charge of felony, he could indict the person. To satisfy Mr. W. he was furnished with the name and description of the man, who proved to be a journeyman ironmonger; the man was consequently discharged.

November 11.

The time of the magistrates was more occupied

on this than on any other evening, respecting the squabbles at Covent Garden Theatre.

Mr. Abraham Hart Braham, of Villiers-street, Strand, charged Mr. Michael Thomson, of the same street, with assisting, on this evening, in making a disturbance at the theatre. This was most positively contradicted by several respectable witnesses who were seated near the parties.

Mr. Thomson now preferred his charge against Mr. Braham, for a violent assault, and knocking him down. He said that he was in the pit, standing on a seat with other persons, and, during the performance, after some conversation that took place relative to the conduct of Mr. Braham, a scuffle ensued, the prisoner struck the prosecutor violently on the breast with his fist, and knocked him down. The only offence he had given him was being pushed against him by other persons, which he could not possibly avoid.

This statement was confirmed by Mr. George Purse, a silversmith of the Strand. Mr. Braham was ordered to find bail, which he procured.

Mr. Lewis Vanderdace the younger was brought in the custody of Mr. Bell, high-constable for the Holborn division, who said that he saw the prisoner on the third seat of the pit, while a great noise and disturbance were making.

there, and heard him exclaim, as if speaking to some persons in the boxes, "Now is your time, O Ps, to sing out for the Old Prices;" that he also produced a paper with O P on it, and had one in his hat inscribed "O P and Clifford for ever;" after which he blew a horn, similar to those used by guards of coaches, upon which he (Mr. Bell) knocked the horn out of his hand, the prisoner having persisted in blowing it after he had advised him to the contrary.

Mr. Vanderdace acknowledged blowing the horn, but said it did not belong to him, and it had only just been put into his hand, by a person sitting near him, when Mr. Bell knocked it out of it; he acknowledged having O P in his hat and hand, but denied speaking to any person or persons in the boxes.

Mr. Read asked the prisoner who and what he was? Prisoner demanded whether that was necessary to be told? Upon the magistrate's informing him that it was, he said his father was a notary public, and resided in Wellclose-square.

The magistrate replied that he did not doubt the account which he had given of himself, but that he must find bail, which at that moment not being able to procure, he was ordered into custody. About twelve o'clock, however, he was provided with recognizances.

A person came to the office and stated that he had been extremely ill treated in the pit of the

theatre. He said he went in at half-price, but had no sooner got to the side of the pit than he was pushed against by a person whom he since understood to be Mr. White, jun. of Park-street, Westminster. Mr. White immediately gave him a violent blow on the head, which knocked him down, he got up and remonstrated with Mr. W. who again struck him; that having recovered himself he gave Mr. White in charge to an officer, from whom he made his escape, but he did not mean to insinuate any blame against the officer, as there was a general scene of confusion at the time. A short time after he seized White himself, and was bringing him to the office, and had got him into the passage of the pit on his way, when he was attacked by a person, saying, as Mr. White was not in the custody of a constable, he had no right to go with him. This person then attacked the deponent, and rescued White. The person guilty of this assault and rescue was Captain Hewetson, of Battersea.

The magistrate informed him that all he could do in the business was to grant warrants for the assaults against Mr. White and Mr. Hewetson, which was accordingly done.

A Mr. Jones, a haberdasher, from the city, was ordered to find bail, himself in one hundred pounds, and two sureties in fifty pounds each, to answer the charge of assault made against him by Mr. Bennet, who, seeing the defendant hold-



ing up a placard in one of the boxes, snatched it from him, and received a blow at the same time from the defendant.

Mr. Graham observed, that it was rather doubtful whether Bennet had not committed the first assault, by snatching away the placard.

Mr. Jones was discharged after finding the bail required.

#### November 14.

A man of the name of Tolley, stating himself to be a saddler at Richmond, was charged with sounding a whistle, at Covent Garden Theatre, in the second act of the opera of the Exile, and exciting tumult thereby. The fact was clearly proved against the defendant, by two persons, and the officer who apprehended him produced several other whistles which he had taken from him in the shape of whip-handles. He was ordered to find bail, himself in one hundred pounds, and two sureties in fifty pounds each.

John Brown, a clerk, was held in the same bail, for exciting tumult in the pit, during the said second act, by walking about on the benches, with the insignia O P on his hat.

November 13.

RICHARD STEVENSON, No. 3, Red-Lion Court, Bell Alley, Royal Exchange, was charged, by Mr. Brandon, with creating a riot in the pit of Covent-Garden Theatre.

Mr. Brandon deposed, that he saw the prisoner, from one of the side-boxes, running up and down the pit with a red night-cap on, and a glaring O P in gold letters, on a ground of purple silk, in the front of the cap, which caused a great riot. Several persons were about him, one of whom took out a paper with a great number of O P's on it; after separating them he distributed them.

The witness pointed the defendant out to the officer, who took him into custody; and, since he had been in the office, he acknowledged having been sent into the pit by a Mr. Turner, a salesman, of Leadenhall-Market, who gave him four shillings to pay for his admittance, on condition that he wore the cap and the O P; and that there was another man who wore a white cap in the pit, also paid by him.

The officer corroborated Mr. Brandon's evidence.

The defendant said, he was born and bred a poulterer, and was as good a workman as any in the city. Three gentlemen called on him on Saturday last, and asked him if he would go to the

theatre on this night, and wear his red cap. He told them he would if they would pay for his admission. This they agreed to. Their names were Turner, Davis, and Morris; they were salesmen in Leadenhall-Market: they gave him four shillings, and he had no idea of doing any harm by having the O P in his cap: and as to that, he could prove that he had not worn any thing for years but a red cap.

He was ordered to find bail.

— LECON was charged with making a disturbance in the pit by blowing a whistle. He stated his residence to be at No. 13, Windmill-Street, Haymarket, and that he was in the service of the Marquis de Charmilly, No. 12, Charles-Street, a foreigner. He acknowledged that he had blown the whistle, but only between the acts, and not during the performance. He was dressed as a groom. Ordered to find bail.

WILLIAM GEORGE NUNES\* was brought up on a similar charge, and was dressed in similar attire to that of the last prisoner. He gave the following account of himself: "I am a gentleman,

\* Though his conduct on this occasion appears eccentric, he is a young man of considerable talents and ingenuity, with the pen and the pencil. He lately made an exquisite fac-simile of Christie's well-known and highly-valued "Disquisition upon Etruscan Vases, displaying their probable Connection with the Shews at Eleusis, and the Chinese Feast of Lanterns, with Explanations of a few of the principal Allegories depicted upon them," for Mr. Drummond.

and reside at No. 14, Berkeley-Square; I am not servant to any person but myself: I did blow a whistle, but it was between the acts, and so faintly as to give no disturbance to any person."

Mr. Read.—Have you given a true account of yourself?—I have; I am well known; I am particularly intimate with the Duchess of Manchester.

Mr. Read.—Are you not a clerk in Cox and Greenwood's office?—I am.

Mr. Read.—After this do you insist you are intimate with the Duchess of Manchester?—I do.

Mr. Read.—Is not your mother a servant to the Duchess?—She is.

Mr. Read.—You must find bail.

Defendant.—I should wish to know who charges me?

Mr. Hartman stepped forward and said, he was the person; that he resided in Portman-Square, and that he also was acquainted with the Duchess of Manchester.

Mr. Crace, jun. of Long-Acre, ornamental-painter, charged Mr. MILLER, a clerk at the office of Messrs. Tilson and Smith, Minories, with sending him a challenge to fight a duel; and also charged Messrs. HENDERSON and HADDOCK with carrying it.

Mr. Crace stated, that, on Saturday evening last, he went to Covent-Garden Theatre, in company with his father and mother; he had been acquainted with Mr. Miller between two and three

years : he came into the box which he occupied, and mounted an O P on his hat, which caused a riot and frightened Mrs. Crace. The witness spoke to him of his impropriety of conduct, and, after some little altercation, he put the O P in his pocket. His mother and father, as soon as the play was over, left the box. On their retiring, the defendant accosted the witness in exceeding ill language, which brought on unpleasant retorts. On Sunday he received a note from Mr. Miller, by the hands of Mr. Henderson, purporting that he, the witness, should appoint a friend to meet the bearer, and settle a proper place to give Miller satisfaction, or otherwise to make an apology. To this note he, the witness, did not reply. Yesterday evening he received another note by the hands of Mr. Haddock, stating, that, if the witness did not give the satisfaction formerly required by Miller, or make him an apology, he would post him at the theatre this night as a coward. The witness, by advice of his father, applied at the office, in the morning, for a warrant against the three defendants.

Mr. Miller, in his defence, attempted to enter into the cause of the original quarrel.

The sitting magistrate, Mr. Read, observed that the original dispute had nothing to do with the present charge. It was proved to his satisfaction that a challenge to fight a duel had been sent, which was a breach of the peace. He therefore

should order the defendants to procure recognizances for their appearance at the next quarter-sessions,—which they accordingly did.

November 14.

A Gentleman was brought to the office, charged by Captain Hewetson, the author of the Blind Boy, with an assault. It appeared that the gentleman, who was acquainted with the complainant, was sitting in the front row of a box with Mrs. Hewetson, and, on his taking a prominent part in favour of the O P s, she desired him to leave the seat. Captain Hewetson soon after came into the box, and, after some communication with Mrs. Hewetson, he stood up, and said they were all blackguards and scoundrels. He was immediately knocked down by the gentleman, but, on recovering, he returned the blow, and a contest ensued which ended in an appeal to the magistrate on the part of Captain Hewetson.

The defendant maintained, that the offence justified the manner in which it was resented by him. It however appeared, that the epithets, scoundrels and blackguards, were not intended to apply particularly to defendant, but to all the gentlemen in the box. He was held to bail.

It appeared, in the course of the examination, that Mrs. Hewetson is a constant frequenter of the theatre, and very zealous on the part of the proprietors. As her object in visiting it could not

certainly be to *hear* the play, it was suggested that she might, with more propriety, stay at home.

November 15.

A gentleman, named WRIGHT, was charged, by one of the special constables, with having sprung a rattle in the pit, and excited considerable disturbance, by his riotous and disorderly conduct. Witness stated, that the prisoner was the first person who commenced rattling, and that he ran with great violence from the top of the pit down towards the orchestra; near which, after a most obstinate resistance on the part of his adherents, he was secured, and, with some difficulty, conveyed out of the house.

Mr. Wright denied that he had commenced the use of rattles, but confessed that he took the rattle from the hand of a gentleman who stood next him, and immediately sprang it. He also denied making any resistance, or behaving in any manner unbecoming the character of a gentleman, on being taken into custody.

Mr. Graham ordered him to find bail, which he did in a few minutes, and was discharged.

The attention of the magistrate was next attracted by a gentleman, of the name of POWELL, who informed Mr. Graham, that a very particular friend of his, (Mr. Powell's) a Mr. Cowlam;

linen-draper, of Queen-Street, Cheapside, was murdered in the pit, and carried out, by Perry the waterman, to an apothecary's shop in the neighbourhood; that a person whom he saw assisting in the murder was now in the office, and was the same who charged Mr. Wright.

Mr. Graham cautioned Mr. Powell how he announced a man to be murdered; he ought to make himself acquainted with every fact before he sent forth such a charge to the world. The magistrate then directed Lavender, one of the officers, to go to the apothecary's, and bring him an account of the state of the man who was reported to be dead.

Lavender returned in about ten minutes, and reported that the apothecary said he could not find any outward bruises or wounds, but that he might have received an inward hurt; that he seemed very faint, and on this, the apothecary mixed some strong hartshorn and water, which he refused to take, or to be bled. He requested that a hackney-coach might be sent for to carry him home; this being accordingly done, Mr. Cowlam got into the coach and ordered it to be driven to Queen-Street, Cheapside.

Mr. Winholt then entered the office, and informed the magistrate, that he had not been able to find Mr. White, who had assaulted him on a former night; that the person who had stolen his hat was then in the pit, and he learned that his name was SMITH; he had four gentlemen to prove he was



the person. He also thought it his duty to mention, that he had been informed of a gentleman being killed in the pit, and that Smith was among the persons who caused his death. Mr. Graham then addressed him nearly as follows:—

“ You are the last person who ought to complain of ill-usage ; you, who, I am informed, go nightly to the theatre, with a badge on your breast, to incite riot ; you, who would wish to be thought the patron and protector of rioters, have no right to complain of the issue of that disturbance, to which you were one of the principal instigators ! If, unfortunately, a man had lost his life in this riot, my conscience would direct me to grant a warrant against you, before any other person, for your daring, obstinate, conduct.”

Mr. Winholt's solicitor, who was present, observed, “ That a man sitting in a box could never be answerable for a riot in the pit, let the consequences of that riot be what they would.”

Mr. Graham said, that his opinion was extremely different ; for, if a man, sitting in a box, by his appearance and conduct, excited a riot in the pit, he was equally liable as the man who perpetrated a crime for which the person in the box laid the ground-work.

Mr. Winholt left the office, saying that he would every night attend the boxes, and wear O P on his breast.

JOHN ESTEN was charged, by Mr. Brandon,

with standing upon the seats of the pit, dancing, playing at single-stick, and springing a rattle, during the performance of the after-piece. He was certain of the defendant's person from his clothes, he being dressed in a volunteer's uniform. Mr. Gibbons and Mr. Gray corroborated this statement.

Mr. Read thus interrogated the defendant:—  
“What are you?”—“A journeyman grocer and tea-dealer out of place.”—“Where do you reside?”—“I lodge at Joseph Wright's, grocer and tea-dealer, No. 276, Whitechapel.”—“What corps do you belong to?”—“None.”—“Whose uniform is that you have on?”—“My landlord's.”

Mr. Read—“He is committed.”

November 16.

Mr. Rickman, of Surrey-street, Strand, charged Charles Isard, Esq. of 28, Southampton-street, Pentonville, with assaulting him in box No. 10, of the dress circle, in Covent Garden Theatre, by seizing him by the collar, and shaking him. The complainant said that the box wherein he was was completely filled. A gentleman, who called himself an officer in the army, first attempted to force his way into it; but the complainant had nothing to say against him, as he had given him his address. Mr. Isard then pre-

sented himself, and would force his way into the box. Witness told him there was not room, and remonstrated with him on the impropriety of his conduct in wishing to inconvenience others; on which Mr. Isard assaulted him, as he before stated.

Mr. Isard, in his defence, said that the box-keeper opened the door, and told him there was room for him in that box. He attempted to get in, but Mr. Rickmann prevented him, although a friend of that gentleman advised him to be accommodating, without effect. He then placed his elbow in the side of the defendant, on which he, Mr. Isard, did seize him by the collar.

Mr. Read observed, that the assault was proved; but, taking every circumstance into consideration, he would be perfectly satisfied with Mr. Isard's own recognizance for his appearance, which was immediately complied with.

Capt. O'Hara, of the 47th regiment, said he was the person alluded to by Mr. Rickmann, and he assured the magistrate that, on his oath, Mr. R. was the aggressor, and had called his name out as in defiance.

A person charged Abraham Abrahams with picking his pocket of a silk handkerchief, in the pit of the theatre, last night. He prevaricated so much, that Mr. Read discharged the person accused, and recommended him to bring an action for false imprisonment.

November 17.

CHARLES ROWLLS, Esq. of Kingston, Surrey, was brought before Mr. Graham, from the pit of Covent-Garden Theatre, charged with violently assaulting Nicholas Donnelly, a journeyman ironmonger, of Lascelles Place, St. Giles's, who stated that he was standing on the third or fourth seat at the back, when a placard was thrown from the boxes, for which there was a general scramble. He however succeeded in getting it, and tore it to pieces, when the man before him was pushed down, and he was pushed upon him. On his getting up, Mr. Rowlls gave him a violent blow on the head with his stick. This was confirmed by a man who was in his company.

Mr. Rowlls, in the most solemn manner, denied the charge, but acknowledged he struck the complainant, after he had first received a violent blow from him with his stick. This was also confirmed by a gentleman standing near him, who said, the complainant put himself in an attitude for fighting.

Mr. Graham, however, observed, that it was possible for Mr. Rowlls to have given the first blow without any person seeing it; he therefore ordered him to find bail. Mr. Rowlls sent for Mr. Holloway, the solicitor, in Chancery-Lane, and the master of the hotel where he lives.

WILLIAM WYNNE, clerk to Sir James Branscomb, was charged with assaulting a man, named Powell, who said he was a shopmate with Donnelly, the witness in the last case. Powell produced a stick, with which he said he had been struck: this stick the prisoner most solemnly protested he had never seen before, and positively asserted his innocence of the charge alleged against him.

He was however ordered to find bail.

Mr. Graham asked the witness, Powell, by what means he had obtained admission into the house, but he declined giving any answer. He also refused to inform the magistrate how many of his shopmates had been in the theatre during the evening.

HENRY AYR, an apprentice to a silversmith, in the neighbourhood of Finsbury-square, was charged, by Mr. Brandon, with riotous and disorderly conduct in the second tier of boxes, and, by his gestures, exciting tumult and disturbance in the pit. A placard was thrown from the pit to him, which he exhibited for some time, and then flung it towards the private boxes. He confessed the principal part of the charge, and was ordered to find bail.

Mr. PLASTOW, hatter, of 59, Leadenhall-street, was charged, by John White, with assaulting a man named Smith, who has been particularly

conspicuous for several nights past in opposing the O P s of the pit. Smith, however, not coming forward, the defendant was discharged.

Mr. Plastow, who had been struck and lost his hat, then wished to prefer a charge against his accuser, for dragging him from the theatre without a cause; but Mr. Graham refused to receive it, telling him that he had his remedy by an indictment.

At a late hour this evening, HENRY AARON, of Christopher-street, Finsbury-square, was brought from the theatre in custody, and charged, by Mr. Brandon, with making a noise and disturbance, and exhibiting a placard, from the box in which he was, with the name of Kemble on it, which tended to increase the riot. Another person gave evidence against the prisoner to the same effect, who being ordered to find bail, in default thereof was committed to prison.

GEORGE WEBB, a young man, in naval uniform, stating himself to be an assistant-surgeon on board one of his majesty's ships, at Chatham, was also charged by Mr. Brandon, and other witnesses; with joining the riot in the pit, &c. exhibiting a paper in his hat, with the words "Death or Victory" on it: he was ordered to find recognizances; upon procuring which he was liberated.

November 18.

Soon after ten o'clock this night, Mr. Brandon came to the office and stated, before Mr. Graham, that the disturbance in the theatre, during that evening, had been as great, in the two-shilling gallery, as it was in the pit; the audience there had danced the O P dance as well as in the pit, but the noise had been principally made by four young men, whom he had caused to be taken out of the gallery, by Perry and a party of the patrolé: however, on the patrolé bringing them into the office, there only proved to be three. They said their names were Thomas Comar, Joseph Hobson, and Henry Smith.

James Brandon, upon his oath, deposed, that he saw the three prisoners, from the private boxes, on the second and third rows of the two-shilling gallery, with another young man who is not taken, making a great noise and disturbance, and the insignia of O P in the hats of T. Comar and H. Smith; and O P and N P B, meaning no private boxes, in the hat of Joseph Hobson: that there was a great noise and tumult in the house during the first act of the afterpiece: that one of the prisoners, but which he could not point out, attempted to make a speech, and that

all three made a great noise and vociferation, to the extreme annoyance of the audience.

Mr. Saville Herbert, of Doctors' Commons, said that he particularly observed, from the box where he sate, the violent conduct of the prisoners, which induced him to go to the two-shilling gallery. When they were apprehended by Perry, the patrole, and Mr. Brandon, he took the insignia of O P, and N P B from the hat of Hobson: he concurred with the former witness as to the annoyance occasioned by their active violence.

The prisoners all declared that the insignia of O P and N P B were not their own, but were given to them by a man who distributed them through the gallery. One of them said he kept the O P a long time in his hand, till he was ridiculed by those around him for not putting it in his hat, which induced him to do it. They were all apprentices; one to a musician, one to a Manchester warehouseman, and the other to a glazier.

Hobson and Smith found bail; but Comar was committed for want of it.

November 20.

Some of the officers, in attendance at the pit-entrance, appeared before Messrs. Graham and



Read, and stated that several persons were acting in a riotous and disorderly manner, in the avenues to that part of the theatre, by sparring and sham-fighting, and loud vociferations.

Mr. Read directed that such persons as were in the act of sparring, and similar disorderly conduct, should be brought before him.

In a few minutes Lavender, and some other of the patrol, returned with three young men, in custody; William Nunn, a brass-cutter, Daniel Spriggs, apprentice to his father, a tailor, in Cecil-street, Strand, and George Oakley, apprentice to a person named Waude, a cooper, in Tipper's Road. They were charged with exciting riot and confusion, and, by their disorderly conduct, preventing free ingress and egress to and from the theatre; added to which, one of them wore the letters O P, in red characters, in his hat.

They were ordered to find bail.

JOHN FORD, who stated himself to be a shoemaker, in White-hart-court, Castle-street, Leicester-square, was next brought forward, and charged, by Mr. Brandon, with being one of the most riotous characters that had appeared in the theatre since its opening. Mr. Brandon deposed, that he had watched the prisoner from the commencement of the fourth act, and perceived him particularly conspicuous in every possible device to create tumult; at one time he was running

from the top to the bottom of the pit, hooting and roaring, then assisting in elevating placards, and finally addressing the females in the private and dress boxes in the most indecent language.

The prisoner said, in his defence, that he had been driven about by the fluctuation of the crowd, but denied that there was any impropriety in his demeanour. There were, however, several persons in the office, who substantiated the charge against him, and he was ordered to find bail : in default whereof he was committed.

November 21.

Mr. JOHN ROBSON, of No. 2, America-square, ship-owner, was brought to the office, soon after eight o'clock, by some of the patrol who were in attendance at Covent Garden Theatre. He exhibited the most tattered appearance, his coat being torn from the skirts to the collar behind, and one of the lappets nearly torn off in front. On his entrance he was placed at the felon's bar, where he remained till Mr. Brandon made his appearance. Mr. Brandon stated that the performance of the evening proceeded in the most tranquil manner, till the commencement of half-price, when disorder and confusion were excited by the prisoner, who, upon entering the pit, began an artificial fit of sneezing and coughing ; which, like

the application of a lighted match to gunpowder, was productive of an instantaneous and general explosion; and riot and tumult became universal. Some of the prisoner's friends intimating to him, that his conduct was conspicuous, and drew the attention of some of the peace-officers, he moved into the centre of the pit, where he renewed his incitement to riot, and annoyed the peaceable part of the audience by his violent and unmannerly behaviour: and, whilst thus exerting himself, the officers rushed forward and took him into custody.

This charge was corroborated by Mr. Davis, surveyor, of Bloomsbury-square.

Mr. Robson, in his defence, said that his coughing and sneezing were purely natural, and originated in the cloud of dust that was thrown up by the violent motion of the people in the pit; he said he felt no concern for his situation, as, however obnoxious his conduct might have been, it was dictated by a desire to support a *righteous* cause. Upon being ordered to find bail, he did so immediately, and was discharged.

He then said that he wished to make a charge of assault against Lyons, one of the officers who took him into custody, for poking his stick in the face of his brother, without any reasonable or just cause.

On Lyons being called on for an explanation, he said the person alluded to had come before

him, while conveying his prisoner to the office, and he merely held out his staff to keep him off.

Mr. Read said the officer acted only in conformity with his duty, and refused to receive the complaint.

November 22.

A man was brought to the office before Mr. Graham, the sitting magistrate, charged with having taken Mr. Winholt's hat from him a few evenings since, at the pit of Covent Garden Theatre. It appeared that the prisoner pawned the hat, and converted the money to his own use. The pawnbroker appeared, and identified the person. He was therefore convicted in the penalty of 40s. and 1*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.* the value of the hat, which the prisoner paid. Mr. Winholt received the value of his hat and half the penalty.

Mr. DAVID FORSTER, of No. 66, Basinghall-street, was brought before the magistrate, at seven o'clock, and charged by two persons, John Goddard and George Farmer, with riotous conduct, in the pit, towards the close of the first act of the performance.

Mr. Forster, behaving improperly before the sitting magistrate, was reprimanded, in the strongest manner, for his conduct, and ordered to find bail. Two gentlemen, his friends, Mr,

Robson and Mr. Bryan, became his sureties, and he was of course discharged.

The next persons brought forward were Mr. JAMES JOHNSON, grocer, of Gracechurch-street, and Mr. JOHN TYLER, fish-salesman, of Billingsgate. They were charged by Mr. J. Brandon, with repeatedly crying "*Silence*" in the back boxes, with intent to create riot and interrupt the performance: this charge was further supported by two other persons, attendants of the theatre.

Mr. Johnson declared that his cries of silence originated solely from a wish to stop the tumult that existed, so as to enable him to distinguish the voices of the performers. Mr. Tyler swore, by G—d, that the charge exhibited against him was erroneous.

Both gentlemen were ordered to find bail.

Mr. Graham then fined Mr. Tyler *two shillings*, for profanely swearing an oath in his presence, which, with three shillings costs, he immediately paid.

OWEN JONES was ordered to find bail for assaulting Clarke and Jackson, Bow-street-officers, while in the discharge of their duty in the pit: he stated himself to be clerk to Messrs. Larkin and Co. hatters, 424, Strand.

Mr. DAVID FORSTER was brought a second time in custody from the pit, and charged, by Mr.

Egerton, cutler, of Bloomsbury-square, with haranguing the people in the pit and promoting riot and disturbance by his general conduct.

G. Kent corroborated this statement, and Mr. Forster was again ordered to find bail.

Goddard, the witness against Mr. Forster, in the first charge, then applied for a warrant to apprehend a person named Bryan, one of Mr. Forster's bail, for an assault. He stated that, on his return to the pit, Mr. Bryan pointed him out as an informer, and they tore the skirts of his coat nearly off, which he exhibited in a very ragged state, as a proof of his assertion.

Mr. Graham granted the warrant; and, at the conclusion of the performances, Mr. Bryan was brought from the theatre by some of the officers, attended by an immense crowd of the O P's, who made a tremendous noise at the front of the office, in proof of their displeasure.

Mr. Bryan was ordered to find bail. Two gentlemen offered to swear that the charge was false; but, as the informant swore positively to the correctness of his statement, their evidence was not received.

Several persons were brought in from the door of the office, for disorderly conduct in the street: some were discharged with a reprimand, and one was ordered to find bail for attempting to strike an officer.

November 25.

The charges from the theatre, and those that arose out of them, of assaults, at the office, far exceeded those of all other evenings since the theatre opened. The office, for a considerable time, was a scene of general confusion; and Messrs. Graham and Nares were occupied in the investigations, from eight o'clock till near one on the following morning.

Edward Wright, apprentice to a cutler in James-street, Covent-Garden, was charged by Mr. Brandon and Richard Limerick, one of the patrol, with being one of the disturbers in the pit, during the third act of the "English Fleet," and with having an O P in his hat at the time of his seizure.

The prisoner denied taking any part in the disturbance, and said that, having gone to the pit, at half-price, he found it nearly full; that, from the persons standing on the benches before him, and pressing forward to the front, he thought he had a right to do the same as he had paid his money. Mr. Graham, however, was of opinion, that, as he had only paid for half-price admission, he had no right to trespass on the convenience of those who had paid the first rate: the magistrate therefore ordered him to find bail.

Mr. PERCIVAL, linen-draper, of Oxford-street, was next charged by William Nicholls, of the patrol, with running about on the pit benches, in a disorderly manner, and thereby exciting riot and confusion during the performance.

Mr. P. denied that the promotion of riot was his object, and declared that his movements proceeded from a wish to avoid the confusion prevalent in different parts of the pit. Ordered to find bail.

The attention of the magistrates was now directed towards a gentleman, apparently inebriated, without his hat, and having his clothes nearly torn off his back. He was in the custody of several officers, who shewed, by their perturbation, that they had been in some severe skirmish.

When the gentleman was brought forward, he stated himself to be Capt. John Fitzgerald, of the 103d regiment, now in the West Indies, whence he had arrived on Friday last. He complained of having been robbed of a valuable watch, his hat, cane, and gloves, when taken into custody by the officers, and that he had been used in a most brutal manner, as his appearance would testify.

Mr. Brandon having stated his orders to the patrol, to go into the box where the Captain had been, Charles Humphreys, one of the *missionaries*, said that he brought out the Cap-



tain, having observed him calling out O P, and making great noise and disturbance.

While the examination was in process, such a noise prevailed at one time, that every syllable was inaudible, insomuch as to suspend it, till the patrole forced forward from the crowd a young man, of genteel appearance, whom they insisted to be the principal disturber of the officer. He dared them to lay hold of him, and swore an oath, in the presence of the magistrate. He said his name was Baker, and that he was a barrister, in Garden-court, Temple. He was fined five shillings, as a gentleman, for swearing, as before stated, and three shillings costs, which he immediately paid. The costs, however, will be returned, as the conviction was upon view. It then became a question how Mr. Baker entered the office, and how he came to make a noise. He said it was caused by his being forcibly dragged into the office, by men who had seized him for that purpose. These proved to be some of the patrole, one of whom, James Wheeler, charged Mr. B. with an assault on him, for endeavouring, with others, to prevent him from entering the office. Mr. Baker denied the charge, and said that, passing by the office, and perceiving business going forward, he thought he had a right to go in, for the purpose of hearing it. Upon his attempting to do so, the complainant gave him a violent push, upon which he ac-

knowledged that he seized him by the collar. Ordered to find bail for the assault.

The examination of Captain Fitzgerald being resumed, James Osborne, of Aldersgate-street, builder, stated a series of disorderly conduct, on the part of the prisoner, in the dress-boxes; that he desired the O Ps to persevere, and turn out the constables, swearing, by J——s, if he were among them, he would put out a dozen of them; he also vociferated "*Old Prices and no pieces.*" On his being warned to desist, or he would be taken into custody, he swore he would *crack a dozen skulls* before he would allow any one to apprehend him. His conduct, at length, being noticed, the officers proceeded in a body to make their capture, when a severe contest took place between them and the O Ps, with the captain at their head. The exertions of the latter, however, proved vain, for their leader was overpowered and hurried to Bow-street.

On the charge being read, Captain Fitzgerald said, as his defence, that he had never before been at the theatre, and that his actions proceeded from momentary impulse, aided by his having drunk a little wine. He thought he had as much right as others to join in the general voice, which he heard through the house, but did not recollect in what terms he expressed his sentiments. He described the attack made on him in a most humourous manner; saying that

he was seized by the *legs* and *wings*, when several persons pulled him, as he thought, with the design of making an equal division of his members. They dragged him, as he said, as if they were taking a *horse's head to a bonfire*, not a human being to a tribunal of justice. He requested the magistrate to take measures towards the restoration of the property taken from him.

Mr. Graham, having directed diligent inquiries, agreeably to the captain's request, ordered him to find bail. He declared, that, as he was a perfect stranger in town, he could not procure it, and must, therefore, go where the magistrate should think proper to direct him. Two respectable merchants present, Mr. Clancey and Mr. Cullimore, voluntarily made tender of their bail, which was accepted, and the captain liberated.

November 29.

RICHARD CURTIS, clerk to the Comptroller of the Excise, was brought to the office, in custody, from the pit of the theatre, charged, by Mr. Brandon, with unnatural sneezing, coughing, and howling, by his conduct inducing several others to follow his example.

The prisoner asserted, that his sole design was to applaud Mr. Munden's performance. He

was ordered to find bail, and, in default, carried out of the office in charge of an officer.

Mr. Townsend and Mr. Cahusac, of the Strand, offered themselves, and were accepted, as bail for Mr. Curtis, who was brought back by the police, together with a young man, named Hadfield Sherry, who represented himself as a solicitor, residing at 12, Hatton Garden. This person was charged with an attempt to rescue Mr. Curtis, but, having solemnly denied the charge, was permitted to enter his own recognizance, in fifty pounds, to answer at the ensuing Westminster Sessions.

EDWARD NEWTON, clerk to the house of Mr. Wyburne, Craig's Court, Charing-Cross, was ordered to find bail, for disorderly conduct in the pit.

November 30.

Mr. JOHN MORRIS, clerk in the Warrant-Office, Somerset-Place, was charged, by Thomas Carpenter, with an assault, and also with having danced the O P fandango, to the interruption of the performance.

James Osborne, of Aldersgate-street, confirmed the charge, and the prisoner was ordered to find bail.

December 1.

The magistrates have determined not to sit longer than nine o'clock. In consequence of this, the only person charged from the theatre, this evening, beyond that hour, was forced not faint to spend his time in the watch-house of St. Paul's, Covent-Garden. His name was JOHN THOMAS, of Argyll-street, and he was accused of promoting riot, by placing a placard and the letters O P on each side of his hat. He was also charged with having brandished a stick over his head, as in defiance of the peace-officers, by whom, however, he was speedily secured, and delivered over to the constable of the night, till he should be examined, as to the charges against him, on the following morning.

December 6.

RICHARD COKE, of Clifton, whom we understood to belong to the Excise, was charged with riotous conduct, in the boxes of the Covent Garden Theatre, this evening. The evidence against the defendant was, that, during the first three acts of the play, he excited disturbance, by calling out, "Off! Off! Scotchmen good! Englishmen

bad!" &c. &c. This testimony was corroborated by two witnesses, and the defendant was ordered to find bail. He inquired at the office if any gentleman would bail him, as he was a perfect stranger, and had only been a few days at Hudson's hotel, from Clifton, where his family dwelt.

Another charge was exhibited against the prisoner for swearing four oaths. It was proved, in evidence, that the oaths had been taken, and the defendant was convicted in five shillings for each oath. The defendant, not being able, at the moment, either to find bail or to pay the fine, was sent to the Brown Bear.

#### December 7.

A gentleman, named M'GILL, resident at Hampstead, was charged with having disturbed the performance, at the theatre, by hissing, hooting, &c. The magistrate directed him to find the usual heavy bail, which he did accordingly.

#### December 9.

WILLIAM CHAMPION was charged, by Mr. Brandon, with running about the pit, soon after the second act of the play, jumping upon the seats thereof, and causing great noise and dis-

turbance.—Ordered to find bail, which he did accordingly.

Soon after this, it being nearly ten o'clock, Mr. Graham was on the point of leaving the office, when a number of persons entered it, and the magistrate, being informed it was another charge from the theatre, he took his seat on the bench again. It turned out to be an accusation against John Lord, one of the patrol, on the part of Mr. Thomas Lee, of Poland-street, Oxford-road, coachmaker, who charged him with having laid his head open with a stick. The magistrate listened to Lord, however, first, who stated, that, finding it necessary, from the great disturbance which prevailed in the theatre, to accompany Taunton, and others of the patrol, for the purpose of seizing the disturbers, he was stopped by the prisoner, who seized hold of his staff with both hands, and attempted to wrest it from him. In so doing Lord was pulled through the pit towards the orchestra, near which the prisoner received assistance from others, whom he told that Lord had struck him. In this conflict, separated as he was from the rest of the patrol, he received considerable injury.

His statement was confirmed by Smith, another of the patrol.

Mr. Lee then addressed the magistrate, and made his charge against Lord; he was obliged

to wipe the back part of his head continually, on account of the blood which issued from the wound. He stated, that, for the first time, this evening, he went to the pit, with a friend recently arrived from Lisbon; they were at the back part of it, when he observed a number of persons rushing in, whom he at first supposed to be those who usually entered at half-price. This furious entrée was, however, made by Lord, the defendant, and others belonging to the office. Though there was considerable tumult in the pit, neither he nor his companion joined in it. In their endeavours to enter, the prisoner and his comrades made a violent rush by him, and, without previously having spoken a word by way of caution, the prisoner struck him a violent blow upon the back of his head, which cut it open; upon this he seized the staff with a determination to defend himself as an Englishman against future aggression; he had himself served the office of constable, and was acquainted with its duties. The prisoner, he was well persuaded, was no constable, and he was determined to make an example of him, by prosecuting him to the utmost extent of the law.

Mr. Graham ordered them both to bail on their respective charges, taking their own recognizance in twenty pounds each.



December 14.

At eleven o'clock this night, after the performances had closed at the theatre, a great noise was kept up in the avenues leading to it, by way of rejoicing at the victory obtained by the O Ps. Mr. Graham sent Lock to ascertain the cause of the disturbance. He returned and reported that there were from forty to fifty gentlemen dancing in the pit-avenue of Covent Garden Theatre, with two fifers playing to them. Mr. Graham desired him to take assistance and bring the musician before him. Lock accordingly went for that purpose, with his own party of the patrol; he rushed in among them, and seized one of the fifers by the collar. He and his prisoner were immediately surrounded and actually taken off their legs to the iron gate in Bow-street, where a woman kept close by Lock, continually hitting that hand which held the fifer's collar. After having got into the street, all three fell down in the mud together; a violent scuffle ensued between Lock and the fifer, together with those who assisted the latter. The coats of the patrol and the unfortunate Orpheus were torn to rags, as was also the gown of this zealous Eurydice. Lock, however, having got up, kept his hold,

and was only prevented from incarcerating the fifer by an additional band of O Ps, who came up and made him gladly desist from such a proceeding. He returned to the office, and reported that the most he could do was to extricate himself from the fury of the populace.

The editor observes, as will also, most probably, the reader, that the Police Account is not perfect. He twice applied to the first magistrate of the police office, for the purpose of obtaining access to the books of the office:—this request was, however, refused, as being contrary to established rules. The editor, therefore, compiled the best account which the diurnal newspapers afforded him; and, whatever its imperfections may be, it is far superior to any other which is extant.

## APPENDIX.

### No. 1.—*Advertisement of the Proprietors, previously to opening the New Theatre.*

“The proprietors, having completed the new theatre within the time originally promised, beg leave respectfully to state to the public the absolute necessity that compels them to make the following advance on the prices of admission—boxes 7s. half-price 3s. 6d.—pit 4s. half-price as usual. The lower and upper galleries will remain at the old prices.

“On the late calamitous destruction of their property, the proprietors, encouraged by the remembrance of former patronage, instantly and cheer-

fully applied themselves to the erection of a new theatre, solicitous only, that, without enlarging the audience-part of the edifice, it might afford the public improved accommodation and security, and, at the same time, present an additional ornament to the metropolis of the British empire. This, their most anxious wish, they flatter themselves they have solidly effected, not only within the short space of ten months, from the laying of the foundations, but under the enormously expensive disadvantage of circumstances singularly unfavourable to building. When it is known, that no less a sum than £150,000 has been expended in order to render this theatre worthy of British spectators, and of the genius of their native poets; when, in this undertaking, the inevitable accumulation of at least a six-fold rentage is positively stated to be incurred; and when, in addition to these pressing incumbrances, the increased, and rapidly increasing, prices of every article indispensable to dramatic representations come to be considered, the proprietors persuade themselves that, in their proposed regulation, they shall be honoured with the concurrence of an enlightened and liberal public."

No. 2.—*Covent Garden Theatre.*

(Mr. Redhead Yorke, September 16.)

If it be allowable to divest ourselves of more solemn reflections, at this hour of eventful interest, and to direct our attention to matters of internal economy, the opening of a new theatre would be a circumstance which would claim a preference over all others; as the influence of the stage over our manners, thoughts, and actions, is much greater than most persons suppose. The new theatre in Covent Garden opens on Monday next, and consequently we cannot well dispense with the consideration of a subject which is so interesting to our families, as well as to the national literature.

Some time ago, when it was announced that the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre had engaged the foreign songstress, Catalani, to *act* upon the British stage, I pointed out what steps might be proper for the people to adopt in order to abate to nuisance, and preserve the national theatre from defilement and disgrace. A report was soon after propagated, that the proprietors, ashamed of their own baseness, and convinced of the public indignation at their design, had prudently broken off the engagement, by giving the Italian, or her French husband, a good round sum, provided she

would *not act*. Under the belief of the truth of this report, I was silent. The reader will therefore guess my astonishment, when I discovered that the Italian is not only hired at the rate of *four thousand pounds a year*, to give us our mother tongue through the medium of her foreign brogue, but that the proprietors, in mockery of our disgust, and with an impudence peculiar to the wretches who riot on the good nature and simplicity of the English people, have dared to advertise in all the papers a most infamous lie, stating, that they have expended one hundred and fifty thousand pounds upon their theatre, in order to render it worthy of British spectators, and *of the genius of their native poets !!* This insolent imposture they endeavoured to cram down the throats of the public, when they know that their engagement with that unfeeling Jewess, Angelica Catalani, is of itself calculated to banish the genius of our native poets from the stage; and the introduction of their detestable trash, of which, under the names of opera and melo-drame, the public are forced to be spectators, is also, I suppose, in their judgments, another test of their taste for our native poets.

It is my intention to offer, first, some remarks upon the advertisement of these proprietors, and next, upon the necessity of destroying theatrical monopoly, as a preliminary to a thorough reformation of the stage. Their advertisement runs thus: "On the late calamitous destruction of their

property, the proprietors, encouraged by the remembrance of former patronage, instantly and cheerfully applied themselves to the erection of a new theatre, solicitous only, that, without enlarging the audience part of the edifice, it might afford the public improved accommodation and security, and at the same time present an additional ornament to the metropolis of the British empire. This, their most anxious wish, they flatter themselves they have solidly effected, not only within the short space of ten months, from the laying of the foundations, but under the enormously expensive disadvantages singularly unfavourable to building. When it is known, that no less a sum than one hundred and fifty thousand pounds has been expended, in order to render this theatre worthy of British spectators, and of the genius of their native poets; when, in this undertaking, the inevitable accumulation of, at least, a six-fold rentage is positively stated to be incurred; and when, in addition to these pressing incumbrances, the increased, and rapidly increasing, prices of every article indispensable to dramatic representations, come to be considered, the proprietors persuade themselves that, in their proposed regulation, they shall be honoured with the concurrence of an enlightened and liberal public."

This proposed regulation, most enlightened and liberal public! is no less than the modest price of *seven shillings* for a seat in the boxes, and of *four*

*shillings* for a seat in the pit. The lower and upper galleries remain at the old prices, evidently, *ad captandum vulgum*, that is to say, to conciliate the gods. One is inclined to think, that the proprietors got this stroke of cunning from that finished pick-pocket, Vallebrequé, the husband of Catalani, for it does not savour of English sterling. But, be that as it may, I trust the gods will resent this unmanly attempt to swindle the rest of the public through their acquiescence; and that they will not fail, when King John represents Macbeth, to exhibit *The Tempest* themselves.

Many of the assertions in this advertisement stand in need of proof;—for instance, it is extremely problematical whether the destruction of the late theatre were calamitous or not! and I doubt the sincerity of the proprietors themselves when they consider that event as calamitous, which they have thus dexterously availed themselves of to increase their emoluments. As far as the public are concerned, I do not conceive the late fire was at all calamitous, because I think it would be far better for the national taste and manners, that we should have no theatre at all than such a sink of corruption, effeminacy, execrable fooleries, and sing-song lullabies, as was the late Covent Garden Theatre.

The proprietors pique themselves on their gratitude, and declare that they erected instantly and cheerfully a new theatre, “by the remem-



brance of former patronage." This is not true. That they went to work instantly and cheerfully too, no one can doubt who has any knowledge of their profits. They entered into no new speculation; they trod upon sure and safe ground; they were conscious that they enjoyed a monopoly; they had no rival; they had nothing to apprehend from competition. "The remembrance of former patronage" ought therefore to have prevented them from growing greedy; at all events it should have deterred them from shewing their grinding and unblushing cupidity. As to the theatre being an additional ornament to the metropolis of the British empire, I shall be better qualified to judge of that pretension when I see it; but it is to be observed, that if the proprietors take credit to themselves on this account, they ought not to make us pay the piper for it. It was their interest to render the theatre attractive, in the same manner as a pastry-cook is emulous of having a smart shop, or an old procuress a handsome house to draw customers. And now I mention an old procuress, the proprietors will excuse me when I say, that I find a very great affinity between the modern "ornament to the metropolis of the British empire," and a brothel. For the ornamental works of both are designed to catch fish; and, the greater the shew, the higher the price each customer is made to pay. There are also several other coincidences of character

between the two houses which I shall not at present enumerate.

It is laughable enough to see them boast of the expedition with which the new theatre has been completed. Was it not their *interest* to have the theatre in a state fit to be opened at the usual time? If the building had been deferred, their profits of the season would have been forfeited. Nor is it decent or justifiable in them, while recommending themselves to the public, on account of the celerity with which, "within the short space of ten months from the laying of the foundations," they have raised the edifice, to lay on an additional tax upon the frequenters of their theatre, in order, as they afterwards avow, to enrich themselves for having done what it was their interest to do.

Then comes the *plumper*, namely, about the one hundred and fifty thousand pounds being expended, in order to render the theatre worthy of British spectators. I have no doubt whatever that this sum has been expended upon the theatre; but all this money is not a dormant capital which went out of the pockets of the proprietors. No such thing. A correspondent, whom I personally know to be well acquainted with the secrets of this theatre, proves, in another part of this sheet, satisfactorily and unanswerably, that the proprietors are gainers to a vast amount by the late conflagration; and that, instead of canting about

the calamitous destruction of their property, they ought to consider the fire as *a God-send*. For, what with the rottenness of the old building, the extent of the insurance, and the uninterrupted monopoly in the hands of the patentee, he has proved that they have gained nearly £30,000 by the fire, besides the benefits that they will derive from plucking the boxers and pitites, and the private boxes which they have farmed out to the vain and silly.

Let it be remembered, that the proprietors are to give four thousand pounds a-year to the thief and slave Vallebrequé, the French dragoon. Thus, by a gradual and unperceived decline, we are gliding down to ruin. We laugh, we sing, we feast, we play; we adopt every vanity, and catch at every lure thrown out to us by the nation which is planning our destruction; and while fate is hanging over us, we are sightless, and thence secure. Were we but as innocent as blind, we should, in our fondness for these foreigners, completely resemble the lamb described by the poet:

“ The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,  
 “ Had he thy reason, would he skip and play?  
 “ Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,  
 “ And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood !”

I have neither time nor further inclination to expatiate upon the numberless absurdities which

the newspapers represent to have been committed by these remembrancers "of former patronage." Suffice it for my purpose to observe, that my absence from the metropolis will prevent me from being present at the opening of this "ornament to the metropolis of the British empire." Had my good stars allowed my attendance, I should have been at my post in the one shilling gallery, with my club in my hand, to see justice done to my poor insulted countrymen. What I have to say upon the abuse of the English stage shall appear in my next number. In the mean time I desire it to be observed, that the above article is written upon the spur of the occasion, on account of the advertisement which has appeared in all the papers, signifying that the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre intend to open their catch-penny the day after to-morrow; and under the hope that every unbought Englishman *will do his duty*, in defiance of the blood-thirsty hirelings from the East-India Company's warehouses, and other quarters, which the cowardly, mean, base, and anti-national proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre have collected together to suppress the public opinion.

I am for a rebellion; and, let me tell King John, that if he will not give us the English spirit of Garrick, we will give him and his Frenchified crew, the spirit of Marat. The spirit of Garrick was this, bless his English soul!

“ The stage but echoes back the public voice;  
“ The drama’s laws the drama’s patrons give,  
“ For we, that live to please, must please to live.  
“ Then prompt no more the follies you decry,  
“ As tyrants doom their tools of guilt to die;—  
“ ’Tis your’s this night to bid the reign commence,  
“ Of rescu’d nature and reviving sense ;  
“ To chase the charms of sound, the pomp of show,  
“ For useful mirth, and salutary woe ;  
“ Bid scenic virtue form the rising age,  
“ And truth diffuse her radiance from the stage.”\*

Can John Kemble, the usurper of the British stage, the accomplice in the crime of exiling from our national theatre the native poets of Great Britain,—can he dare to approach a British public with such patriotic sentiments as the above, which Garrick charmed from the stage.

Oh ! King John ! John Kemble ! Kemble John, Oh !

No. 3.—*The Necessity of lowering, instead of advancing, the Prices at Covent Garden Theatre.*

(Same Paper.)

Sir,

It is highly necessary that the proprietors of the above theatre, after muzzling

\* Prologue spoken by Garrick at the opening of Drury-lane theatre in 1747, by Dr. Johnson. Times are altered since 47.

and clapping a straight waistcoat upon poor John Bull, do conduct him to St. Luke's with all possible despatch; for, should they suffer him to be at liberty until they take out a writ "De Lunatico Inquirendo" against him, I will not answer for the consequences. There is very little doubt of his madness: as a proof, has he not made a worthy magistrate of one of the first cities in the world read a very severe vote of censure on himself in open council?—That being an absolute fact, I think the next thing he will perform, unless he is properly secured, will be to make a certain majestic manager go down upon his marrow-bones, and, in the names of the proprietors, "beg leave respectfully to state to the public the absolute necessity that compels them to make the following 'deductions' on the prices of admission:"

First Price, Boxes, 6s.

Half Price, 3s.

———— Pit, 3s. 6d.

———— As usual.

If you are resolved, most supreme Mr. Manager, to try your abilities once more, by endeavouring to procure an advance on the prices of admission, I wonder you did not open the "new theatre" with a new comedy or opera. Why, surely, Mr. Manager, some of your woe-begone authors could easily have written one "within the short space of ten months from the laying of the foundations;" and, if the intention of raising the prices had been

named to them, how easily could the question have been manufactured into a comedy! Novelty and stage-effect, you know, now-a-days, are every thing; and it would have been the best and politest way to have asked the question. Now, as you are well acquainted that a good title is every thing, and as a double title, at this time, is all the rage, what do you think, Mr. Manager, of “*The Seven Shilling Piece; or, How do you like it?*”—then, by way of procuring an answer from the public, you might have had performed the petit farce of “*Yes or No.*” This would have been stage-effect, and would have procured you immortal fame! Indeed, the novelty of the thing would have gained your point; but, “that it should come to this”—to open with “*Macbeth!*” Oh, Heaven! why ’tis absolutely Gothic, and you may depend on it, that John Bull, unless muzzled, will conclude with “*The Devil to pay.*”

Alas, sir, it is high time these theatrical caterers for the public, as well as their masters, should be taught how to behave themselves; and when we see them imposing, and that in a most gross manner, on that “enlightened and liberal public,” both in the capacity of managers and proprietors, it is really and absolutely necessary to shew that public, that they are most grossly imposed upon by the present advance on the prices of admission.

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In the first place, the proprietors were to receive from the different fire-offices, I believe, at least .....	£ 70,000
By 28 private boxes, which, at least, will net them £5600 a year; but if sold at twelve years' purchase, at 10 per cent. are.....	56,000
One hundred shares, at £500 each, are.....	50,000
	<hr/>
	176,000
Deduct what the new theatre, &c. as stated, cost	150,000
	<hr/>
Balance in hand.....	£26,000

Making, in the whole, a sum not only sufficient to cover the expenses of building, &c. but leaving a surplus of £26,000 in hand, the interest of which will handsomely pay and treat another set of 300 labourers from the East India Company's warehouses, to be distributed throughout the house, in order to force the advance upon the town, and over-awe that "enlightened and liberal public" they pretend so much to court.

Notwithstanding I have ventured to shew, that the proprietors have actually put into their pockets the sum of £26,000 by this job, I will endeavour to point out to that generous public they appeal to, that they have got almost an entire theatre, by the "late calamitous destruction of their property," into the bargain. In the first place, I shall ask Emperor Harris and King John, whether it was not in contemplation, a short period before the fire happened, to pull down and rebuild the



old theatre? And, secondly, I ask them, whether the late theatre was not greatly damaged by making private boxes, and various other alterations? For my own part, I believe it was so much so, that it was becoming highly dangerous to permit an audience to visit it. Whether it was so or not, they, perhaps, may know best; but, if it was their intention to rebuild it, they have, by the fire, saved the expense of pulling it down; they have gained more private boxes; and lastly, they have got 70,000*l.* by the fire-offices.

Thus, sir, they have gained sufficient to enable them to *reduce*, rather than to *advance*, the prices of admission.

HAMLET'S GHOST OF THE OLD THEATRE.

No. 4.—*Theatrical Amusements.*

(Same Paper.)

Sir,

As a general system of reform is the order of the day, I think it becomes highly necessary for the legislature to make some investigation into the state of our public theatres, and endeavour to reform those abuses, so often and so justly complained of. Whether it is that the stock of dramatic subjects, or of dramatic genius, is exhausted, I know not; but it appears very clear to

an impartial observer, that the morning of wit, as well as its noon, are gone and past, and the twilight already begins to grow dim and feeble. Night, alas! is too rapidly advancing; the sun of literature has long set, and night must come.

Such, sir, is the progress of nature and of genius! We appear already to have forgotten that Congreve had wit, Farquhar sprightliness, Jonson, Steele, and many others, humour, and Otway genius and sublimity! There are in arts as in kingdoms, various stages which lead to refinement, and that refinement to dullness and ruin! Thus it is, that the theatres now teem with literary monsters, equally absurd and disgusting; and each ensuing season gives birth to a variety of nonsense, mimicry, and buffoonery. We daily see plays manufactured without plot, character, or sentiment. Though of little or no merit, (dull and uninteresting,) they are patronized, and the manager, after discovering that nothing is wanted but stage-effect to make them go down, is induced to bring them out. A dance, procession, solemn dirge, or prayers, are introduced; their merits are blazoned about by the understrappers of the green-room; for a week or so, the daily newspapers boast of the splendid decorations, enchanting scenery, and delightful songs and music, of the forthcoming piece; and the public, thus wrought up to the very tip-toe of expectation and anxiety, are cajoled and gulled to see one of the most wretched dramatic

productions ever penned. But that is all nothing, sir,—it is a MELO-DRAMA, and, as this is a fine-sounding name and a new thing, poor John Bull is perfectly satisfied. I have made several inquiries, among professed critics, what a melo-drama is, but have never been sufficiently satisfied by the answers I have received; for my own part, I imagine it to be a non-descript—in plain English, it is neither more or less than a tragi-comedy, frittered down in the middle to a species of farcical-opera, and concluded by all the sable and melancholy symptoms of a deep tragedy. This kind of writing has gained ground upon us, and will gain ground apace, unless nipped in its bud. In fact, our comedy is dwindled down to a mere methodist sermon, replete with rigid morality, divinity, and prayer; and our theatres are nearly on a par with a methodist meeting-house, where rant, whining, bombast, and ridiculous speeches, keep the hearers from falling into gentle slumber!—Hear this, thou emperor of theatrical managers, and then boast how many methodistical bigots thou hast taught to wine; go boast, ye crew of fanatics, that ye converted a play house, and learnt most of its authors to speak of the “divine breathings of the spirit” in their comedies!

The stage, which, of late, has ever been considered to give a just and natural representation of good plays, has degenerated very much within these few years; and men of taste reflect now, not

of what *is*, but of what *has been*. It is very plain, that theatrical managers adopt only one system of judging of the merits of dramatic composition; with them, patronage and stage-effect are every thing; and I am sorry to observe that most of the performers, who ape these profound critics, (in hopes, no doubt, thereby to recommend themselves,) pay more attention to tricks and grimace for applause than any thing else. Alas! the time, I fear, is over; the glory and honour of dramatic literary fame and pride are fled; and no man of real talents thinks it worth his while to write, however great his patronage may be! Indeed, the extravagant and unmerited applauses these *melo-dramas* have bestowed on them is a drawback to men of real talents and genius.

It is a well-known fact, that the greatest excitement to excellence is emulation and encouragement; but how can it be expected that men of better abilities will come forward, when they are aware it is impossible to excite greater plaudits from an audience than the *melo-dramatists* have done before them! Dryden candidly declared that he stood in this predicament, and said that he thought his plays, though confessedly indifferent, good enough for John Bull, who had often praised much worse. In fact, there is very little difference between the good and the bad writer; their profit and applause is the same, but the access to the stage is more in favour of the bad

writer. The good one has to combat the monopoly made by the other side, whose chief dependence rests entirely on their being able to exclude all good writers from the stage, in order to reap the benefit; and the proprietors themselves are quite indifferent to any application that may be made, as they pay no more for a *good* than a *bad* piece; and, unless an author is not strongly patronized, and recommended by some great personage, his case is indeed desperate and without remedy.

It is thus the management of a theatre has become so refined, that, in spite of *the town*, as it was emphatically called in the days of Addison, they will play a damned piece into repute, and get more by it than a good one. Thus the great Catalani is to be forced on the public by that emperor of all theatrical conjurors John Kemble, who not himself contented with having given us his barbarous dogmatic and pedantic pronunciations of our mother-tongue, is resolved and determined that it shall be once more tortured by the outlandish squalling of an Italian opera-singer. But a new performer is every thing; and, though the play and farce be intolerable, John Bull is satisfied with seeing a new performer, and the more so if a foreigner. Whether she stands like a goose on one leg for a quarter of an hour, like the famous Hernel, who some years ago captivated

and delighted all the people of fashion in this country, by standing in that posture with her arms outstretched, or in hearing the death-notes of that enchanting syren Madame Catalani, it is the same to John Bull, because he has no way of helping himself; and, notwithstanding he does not wish to sing *à la Catalani*, Emperor John is well aware that a scoundrel or two have no right to complain. And hence it is, that the good people of this town have forced on them performers and performances that have vitiated their taste. We have had a Katerfelto, a young Roscius, a Carlo, and now are about to have a Catalani; and, in course of a short period, we are likely to have all the Opera performers in this country on the English boards. Indeed, I have often wondered myself, that this majestic manager, not knowing, or pretending to know, the taste of John Bull for novelty, and the eagerness and avidity with which he follows it, has not bargained long before now with Pidcock to introduce real wild *beastices* into his new theatre, by way of novelty. If really and truly Emperor John wishes to introduce any thing foreign on the boards of a British theatre, let him apply to the legislature; and, if something foreign must be introduced, let us take example from our neighbours, make all theatres national property, and by that means enable the nation to reap the benefit

of it. In my next, I will point out the utility and absolute necessity of adopting such a plan; and shall conclude this with an anecdote of a country manager, “A poor Scotch schoolmaster, not over rich, had a daughter who was extremely ugly. Nobody thought this young woman would be married; she wanted both beauty and fortune. Now, it happened, the country manager, hearing of this schoolmaster’s daughter, called on her father and asked for his daughter in marriage. The Scotchman asked him if he had seen his daughter, ‘for she’s hump-backed.’ ‘Very well,’ says the manager, ‘that will do for me.’ ‘Aye,’ returned the other, ‘but my daughter’s as brown as a berry.’ ‘So much the better,’ replied the manager. ‘But she’s bandy-legg’d,’ said the Scotchman. ‘I like her the better for that,’ replied the manager. ‘But she wants an eye, and stammers very much,’ exclaimed the Scotchman. ‘My dear fellow,’ returned the manager, embracing him, ‘your description delights me; I have been long looking for a Caliban for our company, and she’ll make an excellent one.’”

Yours, &c.

AN OLD SCENE-SHIFTER.

No. 5.—*Address, intended to be spoken by Mr. Kemble on the Opening of the New Theatre, September 18, 1809.*

“ In early Greece, and in a barbarous age,  
A wretched tumbril was the actor’s stage:  
The muse, with cheek reclin’d in pensive shame,  
Blush’d for her wand’ers from the path to fame.  
Æschylus sprang;—and storm’d, as he arose,  
His country’s passions, like his country’s foes.  
Rough from the battle, train’d to vanquish men,  
E’en as his sword he wielded, so his pen.  
He smote the heart, the trembling sense oppress’d,  
And gave no quarter to the human breast.

Yet stage-improvement mark’d the soldier’s sway,  
And ting’d with taste the captives to his lay.  
Then, first (the cart of Thespis overthrown)  
Form’d by rude planks, a theatre was known;  
Cop’d by the heavens, it overspread the lawn,  
And light on scenic dress appear’d to dawn,

But, all divine, when Sophocles appear’d,  
’Twas then the drama’s majesty was rear’d.  
Builders and decorators came;—their boast  
Was who could grace the lofty poet most:—  
The lofty poet lack’d not brains to know  
That dramatists require the drama’s show.

NATURE’S perfection springs from various parts;  
And “NATURE’S MIRROR” needs the sister-arts.

Hence grew the splendour of the scene;—and hence  
The hand-maids that embellish eloquence;—  
Dance, music, painting, pageantry, parade,—  
All that give zest, or yield illusive aid.



Rome caught the sparks from Greece ; improv'd the plan ;  
 At last the flame thro' modern Europe ran.  
 OUR scene now decks, in an illumin'd age,  
 The bards who first gave vigour to our stage :  
 Thus Shakespeare's fire burns brighter than before,  
 And may the stage that boasts him—burn no more !

For this our fabric—banish we to-night  
 Figures worn threadbare, metaphors grown trite.  
 No Phœnix from her ashes shall arise,—  
 Stale to our thoughts, as sparrows to our eyes ;—  
 No naked truism be cloak'd anew,  
 To tell, that fire, which cheers, consumes us too.  
 No ;—let a Briton now to Britons speak ;  
 His cause is strong, although his language weak.  
 We feel, with glory, all to Britain due,  
 And British artists rais'd this pile for you :  
 While, zealous as our patrons, here we stand  
 To guard the staple genius of our land,  
 Solid our building, heavy our expense ;  
 We rest our claim on your munificence :—  
 What ardour plans, a nation's taste to raise,  
 A nation's liberality repays.

No. 6.—*Speech of Mr. LEIGH to the Audience.*  
*September 19.*

“ Gentlemen,

If the proprietors can,  
 upon any reasonable grounds, justify the measure  
 of raising the prices of admission, the public, I am  
 persuaded, will be satisfied, and acquiesce in the  
 demand ; but, gentlemen, the public will never

consent to submit, upon the vague and general plea of "*necessity*." Let the necessity be fairly proved, and we will be satisfied. Let it be proved that certain obnoxious engagements have nothing to do with the rise of prices; and let it be considered, when we look around, what extensive means of reimbursement have been had recourse to. Until ample justification is afforded, let me exhort you to continue a justifiable opposition to the present attempt. I mean that peaceable but firm species of resistance which you now display: and, if this satisfaction be not afforded, your opposition must in the end prevail. When I exhort you to a peaceable resistance, such as you now manifest, and which is the only kind of resistance you can justifiably make, let me, at the same time, intreat you to persevere, unawed by hirelings, or by Bow-Street officers. Pursue, with peace and order, these means of redress, and the managers cannot much longer persist in opposing the sense of the public. Gentlemen, I have only farther to observe, that the advance of prices is not for the purpose of bettering the condition of the performers, but for that of aggrandizing a few individuals; and that the family of one of the managers alone receives from the fund of the theatre a sum more than the amount of the salaries of any other twelve performers."

No. 7.—*Speech of the same Gentleman.**September 20.*

“ Gentlemen,

I took the liberty of addressing you last night, because I felt a common interest with you upon this occasion; and, from the attention with which you honoured me, I am encouraged to address you again to-night. Last night, as well as this night, you acted as became a British audience, and as you are entitled to do. Peaceably, but firmly, you exercise the right of marking your opinion of those who breathe upon your favour. In the way, admitted from time immemorial in a British theatre, you manifested your feelings, and you acted legally. It was, therefore, with surprise that I witnessed the conduct of those who are employed to thwart your wishes. I saw, last night, a set of Bow-Street officers insulting every man who evinced any disapprobation of the imposture attempted to be practised on you. In the pit I saw the officers seconded, in their rudeness and violence, by a number of persons who are notoriously hired, and are in the regular employment of the proprietors of the theatre. One man indeed, in particular; I noticed, who is, I am assured, a foreman in a particular department of the works, and who, with his coat off, was striking

at every one in his way, challenging every man to fight him, who dared to oppose the manager's will. In this conduct, I lamented to perceive, that he was encouraged and supported by those constables who were *professedly* called in to keep the peace, but who only distinguished themselves by protecting and exciting every rioter in favour of the managers, and treating with violence every one who differed from them. Several gentlemen were, in fact, dragged to Bow-Street, and some, I am told, detained in custody for the night. Let us hope, however, that, among those gentlemen, one at least will be found of sufficient spirit to make those officers account for such outrageous conduct;—to try the question at law with them.— I have no doubt that they have acted illegally;— but, however that question may be decided, the public must ever consider it as an aggravation of the misconduct of the managers to attempt the establishment of their imposture by such means, to *force* a submission to it. I know of several of their expedients for this unworthy purpose. I can state facts, which I can prove. Upon the first night the theatre opened, orders were sent to printing-offices, and to trades-people who have many people in their employ, requesting that such orders should be disposed of “for the benefit of the managers.” But it will amuse you to hear, that many of those orders were used against them. This was a trick of war; and not unfair. It was “BITING

THE BITER." Last night and to-night also, the use of orders has been glaring. Indeed money has been refused, where orders have been admitted. I, myself, was refused admittance at one of the doors last night, being told that there was no room, though there was plenty, and while, at the same time, paper-orders were received. Probably this refusal was the consequence of my observations last night; but the object of the refusal did not answer. I am here still, and shall be here again to-morrow night too, if the managers provoke the continuance of opposition. (*Loud applause.*) The causes assigned to justify the imposition we complain of are insufficient, while the real causes are utterly inadmissible, and the managers know it, therefore they do not venture to state them. You are told, that this theatre has been long a losing concern. What! do you not know that John Kemble paid £25,000 for a share of this concern; and do you believe that John Kemble does not know the value of money? (*A loud laugh.*) I wish that some manager would come forward, who does know, or who would not pretend to be ignorant of what we want. (*A laugh.*) If such an one did appear, I would direct his eye to the placards about the house, if he were so deaf as not to have heard our cries since the opening of the theatre; and if he were to say, that the advance complained of were rendered necessary by the money borrowed to build this

theatre, I would tell him that, which I can prove, gentlemen, the rent of the private boxes alone (upon the *appendages*\* to which I shall not now observe) is more than sufficient to pay the interest on the whole of the loan raised, and also the salary of Madame Catalani. Having mentioned this performer, I hope I may be allowed to express the general discontent at such an exorbitant grant to a foreigner, while native talent is overlooked. But if the day should ever arrive when that stage is to be contaminated by Italian depravity,† and French duplicity, I trust this audience will feel and act as it ought." (*Continued plaudits.*) Mr. Leigh, after requesting a clap for the performers, in order to show that no offence was intended to them, (a request which was universally and promptly complied with,) concluded, by exhorting the audience to conduct itself as it had hitherto done, promising that, on such conditions, he would attend, from night to night, till the public cause should be crowned with triumph."

\* A retired anti-room to each private box, and the sofas with which each is said to be furnished, are the appendages alluded to, but, in the account of the rise of the present edifice, this opinion will be found to have been erroneous.—EDITOR.

† Mr. Leigh is unacquainted with the moral virtues and *restrained* beneficence of this amiable woman. Previously to her union with "*French duplicity*," he who would question these qualities in Catalani would be despised as a miserable detractor from her well-known merits.—EDITOR.

—*Mr. Kemble's Address to the Audience of Covent Garden Theatre, subsequently to his Interrogatory of "What do you want?" Wednesday Night, Sept. 20.*

"Ladies and Gentlemen, I feel most gratefully impressed by the attention with which you now honour me. The proposed advance to the price of admission to the boxes and the pit is, if I am not mistaken, the cause of your objections.—("What affectation! you know it is," exclaimed several voices.)—You have been told, that the former prices were quite sufficient, were amply abundant, to remunerate our expenses, to reward our exertions; but I beg you to reflect, that the price of admission to the pit was 3s. so far back as the reign of Queen Anne. (*Hisses, and some applauses.*) The galleries were at the same rate then as they are now, and in these we do not propose any advance. For a century back there has been no increase in those rates of admission, although every article we had to purchase, was advancing in price, and although, I can assure you, that, for the last ten years, the proprietors of this theatre have not divided 6 per cent. upon their capital. I beg you, ladies and gentlemen, to take this circumstance into your consideration, and to combine with it the known

precariousness of this description of property—the expense to which we are daily exposed—the hazardous speculations in which we are obliged to engage, and the certain loss to which we are subjected, by the ruin of a single play. (*Hisses and applauses.*) It was said by a gentleman, I understand, last night, that no part of the proposed advance would ever go into the pockets of the performers, and that if it did you would not be so disposed to complain. I can assure that gentleman, that he is mistaken in his view of the subject; for, in point of fact, the performers are, and will be, materially benefited by this advance, and they are ready to come forward in a body to testify it. To benefit them, indeed—to encourage talent, by securing it an adequate reward—to promote the interest of our profession—to provide suitable performers and performances for your entertainment, was the principal motive which suggested the propriety of this small advance. When you, ladies and gentlemen, reflect on those points, with your accustomed candour; when you consider the immense expense, no less than 150,000*l.* which has been laid out in providing for you the finest theatre in Europe—when you take into account the still further expense which must be incurred, in purchasing a suitable wardrobe and scenery, together with the numberless articles necessary to a theatre, which have all, of late years, been en-



hanced in price, I can have no hesitation in trusting to your liberality and justice, and to the liberality and justice of the country, for a decision in our favour.

No. 9.—*Parody on the four last Lines of the Covent Garden Address.*

(THE TIMES) 21 Sept. 1809.

Heavy our building, but not so th'expense,  
We rest our hopes upon your want of sense ;  
What av'rice spends, new mines of wealth to raise,  
A generous people's folly soon repays.

No. 10.—*To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.*

Sir,

Your remarks, respecting the rise of the price of admission to Covent Garden Theatre, are so pertinent and just, that I am emboldened to send you my ideas on the subject, requesting you to apply them as you please, if you think them worthy your notice.

When government gives an exclusive privilege, as for example to the West-India and London Docks, and to several other chartered companies (which are nearly the same as exclusive patents) there is generally a clause restricting the pro-

prietors from dividing more than 10 per cent. and that the surplus (if any) shall be applied towards the further improvement of the concern. This has of late, I believe, been the constant practice, and has been considered a wholesome and proper regulation. Now, I do observe, the proprietors of the theatre have attempted to say that the profits of that concern have not yielded 10 per cent.; but I rather think they have far exceeded that amount; and I will now shew that the intended increase of admission would alone be sufficient to build such a theatre as the present one. They say that they have expended, in building it, £150,000. This sum they can at any time raise by subscription, at 5 per cent. for 85 years, with the additional bonus of a free admission for the like term, which said admission is known to be worth about £6 per annum. This, supposing the shares to be £500 each, will, with the said admission, cost £31 per annum; and this, multiplied by 300 shares, makes £9300 per annum to pay for the loan of £150,000, and for 85 years only. Now the increased price of admission is,

Say for 800 in the pit at 6d. is - £20

For 600 in the boxes at 1s. is - - 30

50

And for 200 nights - 200

Per annum - £10,000

This is £700 per annum more than enough for the whole of the building of a theatre. I say nothing about the great increase of rent from the private boxes, which is enormous; and, therefore, I think the public ought to be put in possession of these facts, quoted, without prejudice or partiality, by

A FREQUENTER OF THE THEATRE.

21st Sept.

No. 11. — *Advertisement of the Proprietors, on Thursday, the 21st of September.*

It having been stated, in some of the public prints, that the profits of the late theatre were more than sufficient, the proprietors think it their duty to state, that the average profits of the last ten years have not been six per cent. The proprietors cannot doubt that a liberal public will feel the justice of the present advance,—particularly when the very precarious nature of their property and their heavy additional expenses are considered.

No. 12. — *Query of "The Morning Chronicle," same date.*

The Managers of Covent Garden Theatre assert, that the average profits have not exceeded six

per cent. on the capital employed, for the last ten years. It would be candid in them to state the whole truth. Did they separate the *actual expenses* from the *annuities*, and other *payments for incumbrances*, paid at different times, on the establishment.

No. 13.—*To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.*

Sir,

The magistrates and constables having taken upon themselves to interpose their authority in support of the rise on the prices of admission to Covent Garden Theatre, I have been induced to inquire whether such interposition is legal, and the following is the result of my search.

Dr. Burn, in his book entitled the “Justice of the Peace and Parish Officer,” vol. 4. p. 96. title, Riot,—defines a riot to be :—“When three persons or more shall assemble themselves together *with an intent* mutually to assist one another against any who shall oppose them in the execution of an enterprize of a private nature, *with force or violence* against the peace, or to the manifest terror of the people, whether the act intended were of itself lawful or unlawful.”—And, in describing what acts “are against the peace, or to the terror of the people,” he says, “it seems clearly agreed, in every riot, that there must be some such cir-

cumstances either of actual force or violence, or of an apparent tendency thereto, as are naturally apt to strike terror into the people,—as the shew of armour, *threatening* speeches, or turbulent gestures; for every such offence must be laid to be done to the terror of the people; and hence it clearly follows, that assemblies at wakes, or other festivals or meetings, for exercise of common sports or diversions; as bull-baiting, wrestling, and such like, are not riotous.”—By the common law, the sheriff, constable, and other peace-officers, may and ought to do all that in them lies towards the suppressing of a riot, and may command all other persons to assist therein.—1 Hawk. 159.

By the 34 Ed. III. c. 1. and also by 13 Hen. IV. c. 7. § 1. justices of the peace have power to restrain rioters by imprisonment and punishment.

The riot, within the contemplation of these acts, accords with the definition given by Burn, for the precedent of the justice's record of a riot states, that they found the rioters “in a warlike manner arrayed, to wit, with clubs, swords, and guns, unlawfully, riotously, and routously assembled.”

The next act on this subject is 1st Geo. I. st. 2. c. 5. commonly called the Riot-Act, which enacts, that every justice, sheriff, under-sheriff, and mayor, shall, on notice or knowledge of any riotous, unlawful, and tumultuous assembly of persons, to the number of twelve or more, together with such help as he shall command, resort

to the place, and thereupon, amongst the rioters, or as near to them as he can safely come, with a loud voice command, or cause to be commanded, silence to be, while proclamation is making, and after that, shall openly, and with a loud voice, make, or cause to be made, proclamation, in these words, or to the like effect:

“Our Sovereign Lord the King chargeth and commandeth all persons, being assembled, immediately to disperse themselves, and peaceably to depart to their habitations, or to their lawful business, upon the pains contained in the act made in the first year of King George, for preventing tumults and riotous assemblies. — God save the King.”

“And if any twelve or more of them shall continue together by the space of one hour after proclamation made, they shall be guilty of felony, without benefit of clergy.”

From the above extracts, it is clear, that so long as the audience refrain from all acts of violence and threats, and confine themselves to hissing, and other peaceable demonstrations of disapprobation, (which I earnestly entreat them to do as the only safe and sure means of success,) the magistrates and constables cannot interfere either for a riot or breach of the peace; but, if they should be rash enough to interfere, I advise the persons whose liberty may be thereby affected, to submit peaceably to what may be required of

them, taking care to have witnesses to prove the facts, and then bring an action for false imprisonment; and I think, under such circumstances, a jury would give ample damages.

I again recommend moderation, but firmness and perseverance.

JOHN DOE.

Temple, Sept. 21, 1809.

No. 14.—*To Mr. Redhead Yorke.*

Sir,

It is impossible for me fully to express the indignation and sorrow I feel at the conduct of the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, who, not contented with the patronage and liberality of a generous public, which they have so often boasted of and experienced for a number of years; not satisfied with the many indulgences and flattering panegyrics bestowed upon them by their friends and patrons; not thankful for the continual repeated favours they have received; they are now endeavouring, in return for these many acts of kindness, to fly in the face of their worthy benefactors. The injurious monopoly, and daring impudence of these *would-be men of genius and taste*, call loudly, as I before observed, for the interference of the legislature. That the new theatre costs the enormous

sum of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, is absurd, ridiculous, and false; and if the proprietors have expended that sum, they are, as the public well know, gainers by it. But let them shew to that "liberal and enlightened public" they so much talk about, how, where, and in what manner, one hundred and fifty thousand pounds have been expended, and, at the same time, add the amount of the respective tradesmen's bills employed in building and finishing this graceful and elegant theatre. After that is done, let them state to the public the amount of the new shares taken into the concern; next, the number of additional private boxes they have made; and, lastly, let us know the actual sum received from the fire-offices. Let them do this, and prove to the world that their *loss has not been a gain*. Alas! Sir, I fear, were the real facts to come before the public, it would appear upon the face of a clear and correct statement, that, instead of *raising*, they ought to *lower the prices of admission*. Have we not had many theatres fall by the same destructive calamity as the late Covent Garden Theatre did? and yet the public have not been imposed upon by those enlightened and sensible proprietors. Have not the Circus, Astley's Amphitheatre, the Birmingham Theatre, and others, been consumed with much greater loss to the proprietors than the late Covent-garden proprietors have experienced? for, had not a fire taken place, their



theatre must have been pulled down and re-built, it being in a complete state of decay and ruin ; whereas, the others have been in an excellent state of repair, and of course of more value than an old rotten theatre.

The proprietors of these theatres, however, with that good sense and decorum worthy of the patronage of a discerning and candid public, did not raise *their* prices of admission, notwithstanding their heavy losses ; but very properly came forward, in a conspicuous and manly manner, to *perform at the old prices of admission*, fully sensible that a generous public would repay their losses by its patronage.

Not so is the behaviour of the sordid, avaricious proprietors of Covent-garden ; having no theatrical competitors in the kingdom to divide the public attention, they insult, and endeavour to overawe their best benefactors ; and, amidst a phalanx of melo-dramatists, justices of the peace, Bow-street officers, and understrappers, strive to raise their consequence and reputation above the most arbitrary tyrants upon earth. Grown conceited, haughty, insolent, and vain, by public patronage, and public encomiums, the petulant, proud, arrogant, and whining manager, without considering the voice of the public, has dared to laugh at the remonstrances of the town, and wondered at their impudence ! Let King John enjoy his reputation as a comedian, if he be worthy of

it; but, if the public are to receive insults from the manager of a public theatre, to their remonstrances against theatrical monopoly, it is high time for that public to hold his conduct in universal contempt, and to consign it to infamy.

To conclude this subject, already worn out by daily discussions, I shall quote the following description of a manager from the celebrated author of Roderick Random.\* "It is not for the qualities of his heart that this little parasite is invited to the tables of dukes and lords, who hire extraordinary cooks for his entertainment. His avarice they see not, his ingratitude they feel not; his hypocrisy accommodates itself to their humours, and is of consequence pleasing; but he is chiefly courted for his buffoonery, and will be admitted into the choicest parties of quality for his talent of mimicking Punch and his wife Joan; when a poet of the most exquisite genius is not able to attract the least regard."

That national theatres will prove national benefits, I have no doubt. In my last I pointed out how much our theatres were on the decline; and what will after ages say, when they are informed that the talents of an author now-a-days is frittered down to the writing a character for an Italian opera-singer. But, this is one of your melo-dramatic gentry writers; and it is quite

\* Vol. ii. p. 260.

indifferent to them, Sir, as long as they are paid for it, whether they introduce a *dog*, or a *Frenchified opera-singer*, upon the British stage. The late uproar at the new Covent Garden Theatre will, I fear, be nothing compared to that which will take place on the appearance of Madame Catalani. The secretary of state, sir, would not only perform a public act of justice, by sending her at once out of the country, but get the thanks of the nation also. Indeed, I am well convinced, that such is the dislike the town have to this foreigner, and her gang of adventurers, that the minister, by such an act, would, in the first place, prevent all rioting and confusion, and, in the next place, gain great and deserved popularity by it. Good God! sir, what will the rising generation say, on hearing, that an Italian opera-singer gained, in this country yearly, a sum almost equal to the salaries of our twelve judges; a sum, sufficient to pay all the performers of a theatre handsomely; and, notwithstanding this excessive generosity, on the part of the public, she had the ingratitude to refuse performing for a charity, and the brazen effrontery to insist on singing at the new theatre, although she is well aware the public voice and sentiments are decidedly against her appearing on the boards. What we are to think of such conduct, I know not. The one has our pity, the other our hatred and contempt. And while we continue to point out our grievances to the legis-

lature, I hope, and sincerely trust, this evil will be done away with, for the benefit of national independence and liberty.

Amusement, sir, is the great object of our theatres. If we are but amused, that is supposed to be sufficient; and indeed we may perceive that proprietors and managers imagine they have performed their parts by introducing new performers and new melo-dramatic-mummery on the stage. It is thus we have had forced upon us a young Roscius, a Carlo, and a wretched species of bastard comedy. The dramatic masters had but one opinion formerly; alas, how widely different is the opinion of authors of the present day. The ancient rule was, that, as tragedy displayed the overwhelming misfortunes of the great, so should comedy depicture their frailties and follies, as well as those of the lower orders of society. These were the definitions given by Aristotle of the drama; and even Boileau, one of our best modern critics, asserts, that comedy will not admit of tragic distress. Until these latter years, comedy and tragedy were always kept separate; but now they are promiscuously jumbled together, and, as Voltaire humourously observes, we see nothing but "a tradesman's tragedy" performed now-a-days. Our theatres, it is true, have their fashions and fancies; and this is the only reason I can assign, why they applaud the laughing sentimental tragi-comedy of the present day, as

well as put up with this new species of mummery, called melo-dramatic writing. These compositions have, perhaps on account of their novelty, great success; but have they not vitiated the taste of the town? And does it not also prove what I said in my former letter, that our dramatic genius and subjects are departing from the stage? Indeed, our comic performances have nothing to recommend them but a song or two; and our performers, with the advantage of fine clothes, can always play their parts to admiration, by the mere help of a loud laugh, a grin, leer, and vacant stare. It is a fact, that true comedy, real tragedy, or a humorous farce, would amuse us more; but where are we to find them? The melo-drama will, in spite of opposition, carry every thing before it; and the reason is plainly and simply this:—The melo-drama of the present day is, of all dramatic composition, the most easily written; it requires neither genius, taste, sense, wit, humour, sentiment, character, nor abilities. If you can but write, you are sufficiently qualified for manufacturing a melo-drama. This argument will beat down a thousand objections, and the vitiated taste of the town, for want of better geniuses, is contented to be pleased with the disgusting and unbearable nonsense of these melo-dramatists.

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—Omnia fatis

In pejus ruere, ac retro sublapsa referri. VIRGIL.

This, sir, is the sad and wretched situation of the English stage; and, although the exertions of Colonel Greville and Mr. Arnold are to be praised, yet I fear the attempt to render the theatre once more the seat of the muses and of genius is desperate, and will be of little or no avail, unless patronized by the legislature. It was with no small degree of pleasure I read an account of the before-mentioned gentlemen having determined to introduce nothing *foreign* on their theatre, and were I to advise them, I would also make it a constant rule never to have acted on their theatre such wretched sing-song stuff as the melo-dramas of the present day. Great credit and applause are also due to the merchants in the city, who, it is reported, are about to erect a theatre, if they can obtain a licence, in Bouverie-Street, Fleet-Street.

To check the ambition of theatrical managers, to stop the rapacious and all-greedy devouring jaws of monopoly and of avarice, and to redress the wrongs and insults of a liberal and generous public, are worthy the character of British merchants. But still it is necessary that the legislature should take upon themselves the establishment of national theatres, and there is little doubt but that they will, in a short period, prove national benefits.

And now, sir, I have very little more to add: if there be, among your numerous and highly respectable readers, any real lovers and well-wishers of our native drama; if there be any friends to

dramatic genius and talents still in being, who are willing to promote the welfare and independence of the British stage; the present unjust and arbitrary conduct of the proprietors of Covent-Garden Theatre demands their attention.

Being myself fully sensible of the utility and advantages to be derived from national theatres, I have thus, unpatronized and unknown, voluntarily come forward. And I now state, without the smallest hesitation, that to such of your readers who possess sufficient interest with the government, and inclination for building a national theatre, I am ready to submit a plan, pointing out not only a method of raising *a fund* (without injury to the public, and without any subscriptions,) which shall enable government to build one or more theatres within a twelvemonth; but also shall enable the government to put down the *lottery-tax* by the annual accumulation of that fund, together with the profits of the theatres. Any letter, addressed for me at your office, will be duly attended to.

I am, sir, your's, &c.

AN OLD SCENE SHIFTER.

Sept. 21, 1809.

No. 15.—“*Morning Chronicle.*” Sept. 22.

Mr. Editor,

I cannot easily imagine a more favourable opportunity for an elegant and classical poem than the opening of a *National Theatre*; particularly under the melancholy circumstances that occasioned the rebuilding of Covent-Garden Theatre; but no such impression appears to have been made on the bard who favoured the public with an *Occasional Address*: on the contrary, he seems to spurn at the idea of alluding to the destructive conflagration, except in the *elegant* and *unrivalled* couplet—

“ Thus Shakespeare’s fire burns brighter than of yore,  
“ And may the stage that boasts him *burn no more!*”

What a climax! Again, sir, what think you of this anti-metaphorical composer? He loathes the introduction of a Phœnix because ’tis

“ Stale to our thoughts as *sparrows* to our eyes.”

I cannot pass over the *elegant exordium*, which seems to aim at some degree of classic refinement.

We are, in a succession of *Heliconian* lines, introduced, first to the Grecian Æschylus, who





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“ Rough from the battle, train’d to vanquish men,  
“ *E’en* as his sword he wielded, *so his pen.*”

Then Thespis’s cart ; and in one period, we find Sophocles—

“ Builders and decorators came, *their boast*  
“ Was who could grace the lofty *poet most.*”

Now, Mr. Kemble has acquired some credit for a *classic taste*,—with what justice, I shall not here dispute ; but that this *deeply-read player* should, as manager of the theatre, sanction and recite a composition so disgraceful to the taste of the age, does not well accord with what the poet makes him utter—

“ Here we stand  
“ To guard the *staple genius* of the land.”

*Non deficit alter* :—but I shall not intrude farther than to pity the ignorant presumption of the author, and the injudicious taste of his patron,—for—

“ Sure ’tis the very error of the moon ;  
“ She comes more near the earth than she was wont,  
“ And makes men mad.”

R.

No. 16.—*Song and Chorus, by Messrs. Harris and Kemble, at the New Theatre.*

(From the same Paper.)

John Bull, don't huff,  
You've had enough  
Of SHAKESPEARE'S stuff;—  
You must learn of th' Italiani ;  
Nor reason, nor rhyme,  
You shall have next time,  
But the squalls sublime  
Of the great CAT—CAT—CATALANI !

CHORUS.

John Bull, 'tis not fit  
You should come to the pit,  
To bawl for wit,  
And such like vulgar blarney ;  
We'll have in those walls,  
No more cat-calls,  
But the tuneful squalls  
Of the great CAT—CAT—CATALANI !

John Bull, take advice,  
And don't beso nice,  
About the NEW price,  
Which shall never (at least, as we hope) end ;  
But come here, and doat  
On the tuneful throat,  
Which, a *one pound note*  
Pops out, *every time it is opened.*

Chorus.—“ John Bull,” &c.

Then cease your "good-lacks!"

About tax-upon-tax,

Nor ever *ax*, what we *ax*,

But crowd in with the jovial throng:

Come, come. to the play,

And be merry and gay,

'Tis by far the best way,—

Like us, pay your debts with a song.

Chorus.—"John Bull," &c.

Then stop your bull's mouth,

For in truth, and good sooth,

'Tis so vastly uncouth,

We will stop it at once with OUR GAG:—

Keep off, or perhaps

You may sink in our traps,

Or Bow-Street's fierce chaps

In the round-house invite you "to brag."

Chorus.—"John Bull," &c.

HISTRIONICUS.

No. 17.—*Mr. O'Reilly's Speech to the Audience of Covent Garden Theatre. Sept. 22, 1809.*

"Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg your attention to what I shall offer, for a few moments. You abuse the managers of this theatre, and justly, because they impose upon you;—but why confound, in that abuse, a person who has no share in that imposition? The managers both injure and insult you,

and, therefore, your resentment against *them* is reasonable; but why transfer any part of that resentment to one who has not, who cannot have, any disposition to injure or insult you? Some artful people avail themselves of your honest indignation against the managers, to promote their own interests, and gratify their prejudices, by exciting you to abuse an unoffending individual. How can you be so imposed upon? How can you be so inconsiderate? How can you be *so unmanly as to abuse a woman*? What has Catalani done to offend you? (*Applause and hisses.*) The managers engaged her upon the calculation that she would attract an increased audience, and increase their profit. Now, if they fail in their calculation why direct your anger against *her*, on account of *their* loss, which is no injury to you; and, if they gain by her, would you not rather wish the gain, or a fair share of it, to go into the pocket of her, who never offended you, than of those who are offending you every night? But then you are excited against this woman, because she is a foreigner. What! is it consistent with the liberality of Englishmen to outrage the feelings of a woman, and prevent her merits from meeting their reward, because she was born in another country? Away with such an unworthy and barbarous sentiment! With disgust, I behold the placards of "No Catalani;" but with disgust, combined with amazement, I see those of "Dickons—no Catalani!"

Good God! What a contrast! Let me appeal to your common sense. This Catalani, whom I never saw or heard but on the stage, is capable of affording the most exquisite pleasure to all who profess a taste for vocal powers. She stands confessedly unrivalled. If then you are ambitious of the pleasure of hearing her, is it not more for the interest of you, the people, to have her here, where you can hear her for one or two shillings, than at the Opera-house, where you cannot enter without paying five shillings or half-a-guinea, which many cannot afford? Then will you, to gratify other's prejudices, deny yourselves pleasure? I have heard it whispered, that a great many insidious manœuvres are going forward against this woman, and therefore only am I interested for her. I have even been told, that it is not improbable the managers would have no objection to an apology for rescinding their agreement with her. It may be calculated, that, as Madame Catalani has been detached from the Opera-house, as a serious dissension has been created between her and Mr. Taylor, she may be safely got rid of by this theatre,—that there is now not the least danger of her being able to procure an engagement elsewhere, which can produce any of that *counter-attraction* to this theatre, to guard against which was probably a main cause of her original engagement here. This calculation I state as merely possible;—but will you second it? Will you promote the un-

worthy speculations of selfishness? Will you gratify the base feelings of envy? Will you ally yourselves with the enemies of an unoffending stranger, of a meritorious woman? Can you stoop to any thing so ungentlemanly, so illiberal, so unmanly?— Again I tell you, that I know nothing of this woman, but as a public-singer; but I cannot, without pain, witness the attack made upon her. I, therefore, declare my resolution to attend here, upon the first night of her appearance, and to use my utmost endeavours to resist that foul conspiracy, which appears to have been formed against her. In such an undertaking, I can have no doubt of being seconded by every man, who is, in the slightest degree, animated by IRISH feeling.”—  
*(Applause, with laughter.)*

No. 18.—*To the Editor of the Times, September*  
 22, 1809.

Sir,

I have hitherto been one of that class who have considered theatrical property, *well managed*, as extremely lucrative; consequently, I thought the present increase of prices a gross imposition on the public; but, since the proprietors have solemnly declared, that “their average profits, for the last ten years, have not been six per cent.” I confess my opinion has

been greatly shaken, although I cannot say I am convinced yet that I was wrong. Therefore what I would propose, Mr. Editor, is this: that a committee of *respectable and disinterested persons* should be appointed, to examine into the accuracy of the proprietors statement; and I am convinced, that, if it be found true, great as the increase is, amounting on the boxes to nearly seventeen per cent. and on the pit to better than fourteen per cent. an enlightened public will cheerfully submit to it; and, on the contrary, they will shew their contempt for any expedient, by gross fraud, intended to support an imposition, by abstaining from the theatre altogether; and thereby convince them, that *Macbeth* is only the tinsel sovereign, and that the public is the real dictator of a theatre. Should this meet your ideas on the subject, you will oblige a constant reader by an early insertion. I am an admirer of talent but

NO PARTY MAN.

No. 19. — *A Song, founded upon Mr. Kemble's opening address, (from the same paper,) September 23, 1809.*

Tune, "When I was a servant in Rosemary-lane."

In Greece, we are told, that their barbarous actors  
At first on a tumbrel perform'd their characters;

While the muse, luckless damsel, beheld it with shame,  
Vex'd to see her sons seeking such bye-roads to fame.

Fol de rol, &c.

Then Æschylus rose, sir, and made a great pother,  
With his sword in one hand and pen in the other;  
And while, from the former, his enemies shrunk,  
With the latter he scribbled his friends in a funk.

Fol de rol, &c.

Yet this militant poet so mended the age,  
That the tumbrel and cart soon gave place to the stage;  
Which, rear'd of rude planks, overspread the bare ground  
Like a huge kitchen table in the midst of a pound.

Fol de rol, &c.

But not, till old Sophocles raised up his head,  
Had the muse of the Drama a house or a shed;  
For then first the builders a play-house erected,  
And poor devils of Greeks from the weather protected.

Fol de rol, &c.

The wise-acre poets then first did discover  
That Punch would beat Poetry all the world over;  
And therefore resolved, that their players should be  
Dress'd spruce as a carrot and laced cap-a-pie.

Fol de rol, &c.

Then scenes were invented and painted with skill,  
And every art courted the play-house to fill:  
Till, at length, these same arts were so powerful grown,  
That they up with their fists and they knock'd nature down.

Fol de rol, &c.

In England, old Shakespeare, that foolish art-hater,  
Succeeded in giving new life to poor nature;



But our age of *taste* her authority spurn'd,  
Till, enraged at neglect, she our theatre burn'd.

Fol de rol, &c.

But we'll have revenge, and out of pure spite,  
We'll tip her a piece of her fav'rites to-night;  
And to shew her our power, if she does not know it,  
I'll warrant we'll murder both her and the poet.

Fol de rol, &c.

To complete the dame's downfall, if there should be any  
Strength wanting in us, we've engaged Catalani,  
Whose notes so piano, o'er the old beldame's grave-o,  
Shall sound through our house till our house echo bravo.

Fol de rol, &c.

But now that John Bull to John Bull might speak plain,  
Our house is extensive, and *small* is our gain;  
Then is there among you one Briton not willing  
To see nature murdered and pay the *odd* shilling.

Fol de rol, &c.

No. 20.—*Occasional address, intended to be spoken  
at the New Theatre, Covent Garden, by Mr.  
Kemble, on Madame Catalani's first appearance.*

[From the Morning Post, September 22.]

In antient times, in days of good Queen Bess,  
Than now, the playhouse prices were much less;  
"The Muse, with cheek reclined" and pensive frown,  
Blush'd to see boxes fill'd for half a crown.

Actresses sprang at length—(observe, till then,  
The female parts were all performed by men);  
Admissions were advanced, and soon the town  
Were, larger sums, accustom'd to put down;  
Again the Managers John Bull oppress'd,  
And, without new advances, could not rest.

*Improvement* rapidly thus gaining ground,  
A something novel every day was found;  
To raise the taste of a degen'rate age,  
Asses and dogs now trod the British stage;  
While streams of real water found their way,  
To bid the town expect still more to pay.

“But, all divine, when” I!—at length “appear'd;  
'Twas then the drama's majesty was rear'd”  
On Covent Garden's boards:—'twas then you heard  
Of “*a—ches*,” and saw me the public “*beard*;  
'Twas then you saw your hisses scorn'd, and knew  
What 'twas to be each night defied anew;  
Insolence genuine springs from nature's parts,  
But Managers must court the *finer arts*.

Hence sprang new innovations, and from hence  
That taste which immolates, for sound, good sense;  
“Dance, music, painting, pageantry, parade,”  
And all that could the cause of nonsense aid.

Harris from Taylor “caught the spark;” the plan  
Has turn'd the brain of that advent'rous man.  
Our scene no longer, as in former years,  
Shall call forth smiles or tributary tears  
By British acting:—Oh no! give way all  
(Save when I play)—[*Aside*.]—to Catalani's squal;  
And when I die, Shakespeare, that scribbling elf,  
Shall rest for ever on the prompter's shelf.

For an Italian, banish we to-night  
Each British sentiment as weak or trite;  
Let no contempt for an outlandish strain,  
Stale and worn out, be heard,—'twill all be vain.

“No naked truism be cloak’d anew  
 To tell”—you’ll ever give “the devil his due!”  
 No:—for this actor we applause bespeak,  
 Her voice is strong, although her cause is weak.  
 We know what *should* please best, what is your due,  
 And this fine actress we’ve engaged for you  
 To pay; “while zealous as yourselves we stand  
 To guard the staple genius of our land.\*”

Firm our engagement, heavy our expense,  
 We rest our hopes upon your lack of sense;  
 What we bring forward, be it what it may,  
 Th’expense your extra shillings will defray:  
 So, if we should fall short, you’ll sure be willing,  
 Another year, to add another shilling.

### No. 21.—*The House that Jack built.*

(From the General Evening Post, Sept. 23.)

This is the House that *Jack* built.

These are the *boxes*, let to the *Great*, that visit the House that *Jack* built.

These are the *Pigeon-holes* over the *Boxes*, let to the *Great*, that visit the House that *Jack* built.

This is the *Cat* engaged to squall, to the *Poor*, in the *Pigeon-holes*, over the *Boxes*, let to the *Great*, that visit the House that *Jack* built.

This is *John Bull* with a *Bugle-horn*, that hiss’d the *Cat* engaged to squall, to the *Poor*, in the *Pigeon-holes*, over the *Boxes*, let to the *Great*, that visit the House that *Jack* built.

\* This may appear somewhat inconsistent. Probably by “staple genius of our land,” we are merely to understand Messrs. John and Charles Kemble, and Mrs. Siddons. But inconsistency is of no consequence in an address.

This is the *Thief-taker* shaven and shorn, that took up *John Bull* with his *Bugle-horn*, who hiss'd the *Cat*, engaged to squall, to the *Poor*, in the *Pigeon-holes*, over the *Boxes*, let to the *Great*, that visit the House that *Jack* built.

This is the *Manager*, full of *scorn*, who RAISED THE PRICE to the People forlorn! and directed the *Thief-taker*, shaven and shorn, to take up *John Bull* with his *Bugle-horn*, who hiss'd the *Cat* engaged to squall, to the *Poor*, in the *Pigeon-holes*, over the *Boxes*, let to the *Great*, who visit the House that *Jack* built.

Bow-Wow.

No. 22.—*To the Editor of the Times, Sept. 23.*

“Mr. Editor,

At length the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre have been *compelled* to accede to the wishes of the public; and let it never be forgotten that they were *compelled*. It forms a most important feature in their case, that they did not meet the decided sentiments of the public 'till engines, trap-doors, thief-takers, and orders, had all failed. They had to fear, too, that when the members of the late or present administration (which shall I say?) had *amicably* settled the affairs of the continent, and restored peace to Europe, by shooting at each other,\*—they had to fear, I say, that Government would then, in the

\* A duel was fought, this month, between Lord Viscount Castlereagh, and the Right Hon. George Canning; both Cabinet Ministers.—*Editor.*

same spirit of harmony, restore peace to the metropolis, either by the obvious mode of compelling the proprietors to shut the theatre or lower their prices, or by the more statesman-like means of calling out, I believe the phrase is, the managers.

But, sir, to the point. It is right that the proprietors should distinctly understand the public expectation, that the committee will be composed of independent men of acknowledged worth. They should be men not encumbered with the trappings of office. Lawyers, of all others, will be the most unfit; for, either they must be paid, and the investigation will become a mere job, or they must attend gratuitously, in which case the business will not be attended to. It is idle to expect that men will suspend the exercise of a lucrative profession, to attend to the concerns of the public, in a case like this, where no emolument is to be expected. The same observations apply, still more forcibly, to public accountants, and officers in the Bank. It may be said, indeed, that it is not material of whom the committee is composed, as they will only have to make out a debtor and creditor account of the receipts and disbursements of the theatre. But, it must not be lost sight of that the proprietors are dragged into this measure; that they and their servants will not only come before the committee as unwilling witnesses, but as persons deeply interested in suppressing documents, and

having ample means to do so. It will therefore require an intelligent, patient, active, and incorruptible, committee, to dive into the secret recesses of these men's hearts, and elicit truth from complicated and contradictory accounts. It will be proper, too, that the persons examined should be, previously, examined before a magistrate; for, although an oath so taken would be *coram non judice*, and therefore an indictment for perjury would not lie upon it, yet it would be binding *in foro conscientia*. In truth, the investigation must be conducted, strictly, as between adverse parties, or it would be better not to enter into it. If a mere *ex-parte* statement is to be produced, the public will not be satisfied. Of course, in considering the income of the theatre, with reference to the propriety in the rise of prices, the question will be, not merely what the receipts have hitherto been, but what, in future, they will be, in the present *improved* form of the theatre. The committee must bear in mind, that the public expect the private boxes to be thrown open, unless the receipts will, in that case, be diminished below what it is right the proprietors should receive.

When the committee shall have made their report, it will be proper to allow a reasonable time for the public to consider it; and not to open the house immediately. Let but a fair statement of the necessity of the advanced prices be pro-

duced, and the public will one and all cheerfully submit to them.

Speaking for myself, I declare, that, as I have been decided in my opposition, so will I be strenuous in my support. On the other hand, the proprietors will do well to remember, that, if any duplicity shall appear in their statements, the lion whom they have roused is still on the watch, pacified for the present, but not subdued.

S. B. E.

No. 23.—*Morning Chronicle*, Sept. 25.

“ John Bull has gained *one* point,—that’s flat,

“ For KEMBLE has *whipt* out the CAT;

“ Shut up his house, and gone to bed,

“ With fewer AITCHES in his head.”

HISTRIONICUS.

No. 24.—*Same Paper*.

It is said that the expenses of the old house amounted to £54,000, and that their largest receipt for any one season, which was the winter in which “ John Bull ” came out, amounted only to £61,000.

No. 25. — *New Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.*

Monday, Sept. 25, 1809.

The public are most respectfully informed, by the proprietors, that the above theatre will be closed, till the committee of gentlemen, to whose investigation their books and accounts are to be submitted, have examined and made up their opinion upon them.

No. 26. — *Affidavit made before the Lord-Mayor, by the Treasurer of Covent Garden Theatre, preparatory to the submitting of their Accounts to the Gentlemen who undertook to examine them.*

*London, to wit.*—RICHARD HUGHES, of Millbank, in the county of Middlesex, Esq. treasurer to Covent Garden Theatre, and JOHN TULL, of Maiden-lane, Covent-garden, in the said county of Middlesex, gentleman, deputy-treasurer to Covent Garden Theatre aforesaid, severally make oath and say, that they have been respectively treasurer and deputy-treasurer to the said theatre for upwards of thirteen years last past, and that they have, respectively, carefully examined and compared all the books of account, kept for the



said theatre, for six years last past, under the superintendance of these deponents, that is to say, commencing at Midsummer, 1803, and ending at Midsummer, 1809, both inclusive, which said accounts comprise and contain all the money-transactions of the said theatre, and that the several paper writings, or extracts, from the aforementioned accounts hereunto annexed, and which paper writings, or extracts, are marked respectively (A) and (B), and respectively signed by both these deponents, are, and each of them is, a true, faithful, and perfect, extract from the said before-mentioned accounts, in every particular, matter, and thing.

RICHARD HUGHES.  
JOHN TULL.

(Copy)

Sworn in the Council-Chamber at  
Guildhall, London, by both the de- } C. FLOWER, Mayor.  
ponents, Sept. 26, 1809, before me, }

No. 27.—*Impromptu on the Two Statues in Front  
of Covent Garden Theatre.*

(Morning Chronicle, September 27.)

With steady mien, unalter'd eye,  
The muses mount the pile;  
Melpomene disdains to cry,  
Thalia scorns to smile.

Pieria's stream, when moderns quaff,  
 The cause they'll plainly shew;  
 Their comedy provokes no laugh,  
 Their tragedy no woe.

I.

No. 28. — *The Bona Roba's lamentation, upon seeing some of the richer sisterhood in the private boxes.*

(Morning Chronicle, September 29.)

Kemble's equivocal morality  
 Shall be confined to folks of quality:  
 Alas! the beaux no longer need us,  
 These private boxes *supersede* us.

No. 29. — *The New Chevy Chase.*

(Morning Chronicle, September 30.)

God prosper long our noble king,  
 Our cash and comforts all;  
 In Covent Garden while I sing  
 The *row* that did befall.

To chase the CAT with howl and horn,  
 JOHN BULL went to the play,  
 And, though she laughed him to scorn,  
 I trow he won the day.

The Kembles, Harris, Son, and Co.  
 Did vow to God, God willing,  
 That, for GRIMALKIN and their show,  
 They'd touch the *other shilling*.

For they a theatre had made,  
 This famous CAT to squall in,  
 With ANNUAL BOXES, for the trade,  
 No doubt, of caterwalling.

John's native drama to undo,  
 With foreign *airs* and vices,  
 And so they e'en impos'd their *new*  
 And banish'd *his* "OLD PRICES."

Their *bowmen* bold, from Bow-street brought,  
 All chosen men of might,  
 Resolv'd to stuff down JOHNNY'S throat  
 Their prices, wrong or right.

But JOHN, whose skull with brains is cramm'd,  
 Their schemes did soon unriddle,  
 "And, if I have, may I be damn'd,  
 (Quoth he,) your CAT and FIDDLE!

"What, think you me to tax and gull,  
 For building *this here house*?  
 Or, thinks a CAT to catch JOHN BULL  
 Just as she'd catch a mouse?

"Your modesty, upon my soul,  
 Much with the ton increases,  
 That fain would cram each pigeon-hole  
 With *seven-shilling pieces*!

"No, no, it will not do, *black JACK*,  
 It shall not do, by jingo,  
 'Old plays and prices' we'll have back,  
 And no outlandish lingo!"

The orchestra struck up in vain,  
*Macbeth* and *wife* were hiss'd,  
 And "*Birnam Wood to Dunsinane,*"  
 Unnotic'd pass'd, I wist.

For "banners on the outside wall"  
 The tyrant had no use,  
 Their scrolls within so thick did fall,  
 'Though *ne'er a flag of truce.*

On Monday first the row begun,  
 Or call it what you may,  
 'Tis certain they kept up the fun  
 Until the Saturday.

The actors ran through every scene  
 As fast as they could go,  
 As it a pantomime had been,  
 Or eke a puppet-shew.

And, though the people, who were there,  
 Most loud did roar and rage,  
 Their backsides all, with special care,  
 Were turned upon the stage.

O Christ! it was a grief to see,  
 For word you could not hear,  
 (Except the speech of Mr. Leigh,)  
 A tragedy so queer!

To *catgut*, *cutcall* did reply,  
 With bell and bugle brazen,  
 And all *the gods*, who sat on high,  
 Help'd out the diapason!

Yet bids JACK KEMBLE, on the bent,  
A Don of thorough blood ;  
With a—ches though his head was rent,  
Firm as a mule he stood.

“Shew me,” said he, “*what ’tis you want?*”

“*What want you here?*” he cried;

“We neither want your *Cat* or *cant*,”  
Our Englishmen replied.

“Our notes for her’s you shan’t command,  
And for her pipe, perdie,  
We trust we have, within the land,  
*Five hundred good as she.*”

With that, there came a glorious roar,  
Of rattles, and of row-sticks,  
As such there never did before  
Confound the *Catacousticks*.

Then looked our manager, I trow,  
Like one in doleful dumps;  
His pride was humbled to a bow,  
Almost upon his stumps.

As thus he said, “at length I yield,  
You’ve got what you have wish’d,  
You’ve won, *John Bull*, you’ve won the field,  
And so *the CAT* is *dish’d*.”

God save the king, and bless the land,  
Our liberties and laws,  
And thus may Britons ever stand  
United in their cause!!

No. 30.—*Imitations of Two Odes of Horace.*

(Monthly Mirror for September.)

Book 3.—Ode 9.

*An Italian Duet.*

“*Donce gratus eram tibi,*” &c.

TAYLOR.

Angelic dame! when leagued with me,  
Your *tweedle dum*, and *tweedle dee*  
Charm'd each besotted ninny;  
I thought not of the sons of France,  
Nor join'd with VESTRIS in the dance  
LE CLAIRE OF ANGIOLINI.

CATALANI.

Whilst I possess'd the golden fleece,  
Nor you, like him of antient Greece,  
Stuff'd your dull ears with cotton;  
All other Syrens on the shelf,  
Ev'n stately BILLINGTON herself,  
Was, in my fame, forgotten.

TAYLOR.

In vain, my whiten'd boards to grace,  
Her skipping, pantomimic, race,  
Indulgent GALLIA proffers;  
Alas! (dear CATALANI fled)  
My benches blush all rosy-red,  
And empty are my coffers.

CATALANI.

Young HARRIS now demands my aid,  
To win me, he a price has paid,  
More liberal than rational ;  
For pounds, *four thousand*, I engage  
To sing one season on his stage,  
Nick-nam'd by me, *the national* !

TAYLOR.

Nay, plight again with me your truth,  
Dear DALILAH ! discard that youth,  
Smit with Italian singers ;  
He, amorous SAMPSON, soon, I dread,  
Will pull a new house o'er his head,  
I know he'll burn his fingers.

CATALANI.

Though you are but a slippery wight,  
And he, in modish garments dight,  
Looks, and behaves, quite prettily ;  
I scorn you both ;—my purse is full ;  
So now—dear, credulous, *John Bull*,  
Adieu !—I'm off to Italy.

J.

No. 31.—*Imitation of Book 2, Ode 1, of Horace.*

(Same Work.)

To Mr. KEMBLE.

“*Motum ex Metello consule civicum,*” &c.

In battles, provok'd by the blood-stain'd *Thane*;  
 When tempests assail aged *Lear*;  
 When fortune deserts the poor lunatic *Dane*;  
 In *Richard* the cruel, or *Hotspur* the vain;  
 Oh! when shall your equal appear?

The wreath of applause, what philosopher scorns?  
 'Tis a crown of the sweetest moss-roses:  
 But, when it the brow of an actor adorns,  
 The public oft' mix a few good-natur'd thorns  
 To tickle his ears, when he dozes.

Awhile, to your theatre now bid adieu!  
 Fly, fly, from the tumult and riot!  
 Attempt not, your truncheon and staff to renew;  
 But give them to TOWNSEND, to help to subdue  
 The foes to *new-prices* and quiet.

For hark! what a discord of bugles and bells!  
 What whistling, and springing of rattles!  
 What screaming, and groaning, and hissing, and yells;  
 'Till mad-headed MAMMON, his victims compels  
 To scuffles, rows, riots, and battles!!



And now, from the barracks of Bow-Street, good lack !  
 A band, under TOWNSEND and SAYERS,  
 Wave high their gilt staffs, while the dull-sounding thwack  
 Falls frequent and thick, on the enemy's back,  
 Or visits their pate, with a merry-ton'd crack,  
 In aid of King John, and the players.

The Billingsgate muses, indignant to find  
 CATALANI, and fiddlers from Paris,  
 Usurping their place, in revenge, have combin'd  
 To kick up this dust in the popular mind,  
 So fatal to KEMBLE and HARRIS.

What surly *Brown Bear*\* has not gladly receiv'd  
 The misers, who *old prices* stick to ?  
 At Bow-Street, what knight is not sorely aggriev'd,  
 Where Christians are cross'd, unbelievers believ'd !  
 Oh ! story *mirabile dictu* !

To mix in this warfare, regardless of fear,  
 What 'prentice or clerk is not willing ?  
 From Smithfield and Wapping, what heroes appear,  
 Who fight, I acknowledge, for all they hold dear,  
 When the object of war's the last shilling !

What fists of defiance each pugilist wields,  
 What Jews have not had bloody noses !  
 What victim of law, who to *Mainwaring* yields,  
 But gladly for ever would leave *Coldbath Fields*,  
 To fight here *pro ARIS et focis* !

\* A public-house, opposite the Bow-Street office, used as a lock-up-house for thieves, &c.—Hither many respectable persons were conveyed on the late occasion.

But gently my muse, hush your angry-ton'd lyre;  
 From *rows* so disgraceful remove;  
 And, seated at home, by your own parlour fire,  
 Let beauty and claret your numbers inspire  
 To melody, laughter, and love.

H.

No. 32.—*The O P Garland.*

"Said a Smile to a Tear."

(From the MORNING POST.)

Said a P to an O.  
 Where d'ye intend to go?  
 Said the O, I've not fix'd upon whither;  
 Oh! then said the P,  
 Let you and I agree  
 To kick up a *row*, both together.

But where shall it be,  
 Said the O to the P?  
 Said the P, why at *Covent Garden*?  
 For, dear Mr. O!  
 I beg you to know,  
 I do not care where, a brass farthing.

Oh, then said O,  
 E'en let it be so,  
 That's the place I expect to see fun in;  
 D—n the play, that is stuff;  
 We shall have fun enough,  
 If we *counteract* the manager's cunning.

For, good Mr. O,  
 Young Hamlet, long ago,  
 Of the cunning of the scene would be talking;  
 Now we'll let them all see,  
 (U and I chums O P)  
 That the best scenes are jumping and stalking.

To these let us add,  
 My *round-about* lad,  
 A dance, which we'll call the O P;  
 And we'll have ev'ry night,  
 A clever sham-fight,  
 Which will end all with frolic and glee.

And if Justice Gr——m,  
 Says we've been to blame,  
 And threatens that he will *enjail* us;  
 We will say, that's a jest,  
 For we know the law *Best*,  
 And have ready our cronies to bail us.

And then the next night,  
 We'll redouble our spite,  
 And roar out—come forth Mr. K——,  
 You shall know *what we want*,  
 For you shall not us daunt,  
 You, and all *aft'* the curtain, shall tremble.

As to Mr. W—h—t.  
 He is but a dolt,  
 For he says, he'll bring pistols and pop'em,  
 But we care not a fig,  
 For that bouncing prig,  
 Nor shall grieve if the justices *shop him*.

So now gentle O,  
 Home to bed let us go,  
 And dream of what we've been doing;  
 For what is't to us,  
 If the players make a fuss,  
 And declare we shall bring 'em to ruin?

You know, little O,  
 Our spelling-books show,  
 That the frogs, when by such as us pelted,  
 Said, "What's sport to you,  
 "Makes us sadly rue,  
 "That you cannot to pity be melted.

And as to those folks,  
 Who like dramatic jokes,  
 And to *hear* play'rs as well as to see'em;  
 And also sit quiet,  
 Without any riot,  
 Why they may go to the *Lyceum*.

While we'll groan, and we'll jump,  
 And we'll rattle, and thump,  
 And like true French philosophers, callous,  
 We, who are the public,  
 Will become a republic,\*  
 And soon after be fit for the gallows.

And when at that tree,  
 We will chaunt merrily,  
 And stick to it like hungry leeches;  
 Then, with hearts hard as stones,  
 We will give our *last groans*,  
 Instead of our *last dying speeches*.

\* "Mark, Jew—a learned judge."

No. 33.—*Covent Garden Theatre, Morning Chronicle, Oct. 2.*

The committee for inspecting the accounts of Old Covent Garden Theatre employed the whole of Saturday in examining the proper vouchers for the additional incumbrances on the new theatre. We understand that their sitting was adjourned to this morning. Their first meeting took place on Friday morning, not (as was generally reported) on Thursday.

No. 34. — *Proprietors' Advertisement of October 2, 1809.*

New Theatre Royal Covent Garden, Oct. 2, 1809.

The committee for examining the affairs of Covent Garden Theatre, consisting of the following gentlemen,—Alderman Sir C. Price, Bart. M. P. Sir T. Plumer, Knt. his Majesty's Solicitor-General; John Sylvester, Esq. Recorder of the City of London; John Whitmore, Esq. Governor of the Bank of England; and John Julius Angerstein, Esq.—have authorised the proprietors to publish the following report in their names :

We do hereby certify that, after a full and attentive examination of the subject, which we

have been desired to investigate by the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, for the satisfaction of the public, in respect to the rate of profit received by them from the late theatre, and likely to be received from the new, the following is the result of our inquiry.

The rate of profit actually received, upon an average of the last six years, commencing in 1803, (the period of the present copartnership in the theatre,) upon the capital embarked therein, we have ascertained to have amounted to  $6\frac{3}{8}$  per cent. per annum, charging the concern with only the sum actually paid for insurance on such part of the capital as was insured; but, if the whole of the capital had been insured, the profit would have been reduced to very little more than five per cent.; and, for want of this full insurance, the proprietors, being in part their own insurers, sustained a loss by the late fire, for which no compensation has been made, to the amount of more than the whole of their profits for the above period of six years.

The rate of profit likely to be received in future from the new theatre, depending in part upon the amount of bills not yet delivered, and of estimates not fully ascertained, and on the future receipts of the house, which are subject to various contingencies, cannot be ascertained with the same degree of certainty; but, upon the best consideration which we have been able to give this subject,

after having recourse to every source of information, oral and written, we are fully satisfied that the future profits of the new theatre, at the proposed advance in the prices of admission, will amount to only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. per annum upon the capital expended in the theatre, if the same be insured; and that, upon the same supposition of insurance, at the former prices of admission the proprietors will, in our judgment, annually sustain a loss of nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. per annum on their capital.

CHARLES PRICE.

THOMAS PLUMER.

JOHN SYLVESTER.

JOHN WHITMORE.

JOHN JULIUS ANGERSTEIN.

The account of the receipts and expenditure of the last six years will be published to-morrow; and the public are respectfully informed that the theatre will be re-opened on Wednesday (Oct. 4) with the comic opera of "The Beggar's Opera," and the farce of "Is He a Prince?"

No. 35.—*Estimate of the Expenses of a Theatre.*

(Morning Chronicle, Oct. 3.)

Supposing the public were to be accommodated by having a new one built, under a licence, on

the plan of Covent Garden Theatre, the cost of building, scenery, decorations, wardrobe, &c. being 150,000*l.* :

Three hundred subscribers, at 500 <i>l.</i> each, to receive 5 <i>l.</i> per cent. and a free admission ticket:—interest.....	£ 7,500
Expenses of the house for 200 performances, at 200 <i>l.</i> each, (the estimate of Covent Garden Theatre, in 1800, was 160 <i>l.</i> ) .....	40,000
Total .....	<u>£ 47,500</u>

Ways and Means.

New Covent Garden, at the old prices, is supposed to hold 650 <i>l.</i> ; to calculate on an average receipt of only 400 <i>l.</i> there being but 300 free tickets, this, for 200 nights, will produce .....	80,000
Excess.....	<u>£ 32,500</u>

Allow for insurance, and other extra expenses, 12,500*l.* there will be still an excess of 20,000*l.*

If three persons were each to deposit 50,000*l.* and have the whole property, they would receive, by this calculation,—their interest at 5 per cent. ..

7,500

Profits from the house .....

20,000

Value of 300 free admissions, only estimated at 40*l.* per night.....

8,000

Which is above 23½ per cent.... £ 35,500



No. 36.—*Interesting Objections to the Accuracy of the Report made by the Covent Garden Committee.*

(Morning Chronicle, Oct. 3.)

It is extremely painful to be obliged, in justice to the public, and in the faithful discharge of our duty, to question the accuracy of a report made by gentlemen of character, upon the view of accounts submitted to them. But volunteers in any service are not apt to be scrupulous.

They were novices in theatrical affairs, as may be gathered from the result of their examination. Various objections occur to the account rendered.

1. The last season ought not to be taken into the average. The company was driven from place to place; they had no regular season; and yet the deficiency of that year is brought in to diminish the aggregate receipt, and the average is taken from six years. Take away the last year from both sides, and divide the remainder by five, the product will be 10,212*l.* 15*s.* per annum, instead of 8345*l.* 6*s.* 2*d.* or, 7*l.* 17*s.* per cent. profit, instead of 6*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

2. In estimating the profits on the capital employed, the sum of 130,000*l.* is to be deducted; because, upon that sum, they have no right to ask for profit, since they did not advance it. There is a sum of 3500*l.* per annum to be paid, indeed,

for 85 years; and this an annual charge on the house. Now if that charge stands in the account, and they also calculate profit on the 75,000*l.* it is a gross error, for they are both to take interest and profit on it.

3. Why did not the committee require, and lay before the public, the receipts and expenses of the six years preceding Mr. Kemble's purchase, in order to ascertain upon what data he was induced to give 22,000*l.* for a sixth share, which brought the supposed capital to 132,000*l.*? Did he lay out his money at 6 $\frac{3}{8}$  per cent.?

4. Suppose that the plant of a brewery, or any other great business, were consumed by fire, by which a capital, beyond the sum insured, of 100,000*l.* was destroyed, and that it required another 100,000*l.* to re-build the plant, would they be entitled to charge a profit on their commodity, so as to get interest or profit on a capital of 200,000*l.*? Perhaps, yes, if they had a monopoly; because there would be no other shop for beer; and this is the whole question as we said at first. The proprietors introduce articles that have nothing to do with the matter; build a theatre which they own they do not expect to fill; for, if they did, they might diminish instead of raising the price; and then, because there are only a limited number of play-going people, (which experience enables them to ascertain,) they claim a right to raise the price upon that limited number, because there is no other booth in "the fair."

## No. 37.

The proprietors have the honour of presenting to the public the report of the gentlemen, who kindly undertook the investigation of the accounts of the theatre; and cannot but feel assured that a liberal and enlightened people will now be convinced, that the alteration in the prices arises solely from the impossibility of their continuing the public amusements on the former terms of admission.

Statement of the accounts of Covent Garden Theatre, for the last six years, most respectfully offered to the public.

	<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
1803—4. Received .....	61,682	13	10
1804—5. Ditto.....	70,727	9	10
1805—6. Ditto.....	56,065	18	5
1806—7. Ditto.....	68,126	7	5
1807—8. Ditto.....	63,038	14	7
1808—9. Ditto.....	46,342	13	0
	<hr/>		
	365,983	17	1
Deduct the payments in six years	307,912	0	0
	<hr/>		
	58,071	17	1
Deduct out-standing debts	8,000	0	0
	<hr/>		
Profit divide by six	50,071	17	1
	<hr/>		
Average of each year	8,345	6	2
	<hr/>		

1803—4. Paid .....	58,926	18	7
1804—5. Ditto.....	81,057	11	6
1805—6. Ditto.....	47,975	2	2
1806—7. Ditto.....	68,391	6	4
1807—8. Ditto.....	62,406	8	3
1808—9. Ditto.....	47,334	11	2
	<hr/>		
	366,091	18	0
Deduct what was drawn out by the proprietors.....	58,179	18	0
	<hr/>		
Paid in six years (as above) .....	307,912	0	0
	<hr/>		

(Errors excepted.)

RICHARD HUGHES, Treasurer.

JOHN TULL, Deputy-Treasurer.

Sworn before me, the 26th September, 1809.

C. FLOWER, Mayor.

No. 38.—*The Proprietors' Advertisement, appended to the foregoing Statement.*

The gentlemen, who, for the public satisfaction, kindly formed a committee for examining the accounts of Covent Garden Theatre, have most faithfully discharged the office, to which they were invited by the proprietors, and spared neither time nor pains, in order to draw justly the conclusions which are contained in their report. They were occupied, in the task they had generously imposed on themselves, for three whole days, from morning till evening; on Monday, the last day of their

meeting, they did not rise till near eleven at night: they examined such witnesses, belonging to both theatres, as were most likely to give them proper information: they searched minutely into the books of the treasury, in which all the receipts and disbursements were entered at the time, for six years back, and scrupulously confronted them with the banker's books, and all the original vouchers: they had recourse to Mr. Smirke, on points of expense relative to the building, and examined Mr. Copland, besides between twenty and thirty artificers, employed in the erection of the theatre, touching their several bills: they omitted no investigation relative to the scenery, wardrobe, music, and every material article of expense: they asked, and received from the different offices, the rate of insurance for the theatres: they formed the most careful calculations of the number of persons likely, in future, to resort to the theatre, grounded on an exact knowledge of the number admitted nightly, in each of the six years, into the boxes, pit, and galleries, at whole and half-price, or by free admissions. These complicated numerical calculations they checked and compared, in every way that could help to render them accurate; and, in every doubtful point, they have always given the turn in favour of the public: they found large heads of future unavoidable expenditure much under-rated, as the scenery, wardrobe, machinery of all kinds, music, &c. and were

convinced that the capital, necessary for the proper conduct of the business, must very heavily exceed what it has been hitherto calculated at.

October 4, 1809.

No. 39.—*Treatment of Mr. Pope.*

(Morning Chronicle, October 4)

The manner in which Mr. Pope has been treated, by the managers of Covent Garden Theatre does not justify their pretensions to liberality. Three different times has Mr. Harris, *in the moment of his necessity*, drawn this artist from his profession as a painter, to sustain a very arduous situation in the theatre; and yet, after being on its boards for twenty-four years, he has been dismissed, without giving him a moment's warning! Not because they had in the theatre another, equally capable of performing his line of duty, but because they found an *itinerant*, that would undertake it at half-price; and this, too, when they are attempting to raise the prices on the public.

No. 40.—*Epigram.*

(Morning Chronicle, October 4.)

Kemble, ne'er mind the noisy crew,  
At all their efforts smile;  
Nor when I've fix'd the *prices new*,  
Forget the *price of oil!*

*Arbitration-Corner.*

BLAZE.

No. 41. — *Don John and the Bank Clerks.*

(From the Times, Oct. 5.)

DON JOHN PHILIP KEMBLE, a man of high rank,  
Was mightily griev'd, by a Clerk of the Bank  
Who dared, from the boxes, to give his opinion  
Upon his new-fangl'd dramatic dominion.  
As JOHNNY receiv'd this affront from a clerk,  
He thought he would match the troublesome spark ;  
So he sought for magnanimous, mighty protectors,  
And laid down his case before the directors !  
As boys are complain'd of to birch-bearing masters,  
When they fall unluckily into disasters.  
Then an *order* was fram'd, the don's bosom to ease,  
That the clerks may go to the play, if they please, —  
But must not presume, the performance to greet,  
To clap with their hands, or to stamp with their feet ;  
To spring their loud rattles, the folks' ears to split,  
To blow bugle horns in the midst of the pit,  
Or to raise up their scurrilous labels on poles  
All figur'd with gibbets, and coffins, and scrolls :  
Lest they should receive, poor things ! for their pains,  
A few little rubs to bother their brains.  
So, thus, gentle reader, the business is righted,  
The Clerks are all *muzzled*, and JOHN is delighted.

No. 42. — *Proprietors' Advertisement.* — *Covent  
Garden Theatre.*

The average annual profit on the property of  
Covent Garden Theatre, as stated in the printed

report of the committee, having been misrepresented, it becomes necessary, for the satisfaction of the public, to declare that, after deducting the legal interest of five per cent. on their capital, no more than  $1\frac{2}{3}$  per cent. remain to the proprietors for their profits.

October 6, 1809.

No. 43. — *Plan for a New Theatre Royal, by subscription.*

(Morning Chronicle, October 7.)

A capital of £150,000 to be subscribed in 150 shares, of £1000 each, to be paid by instalments, of which only the sum of £100,000 would be wanted, in the first instance, to build and furnish the theatre: the remaining £50,000 to be called for if necessary.

The subscribers to receive 5 per cent. on the amount of the stock actually subscribed, after the first season of performances, together with a personal ticket of admission, not transferable, except to a nominee, for the whole season.

Application to be made to parliament for a patent, to build and maintain, within the City of Westminster, a theatre, for the representation of English dramas, music, dancing, and other scenic exhibitions, and that this application be founded



on a petition, setting forth the advantages that would accrue to the public, from such an establishment being intrusted to a *Joint-Stock Company*, instead of its being in the hands of one or a few proprietors, viz. :

That no incumbrances would at any time be laid on the property.

That no boxes would be assigned, let, mortgaged, sold, or made private.

That no money would be raised by the issue of *free tickets*, by the grant of *annuities* or rent charges, by tontine, or otherwise; but that, *bond fide*, the receipts of each year should be kept free and unburthened to answer the expense of each year, before even the lawful interest of five per cent. on the amount of the capital, usually advanced, should be payable to the subscribers.

And that the petitioners would humbly propose, both for the security of the public and their own permanent interest, that a clause or clauses to this effect should be introduced into the bill.

That, for the farther security of the public, and as a means of for ever protecting them against the advance of prices, the profits, above five per cent. if any, should be divided into three equal parts, and to be appropriated as follows :

1. One third thereof to constitute a fund to be set apart, and applied, from time to time, to the repair, alteration, or embellishment, of the

theatre, or to answer extraordinary disbursements, or to come in aid of occasional calamities, so that there be no pretence for any farther call on the proprietors, or for any increased demand of prices from the public.

2. One third of the said surplus to create a fund for the encouragement of the drama, by giving annual premiums for new plays, by establishing a school in the theatre for the histrionic art, and for its accessaries, music, dancing, decoration, &c.; and to provide a retreat to meritorious writers and artists, who, by a service of twenty years in the theatre, might entitle themselves thereto.

3. The other third to go to the proprietors as profit on the capital advanced.

A board of directors to be appointed, *without salary*, to superintend the accounts, and who should have the power of appointing a manager, at a liberal remuneration, and for a term certain. Such manager, when appointed, to have the sole uncontrolled direction of all the concerns of the theatre; save, only, that the board should annually stipulate the sum for the expense of the season, beyond which the manager should not go, and for the faithful appropriation of which, he should give sureties.

That no *freedoms* of any kind, or *orders*, even to authors or performers, should be granted, as they serve only to influence or even overpower

the judgment of the public, as to the merit of plays or actors; and also because they occasion cabals, by introducing partizans for insidious purposes, or are used as decoys to give a false appearance to the theatre.

That, in erecting the theatre, and the distribution of its parts, the utmost regard should be paid to the accommodation of all classes of the community, on the well-understood principle, that it is only by a courteous attention, on the part of the great, to the comfort and rights of the lower orders, that the latter repay the condescension, by respect for the privileges of those above them.

The theatre should be insulated therefore on three sides, but not on the fourth; because, on one side there should be an inclosed way to and from the theatre, for foot-passengers, so as to be out of the reach of carriages, as at the theatre, *Rue Fedeau*, at Paris.

The theatre to be encased in a double wall, and the lobbies, between the two, *arched* on each floor, as a security against fire, and to be of solid masonry.

The hall, or audience part of the house, to be of a completely circular form, and of a *size* that shall secure to the spectator and auditor the full advantage of sight and hearing, without forcing either the performers or the company to overstrain their organs.

The audience to be kept free from all annoyance, and that, for this purpose, there shall not be the nuisance called a *basket*, which is the constant rendezvous of tumult and profligacy.

No private boxes to be allowed, and of course no boudoirs; but the space allotted to the *basket* to be one entire anti-room to the dress boxes, which might be taken for the night, and which would remove the riotous company to a distance from the attentive audience. The same arrangement might be made on every floor under the gallery; and yet, by the circular form, with capacious galleries, the theatre might contain a receipt of £550 per night, which is quite sufficient. It is the artifice of making room for a greater number that has rendered our theatres so uncomfortable, and, at the same time, so unfit for the real and impressive delineation of the passions. It is to this that we owe all the ups and downs of intricate staircases, that we are never sure of our footing, and that we never know when we are upon level ground.

The vestibule, saloons, staircases, and lobbies, to be large and elegantly decorated, for here the eye wants entertainment. In the interior of the house there should prevail the utmost simplicity, because no splendour of ornament should divert our attention from the stage.

With respect to situation, all the regular theatres of a metropolis should be near one another,

and near its centre. It is in vain to talk of city theatres, in the present day, or of theatres at a distance from one another. In winter, when a party shall have come perhaps three or four miles to Covent Garden or Drury Lane, (for we trust the latter will be rebuilt,) and should find them both filled, it would be tantalizing to tell them that there was another theatre in the outskirts. These are only proper for summer when all the world is abroad. A situation must be found near the other two and there are several well adapted.

There is to be a new bridge across the Thames, near Somerset House, together with a street to run into Charles-street, Covent Garden. An humble application might be made to his Majesty for the grant of a part of the vacant space in the *Savoy*, at a suitable ground rent, so that the new theatre might form a square, on the west side of the street, leading from the Strand to the bridge, and be a noble elevation, open to the Thames, on one side of the new bridge, as Somerset House will be on the other. The space is vacant, large, and capable of easy as well as of grand approaches. It will, we have no doubt, be a desirable object to his Majesty to give his most gracious countenance to an establishment so much wanted; and which, by affording an elegant, moral, and enlightening entertainment,

to his people, may preserve them from a vicious recourse to gin and methodism.

It has also been thought, that it would be a great improvement to the metropolis, if the crowded quarter of St. Giles's could be opened so as to ventilate the town. It occupies an immense space, forming a square between Great and Little Queen Street, Holborn, and Drury-Lane. It divides, and almost cuts off, the new world from the old. The houses are very insignificant, and yet the situation is highly adapted for building. A theatre in the centre, with streets radiating to every point, would at once be near the other theatres, be easy of approach, and be a splendid object in the very centre of the town. There are various other *scites*, such as the narrow courts and alleys opposite Somerset House, or the courts behind Exeter Change, (which is itself a nuisance,) that ought to be opened; or the King's Mews, as it has been in the contemplation of the crown to remove the stables to Hyde Park: and many others, beside, that will occur to every reader. Finally, though application is to be made to parliament for a patent, as a security to the subscribers, there should be a clause in the act, that his Majesty's Lord Chamberlain should have the same authority that is vested in him under the royal patents granted to the other theatres, viz.; to suspend them, in case of their encroaching on the rights

of the public, or of performers, or of manifest abuse, or of suffering them to become dormant, because a patent of this kind ought to be carried strictly into execution.

This is the outline; but it is in vain to talk of the scheme, if not honoured with the sanction of intelligent, responsible, and liberal, men. We suggest shares of £1000 rather than of £500, because it is a material thing not to have a numerous proprietary. One hundred and fifty personal admissions will be no tax on the property, in the hands of persons who can afford to sink £1000 each for a share, whereas, 300 personal admissions would be a sensible drawback on the receipts of the theatre, which is to be kept within proper limits, as many of them would be annually advertised for sale.

It has been said, that £100,000 is not sufficient to build and furnish a splendid theatre in these times. Upon this, we beg leave to say, that we do not speak without reference to higher authority than our own. A theatre is, comparatively speaking, a *shell*, and does not require the interior and expensive finishing of a mansion. If a grant could be obtained of a part of the *Savoy*, or of the *Mews*, so as to render unnecessary the purchase of houses to be demolished, £100,000 would be found ample for the purpose, but we advise a sum in reserve of £50,000 in case of necessity.

No. 44.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

As you have shewn a laudable desire to assist those poor Philistines, who have had the misfortune to fall into the hands of the Israelites, I hope you will insert the following statement. On Tuesday evening, the 10th instant, I entered the pit of Covent Garden Theatre at half-price, without any inclination for disturbance; and which, if intended, I should have been diverted from, by perceiving the description of people who were present. Not many minutes had passed, when a lad, in the front of the pit, who had been making some trifling opposition to the performance, was seized by the descendants of Abraham, dragged, and beaten in a most wanton and cruel manner. I moved forward, and was endeavouring to expostulate with the Jew who held the lad on the seat, when the whole party, about six or seven, (all Jews,) immediately left him, and succeeded in dragging me out, with the utmost violence. One of the rascals struck me, while on the ground, a blow on the head with a stick, the effects of which I now feel. Morse Braham, or Moses Abraham, who was the head of the gang, has charged me with a violent assault, by striking him, &c. &c. but I am not without hopes, not only to foil this



fellow, but to punish him for his brutality: if some young men in the pit, who were witnesses to what actually passed, and particularly the youth who was first seized, will do me the favour to call on me, or send me their address, I shall feel much obliged. I am, Sir, &c.

JOHN TACKLE:  
25, Villier's Street, Strand.

11th Oct. 1809.

No. 45. — *Theatricals.*

(From the Examiner, October 8.)

Mr. Examining Editor,

I observe, with infinite surprise, the prevalence of gloomy speculation on the decay of public spirit, and of the extreme apathy with which events are regarded, of the greatest importance in their nature and consequences. Convinced of the mischievous tendency of such dire prognostications, I am anxious, through your medium, to satisfy the world of the extreme carelessness and want of observation in the authors of such remarks; and to prove, by a few recent instances, that we retain all that philosophic spirit and calm good sense, by which, as a people, we have always been distinguished: in short, sir, that we are spirited in the proper place, and resigned in the proper season.

First, as to the public spirit. — You attend Covent Garden Theatre, Mr. Examiner, and must observe the laudable and determined opposition to large receipt and overgrown emolument therein displayed. Even the profuse expenditure and unreasonable efforts of the managers to engage superior talent, is canvassed with a feeling of prudence and economy, perfectly characteristic. The nicety of our discrimination is here manifest, because no people can exhibit greater patience at similar extravagance on less important occasions. With what stoical serenity do we contemplate the expense of *diverting* continents and peninsulas! and with what equanimity do we regard the sage managers, and brilliant performers, who have produced and enacted in these memorable interludes! No, sir! we wisely reserve our personalities for individuals like the Kembles. The success of a family who have no pretensions but considerable natural capacity, much study, and prudent application, ought, I say *ought*, to excite dissatisfaction in a strictly commercial country. Why, sir, they have amassed fortunes equal to many button and buckle makers! The mushroom mechanic is a natural production of the land; but to encourage mental *fungi* would be an evident departure from that shopkeeping system, by which we are so exalted in the opinion of sensible foreigners and ourselves. It must be confessed, Mr. Examiner, there is an insolent pertinacity in talent,

not at all congenial with the reigning taste for solid mediocrity. That fellow Kemble, for instance, assumes more than his Majesty's ministers, and does not, like them, exhibit that oily complacent kind of dulness which feels itself at home among the dust under the feet of its patrons. We are certainly the most generous people on earth; we only require the partakers of our bounty to crawl on their bellies all the days of their life, to repay insult with submission, and enmity with abasement. In remunerating actors, too, we should establish the wise principle of a *maximum*, to distinguish them from the aforesaid ministers who, for their extreme pliancy and exquisite sympathy on the subject of Catholic idolatry, and the formidable old gentleman at Rome, should be unsparingly rewarded with sinecures, pensions, and reversions, altogether befitting their high and honourable characters.

In a word, Mr. Examiner, were I to enumerate all the instances of profound and accurate regard and disregard, inverse and direct, of the existing public, I should far exceed your limits; I shall therefore conclude, by briefly informing you, that I am an optimist, and opine that every thing is going on in the best possible manner for a national consummation of all things, and, in accordance with the sentiment, subscribe myself

Your constant reader,

Oct. 6, 1809.

PANGLOS.

No. 46.—*Veteres Avie; or, The Phoenix.*

## AN ODE FOR MANAGERS.

(Times, Oct. 9.)

'Twas said, of old time,

In blest Araby's clime,

The Phoenix, about to expire,

Cover'd up to the breast,

In her ruinous nest,

Awaits a new birth from the fire.

Then renew'd all so pretty,

To Phœbus' gay city,

Doom'd by fate her first journey to run;

She hies her away,

Nor halts night or day,

'Till she pops on the shrine of the sun.

Her voyage effected,

On her ashes collected,

From Olympus she summons the flame;

Submit to her nod,

Hastes the fiery god,

And she posts lighter back than she came.

Our managers thus,

Though with rather more fuss,

Proud, so bright an example to follow;

When fate seem'd to lour,

Invok'd a new power,

And knelt at the shrine of Apollo.

“ In the prospect of death,  
 Receive our last breath,  
 And grant us to flourish once more;  
 Though Christians and Jews,  
 Thy orgies refuse,  
 \*Yet Incas and priests shall adore.

Our house is thy home,  
 †On the top of the dome,  
 Thy image colossal's survey'd;  
 By that we invoke,  
 Oh, parry the stroke,  
 Which fain would thy temple invade.”

The godhead was mov'd,  
 For the people he lov'd,  
 Who still to his worship were true;  
 “ I grant your petition,  
 Fulfill the condition,  
 And your credit I swear to renew.

“ Run the cash ne'er so low,  
 Your house shall o'erflow ;”

Thus, when all was distress and vexation,  
 By wonderful trick,

They were sav'd from Old Nick,

And replac'd on a solid foundation.

\* It is said, that the funds of the late Drury Lane Theatre were considerably benefited by the “getting up” of Pizarro.

† A beautiful colossal statue of Apollo was placed on the top of the dome of Drury Lane Theatre.

To the theatre soon,  
 Implor'd the same boon,  
 And enfeebled by age and decay,  
 In mouldering dust,  
 Disdaining to rust,  
 \*In flames melted sudden away.

A new Phœnix straight,  
 From the ashes of fate,  
 To dazzle our wondering eyes,  
 More firm and tenacious,  
 More grand and capacious,  
 Exalts its proud head to the skies.

Great patron of physic,  
 Who cur'st gout and pthysic,  
 If thus potent, thy healing devices,  
 With the manager's cries,  
 Hear the audience likewise,  
 And reduce the *exorbitant prices*.

No. 47.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

I believe most thinking men will agree in pronouncing that cause to be bad which requires unworthy means for its support. How this applies to the managers of Covent Garden Theatre the public have been enabled to judge,

\* The old Covent Garden Theatre was burnt to the ground on the night of the 20th of September, 1809, after the representation of Pizarro.

from the facts which have been stated, (and which no one has attempted to deny,) relative to the means resorted to by those managers, since the opening of their theatre. If you think the following statement will add any strength to the conclusions, which must be drawn from the facts so stated, you will, perhaps, insert it.

I went, last evening, to the theatre, at half-price. As I entered the avenue, leading down the side of the pit, I observed a dreadful scene of confusion, between a party of Jews, who were collected in the avenue, and a number of the opposite party, who were standing on the benches, armed with sticks. A large vacant space was between the contending parties, and just as I entered the avenue, a Jew, known by the name of *Dutch Sam*, mounted one of the benches, in the vacant space, and several voices exclaimed:—"Here's *Dutch Sam*, he'll stand to you." A scuffle ensued, and, thinking it prudent to retreat from the field of battle, in which I did not intend taking an active part, I immediately, with several others, quitted the avenue, and got outside the centre doors, leading into the pit. I then heard a cry of "That's him!" and was instantly seized by the collar, and surrounded by about a dozen Jews.—Situating thus, I, of course, did not either expostulate or resist, and was dragged to the Bow-Street office. The space of time, from paying my money at the door, to finding myself in the office,

was not much more than three minutes. The charge against me being made, judge of my surprise at hearing the following:—SOLOMON HINDS, a jew, after stating something of his having (as he said), for the *peace and quietness* of the house, seized a parcel of printed bills, which a person was handing about the pit, and, after relating the scuffle which ensued in consequence, declared that he, with several others, was driven into the pit passage, and that, on coming there, I was standing with a stick in my hand, with which I immediately struck him a violent blow; and he shewed the wound it had produced. This he swore to. Another, (DUTCH SAM,) who came to the office with him, was then asked, what he knew of the affair. He *swore* that he saw me give the blow, which caused the wound before mentioned. I had nothing to say to their statements, but to deny them, and was ordered to find bail, to appear at the next sessions for Westminster, to answer the charge of assault. Some gentlemen in the office, whom I never saw before, but who knew me by name, were so polite as to offer themselves as bail, or I must have been committed, until I could have procured it. I abstain from making any observations on the above statement, but sign my name to it, as containing, on my part, nothing but the literal truth.

P. G. PATMORE, Jun.  
36, Ludgate-Hill,  
10 Oct. 1809.



No. 48.—*The Rival Managers.*

(From the Morning Chronicle, Oct. 12.)

At Covent Garden every night,  
Two managers this town delight ;  
Their names are—I will not dissemble—  
Poor JOHN BULL, and rich JOHN KEMBLE.  
One in the boxes and the pit  
Displays his vig'rous native wit ;  
And one, upon the distant stage,  
Struts, frets, and fumes, away his rage.  
One entertains the ear alone,  
With many a hiss and many a groan ;  
And one impairs the *itching* sight,  
With pantomime's full glare of light.  
One deals in uproar and confusion,  
And one in scenical illusion.  
One boasts his bugle-horns and trumpets,  
And one his snug retreats for strumpets.  
One, through the house, roars out his raillery,  
And one appeals to favour'd gallery ;  
Not rais'd in price, but rais'd more high,  
As gods should still be near the sky.  
And last, the one his placards boasts,  
And one his Jews, and Bow-Street hosts.  
Betwixt the mummery, sight and sound,  
Of these two managers profound,  
The genuine drama seems quite ended,  
The senses altogether blended.  
Often their partizans unite,  
To show their taste, or urge their right ;  
For mark ! when springs the watchman's rattle,  
Commences pugilistic battle.

See, see, the well-aim'd blows go round!

See bloody noses meet the ground!

And eyes as black as any coal,

Around the pit indignant roll.

These great and notable transactions,

These dramas of the rival factions,

How long the part, thus oddly cast—

How long will the confusion last?

Unless *High Price* chagrin'd retires,

Or pale *Monopoly* expires.

No. 49.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

As a reader of your paper, I have observed, with satisfaction, your candid reasoning on the subject of the existing difference between the public and the managers of Covent Garden Theatre. I am, therefore, induced to hope, that you will give publicity to the import of this communication.

Yesterday, for the first time, I went to the theatre, and selected the pit, as the most appropriate situation to view its splendour and magnificence. I entered with an intention of supporting the managers, animated with a feeling, that no gratification could be derived from the best performance, under a consciousness, that the performers were playing to disadvantage. Being admitted as the doors opened, I obtained a seat in the centre of the pit, and was surprised to find four or five pre-

ceding benches, covered with Jews of the lowest description; some of whom, I recognized to be those who, under the denomination of crimps, are in daily attendance in the avenues about the East India House; and others, boys who attend the Bank and Exchange with oranges. This motley group excited my surprise; but not anticipating their object, I seated myself without a thought of danger. The house was quiet, until the music had played the anthem of "God save the King;" after which, a noise of bugles, cat-calls, bells, and rattles, commenced, from a group of persons seated a few rows behind me. The duty of the Jews then developed itself, and I discovered, from their agitation, that they were arranging a grand plan of attack. Being thus unfortunately and inadvertently placed between two fires, without the means of retiring, I felt my situation alarming, and endeavoured, without success, to quiet them. At length, by a signal from a box over the stage door, about twenty of them, supported in the rear by several notorious bruisers, made a dreadful rush, prostrating and trampling upon the peaceable possessors of those four intervening seats, among which were several delicate and interesting females, and converting the whole pit into a scene of destruction, riot, and confusion; they were however, discomfited, and driven back to their seats, without daring to renew the contest—continuing, how-

ever, to excite and increase the noise and tumult, by opprobrious and insulting language.

With such partizans, who could support the managers? I, therefore, with a crowd of others, in disgust, remained passive, leaving them to the support of their brutal and unchristian colleagues.

I have ever been a friend to the drama, and should lament if its labours were not amply rewarded; that reward, however, mainly and justly depends on the conduct of the managers towards the public, whose countenance they deserve for ever to lose, if they attempt coercive measures, involving the ruin and destruction of their friends.

I feel it, therefore, a duty I owe to the public and myself to call upon the proprietors to avow or disavow the fact of the Jews having been their hirelings, instructed to support their interest by violence. If no notice is taken of this letter, the fact must necessarily be admitted, and the public will then be able to appreciate the value, which the managers set upon the lives and welfare of their friends.

A FRIEND TO THE NEW PRICES.

Oct. 7, 1809.

No. 50.—*Humourous Hand-bill circulated through the House on Wednesday, Oct. 11, 1809.*

NEW THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

This present Wednesday, Oct. 11, 1809, will be presented, by an entire new company of performers, and not acted these sixty years, a tragi-comedy, called

### HOCKLEY IN THE HOLE;

Principal characters by Messrs. Mendoza, Belcher, Gregson, Cribb, Will. Perry, Harry Lee, Dutch Sam, Solly, Richmond, and Pittone. To conclude with a grand chorus of hired ruffians, fighting Israelites, and Bow-street officers. Preceding the play, Mr. K—e will recite the celebrated popular address called “Set a Beggar on Horseback and he will ride to the Devil.” And at the end of the third act he will sing a new comic song, written and composed expressly for the occasion, entitled,

“ I cring’d and I bow’d till my fortune I made,

“ Then I bullied my masters and knock’d up the trade.”

To which will be added, for the third time, a  
new melo-drama, called

THE BEAR GARDEN, OR JOHN BULL BULLIED;

Performers as before.—The undermentioned prices having been received with the most unbounded and reiterated applause, will be repeated every evening until further notice.—For the better accommodation of the public, and to give greater spirit to the performance, the stage will in future be removed into the centre of the pit. Boxes, 7s. Pit, 4s. Gallery, 2s. Second Gallery, 1s.

TO THE PUBLIC.—Mr. K—e, EVER GRATEFUL to the kind, indulgent, liberal, and “most enlightened public in the world,” for the numerous favours himself and family have been in the habit of receiving for these last 25 years, and, ANXIOUS ONLY FOR THEIR AMUSEMENT, begs leave HUMBLY to state that he has engaged the above company of capital performers, at a very considerable expense; and he trusts that also, considering the high price of paper, whole reams of which he is obliged nightly to expend in orders, for the support of the theatre, that those who can pay the small advance of 1s. on the admittance to the boxes, and of 6d. to the pit, will not object to it.

*Vivant Rex et Regina.*

No. 51.—*The following Song was also circulated on the same Evening.*

K. H. AND CO.

In September Jack open'd his mighty fine house,  
Which he built on presumption the public to chouse;  
He it national call'd,—yet his very first prank  
Was t' engage an Italian to take the first rank.

Derry Down.

He next, in his national booth, you all know,  
De-nationaliz'd the very best row;  
Nay, he bullied, and swore to his master, John Bull,  
If you pop your nose there, Sir, that nose we shall pull.

Derry Down.

This JACK such an insolent servant's become,  
That public opinion he treats as a hum;  
Your displeasure and groans he regards as mere trash,  
And he spits in your face as he pockets your cash.

Derry Down.

He raises his price, while he sinks his respect,  
But his prices and boxes alike we'll reject;  
He and his three partners by this time should know,  
We're determin'd to conquer JACK, H—s, and Co.

Derry Down.

They send in their ruffians, who saucily sit  
With their doxies in front seats of boxes and pit;  
With orders to stifle the sense of the town,  
And convince us of error by knocking us down.

Derry Down.

But LEGALLY let us persist, and these elves  
 Will feel all the mischief recoil on themselves.  
 "Persevere" is our motto,—we'll prove to these drones:  
 Now give JACK and his ruffians three resolute groans.  
 Derry Down.

No. 52.—*To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.*

Sir,

As a lover of *impartial* justice, I should be glad to know why the magistrates of Bow-street demand bail to the amount of 800*l.* that is, 400*l.* the offender and 400*l.* his sureties, of such persons as are accused of opposing the proprietors' demands, and accepting, from the author of the "Blind Boy" (accused of riotous conduct in support of the managers) 40*l.* *i. e.* himself 20*l.* and Mr. Brandon (the oath-taking box-keeper) 20*l.*?

I am, Sir,

Lincoln's Inn, Oct. 11.

FAIR JUSTICE.

P. S. By the way, Mr. Brandon *swears*, to his *knowledge*, neither Mr. Kemble nor Mr. Harris knew of the transaction: will he say (or swear) that he and Mr. H. Harris were likewise uninformed?



No. 53. — *To the Editor of the Constitutional Review.*

Sir,

Whilst the endeavours of the people merely tended, in a constitutional manner, to the reduction of the enhanced prices of admission at this theatre, the subject perhaps seemed too inconsiderable to claim your attention ; but, when riot and disorder usurp the place of that dignified yet persevering resistance, which the people should invariably oppose to every imposition attempted to be practised upon them, the subject becomes worthy the notice of the politician, as involving in it the peace, and consequently the happiness, of the people. Although at all times the firm and decided advocate of the rights and liberties of my countrymen, yet I shall enter upon the discussion of this affair with a mind entirely divested of partiality or of prejudice. If the theatre have not a compensation, proportionate to the amount of the capital vested in the concern, or to the risque incurred, it is certainly but just that they should be allowed to advance the prices of admission ; and if the people, in any case, make use of unwarrantable or illegal means to obtain a reduction of these advanced prices, they stand amenable to the laws, and should be punished ac-

cordingly. But if, on the contrary, the proprietors, in this instance, have taken advantage of their's being almost the only theatre to which the people have it now in their power to resort for amusement, if they have acted thus ungenerously to their patrons, there is no name in the vocabulary of abuse strong enough to brand this conduct with opprobrium, no legal means within the ability of the people too powerful to resist such an unwarrantable imposition.

But this contention has now arrived at a crisis which calls imperiously for the mild, yet immediate and decisive, interference of the government.

There can be no effect without the pre-existence of a cause adequate to its production; and the case now under our consideration is not surely an exception to this general rule. But to destroy the effect you must remove that which has produced it; as the first and principal care of the physician is to remove the proximate cause of a disease, without which he is aware that a cure would be impracticable. Here, undoubtedly, I am supposing the advance in price not to be founded in justice. But, if such advance be essentially requisite to the obtaining a fair profit on the vested capital, I should acknowledge that the present opposition of the people is unjust, ungenerous. In either cases, however, the government should interfere. First, if there exist, to the proprietors, an absolute necessity of raising the

prices, because it is a well-known axiom that any attempt of the people to attain an unattainable object is ever productive of the most dreadful consequences; and, secondly, if the proprietors attempt to practise an unwarrantable imposition upon the public; for it is incumbent on government to assert the rights of the people, if they be not in possession of the legal means of doing so themselves. Thus, whether the people or the proprietors be in fault, the government of the country should effectually interfere. I have intended these observations merely as preliminary to my entering more minutely into the consideration of the subject; prior to which, however, it may be necessary to give a concise and correct statement of the leading particulars of the origin and continuance of the dispute in question, so as to preclude the possibility of a subsequent mistake or misconception in your readers.

When the proprietors first announced to the public their intention of opening the theatre, they announced also the addition intended to be made to the prices of admission; nor did they seem to consider it as a boon they were begging of the people, but issued it as a species of dictatorial mandate. They certainly accompanied it with a short address, mentioning that, in consequence of their having been obliged to expend 150,000*l.* upon the building of the new theatre and the preparations for getting up the entertainments of the season, they were under the necessity of thus

raising the prices of admission. This explanation, which was nothing but bare assertion without proof, could not, surely, be considered as satisfactory to the people, and of course the proposition met with their decided opposition the first night of representation. It has been said, in exculpation of the proprietors, that this being *private property*, they had a liberty of charging what prices of admission they chose, without consulting the good sense or convenience of any person; and that, if the people considered the prices too high, they were at liberty to go or remain at home as they should think proper. But this line of argument is extremely puerile, and can be confuted with ease; because, first, theatres in a country under a monarchical form of government can never be considered as private property, but as a great national concern; as a powerful political engine; as a wheel without which the remainder of the state-machinery would be incomplete: in fact, they form an absolutely constituent part of our political system. Thus it is absolutely incumbent on the chief of a monarchy to procure amusements; and if, by patent, they grant an exclusive liberty to any man or set of men to establish such amusements, they should be careful at the same time to have the prices of admission so regulated as to come within the general ability of the people; and, in proportion as the system of government assimilates to despotism, or in the ratio of the burdens of the people, so, in

the same proportion, should this duty of governors be particularly attended to. Besides, the people are not, or at least should not be, dependant upon the caprice of the proprietors of a theatre for their amusements, but the latter are really and abjectively the *servants* of the former; and, like the servant of any tradesman or private person, they cannot raise their *wages* without first consulting their masters, and proving, to their satisfaction, the absolute necessity for the adoption of such a measure. Had Mr. Harris or Mr. Kemble considered their duty in this light (and this is its real and constitutional definition), they surely never would have come forward with bare assertions in support of the advance of prices, but would have laid before the public a clear and correct statement of their receipts and expenses, and have fully proved the inadequacy of their nett profits. But, at length, after the people had exhibited a marked disapprobation of their conduct, they came to a right sense of their duty, and proposed to submit their accounts to the arbitration of five gentlemen of undoubted respectability, and also that these accounts should be subsequently printed for the satisfaction of the public. This was fair, and precisely such conduct as their duty should at first have dictated. The accounts were submitted to those gentlemen, of whose honour I cannot possibly entertain a doubt, and to whose simple award the public would have cheerfully submitted. But, unhappily, that part of the

account, which has been laid before the public, acts in direct contradiction to this award, for it proves the very contrary to the conclusion they have deduced. Now, either the arbitrators had other documents besides those from which they formed their judgment or they had not. If they had, why did not the proprietors submit them also to public inspection? If they had not, I must say that they have deduced a conclusion against evidence. This is not mere assertion, as I shall now adduce irrefutable arguments to prove it.

The following statement has been laid before the public of the receipts and disbursements of the theatre, with the average nett profit, for the last six years; which average profit the proprietors are willing to admit would be a fair calculation of the future profit of the present theatre, were it precisely on the same scale as the former.

Receipts.			Disbursements.		
£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
1803-4	61,682	13 10	Paid	58,926	18 7
1804-5	70,727	9 10	Ditto	81,057	11 6
1805-6	56,065	18 5	Ditto	47,975	2 2
1806-7	68,126	7 5	Ditto	68,391	6 4
1807-8	63,038	14 7	Ditto	62,406	8 3
1808-9	46,342	13 0	Ditto	47,334	10 2
	<u>365,983</u>	<u>17 1</u>		<u>366,091</u>	<u>18 0</u>
Deduct the pay- ments in 6 years	307,912	0 0	Deduct what was drawn out by the proprietors	58,179	18 0
	<u>58,071</u>	<u>17 1</u>		<u>307,912</u>	<u>0 0</u>
Deduct outstand- ing debts	8000	0 0	Paid in 6 years	307,912	0 0
Profit divide by 6	50,071	17 1	Errors excepted.		
Average profit	8,345	6 2			

Thus it is acknowledged that £8345 : 6 : 2 would be the nett profit of the present theatre, were it on the same scale as the former. But this theatre is not on the *same* scale as the former, but on a much greater; inasmuch, as the private boxes yield much more than they would, were they open to the public. This is easily proved. A fair average of the annual receipts of the house is £60,000; about one third of which is produced by the boxes. If then this £20,000, the produce of the boxes, be divided by 4, (the number of the tiers) the product will be £5,000; which is the real average value of each tier of boxes, if left open to the public. But the tier of private boxes is now let for the annual sum of £11,300, which is £6,300 more than they would bring, if the theatre were on the old plan. Add this to the £8,345 : 6 : 2 already mentioned, and the probable future profits of the present theatre, will appear to amount to £14,645 6 : 2.

The entire sum, which they have expended upon the theatre is £150,000, of which £75,000 is their own capital; the other £75,000 is raised by way of annuity upon the theatre, for which the proprietors pay 5 per cent. per annum. Were this latter a sum of money which the proprietors had borrowed, and for which they had rendered themselves accountable, it should certainly be computed as capital, and the annual distribution of profits should be made on the gross sum of

£150,000. But this is not the case. The money has been raised by annuity, for which the annuitants have only a lieu upon the property, while that property remains in existence, but for which the proprietors are not, by any means, responsible. Thus then, will this calculation stand :

	£.	s.	d.
Annual amount of the nett profits.....	14,645	6	2
Deduct five per cent on £75,000 to be paid to the annuitants.....	3,750	0	0
Remains a nett profit of.....	10,895	6	2

which, being divided upon a gross capital of £75,000, is  $14\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. Thus then it appears, from the statement of the receipts and expenditure of the late theatre, which have been submitted to the public, that the proprietors would now receive a clear profit on their capital, in the new theatre, of  $14\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. were they merely to charge the old prices of admission; while it is allowed, on every side, that 10 per cent. on their vested capital would be a compensation fully commensurate to the risk.

This is a clear and correct conclusion, from the *data* with which they themselves have furnished us. If the arbitrators have deduced their award from these documents, they must evidently have committed an egregious error; if from others, why then are not these others also submitted to the public? But, until the proprietors disprove those



very documents which their own treasurer has proved upon oath, the public must consider, that, as the proprietors, at the old prices, would receive a nett profit of  $14\frac{1}{2}$  per cent on their capital, an advance in those prices is unwarrantable; and, also, that the attempt at justification of this measure is a blundering imposition upon their understandings.

Having now considered the conduct of the proprietors to the public, I shall next take a review of the conduct of the public to the proprietors.

On the first nights of representation, they opposed, and justly, the imposition practised upon them. In this stage of the business, government certainly should have interfered; for they should have known, that an unorganized body of people, when set in motion for the attainment of an object, acquire an accumulated force, in proportion to the continuance of their unobstructed career; that, in the end, they rush to their purpose with a rapidity irresistible. Nor does the attainment of this object generally arrest their progress; for the intended design, with which they at first offered resistance, often becomes, at this period, but a secondary consideration; and, feeling their own powers, and each becoming confident of the assistance of the other, they at length think themselves adequate to the accomplishment of higher objects, perhaps even to the subversion of the existing government. This is a constituent princi-

ple, an absolute inherent peculiarity, of an unorganized mass of people, in the progressive endeavours at the attainment of any object; 'tis an axiom, the truth of which is evident to every person, who may have made politics his study. In fact, the physical strength of a nation lies, not in the governors, but in the governed; and the latter have only to feel confident of this strength, to be in a condition to subvert the most firmly-established government. What would be the consequences, were this period, to which I have now alluded, unfortunately arrived, and that the hordes of traitors, which infest our country, availed themselves of this opportunity of working upon the passions of the people? Certainly, the inevitable ruin of our liberties, the subversion of our constitution. This is evident; these consequences can be foreseen by the most puerile politician. Therefore, if government should (as it is evident) have interfered in the commencement of this contention, *a fortiori* should they now, when all order is subverted and confusion reigns paramount.

But, at the same time that government represses the disorders of both parties, they should not allow the people to remain the dupes of a crafty imposition. I say the *disorders of both parties*, for it is evident, that the horde of hired ruffians, on the part of the theatre, is the occasion of more riot and disorder than the people themselves. A very natural question here suggests itself. Why

should Messrs. Harris and Kemble arrogate to themselves the right of executing the laws? Are they magistrates? Are their hired ruffians sworn constables? Is there not a sufficient number of police already established to maintain the peace of the city? Either there is, or there is not. If there be, then why should the proprietors send in their myrmidons to do that, to which the magistracy of the city are fully competent? If there be not, can Mr. Harris, or Mr. Kemble, or any other person, act as their substitutes? Certainly not; and it certainly appears strange, that the proprietors of a theatre, who are merely the *servants* of the public, should hire a horde of miscreants, to awe *their very masters* into silence. If Mr. Harris or Mr. Kemble had given the least cool consideration to this affair, I am confident their good sense, their duty, would have suggested a very different treatment of the public; and I can attribute their present line of conduct to nothing, but, perhaps, foolishly following the rash advice of some hot-headed puppy.

I shall now conclude with advising the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre to be satisfied with the nett profit of  $14\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. which they would obtain by the retention of the old prices, and not let their avarice again urge them beyond the bounds of propriety; with cautioning the people against the danger of affording the circumstance of their *abuse* of the liberties they possess,

as a pretext to their governors for a substraction of a part, or an abrogation of the whole of them ; and, lastly, with calling loudly upon the government of the country, to repress those riots and disorders, which are every night exhibited in our theatre, which reflect a disgrace upon the city, and are a libel upon the activity of our police ; but whilst they effectually interfere for this purpose, I would caution them against sacrificing, for its attainment, an *iota* of the rights of their fellow-citizens.

Oct. 11. A. F.

No. 54. — *Letter 1.*

To the Editor of The Times.

Mr. Editor,

As theatrical entertainments form, in all countries, a curious and useful subject of speculation, since they mark the national feelings and character, I flatter myself, that you and your readers will allow me to make a few observations on the newly-erected theatre ; the result of which will be to shew that the “ private boxes,” in that theatre, ought to be removed, and the “ old prices ” of admission restored.

“ The stage I choose, a subject fair and free,  
 ’Tis yours, ’tis mine, ’tis public property.  
 All common exhibitions open lie,  
 For praise or censure to the common eye.”

CHURCHILL.

Among the Romans, in ancient times, the people viewed the entertainments standing: and A. W. 599, a decree of the senate was made, prohibiting any one to make seats for that purpose in the city, or within a mile thereof. At the same time a theatre, which was building, was, by the appointment of the censors, ordered to be pulled down, as a thing hurtful to good morals. Liv. Epist. xlvi. Valer. Max. ii. 4, 3. Afterwards, temporary theatres were occasionally erected. The most splendid was that of M. Æmilius Scaurus, when ædile, which contained 80,000 persons, and was adorned with amazing magnificence, and at an incredible expense. *Plin.* 36. 15. s. 24. Pompey first reared a theatre of hewn stone in his second consulship, which contained 40,000, but, that he might not incur the animadversions of the censors, he dedicated it, as a temple, to Venus. Tacit. 14, 19, &c. There were afterwards several theatres, and in particular that of Marcellus, and of Balbus, near that of Pompey, hence called *Tria Theatra*, the Three Theatres.

The pitch of luxury and debauchery to which

these theatres had arrived, in the days of Horace and Ovid, is astonishing. The former tells us, that "perfumed waters" were scattered through the theatres, and the stage was covered with flowers.

"Crocum floresque perambulet attæ."

Epist. lib. 2. Epist. 1. v. 79.

And Lucretius says the same thing.

"Et cum scenâ croco cilici perfusa recens est."

2, 416.

Ovid avows, that the theatres were the most convenient places for assignations, and that the gallant had there an entire liberty :

"Sed tu præcipue curvis venare theatris,

Hæc loca sunt voto fertilia tuo,

Illic invenies quod ames, quod ludere possis ;

Quodque semel tangas, quodque tenere velis."

From this account, there were no doubt *private boxes*, and convenient apartments adjoining, to retire into ; and the whole presented a scene of vice and indecency ; for, he added :

"Ille locus casti damna pudoris habet."

De Arte Amor. lib. 1.

In the next ages it appears, that complete pro-

fligacy reigned in the theatres, and that they were filled with women of very slight reputation, on which account, Juvenal writes, in his sixth satire,

“ ——— Cuneis an habent spectacula tutis,  
Quod securus amis, quodque inde excerpere possis? ”

Such were the effects of *private boxes*. As for the actors, they, in early times, received a reasonable reward for performing their parts, and those who were most approved received crowns, &c. as at other games. But, afterwards, when the theatre became more magnificent, and the morals of the people more dissolute, no price was thought too great for the performers. Æsop amassed a fortune equal to £160,000, and his living was so expensive, that we are told some of the birds, which appeared at his table, cost near £50; and it is said, that his son, anxious to imitate his extravagance, melted precious stones to drink at his entertainments.

“ Filius Æsopi detractam ex aure Metellæ  
(Scilicet ut decius solidûm exsorberet) aceto  
Diluit invignum baccam. ”

Horat. Sat. lib. 2, 3. v. 240.

But in the age of M. Antoninus, a prince whose moral excellence and universal benevolence have drawn upon him the eyes and admira-

ration of posterity, the theatres and the actors were better managed. He was determined to restrain, if not entirely destroy, licentiousness, and, as the primary step towards that great object, he reformed the theatres, and ordained that players should receive from five to ten gold pieces, but not more. Capitolin. H. In succeeding times, however, luxury and debauchery rose again, and every body, who is the least acquainted with history, knows that the Romans, once the proud masters of the world, fell a sacrifice to their love of plays and other entertainments. That such a fate may never attend this great and glorious kingdom, every sincere lover of it must anxiously pray. But then, in order to prevent it, public morals must be attended to. Let us not run the same course which Rome has run before us; from virtuous industry to wealth, from wealth to luxury, and from luxury to a total degeneracy and loss of virtue. The theatre must be under proper regulations, and not the slightest opportunity afforded to indecency. Our theatres, like those of the Romans, were at first of very sorry structure, and the players we read of, in old poets, at Blackfriars, the Bull and Mouth, and Barbican, not much better than the strollers at a country fair. But *now* the theatre is fitted up in a style of magnificence, and very unfortunately affords those inducements and conveniences to indecency and vice that Ovid speaks



of. Then what may we not expect? In a theatre, every one should be able to see what is passing in every part. A time there was when this could be done, and it may be proper to remark, that the word *theatre* imports that it should be always done. A theatre, *theatrum*, is taken from the Greek word *θεαομαι*,—specto,—I see. I wish the proprietors had remembered this, and I should be happy if they attended, when they were planning their building, to the admirable saying of M. Livius Drusus. When that virtuous man was about to build a house, a celebrated architect applied to him, and offered to construct it so that no one should know what was passing within nor be able to look down upon it. “No,” replied Drusus, with indignation, “but if you have any skill, build my house in that manner, that every body may see what I am doing.” Paterc. lib. 2. c. 14. Fearing that these remarks will occupy more of your valuable columns than may be proper at one time, I beg to defer my observation on the prices of admission till tomorrow, and am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

A CONSTANT READER.

Chelsea, Oct. 11, 1809.

*Letter 2.*

“ Let none presume  
To wear an undeserved dignity.”

Shaks. Mer. Ven. Act 2. Sc. 10.

Mr. Editor,

In my letter of yesterday I endeavoured to point out the impropriety of the private boxes, and to shew the fatal consequences that may be expected if they are not removed: I shall now offer my observations on the prices of admission.

A statement has been laid before the public of the profits of the theatre for a few years past, and the proprietors declare, that their profits are not enough. But why, let me ask, are they not enough? I believe the plain answer will be, not because the public pay an inadequate price for their admission to the theatre, but because some of the players are paid too much for their performances. If report be true, £50 and sometimes £70 are paid to an individual for amusing the public for three or four hours; and the daily prints have shewn, that thousands are amassed by one family in the course of a year, while, (as it was well observed by a gentleman the other evening,) “gallant officers, of liberal education

and sentiments, are fighting the battles of their country at five and seven shillings a day." *Probitas laudatur et alget!*

But, sir, this was not always the case, nor were theatres always such good property as they appear now to be. The truth is that, at this time of day, players are too well paid and too much thought of. They want the restraining hand of another Antonine to bring them to their proper level. Formerly, there were only three learned professions, but now acting is called a *profession*, and we not only hear of the gentlemen of the long robe, but also of the *gentlemen* of the stage. Roscius certainly was a great actor, but I believe that Cicero, with all his friendship for him, would never allow that the stage was a profession, or that the actors were to rank with the bar. Speaking of Roscius, he says, "He was an excellent actor, that he alone seemed worthy to appear upon a stage; but he was a man of so much probity, that he alone should never have appeared there." In our own days, Churchill, no bad judge of these matters, felt highly indignant at the pride and haughtiness of players; and he justly observes what I may now appropriate.

"Doth it not move our anger or our mirth,  
To see these things, the lowest sons of earth,

Presume, with self-sufficient knowledge grac'd,  
 To rule in letters and preside in taste?  
 The town's decisions they no more admit,  
 Themselves alone the arbiters of wit;  
 And scorn the jurisdiction of that court,  
 To which they owe their being and support."

*Apology, 256, &c.*

But that excellent critic was determined to confine them to their proper sphere, and to let the public know their proper value.

"Actors, a venal crew, receive support  
 From public bounty, for the public sport;  
 And where's the mighty difference, tell me where,  
 Betwixt a merry andrew and a play'r."

*Apology, 194, &c.*

Sir, whatever reflections some might think fit to make, I must declare, that the business of plays and shews is a very important matter in relation to states. Though I do not wish to sink the stage below its merits, still I would watch, with unwearied eye, that it did not rise above its value. If any one would know what was the mode of life at Athens, at the æra of its downfall, the historian will inform him, that the Athenians, "*Non ut olim in classum exercitusque, sed in dies festos apparatusque ludorum reditus publicos effundunt,*" &c.; that is, "The funds, designed for their forces by sea and land, were con-

sumed in sports and festivals ; the money due to seamen and the soldiers distributed among idle citizens. A soft voluptuous life dispirited their hearts ; valour and the art of war were in no esteem ; their great commanders neglected, and *all their favours were conferred upon the most excellent actors.*" Justin, lib. 2. cap. 9.

It is a melancholy case, when a nation has arrived at this extravagant fondness for plays, and the love of ease and pleasure stifles that of glory and independence. The best way to prevent such a calamity will be to make less of players ; to pay them less, and to praise them less. Let them not arrogate to themselves "to rule in letters and preside in taste," and let us inform them, that, though they act the part of kings and queens, and converse with gods and goddesses, they must be awoke from their golden dream, if

— "O'erweening of their little skill,  
When they have left the stage, they're actors still."

Churchill, whose words these are, would not suffer such conduct before, and it becomes our duty not to suffer it now. I remember an anecdote of the pride and affectation of Garrick, related by Mr. Boswell, in his very entertaining life of Doctor Johnson. He says, "Nor could Johnson patiently endure to hear, that such re-

spect as he thought due only to higher intellectual qualities should be bestowed on men of slighter though perhaps more amusing talents. I told him that, one morning, when I went to breakfast with Garrick, who was very vain of his intimacy with Lord Camden, he accosted me thus; 'Pray now did you, did you meet a little lawyer turning the corner, eh?' 'No, sir,' said I, 'pray what do you mean by the question?' 'Why,' replied Garrick, with an affected indifference, yet as if standing on tiptoe, 'Lord Camden has this moment left me; we have had a long walk together,—Johnson:' "Well, sir; Garrick talked very properly; Lord Camden *was a little lawyer* to be associating so familiarly with a player."

Upon the whole, sir, I am clearly of opinion, that there is no sufficient reason for raising the price of admission to the theatre. There are only a few places licenced by government for the public amusement, and the public expect to be admitted upon reasonable terms. Let not exorbitant sums be paid to the players, and then the "old prices" will be a very sufficient remuneration to the proprietors. Aware of the value of your paper, I would here close my letter, but I cannot do so without expressing one word of indignation at the conduct of those who have sent *fighters* into the theatre to stifle the public voice. This is settling the dispute with a ven-

geance! But I would advise those who may have been concerned in this affair to cast about in their minds what may be the consequences. In all countries, and in all ages, the people have had a privilege to express their approbation and disapprobation at public representations. It was so in the Greek, it was so in the Roman, theatres; and Horace compares the noise which the people made on these occasions to the raging of the sea :

“ Nam quæ pervincere voces  
Evaluere sonum referunt quem nostra theatra,  
Garganum mugire putes nemus, aut mare Tuscum.”

Epist. lib. 2. ep. 1. 200.

Mr. Churchill says :

“ To clap or hiss all have an equal claim,  
The cobbler's and his lordship's right the same;  
All join for *their subsistence*; all expect  
Free leave to praise their worth, their faults correct.”

*Apology*, 196.

I am, Mr. Editor, &c. &c.

A CONSTANT READER.

Chelsea, Oct. 12, 1809.

No. 55.—*Projectors' Advertisement.*

(Morning Chronicle, October 12.)

NATIONAL SUBSCRIPTION THEATRE.

Notice is hereby given, that application will be made, in the next session of parliament, for leave to bring in a bill for erecting a theatre in the metropolis, to be called The National Subscription Theatre.

By order of a select committee of Subscribers,

HENRY FRY, Solicitor.

CRUCHLEY and FRY,

14, John Street, Bedford-Row.

No. 56.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

In your paper of this day, it is asserted, "that Mr. James Brandon\* declared, on oath, that, to his knowledge, no orders for admission to Covent Garden Theatre had been issued by Mr. Kemble to Daniel Mendoza and Dutch Sam; and, that, *if such orders had been issued*, he

\* See Bow-Street Proceedings, &c.



must, of necessity, have known it." I, therefore, trouble you with the following facts:—a tradesman, with whom I am acquainted, came into a shop where I was, about 2 o'clock this day, and shewed two double orders for the pit. He said, they had been given to him by Daniel Mendoza, the prize-fighting Jew, who cut them from a sheet of paper, of which he had two, covered with these orders for the boxes and pit; that Dutch Sam was present, and boasted of his exploits in breaking the peace, and of the mischief he had done to many of his Majesty's subjects, at the theatre last night. Mendoza then offered to furnish any number of orders to persons who would make a draw in favour of the managers. I requested one of these orders, which had been indorsed by Mendoza, in his presence. with the letter D on the back; he then wrote me an order to Mendoza for a few more. I read the note,\* of which I inclose a

\*" Mr. Mendoza,

Wednesday Noon, Oct. 11, 1809.

Having met a few friends, who wish to assist you in your laudable endeavours this evening, I shall feel obliged, if you will send, by the bearer, a few orders for the pit and boxes. Those you gave me I have given away to some staunch fellows, who are determined to applaud, in spite of the rattle and horn-cattle.

Your's,

---

Mr. D. Mendoza,

Royal-Oak, Whitechapel-Road."

copy, to a messenger, and then dispatched him to Mendoza. He has just returned with one double order, and Mr. Mendoza's compliments to the gentleman,—“ he was very sorry he had not taken more in the morning, for then he had offered him as many as he pleased ; his son was then gone to the theatre, and if the messenger would wait till he returned, he should have as many as he wished.”

I am, sir, &c.

JAMES POWELL.

6, Grove-Place, Camden-Town,

10th Oct. 1809.

No. 57.—*On the misplacing one of the Ornaments  
in Covent Garden Theatre.*

(Morning Chronicle, Oct. 14.)

SMIRKE and KEMBLE we see,

In their fondness for show,

Have painted a KEY\*

On the boxes below.

To make all agree,

With their scheme for snug love,

They should place this same KEY

On the boxes *above*.

BOW-WOW.

\* The fronts of the lower boxes are covered with the Greek device called a KEY.

ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING.

Kemble, you say, and Mr. Smirke,  
To shew their true design,  
Upon their *up-stairs* shameful work,  
Should place the same *key* line.

You're wrong, Bow Wow, the wights have tried  
To spare no hints from sin ;  
*Below*, the KEY is shewn *out-side*—  
*Above*, 'tis shewn *within*.

MEW-MEW.

No. 58.—*Song. A New History of the Stage  
to an Old Tune.*

(Morning Chronicle, Oct 14,)

When our illustrious Shakespeare wrote, and London was not  
half so large,  
Nineteen theatres strove t'attract our ancestors at moderate charge,  
Yet Shakespeare's fortune soon was made, and, if prudent, might  
have been old Ben's,  
While sixpenny pits induc'd other wits, to exercise their famous  
pens.  
Oh, moderation ! moderation ! commendable moderation !

Think on't then, that good Queen Bess, and twenty ladies of her  
court,  
For a single guinea could behold a whole night's histrionic sport,

While Sir Francis Drake, Will. Sidney, Wat. Raleigh, and four  
other knights,  
For a seven-shilling-piece, in Shakespeare's boxes, might enjoy his  
noblest flights.

Oh, moderation! &c.

The critics, with rich mental feasts were treated then, we all  
must know ;

Conceive the rapture, on first night, of Hamlet, Richard, Pros-  
pero !

And those sixpenny pits, and shilling boxes, the world must have  
a knowledge, sir,

Enabled a player to build a booth—oh, no!—but Dulwich Col-  
lege, sir.

Oh, moderation, &c.

Some prigs, more nice than wise, may shrug, and, with con-  
tracted phizzes,

Protest, such booths as Shakespeare own'd would now be voted  
quizzes.

The outside might be plain, 'tis true, but rich the treat interior,  
When, at prices low, Ben. Will. and Co. delighted every hearer.

Oh, moderation! &c.

But, in these modern times, alas! as vile events inform us,  
The managers can only think of building piles enormous ;  
And, when they've wasted all their cash, exhausted all devices,  
To raise the wind, they damn the town, and box us for " New  
Prices."

Oh, alteration! alteration! most impudent alteration!

Had Kemble, forty years ago, when Garrick shone resplendent,  
An actor been, we'd ne'er have seen him principal, depend on't,  
Then Barry, Mossop, Ross, and Digges, the critics cheer'd with  
spirit ;

But Kemble bounded into place, on th'extinction of such merit.

Oh, alteration! &c.

At the theatre royal, Bow-street, the managers, to treat us,  
Have engaged the Bow-street magistrates, and their *posse comitatus*.  
The classic Addison approv'd the gallery trunkmaker's thunder,  
But pedant Kemble swears he'll make the *vox populi* knock under.  
Oh, alteration! &c.

But if these Bow-street managers, and magistrates, and Hebrews,  
Persist to crush the public will, while riotously they bruize;  
Let's legally each night proceed to check acts so notorious,  
And, in the end, no doubt, we'll gain a victory most glorious!  
Oh, alteration! &c.

No. 59.—*Letter to the Managers of Covent Garden Theatre.*

(Morning Chronicle, 15th Oct. 1809.)

Gentlemen,

I observed, by this day's paper, that a person, named Andrews, whom I have for some time past employed, was taken up for distributing hand-bills last night, in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden, (given to him by an unknown person,) charging the managers with furnishing Mendoza, the fighting Jew, with orders, &c. &c. I, by no means, wish to defend Andrews, as I am an enemy to all *anonymous* attacks: but, as far as relates to Mendoza, I must

remark, that I saw him myself, and can bring twenty respectable persons, who also saw him, to prove that Mendoza, for several days past, distributed a considerable number of orders\* for admission to Covent Garden Theatre, to such persons as were more likely to break than keep the peace.

I am, &c. &c.

T. BISH,

4, Cornhill.

No. 60.—*To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.*

Sir,

You will oblige the public by inserting the following facts in your paper:—

That the performers of Covent Garden Theatre do not (as Mr. Kemble has asserted) benefit by the rise on the prices of admission to the new theatre.

That the performers did not benefit by the rise in 1797.

That the lowest salary, sixty years ago, was twenty shillings per week, and so it still remains.

\* The names of the persons who signed the orders may be known, if required.

If these are not (as the hireling *Post* says) "damning facts," may I be

BLEST.

38, Upper John-Street,

15th Oct. 1809.

P. S.—I do not mean to assert that none of the performers benefit by it; but, I believe, none beyond Mr. Kemble's own family.

No. 61.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

The report of proceedings against me, at Bow-Street, which appeared in the newspapers of Friday last, has induced me to send you this letter. A friend of mine had agreed to give a ticket-porter five shillings for an order of admission for two to the boxes of Covent Garden Theatre. The order was signed, H. Harris. This, my friend will verify on oath, if required, and bring forward the man he had it of; and several respectable gentlemen, who saw the order. By this order I was admitted, with my friend. Here I, in common with many others in different parts of the house, expressed my disapprobation; but carefully avoided every act which I considered possible to be construed into a breach of the peace. During the after-piece, five or six fellows seized me in the most savage manner, and, though I

made not the least resistance, dragged me, with the greatest violence, to Bow-Street. After the evidence given, which, in most respects, was false, the magistrate (I believe, Mr. Read) told me I must find bail. A gentleman, who happened to be in the office by accident, told the magistrate, he knew me to be a respectable person, and he had no objection to be my bail. The magistrate said, he must have bail from two persons, in £250 each. This gentleman then offered to give bail himself in £500, for my appearance at the quarter-sessions, which the magistrate refused. The gentleman then (of whose responsibility for the money the magistrate could have been satisfactorily informed, by one of his own officers) offered to be bail in £1,000, for my appearance at the office in the morning. This was also refused. I was then ordered away, and taken to the Brown Bear public-house, in Bow-Street, and put into a room, crowded with thief-takers. Here, soon after, an order was brought from Mr. Graham, for my commitment to Tothill-fields Bridewell. I was asked, whether I would walk or ride. On my saying, I would willingly walk, I was told that my hands must then be tried. I, therefore, went in a coach. On my arrival at the prison I was told I might have a bed for a shilling, which I preferred giving, to lying on a bare floor, which I must otherwise have done. I was then conducted, in company with two others, to a room, with iron



bars to the windows, where I was locked up till about eight next morning. When I came down into the yard, the jailor informed me, I must pay five shillings for the indulgence of sitting in a room, or else be confined in a place among vagrants, without fire, table, chairs, or any other convenience. Happily, my means allowed me to choose the best. On Thursday (the same) morning, my friends accompanied me to Bow-Street, where I was admitted to bail, being the first that was released from confinement. Whilst in the office, on Wednesday evening, a gentleman, who wished to see me, in case I wanted to send to my friends, was refused admittance, and rudely told to go away about his business.

SAMUEL FRAMPTON STALLARD.

76, West Smithfield.

No. 62.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

In answer to the several letters in your paper, signed by T. BISH and others, I beg leave to state, that I was in the pit during the performance on Tuesday and Wednesday last, at Covent Garden Theatre: I certainly saw on those nights (as I have seen before) many Jews among the audience, who, I pledge myself, Mr. Editor, not only were most peaceably inclined,

but greatly enjoyed the *novel* entertainment of hearing the actor, till the half-price gentry rushed in, when such a scene of disgraceful confusion ensued, that I, with others, exclaimed, "*Which is the Merchant, and which the Jew?*" But I ask you, Mr. Editor, whether those disgraceful riots, were not more violent before the cry of "Mad Dog," was raised against the Jews? The elegant new theatre was damaged to the amount of 1,000*l.* actors and actresses were pelted on the stage, and the audience of all ranks, were most indecently insulted. In short, Mr. Editor, I am so wearied of this nightly uproar, that only restore order and tranquillity in the play-house, and, for my part, I little care whether it be effected by a Jew or a Gentile.

AN AUDITOR.

15th Oct. 1809.

No. 63.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

As I see my name mentioned in your paper, as well as several others, as having been at Covent Garden, on Friday night, and what happened there (respecting myself) misstated in all; I trust to your usual candour, to insert the fact as it was.

I went into the pit, at the beginning of the farce, and remained till it was over. When the farce was concluded, a man in the boxes, *dressed*

like a gentleman, vociferated "Turn out BERKLEY CRAVEN," which he repeated about twenty times. As no other person seemed to have the same objection to me that he had, I requested him to come and do it himself; on which (for an instant) he was quiet, but soon repeated the same cry, "Turn out BERKLEY CRAVEN." I then went as near him as I could, and inquired the cause of his apparent enmity; he replied, "You have disgraced yourself:" I then gave him the lie direct. "You lie," is (I must confess) by no means a polite phrase; but, when a man is somewhat stinted for time and a patient hearing, it certainly saves a world of trouble.

A gentleman, standing behind me, (whom I did not know,) said there was a paragraph in your paper of Friday, insinuating that I had dragged a man to Bow-Street, the night before. I had not the pleasure of reading your Friday's paper; but assure you that I never called in legal interference to stifle any man's free opinion, or ever was at the office in Bow-Street, in the course of my life. If the proprietors of Covent Garden have been forced to call in legal aid, to protect their property, I am sorry both for the cause and the effect.

To the tearing of placards (as mentioned in your paper of yesterday) I readily plead guilty; I go to the theatre to *hear* the play, and surely, if one man has a right to erect a placard, to create

a disturbance, another man has a right to pull it down, to prevent the wished-for disturbance being created. My opinion, on this subject, cannot be of any consequence to the public ; but, as my name has been mentioned, in most of the Saturday's papers, I avow that, (since Catalani has been with-drawn, and the accounts of the concern submitted to a most respectable committee,) I heartily wish the proprietors every possible success.

I am, sir, with many apologies, for taking up so much of your time, your obedient, humble, servant,

BERKLEY CRAVEN.

Newmarket, Sunday, 15th Oct.

No. 64.—*Hand-bill circulated in the Theatre on the Night of the 16th October.*

Last Night of Performance at the NEW PRICES.

NEW THEATRE, COVENT GARDEN.

This evening will be presented, for the last time, an operatic farce, in one act, called

### IMPOSITION.

Avarice,	Mr. KEMBLE !
Pride,	Mr. KEMBLE !!
Affectation,	Mr. KEMBLE !!!
Insolence,	Mr. KEMBLE !!!!

Being his last appearance before the public.

Foolhardy,	Mr. HARRIS.
Noodle, Doodle, &c.	THE OTHER PROPRIETORS.
Oath-Taker,	JEMMY BOX-OFFICE.

Informers. — Long Gibbons, Count Snip, of Castle-street, the Blind Boy, the Battersea Fields Baron, &c. &c.

New Price, as Old Prices (with the song of “Many a true word is spoken in jest”) Bully Raymond.

Between the scenes,—Slight of hand and leger-demain tricks by the proprietors.

After which, as an interlude, — RAISING THE WIND, otherwise RAISING THE DEVIL, OF DIDDLER DIDDLED.

Including the bilking scene between Diddler and Sam.

Diddler, Mr. KEMBLE. “You hav’n’t got such a thing as eighteen-pence about you, have you?”

Sam. JOHN BULL. “Yes, and I mean to keep it about me, do you see?”

In the course of the interlude, Mr. Kemble will recite, as on a former equally suitable occasion, when it was received with unbounded approbation and applause by a highly gratified audience, his celebrated address of

“WHAT DO YOU WANT?”

Immediately following the interlude will be presented, for the benefit of the proprietors, the last scene in the farce of

THE CONFEDERATES.

Being a capital deception by the following inimitable performers hired for the occasion:— Le Chevalier ap-Rice, Le Sieur Thomaso Le Plume, Gallows Black Jack, of the Old Bailey, M. Witless, from Threadneedle-Street, and Mynheer Pharisee Ankerstill, the well-known public subscription actor.

The former scenes of the Confederates are acted, in conjunction with the proprietors, in private, behind the curtain, for the benefit of the public.

Afterwards will be performed, for the last time, the first act of a grand unfinished tragic ballet of action, called

JOHN OX,

Or the cruel attempt to despoil John Bull of his noble parts.

The whole being arranged under the management of Mr. JEW KEMBLE.

The representation will take place in the audience-part of the house, the following most numerous corps de ballet being distributed in the boxes, pit, and galleries, for that purpose.

First Drover—DANIEL MENDOZA, at the head of 150 fighting Jews and hired bruisers, as constables.

Second Drover—BILL SOAMES, with his gang of housebreakers and pickpockets, as keepers of the peace.

Third Drover—The Fighting Waterman, leading a band of desperados and ruffians in the dresses of Bow-street officers.

Grand Mob of Drovers—By all the thieves, bullies, and blackguards of the metropolis that can be prevailed on by the “managers orders” to perform.

Slaughtermen—Parson Ayres, Mr. Ede, Mr. M'Blarney, &c. &c.

Head Slaughterman—Mr. Graman, burnt out from the Theatre Royal Drury-lane.

The proprietors, after various and unsuccessful attempts, not having it in their power to conclude the above striking representation agreeable to their wishes, it will be withdrawn; and, this night will be presented, the celebrated one-act piece (revived expressly for the occasion) of

A LONG PULL, A STRONG PULL, AND A PULL ALL  
TOGETHER;

As introductory to an entirely new national drama, called,

THE SEQUEL, OR JOHN BULL VICTORIOUS.

In which the part of John Bull will be performed (after an absence of several years) by the public.

Boxes, 7s. Pit, 4s. Gallery, 2s. Upper Gallery, 1s.

To-morrow evening the OLD PRICES will be taken as usual.

No. 65.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

“ Fra si contrari venti, in frale barca,  
Mi trovo in alto mar senza governo.”

PETRARCA.

Sir,

You are so partial to the “audi alteram partem,” when any public measure is discussed, that I am induced to trouble you with the following observations on the contest now existing between the public and the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre.

I am ready to allow that the proprietors are deserving of praise and commendation for the erection of so costly a theatre. I am ready to allow that the policy of the undertaking, rather for the advantage and utility of the public than for any private lucre or self-interested motives: and, what may still farther be advanced in favour of the undertaking, I am ready to concede, that when so large a capital as 150,000*l.* is embarked



in so precarious and hazardous a concern, a proportionable interest or yearly profit should be expected; for it cannot be denied that the contingencies of a playhouse are incalculable; and whether the public will allow a Betty or a Catalani to appear on the stage, may frequently be the cause that many thousands of pounds may immediately be gained or lost to the concern. When discordant elements are to be contended with and overcome, there naturally arises an expectation of profit adequate to the danger. But, whatever may have been the views of the proprietors, prior to the opening of the theatre, I do not think that their conduct has since been marked and regulated by that proper candour and decorum that otherwise might have diverted the indignation of the public. Some concessions have been made after a long pause, but in my estimation they are not of much value or importance. Madame Catalani has agreed to sing elsewhere; and the committee, appointed to examine the affairs of Covent Garden Theatre, after, I have no doubt, a thoroughly sufficient investigation of the accounts submitted to them, have delivered as their opinion, "that the future profit of the new theatre, at the proposed advance in the prices of admission, will amount to only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. per annum upon the capital expended on the theatre, if the same be insured." Now I am anxious to know of what *ingredients this capital* of 150,000*l.*

is composed? If the public are to pay for the incumbrances of the theatre,—if an exorbitant sum, expended for the purchase of the *patent*, is to be accounted as part of this capital, I do not hesitate to declare it as my opinion, that it had been better if the late theatre had rested in its ashes, and not, phoenix-like, appeared again to the public for the purposes of imposition.

A distinction should be made, I conceive, between commodities, whether they are bought for public utility and amusement, or for private convenience. As an individual, I may be inclined to pay more than the market-price for any article that is offered for sale; but I do not consider, by way of illustrating my meaning, if a person chose to expend an enormous sum, in the purchase of the tolls of a bridge or of a turnpike-gate, or of a market or canal, or any other convenience conducive to the ease and comfort of the public, that therefore the toll is to be raised for passing the bridge, or the impost increased at the turnpike-gate, or that my butcher's meat, or the freight of my coals is to cost a greater sum, or otherwise that I am to suffer for the imprudent speculations of other persons.

I should like that the public amusements should be moderate and reasonable, and that

“Non cuivis homini contingit adire Corinthum,”

should not be applicable to the *private boxes*. A

monopoly too is *primâ facie* evidence of the cause of the new prices, and this lately was the cause of the rise on Spanish wool: as that speculation failed, it may also happen that the proprietors will be obliged ultimately to lower their prices.

Commerce, and its companions, riches and luxury,—war, and its inevitable companion, most oppressive taxation, must necessarily raise the price of every article for building or ornament, as well as for consumption; but these are by no means sufficient data to allay the popular clamour. Let there be a fair statement of the component parts of the *capital* expressed to be laid out in the erection and completion of the theatre, let there be a cessation of that ungentlemanly and illiberal attempt to subdue the popular ferment by means of force and violence, and by metamorphosing the seat of the critics into an arena for prize-fighters; let the frank and unprejudiced letter of Mr. B—h be fully explained (inserted in your valuable paper of Thursday last), and the names of the persons who have authorized the hiring of these armed ruffians to be brought to light: and the vengeance and execration of the public for such foul and detestable work may be appeased, the past may be forgotten, and the new prices acceded to and admitted.

CANDIDUS.

*Inner Temple, Oct. 16.*

No. 66.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

Oct. 16, 1809.

I read, with great eagerness, the letter of your correspondent, signed “A Constant Reader,” in hopes that its reference to the ancients would have given us a warning, not to be lulled into the fatal delusion, into the vain hope of seeing the theatre what it never was, what it never will be, a school of morals. The most enlightened and virtuous amongst the heathen world would not suffer the theatre under any form, and truly wise was this determination; they foresaw what has since come to pass, viz. the corruption of morals, and consequently the ruin of those nations. Those “Polished nations whose short-sighted policy gave protection to the stage, under the idea of “enlightening and meliorating” the people. (Vide Morn. Chron. few days past.) The happy influence of Christianity is the only foundation whereon to build the melioration of our nature, the stability of all government, and consequently the peace and prosperity of nations. Christianity has rendered those who live up to its doctrines enlightened in the true meaning of the word, and let it not be said of us, “that the light shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not;” “but

let us walk as children of this light." The stage has proved, and will ever prove, subversive of all order, peace, and purity of morals, and, consequently, of Christianity itself; and, when our religion is gone, vain is the hope that the state and nation will survive. We need not go very far back to be convinced of this truth. Look to that country whose impious ruler is a scourge, in the hand of an avenging God, to punish those who despise his righteous laws; see the effect produced in that apostate land. At the time of the revolution, twenty-six theatres existed in Paris; and a late writer has observed, that one of these conclusions must be deduced from the fact; either that the corruption of the people cherished the theatres, or that the theatres produced the spirit of the times. In what manner they "enlightened" the people, we know, alas! too well. They plunged the nation into worse than heathen darkness; darkness which I hope may never be "felt" in this our favoured land. The enlightened heathens may, however, now be our monitors. If they prohibited the stage, (under any form,) as tending to corrupt the morals of the people, shall a Christian nation uphold and encourage such an entertainment? Shall Christians, who are commanded to purify their hearts, and are forbidden to indulge in the least impurity of thought; Shall these, I ask, revel in licentiousness and debauchery? Shall these associate,

or encourage, by their presence; the most dissolute of both sexes? Let those, who have cast off all fear of God, "whose glory is in their shame," who, "being past feeling, have given themselves up to lasciviousness, and to work all uncleanness with greediness," let those frequent the theatre; they act consistently; but let no one who enters that sink of impurity assume the name of a Christian, nor dare to lift up the same heart that has been entertained with all manner of lewdness to that Being of infinite purity, "to whom all hearts are open, and from whom no secrets are hid." Such inconsistency we find too common; and I am persuaded that many, otherwise virtuous people, attend the theatre, because they are told it is an innocent recreation; not from a conviction that it has been proved innocent, for I fear too many have not inquired into it at all. They are told, that it affords *an elegant, moral, and enlightening, entertainment, and may preserve them from a vicious recourse to gin and methodism.* (Vide Morning Chronicle, as above.) Let not a reflecting people be deceived by those who call evil good and good evil. Let us not be deterred by names; but let us evince ourselves true Christians in thought, word, and deed. Let it be remembered, that the church, in its purest times, in times free from superstition and enthusiasm, had such an abhorrence of the theatre, and such an opinion of the lives of the

performers, that they did not permit them to partake of the Lord's supper until they repented and renounced such an unchristian profession. Be it remembered, too, that a venerable prelate, (Archbishop Tillotson,) has called the theatre, the "Devil's Chapel:" we, therefore, who are of the same established church of this country, ought not, in censuring the stage, to fear the imputation of methodism. I hope, sir, that the clergy of our establishment will, on the ensuing day of thanksgiving, admonish their respective flocks, and declare to them their opinion of the consistency of theatrical entertainment with the purity of our most holy religion. I give this hint with the utmost deference, assured that their zeal will equal the perseverance of those who espouse the cause of blasphemy and profaneness. Your correspondent prays that the fate of those nations, which have been ruined, by this species of entertainment, may not be ours. Let us, then, take warning by them; for, if we follow their example, our doom will be certain. The dreadful judgments of the almighty have, for some years past, been most strikingly abroad on the earth. To what is this owing? undoubtedly to the wickedness of men, for "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." Let us, then, fear to provoke the Lord of Hosts. His arm is yet visible in surrounding nations; and, unless we repent, what can we expect, but,

instead of the mercies with which we have been visited, his vengeance and fury will be poured out upon us, an ungrateful and rebellious people? What time can be more appropriate for considering our ways than now, that we feel sensible of divine providence, in lengthening the days of an universally revered and beloved monarch, and granting him to reign over us, during a term of years not often equalled? May he of his mercy continue this blessing to us, and let us not, by our impieties, bring down the grey hairs of our sovereign with sorrow to the grave! Let us with dutiful loyalty give honours to our ancient king; and let us, at the same time, remember, as a Christian people, (the only true patriots,) to give glory by our obedience to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

A Layman of the Church of Christ,  
as established according to the  
laws of this realm.

No. 67.—*To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.*

Sir,

The nature of my professional pursuits is such that, if I were disposed to reply to the numerous falsehoods, and repeated misrepresentations of the conduct I have pursued, in



the scene of riot and confusion, that nightly takes place in our theatre, my time is too much engaged to admit of it; but there are accusations in your paper of last week, of such serious import to my character, that render it impossible I should remain silent any longer. I am accused of having taken a FALSE OATH, and Mr. Bish's letter is intended to prove it. Now, sir, it becomes necessary that I should first state the substance of the printed bills, that induced me to have their distributor taken up, and my subsequent deposition at Bow-Street.

My deposition states this: "*That as far as my knowledge goes, the matter therein contained is untrue;*" and, as the printed bill is a notorious falsehood from beginning to end, I should be wanting in that duty I owe to my employers, if I had not made an affidavit to that effect. I rest assured, the public will feel satisfied with this public explanation, and excuse me from troubling them with any more observations on the subject.

J. BRANDON.

Theatre Royal, Covent Garden,

17th Oct.



No. 68.—*To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.*

Sir,

The proprietors have been repeatedly called upon, *without effect*, to lay the particulars of their expenditure before the public; this naturally creates suspicion; without, however, calling upon them to expose the whole of their theatrical management, I will just beg leave to ask two or three plain questions, to which, I think, the public have a right to expect plain answers. Does not Mr. Harris, sen. receive, after the rate of £2,000 per annum, out of the nightly produce of the theatre, or some other very considerable sum? Does not his son receive £1,000, in the same manner? Do not their names appear on the regular pay-list of the theatre; and are not the proportions of those sums paid out of the nightly receipts, in the same manner as the salaries of actors, or any other expenditure on account of the house? Should these questions be answered in the affirmative, it will, I think, be evident, that those sums were not carried to the account of profits, as they ought to have been, but are considered as part of the expenses of the theatre: upon what principle, I am at a loss to conjecture; for, whatever pecuniary advantage the proprietors receive, either by way of nightly payments, or of

a general balance at the end of the season, or from both sources, it ought, certainly, to be termed profit, as arising from the concern. It may, perhaps, be said, that these nightly deductions are considered as remunerations to the proprietors for the trouble they take in managing the concern of the theatre. Although I have, myself, had a peep behind the curtain, and know something of the mysteries of these matters; yet I will not take upon me to appreciate the labours of those gentlemen, but would still contend that, in whatever shape the proprietors receive money from the theatre, it must be considered as profit, and ought to have been introduced as such, into the accounts lately submitted to the public.

As to the plea of compensation, for the trouble of proprietors, as general managers, it appears so absurd as scarcely to require an answer; because, every man, who embarks in a speculation, ought to exert a reasonable degree of diligence in superintending it; and I will ask, if the commissioners of the property-tax would suffer a tradesman, in estimating his income, to deduct from his profits any sum, by way of compensation to himself for conducting the business,

I am, sir, &c.

INVESTIGATOR.

18th Oct, 1809.

No. 69.—*Parody on "God save the King," circulated in the Theatre on the Night of Oct. 18.*

NATIONAL AIR.

*Humbly submitted to the Placarding-Committee.*

God save great Johnny Bull,

Long live our noble Bull,

God save John Bull.

Send him victorious,

Loud and uproarious,

With lungs like Boreas.

God save John Bull,

O Johnny Bull be true,

Oppose the prices new,

And make them fall;

Curse K——'s politics,

Frustrate his knavish tricks,

On thee our hopes we fix.

Confound them all,

No private boxes let

Intriguing ladies get;

Thy right John Bull,

From little pigeon-holes

Defend us jolly souls;

And we will sing, by goles,

God save John Bull.

No. 70.—*To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.*

Sir,

The public will not be deceived by such statements as that of Mr. Brandon; for, although he has *literally* sworn the truth, the object evidently is to persuade the public that orders have not been issued to Mendoza, for the purpose stated in the bill; and I am tempted to ask, if the ruffians had not had free admissions, and something more weighty added thereto, how did it happen, that they suddenly collected together, not only to support the proprietors, in their attempted imposition, but actually to beat every person they could get at, who manifested disapprobation, and that to for several successive nights? And how it has happened that, since the publication of Mr. Bish's and my letter, they have so suddenly ceased their attendance? Was it out of pure love to Messrs. Harris and Kemble that the miscreants in a body committed their outrage? The thing is impossible.

On the 11th instant, the account of the hand-bill, and Mr. Brandon's oath, appeared in your paper, and, on the same day, I sent you my former letter, stating, that a person shewed me two *double pit-orders*, which Mendoza cut from a sheet of paper, and indorsed in his presence; the order

brought by the messenger was likewise indorsed by Mendoza, and shall be produced when necessary. With one of the orders, Mr. Ridley, who received it from Mendoza, went, with another gentleman, into the theatre; with the other order (brought from Mendoza by Mr. Ridley) I, with a friend, was likewise admitted, and the door-keeper, on the order being presented, carefully examined the indorsement. Now, sir, it may be said, that the managers do not *issue these orders*, which is literally true; for, Mr. Harris, jun. who wrote them, is not a manager! but, it is also literally true, that persons were allowed to issue orders, by *hundreds*, to Mendoza, and that they were distributed in the manner, and used for the purposes, described in the hand-bill.

As I cannot condense this letter, I shall trouble you again, with an account of some part of Mr. Brandon's conduct, that has fallen under my own observation, which will elucidate his connection with the persons before described.

I am, sir, &c.

JAMES POWELL,

3, Grove-Place, Camden-Town,

18th Oct. 1809.

No. 71.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

I beg leave, through the medium of your impartial paper, to state that I have been a quiet observer, at Covent Garden Theatre, of the disturbances so seriously represented in the different daily prints: and it is obvious now, that the managers have, by their intemperate conduct, in several instances of injurious oppression, completely turned the balance of popular clamour, and individual favour, against themselves. The point they have brought to issue now is, whether the rights, established by prescription, of hissing, hooting, whistling, &c. to express disapprobation, are to be in future exercised by John Bull or suppressed by the managers? The attempt at such an innovation has roused the resentment of the public. Conciliatory measures are now too late; atoning ones are become expedient, and they should be announced, through the mouth of some unoffending actor, whom the audience will suffer to appear before them. If the obstinacy of the managers, and the perseverance of the audience continue to threaten the public peace, some high authority must speedily interfere. If a similar nuisance were to occur at a common public house, the magistrates, without entering into the merits

of the case, would take away the licence; and, if the Lord Chamberlain does not think it his duty to do the same, without some earnest application for the purpose, let a petition, signed by a respectable and peaceable part of the public, be presented to his lordship, to suspend his licence, till the new subscription theatre be opened, by which means, the discussion of the more dangerous part of the question, will be waved for the present, and that of old or new prices will, by and bye, be brought to a fair market for competition.

PAX.

Chamberlain's Court,

18th Oct.

No. 72. — *To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

I want to know on what grounds the magistrate commits persons, who use the only modes of expressing disapprobation, which have been practised since the very first invention of the drama, by the Greeks. If a person does damage to the scenery, by cutting, tearing, or breaking, or if he throws any thing at an actor, or strikes a neighbour hearer, there is evidently a breach of the peace, and a ground for committal. But clapping, hissing, or whistling, have, from time immemorial, been used in this, as well



as in all other countries, as the modes of expressing approbation and disapprobation at dramatic performances. They have been uniformly acquiesced in by the owners of theatrical property themselves; and, indeed, if these signs of approbation or disapprobation be not allowed, I ask both magistrate and manager how is an audience to express either? It may be said that these may become so violent and lasting as to amount to a riot. I should be glad to be shewn in what portion of the law of the land, or in what section or chapter of the statute-book, this is defined, or indeed where clapping, hissing, hooting, or catcalling, at a theatrical representation, is declared to be an offence, or symptom of riot, at all. Sir, I went to Covent-garden on Saturday night, and I heard much noise; but I perceived not the least appearance of riot, except what was once or twice attempted to be made by the injudicious (to say no worse of it) interference of persons sent in on the part of the proprietors. The audience in the pit turned their back upon the actors, to shew their disapprobation of the conduct of the proprietors, but they did not prevent them from going on, nor did they put them in either fear or danger. I call on the performers to say if they were not permitted to go through their parts as they pleased, or if they were molested in any other way than when the audience does not approve of a piece. I saw them indulging in all the usual

gestures and motions at their ease. They might feel uncomfortable because they were not attended to, but I am sure that there was no attempt of any kind whatever made against them, that would necessarily have been made in the case of a riot.

As neither actors nor audience have to complain of any riot which puts them in fear or danger, the ground of complaint must rest wholly with the proprietors. It will be said for them that their property is in danger, and that this noisy conduct, on the part of the audience, tends to diminish the fair profits which they have a right to expect. As to danger of their property, I saw none; and I do not believe they have themselves any fear of that sort. All attempts to injure it have been uniformly reprobated and repressed by the audience, and the diminution of profits, in this case, is merely an accident arising from the nature of their property, and springing from an act of their own. Every species of capital, vested in any speculation, is liable to peculiar losses. That arising from hissing and damning is one of the peculiar losses to which theatrical capital is exposed; and those who employ their capital this way ought, before they meddle, to lay their account with meeting with this species of loss, as well as an underwriter must with the losses arising from sunken rocks, privateers, equinoctial and Christmas gales. Suppose the proprietors were to be so unlucky as to have every new piece

and actor they brought forth during a season damned or hissed off, their profits would be much diminished; but how could they find redress? We may pity an unfortunate author who has his piece damned, for his profits are gone; but are the audience to be charged with a breach of the peace, or with riot, because they hiss what they do not approve? Like the proprietors of the house he took the risk voluntarily on himself, and he must abide the consequence.

The case thus stands:—Covent Garden Theatre possessing a monopoly, its proprietors have thought proper to raise the price of the article in which they deal. The public, who is the buyer, thinks this an unfair price, and shews its disapprobation by modes from time immemorial used for the purpose, and, indeed, the only modes that can express it. As for the placards, they can be considered in no other point of view, by any honest man, but merely as the means of conveying, more distinctly, the feelings of the displayers of them to a large body of men assembled together.

But it will be urged, that those who are not pleased with the prices, fixed by the seller here, need not buy, but may stay away. And why should they? The public wish to enjoy dramatic entertainments; and, as the exhibition of them is confined by patent, they must either pay more than they think they should, or be deprived of a

favourite amusement. Were there a fair competition, the argument would have weight ; because every one would have his choice, and this very competition would keep the price fair. But, at present, the public have no choice. They must buy from the house possessing the monopoly or not at all. And, if the audience be not permitted to express their disapprobation of the present rise, I ask, what security they have, that the monopolizing house may not raise the prices again next year. Indeed, as government grants an exclusive patent, it ought to go farther, and protect the public, by naming a regular price, beyond which the monopolists shall not dare to go. The wretched state of both tragedy and comedy among us has made some of our best critics think, that theatrical property should be left entirely open, to secure the stimulus of competition.

But the proprietors tell us, that they have submitted their affairs to a committee, and that committee has found that, without the new prices, they must be ruined. Sir, I believe, on my conscience, that the gentlemen of that committee have given the result fairly and honourably, as appeared to them, from the data presented to them ; but I must be allowed to say, that no statement ever was more unsatisfactory. We have no statement of the capital really invested, and what it was made to consist of ; nor have we any detail of the items of expenditure. We can, therefore, form no opi-

nion whatever, how far what was stated to be capital was really capital, or how far what was stated to be expenditure ought to be admitted as real expenditure. The amount of capital, (which we are left to calculate from the stated rate of interest) should have been given, and how it arose. The various items of expenditure should also have been laid before us. In order to have a fair investigation, to the result of which the public would probably pay attention, the proprietors should choose one gentleman, and the public another, and these two should nominate a third, thoroughly conversant with accounts. The latter should examine the accounts of the theatre, with the assistance, and under the eye of the former. A detail of the various items of capital, income, and expenditure, should be made out by the accountant, accompanied with any remarks, which the proxy for the proprietors, as well as the proxy for the public, might find themselves called on to make. What prudence or delicacy should require not to be made known might be kept concealed. But, say the proprietors, are we not to be allowed to judge for ourselves, as to the propriety of making a rise, or is every other dealer to be permitted to raise his price, to meet the rise of the prices of the various articles, while we are kept at the old price, amid every thing rising around us? All that need be replied to this, is that, as the public, who is the buyer, does not choose to grant a rise at present,

they, as the sellers, would act wisely to soothe, not irritate; and trust to a full exposition of their income and expenditure at the close of the season. It is true that the prices of things have, in general, risen since the last rise in the prices of admission; but it may very justly be queried, whether the increasing number of those who frequent the play-house, from prejudices against the drama giving way, and from the growing wealth of the various ranks in the metropolis, is not fully sufficient, at least, to meet the increase in the expenditure of the house, arising from the higher price of the various articles. To insult and ill-treat the audience, who is the buyer, is not right or politic. They are the servants of the public; and, instead of bearding their master, they ought to throw themselves on his generosity and justice. Their income depends on their audience, and, instead of bullying them, it will always be wiser to throw themselves on their mercy.

In the mean while, I conceive, sir, that the public are perfectly warranted in using the established modes of expressing disapprobation, to express their dis-satisfaction with the conduct of the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre. If they pay for admission, and confine themselves to hissing and whistling, the immemorial modes of expressing disapprobation, and do no harm to the house, nor strike any one, nor throw any thing at the actors, they appear to me to be guilty of

no riot or breach of the peace whatever. Nor shall I think so, till I am shewn, either from the law of the land or the statute book, that they are so. And, sir, though I detest rioting and factious conduct as much as any magistrate in London can do, I must say, my blood boils in me, as a Briton, at the very idea of a young woman\* being sent to prison for only springing a child's rattle in the one-shilling gallery of Covent Garden play-house. I trust, also, that some person of spirit, if assailed by these breakers of the peace, will have the question immediately brought to a hearing.

I am, sir, a sincere friend to the drama, and your humble servant,

J. LORAINÉ.

Whitehall, Oct. 19th.

No. 73.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

As many persons concerned in the riotous proceedings at Covent Garden Theatre seem to flatter themselves with the persuasion, that they are *not acting contrary to law*, and that they shall be able to show that the police magistrates have exceeded their authority, in the commitments which daily take place, I humbly beg

\* Mary Austin. Vide Bow-Street Proceedings.

to offer the following observations to their consideration, hoping, that (if I am correct) all who wish to avoid the punishment of the law, will, by a timely warning, abstain from subjecting themselves to its power. I shall not enter the question, as to the justice of the advance in prices. I have never turned my thoughts to the inquiry; for my opinion coincided with that of your correspondent, "*a Layman,*" viz. *that the theatre is the bane of the morals of the people*: I, therefore, do not attempt to *justify* the proprietors, or to fight *their* battles. I will, for the sake of argument, suppose that the advance is a gross imposition, and then put the following case:—Suppose a tradesman, anxious to make a rapid fortune, (which *sometimes* happens,) has it in his power to buy up a commodity, so that he is almost the exclusive dealer in that article: suppose too, that in consequence, without any regard to principle (and for no other reason than his love of wealth,) and the necessities of his fellow creatures, he raises the price: although we should not hesitate to pronounce such conduct to be *unjust*, have we a right to *take the punishment into our own hands*, by assembling, in a tumultuous way, in his shop, or warehouse, *in order to hinder those who chose to submit to the imposition*, from making use of the commodity, notwithstanding they had paid their money? And have we a right, in so doing, to injure his premises? I ask, sir, whether the laws war-



rant this, for I am no lawyer? If they do, then I conceive, that, if my neighbour defrauds me, I may become my own judge, and cause him (if I have power sufficient) to make restitution. I repeat that I am no friend to the managers of ANY theatre; for I have always observed, that when *they* are prosperous, that nation which supports them is in danger of falling into neglect of religion, and consequently into ruin.

A FRIEND TO ORDER.

19th Oct.

No. 74. — *To the Conductor of the Times.*

Sir,

I read, in your paper of yesterday, a letter, signed Samuel Frampton Stallard, West Smithfield; and I wonder that it escaped your animadversion. This gentleman complains very bitterly of his ill treatment, but he shews on the face of his letter that another gentleman, a friend of his, having purchased of a ticket-porter an order, signed by Mr. Harris, jun. for five shillings, he and his friend go into the boxes with this order so purchased for five shillings; and then join in the clamour with those who complain that they had been forced to pay seven shillings a piece. The injustice and impropriety of Mr. Samuel Frampton Stallard are thus, by

his own statement, made most apparent. Perhaps it would be satisfactory, if Mr. S. F. S. would give us an account how the gentleman, his friend, happened, and where, to meet with the ticket-porter from whom he purchased the orders. There can be no difficulty in this, as the gentleman, his friend, must be acquainted with the ticket-porter; for, it cannot be supposed that orders were sent out by the theatre, to be sold in Smithfield-Market, or to be sold at all. It is not improbable that the managers would have given orders, on application by letter, sent through the medium of a *ticket-porter*, from persons professing to be supporters of the claim of additional prices; but that a ticket-porter should have them to sell seems to me very mysterious; and, as Mr. S. F. Stallard has brought himself before the public, I think myself, as one of that public, entitled to have my doubt done away, particularly as Mr. Stallard and the other gentleman, his friend, fancied that, when they had got into the theatre, they had paid fourteen shillings for their admission, when the ticket-porter had received from them only half-a-crown a piece, and the proprietors of the theatre nothing.

A FRIEND TO THE OLD PRICES.

20th Oct. 1809.

No. 75.—*Hand-Bill circulated through Covent Garden Theatre, on the Night of the 20th of October.*

By particular request,

The new prices will be continued a night or two longer,

New Theatre Covent Garden,

This evening will be presented a medley of entertainments, called

The JUGGLERS, OR HALF THE TRUTH.

Commencing with two excellent comic scenes of the interior of the\* public house in Strand-lane, and the pastry-cook's shop in Duke's place,† with the fighting Jews receiving orders.

\* \* The *striking* effect of these scenes has been felt and acknowledged by several crowded and respectable audiences.

During the performance (young Mendoza not being sufficiently trained to appear in public) Mr. Mendoza sen. will suddenly come forward and swear a *great oath*, "that he will close our day-lights."

\* Where the fighting watermen are supposed to have got refreshments.

† See Mr. Bish's foregoing letter.

Jemmy Box-office will also swear an oath on the occasion ; and, if the performances can be lengthened without farther intrusion on the unparalleled patience of the public, the managers, and proprietors, and several new performers, will also swear together, to the great amazement of the audience.

Messrs. Mendoza and Box-office will perform

A pas de deux ;

Then, crossing the stage and changing hands, in a manner never before presented in public, they will dance a hornpipe, and

Long Gibbons will dance upon the tight rope.

Mr. Kemble, from the nature of his engagements, not being allowed to decline a part, a most dexterous feat will be attempted. Mr. Harris, with the rest of the proprietors, will suddenly endeavour to conceal themselves from the public, by jumping down Mr. Kemble's throat, to the unnecessary injury of the unhappy performer, unless prevented by the timely interposition of an enlightened and liberal public ; after which

A Peep behind the Curtain,

Weeping Billy, — Mr. Harris ; Jack Humble Pie, — Mr. Kemble ; Affidavit man, — Jemmy Box-office ; Jemmy Coventry, — Long Gibbons.

Mr. Townsend having on so many nights kindly condescended to act the part of a *trap* and a

*swell*, will this night perform it for the last time at this theatre.

Messrs. Harris, Kemble, and Brandon, muffled in sables, will chaunt, as a sublime dirge :

“ To think on one’s follies is sometimes but right,  
And reflection is good, tho’ there’s nothing got by’t.”

Mr. Harris, having come to town expressly for the occasion, will afterwards step forward and sing, to mournful music :

“ There’s nothing but money can cure me,  
And rid me of all my pain.”

Mr. Kemble will then sing, accompanied by a general crash of instruments :

“ Tho’ hurricanes rise, and rise every wind,  
They’ll ne’er make a tempest like that in my mind.”

Mr. Brandon will rush forward, and, dropping on his knees, will sing or say, accompanied by rough music :

“ Guardian angels now protect me.”

Mr. Townsend, running passionately on, in character, will sing a bravura :

“ Pho ! pox on this nonsense, I prithee give o’er,”

And afterwards whisper aloud to the office,  
 “ Damn my eyes, Read, by G—d its all up.”  
 To conclude with the new national drama of  
 John Bull victorious.

The part of John Bull will be repeated (after an  
 absence of several years,) by the public.

Boxes 7s. — Pit 4s. — Gal. 2s. — Upper Gal. 1s.

To morrow evening, by general desire, Empty  
 Benches, with a House to be Sold.

No. 76.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

As my countrymen are about celebrating the commencement of the 50th year of our beloved monarch's reign, by emancipating unfortunate debtors and other beneficial acts, permit me, through the medium of your paper, to suggest to the public the laudable design of their entering into a subscription, for the support and relief of those persons, who, for expressing their opinions at a public theatre, are doomed to confinement, and of assisting others who are held over to bail, to answer the like charges, but whose circumstances prevent their obtaining that legal assistance, which a more independent condition can ensure. They will no doubt be considered, by Englishmen, as suffering in the general cause, and as meriting an adequate attention on their

part. As I am not competent to arrange and conduct the plan, I beg leave to inclose a guinea; if you will apply the same to the object in question; should these hints induce any man of public spirit to set a subscription on foot.

PUBLICOLA.

Oct. 20, 1809.

No. 77. — *New Grand Imperial incombustible Theatre.*

(From the British Press, Oct. 20.)

Whereas an advertisement has appeared, announcing a *New National Subscription Theatre* (the prospectus whereof is promised in a few days): it is deemed an attention due to the public to remind them, without meaning the slightest disrespect to a Mr. Fry, the subscribing solicitor to this supposed speculation, of the palpable delusion which must belong to the scheme; inasmuch as, when it first started, with the assertion that a great sum had already been subscribed at Lloyd's, it immediately appeared, that not a single merchant or banker had ever subscribed a single shilling, or even had heard one word upon the subject.

We, who have now the honour to address the public, proceed upon a principle of a very dif-

ferent character. We are ready to admit, that any attempt to defeat or counteract the endeavours, said to be earnestly persevering in, to re-erect Old Drury, and to satisfy, in the most just and liberal manner practicable, the various and weighty claims of those who have embarked their property on the faith of the patent, would be felt and resented, by the public at large, as a base, unfeeling, and fraudulent, endeavour to take advantage of a temporary destruction, by the calamity of fire, of a great concern, every way entitled to the peculiar protection of the public patronage. The persons engaged, therefore, in the present speculation, namely, the erection of *A New Grand Imperial and Incombustible Theatre*, scorn to attempt to filch any countenance to their proposition from the present ferment, created by the resistance to the new prices at Covent Garden Theatre. They equally scorn to shrink from the admission that, if Old Drury can be rebuilt, and that the report be also true, that, should there appear a real call for a third theatre, the dormant patent belonging to the proprietors of Old Drury will be also brought into action to fulfil the public wish in that respect, it would ill become them, as gentlemen and honest men, to persevere a moment longer in their plan. Should the event, however, turn out otherwise, we are prepared to enter the list of competition with Mr. Fry; and are convinced, that



the discerning public will even now decree the palm of superior sincerity to us, when we frankly declare, which Mr. Fry and Co. have forborne to do, that this address is by the express order of an Ideal Committee, selected from the general body of non-existing subscribers.

(Signed) GREGORY GRILL,

First Clerk to Messrs. Hum and Hoax, Solicitors.

No. 1809, Labour-in-vain Hill,  
Lower Thames-Street.

N. B. Mr. Grill, having great doubts of the actual existence of such a person as Mr. Fry, conceives that he is acting in the fairest manner, by thus avowing his own name, and that of his respected employers.

P. S. Such noblemen and gentlemen as are desirous of supporting the undertaking, by becoming subscribers, will please to send their names to Messrs. Hum and Hoax, or to any banking-house in London not receiving subscriptions for the plan of Mr. Fry: in suggesting which restriction, Mr. Grill is confident that he does not exclude a single banker in the metropolis.

No. 78.—*From the Morning Chronicle, October 21, 1809.*

Sir,

The scenes of riot and confusion nightly represented at the New Theatre, Covent Garden, are of a nature to excite the most serious apprehensions, as to effects, which, according to the ordinary course of public commotion, may be produced by a continuance of such disorder. The means hitherto adopted to allay the discontent manifested by the public at the increased prices of admission have tended only to heighten popular displeasure, and each succeeding night evinces the remoteness of the probability that they will acquiesce in the demands of the manager. On the other hand, in the mind of the managers, nothing but the total destruction of the concern seems likely to produce the slightest impression in respect for the public sentiment. Under these circumstances the question arises, how is the controversy to be settled? The matter appears to me hitherto; by many, to be misunderstood, as if there were no other parties to the dispute than the managers and the persons actually present at the theatre on the several nights of performance. I am, however, certain, that I anticipate a reflection that has occurred to many

reasonable persons, who contemplate with disgust and alarm the repetition of those nocturnal orgies, when I observe that I conceive it to be the duty of the executive government to interfere with firmness, but at the same time with moderation, in order to terminate a contest which may ultimately be attended with consequences most fatal, and the extent of which it is impossible to foresee. With this impression, and after all that has occurred, I certainly am inclined to hold HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT responsible for all that may ensue, if measures be not adopted, under the authority with which he is invested, for the maintenance of public tranquillity. To the person holding that distinguished and important situation I shall look henceforward for a due discharge of his duty on this occasion; and I trust it will manfully be performed, not by introducing within the theatre spies and thieftakers, to disturb the people of England in the exercise of privileges sanctioned by long usage, and even, to a certain extent, by the express recognition of law, but by adopting a course suited to the circumstances of the case, and to the rights and obligations of all parties concerned. I am not, sir, to be told that the interference of government is a matter of delicacy,—that they have no authority to intermeddle with a dispute about a private concern, nor with the property of individuals; on the con-

trary, I maintain that the PRESENT IS NOT A CASE OF PRIVATE CONCERN, and that the theatre of Covent Garden, separate from the walls of the building and its decorations, is not SOLELY THE PROPERTY OF INDIVIDUALS. It is a NATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT, constituted by the crown, and instituted, not for the purposes of commercial traffic, with which indeed it is not to be compared, not for the reward of any new and ingenious discoveries, as in other cases,—not for the exclusive advantage of individual speculators,—but upon wise motives of municipal policy, and for the BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC. It is therefore mainly the PROPERTY OF THE CROWN, as representing the nation. The PATENTEES are only its deputies, contractors with the crown for public purposes, the building and scenery are alone their own; their right of representing plays can be revoked, it remains only *quam diu se bene gesserint*, and they hold their patent upon a well-known principle, subject to a TRUST in which the PUBLIC have an INTEREST, and to a CONDITION in favor of the public which they have a right to call upon the MINISTERS OF THE CROWN to see executed in their regard.

In advancing this position, I am warranted by high legal authority, and by declarations with respect to this very theatre, delivered from the bench by a distinguished chancellor, the late Lord Thurlow. In the opera-disputes, his lord-

ship observed that the PATENTEES OF COVENT GARDEN had been too wise to raise any question upon their patent, and that, if ABUSED, it could NOT STAND ONE INSTANT. From the whole case it may be inferred, as well as what was thus distinctly declared by his lordship, that an inability of patentees, from distress, to carry on the business of a theatre, or a loss of confidence on the part of the public, arising from mismanagement, would be a ground for rescinding a patent, it being granted principally for the BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC. I have not the case before me, but I am satisfied that I am correct in this statement. It is to be found in the first vol. of Mr. Vesey's Reports. The public, however, cannot proceed by any judicial application for their relief in the court of chancery, and therefore it must ever devolve upon the ministers of the crown to PROTECT, on all occasions, their rights. It certainly would not be inconsistent with the duty of the Attorney-General to institute, *propria motu*, the necessary proceedings, and bring, to a legal determination, the question, whether the patentees have been at all warranted in exacting the present advance on the price of admission. The mere fact of an increased demand, so steadily opposed by the public, would, I conceive, be at any time sufficient for the interference of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL, on the part of HIS MAJESTY; and he must ever be of COUNSEL FOR THE PUBLIC ON

those occasions. He cannot be retained or consulted by the PATENTEES, in opposition to the rights of the public, which are those of the CROWN. But, sir, if it shall have happened, that the PATENTEES of this or any other theatre, have attempted to impose upon the metropolis, to take it by surprise,—that they have withheld all fair information, previously to exacting an increased price of admission,—that they have neglected to adopt those means which an ordinary attention to the history of the theatre, and to the disposition of the British people, would have dictated, previously to any innovation, in order to prepare their minds for an acquiescence in what was likely to encounter opposition,—if they shall have wantonly provoked the indignation which was manifested,—but especially if they shall have admitted *gratuitously* bodies of persons, forcibly to overawe an audience *paying* for their admission: and I never can admit the doctrine, that, *merely by paying at the door of a theatre a party waves his right of expressing disapprobation and joining in the cry of the majority, against the conduct of manager, in exacting such an increased price*;—if they shall have hired bruisers and ruffians to *force* compliance;—if they shall have occasion, by improper conduct of their agents, flagrant breaches of the peace (and the fact, that pugilistic contests have regularly been fought within the theatre raises no favourable presumption);—if, by

such conduct and an ill-judged obstinacy they shall have contributed to convert a theatre of rational entertainment, into a public gymnasium, or as I have heard it described, an arena of gladiators, contrary to every principle on which they obtained the privilege of dramatic representation;—if such shall have been the conduct of the managers, will any lawyer pretend to say that the patent has NOT BEEN ABUSED? Is the minister, charged with the general superintendance of the police, to adopt no measures upon such an occasion, and institute no inquiry?

Surely, sir, the reports afloat on this subject are of a nature to require the Secretary of State for the Home Department to call, at least, for an explanation of these circumstances from the PATENTEES, if not to send the matter, with his directions, before the Attorney-General. It must occur to every one that the question for the consideration of government is become not so much whether the original demand of an advance were reasonable, as whether the PATENTEES, from the mode in which they have attempted to carry into effect what might originally have been reasonable, have not lost all claim to support, and whether they may not have comported themselves in a manner which may require the visitation of the law, or the terror of it upon themselves, as they call it down upon those by whose contribution alone they are able to maintain the existence of

their establishment, and for whose benefit it was originally founded. I shall forbear, until Monday, from trespassing further on your attention ; but, if compelled to return to the subject, I shall notice other points of law, which the patentees of the theatre have, as it appears to me, so injudiciously agitated. Requesting them to consider the *friendly advice of Lord Thurlow*, in preference to the blinded suggestions of an imprudent obstinacy, I remain the friend of all parties concerned,

MODERATOR.

No. 79. — *To the Editor of the Constitutional Review.*

Sir,

The letter signed A. F. inserted in your paper of last Saturday, carries, on the face of it, so much of the semblance of truth, supported by calculation, that the reasonings would be, if the data were correct, conclusive ; yet I hope you will allow me to contradict most of the assertions, by some facts which I presume will be found incontrovertible.

Your correspondent begins by stating, that the proprietors of the theatre should, when they first announced the rise in the price of admission, have laid open to the public a statement of their accounts, to shew that the proposed advance was



necessary. Has not their subsequent conduct been such as to prove that this step would have been taken, if they had thought that the justice of their claim would have been disputed? The proprietors considered, that a liberal public would at once accede to a proposition, which was rendered necessary by the advanced prices of every article connected with their concern, and the sums that had been expended in the building of the theatre.

The report of the committee comes next under his consideration: he states, that the arguments adduced from his calculations are irrefutable. This I am ready to allow, but I hope I shall shake the whole by proving that the calculations are (not to say unfairly) erroneously given. As the present theatre will contain nearly the same number of persons as the last, the annual average profit therefore would, at the old prices for admission, if there were no collateral circumstances to affect it, be fairly stated at £8,345 : 6 : 2; which, with the advantages given by A. F. to the new theatre, would most certainly leave the proprietors a profit equal to  $14\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on their capital of £75,000. But that the fallacy of this statement may be more apparent, I beg to subjoin his, with a more correct one; but I must premise, that I have no other means by which to form a calculation, than those he states to have employed;—the report of the committee, laid before the public by the proprietors.

*Calculations of A. F.*

	£.	s.	d.
Annual profit .....	8,345	6	2
Private boxes .....	11,300	0	0
	<hr/>		
	19,645	6	2
	<hr/>		
	£.	s.	d.
Deduct the amount of annual dividends.....	3,750	0	0
Ditto loss by private boxes.....	5,000	0	0
	<hr/>		
	8,750	0	0
	<hr/>		
	10,895	6	2

being a profit of  $14\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

*A more correct Statement.*

	£.	s.	d.
Annual profit.....	8345	6	2
Private boxes.....	4200	0	0
	<hr/>		
	12,545	6	2
	<hr/>		
	£.	s.	d.
Deduct the amount of annual div.	3,750	0	0
Ditto loss by addit. private boxes	1,666	13	4
Do. 150 free admissions.....	2,362	10	0
Do. property-tax.....	375	0	0
Do. for insurance .....	2,600	0	0
	<hr/>		
	10,754	3	4
	<hr/>		
	1,791	2	10

which is about  $2\frac{3}{8}$  per cent profit.

It will be recollected, that the terms, on which the proprietors raised £75,000, were these; to give £5 per centum, to pay the income-tax thereon, and to grant a free admission for every £500

advanced. The free admissions, 150 in number, I have stated at fifteen guineas each, a price at which many have been sold, but a sum by no means equal to the loss that the proprietors will sustain. In the old theatre there were twenty private boxes; these appear to have escaped altogether the notice of your correspondent. I have therefore taken the present additional advantage on *ten* boxes, at 400 guineas per annum each, and made a suitable deduction, founded on his calculation (which I think a fair one) for the sum lost by the exclusion of the public from that part of the house. The old theatre was insured for £46,000; I have therefore taken the difference, between that sum and the value of the present one, and calculated the rate at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per centum; but to this something might be added for the difference in the rate of insurance on the £46,000; as, since the many recent accidents which have happened to theatres, the offices have raised the premiums on that property. Such are the data on which my calculations are founded, and they are such as, I hope, will be thought equitable. I am well aware, that the account which I have submitted does not include all the items of the additional expenses, nor could I add them without reference to the books of the theatre; but still it goes very far to establish the report of the committee; and when the respectability, the talents, and daily habits, of the gentlemen who devoted three days to the examination

of the accounts, are considered, it is illiberal to doubt the opinion which they have given.

To prove that a theatrical concern is not profitable, let us for a moment divert our attention from theory to practice. If we look to the late theatre in Drury-Lane, we shall see that the expense of that house would admit of many more persons than the present one in Covent Garden, and therefore the receipts must have been greater; yet, we shall find the renters' dividend unpaid for several years past, and an exhausted treasury.

The theatre, skilfully managed, is, no doubt, a powerful political engine, for, while it amuses the public, it leads the minds to virtue; but the exercise of considerable talents in an actor (particularly in the higher department of the drama) is required to impress the precepts of the poet. How few men of talents then, would be found to embrace the arduous profession of a player, with all the odium which illiberal minds attach to it, if a prospect were not held out of a suitable remuneration! A theatre, therefore, conducted on a narrow scale would be a loss to the public in entertainment and instruction.

That the dissatisfaction which has arisen, with regard to the new prices, is from the efforts of a daily newspaper, cannot be denied. Long before the prices were publicly announced, the editor of the Times foresaw the necessity that would exist for the advance, but used every means to agitate

the public mind against it. This conduct may be thought to have arisen from patriotism; but had he explained to the public, why the advertisements from the Covent Garden managers did not appear in that paper for nearly two years, his opposition would have been attributed to its right cause—spleen. The fact is, that the insertion of the play-house advertisements is considered of equal advantage to the proprietors of the newspaper and the theatre. The editor of the Times is said to have demanded double the price paid to the other papers, but this was resisted for nearly two years.—The people should therefore have received with great caution the report of an enemy. The proprietors and managers have done their duty to the public, and it appears, their demand is rather for justice than liberality.

J. K.

No. 80. — *To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

It having been stated, by Mr Kemble, in one of his addresses to the house, that the price of admission to the pit, in Queen Anne's reign, was 3s. (implying, as it was understood, that it had not been less since that period,) and to the galleries 2s. and 1s. always. I am induced to send you the following extract from Kirk-

man's Life of Macklin, to prove that these were not the regular established prices of admission to those parts of the house until the year 1736; as also to shew, that the right the public then assumed to interfere on the subject of the proposed advance, was at that time recognized by the proprietors.

“At this period, 1736, a new regulation took place at the theatre, with respect to the prices of admission; the regular prices being, boxes, 4s. pit, 2s. 6d. first gallery, 1s. 6d. and second gallery, 1s. except upon the first run of a new play, or pantomime, when the boxes were 5s. pit, 3s. first gallery, 2s. and second gallery, 1s. But Mr. Fleetwood thought fit to raise the prices for an old pantomime, which was revived without expense. This circumstance produced a violent opposition for several nights; and, at last, a *deputation from the pit* had an interview with the manager, in the *green room*, where it was agreed, that the advanced prices should be constantly taken at the doors, and that such persons as did not chuse to stay the entertainment should have the advanced part of their money returned. This was an advantageous agreement for the managers, because, when the audience had once paid their money and were seated, very few went out at the end of the play and demanded their money: the few who did at first soon grew tired; and at last it settled in the quiet payment of the

advanced prices." Kirkman's Life of Macklin, vol. 1. p. 206.

*Memorandum.* — In the year 1767, Messrs. Harris, Rutherford, Powell, and Coleman, purchased the patent of Covent Garden Theatre for £60,000 and became joint proprietors in four equal shares. It was afterwards agreed, by these parties, that Mr. Powell should be engaged as an actor, at £400 per annum, and a clear benefit, for seven years; but, if any other performer should be engaged at a higher salary, Mr. Powell should be advanced to equal it. This proves £400 to be the largest annual salary given at this time to any performer.

Oct. 21, 1809.

No. 81.—*A new Song, to the Tune of Derry Down.*

(Morning Chronicle, Oct. 21.)

Of fam'd Covent Garden, with freedom I sing,  
When John Bull and John Kemble have enter'd the ring;  
A month now has pass'd,—still the battle doth rage,  
John Bull in the pit and Don John on the stage.  
Derry down, &c.

A trio of new justice actors appear,  
Riot acts in their hands and jews in their rear;  
But, Barney, the saddle is on the wrong horse,  
John Bull will not yield to dragooning and force.  
Derry down, &c.

In old English law, his safety and trust is ;  
 May we never submit to such new-fangled justice ;  
 Let Don John and Company arm their patrols,  
 But we'll never find *pigeons* for their pigeon-holes.

Derry down, &c.

Then success to John Bull,—and whatever betide,  
 May his sons, when impos'd on, have law on their side ;  
 And, whenever attack'd, in a way that he scorns,  
 May the Bull win the day tho' he's robb'd of his horns.

Derry down, &c.

No. 82.—*Theatrical Amusements.*

(Redhead Yorke, 21st and 28th of October.)

“ Onward they rush, at fame's imperious call :  
 And less than greatest—would not be at all.”

Sir,

The armistice between the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre and John Bull being at an end, each party, after having mustered all their forces, have once more entered into the field. John Bull has again cried “havock, and let slip the dogs of war :” and Emperor Harris and King John have not been backward in rallying their *scattered and disordered troops*. How the contest will terminate is at present dubious. “ ’Tis strange, ’tis passing strange, ’tis pitiful, ’tis



wondrous pitiful," that the proprietors should publish, with all their boasted promises, so paltry, vague, unsatisfactory, and complex a statement as they have done. What has the public to do with the average prices for six years last past? is not the theatre a new concern? and if it is, had not the proprietors much better perform one or two seasons first, and then, if they found it did not answer their purpose, have stated their reasons to the public, and I doubt not but they would have been more satisfied with their increased price; but to thus trifle and impose upon that public, who they boast their respect for, and to set at defiance the voice of a generous and liberal set of patrons, is an insult not easily to be borne with. It is impossible, from the statement they have made, to receive any information; the committee may be very intelligent and honourable men, but it would have done them more credit to have stated fully the expenditures and payments. In fact, their statement, to read it in plain English, is neither more nor less than this. "Gentlemen, we have looked over and attentively examined the rate of profit of the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, and it *depending in part upon the amount of bills not yet delivered, and of estimates not fully ascertained, and on the future receipts of the house, which are subject to various contingencies, cannot be ascertained with the same degree of certainty; but, upon the best considera-*

*tion we have been able to give to this subject, after having recourse to every source of information, oral and written, we are fully satisfied that we know nothing about the matter in dispute."* Unless every item of the expenditures be laid before the public, I trust that they will testify their contempt and dislike to the imposition, by **ABANDONING THE PROPRIETORS AND THEIR NEW THEATRE ALTOGETHER.** For my own part, I shall never believe otherwise, until I see a fair, full, just, honest, and correct statement appear, "*errors excepted,*" than that the proprietors reap *so large and enormous a profit,* that they are really *ashamed* to inform the public of the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

It is freedom, sir, and that alone, which inspires men with elevated and noble minds; it is freedom that raises our souls to the highest pitch of perfection, and inspires us with true genius and talents. Men, labouring under the disadvantages of restraint and want of patronage, cannot give full force to their imaginations; their ideas are cramped, and are rendered of little service. True genius cannot bear control; it cannot put up with the overbearing effrontery of theatrical management; and thus it is that genius and talents have been long banished the British stage. Oratory expired in Greece shortly after the Romans and Macedonians conquered their commonwealth; and since the unbounded ambition of

theatrical managers has become so great, the English drama has dwindled into insignificancy and contempt. Theatres now have none but *annuity authors* to write for them, and the public, long inured to their wretched *lanthorn pieces*, behold with indifference, the nonsensical bombast and tricking mummery of the English stage.

A man must possess few ideas who can sit a full piece; — there are pauses in an opera which formerly gave exquisite pleasure to the hearers, but they are vanished.

A song was then simple and plaintive, and the music sweet and tasteful. People then met to enjoy the music and the singing; their organs of hearing were not fatigued with listening; but, now how different is the case! The hearing is satiated by the outlandish squallings of a *Bravura*, and we are shewn no mercy by some favourite *Polacca à la Braham*. But that is not alone sufficient for our managing gentry; a dance must be introduced, and then it is, that the catgut-scrappers in the orchestra, annoy us uncontroled with the croakings of their different instruments. Alas! no mercy is shewn by these tweedle-dums and tweedle-dees. Smiles of joy deck their faces; mirth dances in their eyes; and all is in sweet uproar and confusion. Next comes the song, all is hushed in silence, each bosom pants with longing expectation, and every eye-string out-stretched to see the sweet enchanting warbler. Amidst in-

cessant bursts of applause and joy, lo! Catalani, in pompous dress, appears! and now, with outstretched arms and smiling face, she opes her deep-toned voice—now sinks, then rises, stops, and in a gentle shake dies soft away. Again, with mellifluous swelling notes, she squalls aloud, and gains the applause and admiration of all the ton. So have I heard the wretched tortured slave, when on the rack, in pangs of agony sing out his death-like notes, and, in Bravura strains, lament his crimes.

Theatrical monopoly is an evil hardly known to the public; it does not consist in writing only, but it also extends to composing, dancing, &c. That managers should patronize authorlings, actors, composers, and understrappers, is not to be wondered at; but, that they should give authors *annuities* to write for the theatre, to the exclusion of all others, or that they should permit composers to place, under *their management*, pupils whose master receives half the salary for their services, or connive at the dancing or ballet masters sending their pupils, and receiving the like, to the detriment of other well-experienced performers, is only to be accounted for, by their being able to engage them at a *lower salary* than a regular performer can afford to perform at. Hence it is, that we have had so many children introduced on the stage, and placed in a situation of life highly dangerous to their morals, future happiness, and welfare.

With respect to the swarm of petty authors ever hanging on the manager's sleeve, I imagine them to be so many *puffers*, whose melo-dramatic works the pomposo forces upon the public, in consequence of receiving fulsome panegyrics, and working for less than the accustomed price by way of annuity. True genius, as I before stated, cannot bear controul; and, although we have heard of a Lee being opposed, Murphy insulted, and Kenrick defrauded, we have known Bickerstaff, Becket, Griffin, Parker, and many others, supported and caressed, for their passive obedience and servility to the managers.

It is not my intention to meddle with the internal department of a theatre, neither do I, in what I am about to say, wish to speak of the judgment, candour, or ability, of any one, or to detract from the superior excellence of our *modern* dramatic authors, or managers; but, it is well known, that without a *very great interest*, no author, however great his genius, or whatever be his abilities, can ever get a piece performed. We have had men of talents; men whose writings have been extolled and deservedly admired; men who have written with grace, elegance, and taste; whose pens have touched the finest and tenderest chords of the heart, and from whom every thing excellent and beautiful were to be expected, write for the stage, *and have had their pieces returned*. What is the reason of this? Are we to have nothing but mum-

mery forced down our throats? Are we never again to see *original* pieces performed, or are men of real genius and talents *outlawed from the English stage?*

The Italian opera has long bewitched our faculties; their fascinating and agreeable nonsense and bombast have long ago vitiated our taste for real dramatic representations. For my own part, I am of the same opinion as my Lord Chancellor, with respect to Italian singers and performers; I would not give five shillings to hear Madame Catalani squall for five minutes, until she was *black* in the face; nor would I expend half that sum to see Deshayes, *the modest active Deshayes*, dancing a pas seul, with all the grave formality of a methodist parson walking to a funeral. The first, sir, reminds me of the *horrid yell of an Indian war-whoop*, and the latter, the more *diverting grimaces and attitudes of a man enjoying all the agonizing torture of a severe fit of the gout*. Foreigners have so inveigled the great by flattery and abject servility, that nothing will go down but foreign mummery. What will after ages say of our nobility and gentry, when they are informed, that they could sit out an Italian opera, and enjoy it, without understanding a single sentence that was spoken? Will they not think them a set of dunces, unworthy their titles or fortunes? Nothing speaks more home to them, and proves that they do not understand what they go to hear and

see, than their suffering such low buffoonery and sing-song trash to be performed. How far the old adage of "a fool and his money are soon parted," applies to them requires no Solomon to judge. In fact, sir, the Italian Frenchified operas have ruined the British drama, and will ultimately ruin the British constitution. We may fit out expedition after expedition, we may drain the country of men and money, we may abandon our fellow-countrymen, and exalt these foreigners to the highest pinnacle of honour and respectability; and what will be our reward? *Treachery*.—For myself, I never hear of an expedition fitting out, but I imagine our enemies are already aware of its destination: indeed, sir, I never hear of any new *opera-singer* or *dancer* having arrived in this country, but I consider them as *spies*, and their intimacy with the great gives them an opportunity of gaining a knowledge of our affairs, which may be of vast importance to the prosperity and welfare of old England. But let the head of the alien-office look to it, ere it is too late; and John Bull, I trust, will, in such "a glorious cause" as that of monopoly and imposition, carry all before him with fortitude, judgment, and patience; and I hope soon to hear that he has trod down Satan under his feet, and made his enemies his footstool.

I remain, sir, your humble servant,

AN OLD SCENE SHIFTER.

No. 83.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

Fully agreeing with your correspondent *Publicola*, as to the mode mentioned by him, for the celebration of the commencement of the 50th year of our venerated king's reign, and applauding the laudable design proposed, I beg to add my mite—(an inclosure of one pound.) The disgraceful conduct of the hired bravos, at the new theatre, calls for the marked disapprobation of the public in general, and I beg leave to say, that it is as much a right to disapprove as to approve.

AN ENEMY TO HIRED RUFFIANS.

21st Oct.

No. 84.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

It was not my intention to have written or said any thing farther concerning the dispute between the managers of Covent Garden Theatre and the public, nor should I have published the letter I did, had I not seen what I considered a gross insult to the public. I mean, a man of Mendoza's description, giving away free




admissions to the theatre, to persons, as I before observed, "more likely to break than to keep the peace." In my letter, I neither mentioned Mr. Kemble, Mr. Harris, Mr. Brandon, nor any other person, so furnishing Mendoza with the orders. I stated what I saw, and what I can prove, by fifty respectable witnesses; and, in addition to my former charge, I have to inform you, sir, that at the house of a Jew pastry-cook, in Duke's Place, Mendoza distributed, I may safely say, hundreds of free admissions to Covent Garden Theatre. The door of the pastry-cook's house was more crowded on the occasion than the doors of the theatre; and, however ignorant the managers may pretend to be of such orders having been given, they must know, or ought to have known, that these orders, daily issued by Mendoza, were admitted at the theatre.

I am, &c.

T. BISH.

4, Cornhill, 22d Oct. 1809.

P. S.—I have received a number of anonymous letters, threats, &c. which meet the contempt they deserve.

 The above letter was sent, in consequence of Mendoza having made affidavit, denying that he had distributed orders for Covent Garden Theatre by desire of any person connected with the theatre.

No. 85.—*Pillage and Honestus—a dramatic Extract.*

(Morning Chronicle.)

- PILLAGE. O! on me, Gods, bestow the pence,  
And give your fame to any fool you please!
- HONESTUS. Your love of pence sufficiently you shew,  
By raising still your prices on the town.
- PILLAGE. The town for their own sakes the prices pay,  
Which the additional expense demands.
- HONESTUS. In former times,  
When better actors acted better plays,  
The town paid less.
- PILLAGE. We have more actors now.
- HONESTUS. Aye, many more, I'm certain, than you need;  
Make your additional expense apparent,  
Let it appear quite necessary too,  
And then perhaps they'll grumble not to pay.
- PILLAGE. What is a manager whom the public rule?
- HONESTUS. The servant of the public, and no more;  
For, tho' indeed *you see* the actors paid,  
Yet from the people's pockets come the pence.  
They therefore should decidewhat they will pay for.
- [Exit *Honestus*.

PILLAGE (*solus*).

I wish I could have gain'd one honest man  
O'er to my side; but since th' attempt is vain,  
Numbers must serv'e for worth;—the vessel sails,  
With equal rapid fury and success,  
Borne by the foulest tide as clearest stream."

Vide Fielding's Works, Edit. 1783. vol. 4.

No. 86.—*The Professional Opinions of the Covent Garden Theatre Committee.*

(Examiner, October 22.)

The worthy Alderman at the head of the list is clearly for a - - - NEW PRICE.

Mr. Angerstein is of opinion that the whole question turns on the rate and amount of the - - - INSURANCE.

Mr. Whitmore thinks Mr. Kemble a very good - - - GOVERNOR.

Sir John Plumer is of opinion that the proprietors require an able - SOLICITOR.

And Mr. Sylvester is determined that the struggle shall not want a faithful - RECORDER.

No. 87.—*Soliloquy of the Moor of Covent Garden.*

(Examiner, October 22.)

I had been *happy* if th' united House,  
Pit, galleries, and boxes,—all had paid  
Their money *cheerily*, and riot we had none.  
Oh! now for ever farewell ambition's hope!  
Farewell applause! and side-long glances  
From the boxes, thro' the sticks of fan,  
Or from behind the kerchief-veiled face.  
Farewell our golden hopes of swelling bags,  
And long account at banker's.

Farewell ye wanton toys of feather'd cupid  
 In th' anti-chambers of the private annuals !  
 Hark ! the loud twanging of the bugle-horn,  
 Th' ear-piercing whistle, and terrific bell,  
 The plaguy placard, drum, and deaf'ning rattle ;  
 The voice Stentorian, and the serpent's hiss !  
 Sibilant,—all, all awake me  
 From dreams delusive of eternal triumph !

And ye, ye catcalls, of infernal sound,  
 Whose barbarous sounds might even split the ears  
 Of Belzebub himself,—cease your horrific din.  
 No more the valiant *Dan*, with *host of Israel*,  
 Flank'd and supported by the Bow-street tribe  
 Of myrmidons, and bruisers *squaring* in the pit ;—  
 No more the phalanx dares to face the town.  
 O'erwhelm'd by numbers and determin'd hate,  
 No more the *orders* in the boxes now  
 Support the managers,—but placards wave,  
 And O P's shine from every box!—*initials hateful* :  
 All, all, our efforts are in vain, and fate decides  
 By the loud voice of the people,—*irresistible*,  
 That prices be reduced, and privacies  
 Thrown open.—  
 Farewell,—OTHELLO'S occupation's gone!

No. 88. — *Anacreon in Bow-Street.*

By the author of " My Pocket Book."

(Examiner.)

As rapt I sweep the golden lyre,  
 To love I cry, " my notes inspire,

And let me sing of ROSA:”

But *Thespian wars* fill all my strain,  
TOM HARRIS; *junior*, hopeless swain!

JOHN KEMBLE and MENDOZA.

Then, if I to the stage belong,  
O! let me sing the charms of song,  
Of BILLINGTON and BRAHAM!  
In vain, again my wishes fail,  
I sing of nought but *heavy bail*,  
Of TOWNSEND and of GRAHAM.

The soul of harmony is dead,  
And vilest discord reigns instead,  
With rioting and battles.  
To shrieking owls are turn'd my doves,  
To O P men \* the little loves:  
My lyre to horns and rattles.

No. 89. — *Projectors' Advertisement.*

SUBSCRIPTION THEATRE. The committee for conducting the affairs of this undertaking having come to a resolution to petition parliament for leave to erect a new and additional

\* I find that Horace makes particular mention of the *OPs*, and the noise they made in Rome: “*OPES strepitumque Rom.*”

Od. lib. 3. 29.

My old friend, the late Mr. OPIE, was a man of celebrity; but he never made half so much noise in the world as any one of his numerous relations.

theatre in this metropolis, upon a capital of £220,000, state, thus publicly, that, if their application shall meet that success which they trust it will appear to merit, they are fully purposed to employ every means, which the ability of their architect can suggest, for the completion of an edifice, in which every accommodation shall be studied that can recommend it to the real patrons of the national stage, as a playhouse specifically appropriated to the representation of such dramatic compositions, and such only as may be calculated to afford that rational entertainment which neither violates morality nor disgraces genius, and which alone is worthy to be selected for a British audience, and sanctioned by the legislature of an enlightened nation. The promoters of this undertaking were not led to it by motives that have any reference to the present disturbed state of Covent Garden Theatre, or to the unhappy catastrophe that has befallen that of Drury-Lane. Such illiberal imputations they most earnestly deprecate. Their simple object is to establish and conduct (if so authorised and empowered) a new and additional theatre for acting plays, that shall not be unworthy to share the honour of embellishing the capital, contributing to the encouragement of merit both in science and in art, and opening, to the immense population of this vast metropolis, one more, (and that only a third,) resource for their enjoy-

ment of that rational and edifying recreation, which it has been the policy of all civilized states, in all ages, since the invention of the drama, to promote and patronise.

The committee think it right to inform the public, that the sum of £220,000 will be raised in shares of £100 each, and that the terms proposed to the holders of one or more such shares may be seen on Monday, the 30th instant, at the banking-houses of Messrs. March, Sibbald, and Co. in Berner's Street, and Messrs. Ramsbottoms', Newman, and Co. Lombard-Street, where subscriptions will be received.

By order of the committee.

HENRY FRY, Solicitor,  
14, John-street, Bedford-row.  
Oct. 23, 1809.

No. 90.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

I beg leave, through the medium of your paper, to request the favour of any impartial gentlemen, who was witness to my conduct, in Covent Garden Theatre, on Wednesday night last, to send his name and address to A. B. No. 11, Bell-Wharf, Shadwell, which will be a particular obligation conferred on

The Wearer of the Watch Ribbon.  
Oct. 23.

P. S. There is no person of the name of James Caulfield \* in the employ of Mr. Lyons.

No. 91. — *To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.*

Oct. 23, 1809.

Sir,

With extreme reluctance I am obliged to resume the subject which I discussed in my former letter. I had indeed flattered myself that another week's experience, of so fixed a determination, on the part of the public, not to submit to the demand of increased prices, would convince the managers that it becomes even their interest to make a concession, at least during the present season, and that their PATRIOTISM would have induced them to contribute to restore the peace of the metropolis, nightly invaded, as it has been, during so long a period, by a sacrifice, on their part, of emoluments so unlikely, under existing circumstances, *ever to be obtained.* Expostulation with the managers, I fear, is vain; and, if they have not been disturbed in their dreams of visionary enrichment by the outcry of the last nocturnal tumults, I cannot venture to

\* The name by which he was himself mentioned in the Bow-street report; which see.



hope, that the influence of reason and dispassionate argument will be found of more effect in dispelling the charm by which they seem entranced. I therefore must again address myself to the ministers of the crown, and more particularly to the PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF THE HOME DEPARTMENT, on whom I call to discharge his *duty*, on this occasion, in the protection of the public, and not only to preserve the peace of the metropolis, but *the liberties of the subject*. The noble Lord, at the head of the department, may be assured, that he will be held responsible, not only by the public, but also be called to account in parliament, if any supineness be manifested from the turn which the thing has taken, to fall so peculiarly within the duty of his department, and any serious accident should unfortunately ensue. What has already occurred is a disgrace to the country, and in no other state in Europe so long a continuance of such scenes as we have witnessed would have been tolerated. The weakest government would have interfered; and I have already pointed out the course which the noble secretary may pursue. For his Lordship, personally, I entertain the most unfeigned respect, and I am disposed to attribute any apparent indifference to what has occurred more to embarrassment and perplexity in respect to the conduct to be adopted on this occasion. Others, however, may not be so charitable, and will not

be wanting to impute forbearance to motives connected with the *present predicament of the administration*, from which I am by no means inclined to think it has proceeded. The question has not yet been, I trust it never will be, associated with political opinions on party differences. Since I had the honour of addressing to you my former letter, I had an opportunity of referring to a case I therein mentioned; it is entitled *ex-parte O'Reily*, 1 Ves. Jur. 112. and I find my impressions of its nature were most correct. The words of Lord Thurlow are as follows: "The old patents of the theatres, granted to Killigrew and Davenant, at the time of Charles II. were, I am told, in fee; but, whether they were or not, the patentees have not provoked an inquiry into them, and I dare say they will have too much discretion to do so; for, even if they were in fee, they could not stand half an hour if abused. I would not advise the crown to extinguish property to the amount of £70,000 or £80,000 by granting a rival patent, unless there was misconduct, or unless the miserably entangled state of the property made it impossible for them to go on to the *advantage of the public*. THE ACCOMMODATION OF THE PUBLIC IS THE PRINCIPAL THING TO BE CONSIDERED. Many considerations require that public establishments of this nature ought to be in the hands of the king. It principally relates to

my office to see that the king be not deceived, nor his object disappointed. In the time of James I. as in that of Queen Elizabeth, masks and such diversions were under the immediate direction of the crown, executed partly by the Lord Chamberlain, but more immediately by the master of the Revels. They acted as the king's servants; and Charles II. still preserved the same idea, when he gave a patent to Killigrew and Davenant; but, instead of leaving it to the management of the menial servants of the court, of which the Lord Chamberlain is certainly one, the king appointed other persons to execute it." I have troubled you, sir, with this extract to convince your readers, that I hazard no assertion on light foundations. The conduct of the managers I propose to discuss in my next letter; and also to offer legal arguments in support of the following position: That, in a British theatre, the majority of audience, dissatisfied with the conduct of the managers, have a right to express their displeasure by any *cries*, or signs, or instruments, which they may chuse to adopt, so that they abstain from all actual violence against the performers or decorations of the theatre, and that such signs do not import an excitement to the commission of such violence, but be confined solely to the expression of such dissatisfaction. This is a question raised by the managers, not by the public. It concerns the legal rights of the

latter, has been made, unfortunately, to concern the personal liberties of individuals, and requires fair and impartial consideration.

MODERATOR.

No. 92.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

As any subject connected with the words "Covent Garden Theatre" is sure at this moment to meet with particular notice, I beg to request the attention of such of your readers, as are commissioners of tax-boards, to the following statement.

Covent Garden Theatre, and the houses which formed the scite of the lobbies and new passages, were, previously to the late fire, rated to their rack rents; the parochial assessors, therefore, in making the new assessment, rated the whole in the several sums at which they were formerly assessed: the aggregate of which amounted to upwards of 2000*l.* per annum. With this, however, the officer, who is called the king's tax district surveyor, (who I am not aware is sworn to the justice of his rate) is not satisfied; and he has surcharged the theatre at the rate of EIGHT THOUSAND POUNDS per annum. It is presumed this is done on the principle of a per centage on the sum laid out in the new building!!! What, sir, is the high price

of materials, and the extravagant demands of workmen, in all business done in the hurry this was, to form the ground for entailing the heavy tax now attempted to be fixed on the property? If no theatre, nor other assessed property, had stood on the spot where the present buildings are erected, a pretext might have been made for this surcharge; at the same time, it is most apparent, that, if the principle of taxation is to be regulated by the expenditure, in the mode now adopted, there is an end to all hope of the ornamental improvement of the metropolis,—to the erection of a new theatre, or the re-building of Drury Lane Theatre.

I shall feel myself much indebted to any of your correspondents, if they would point out, through the medium of your paper, whether there is any law which justifies an assessment on any new building at a per-centage on its cost; and, if so, at what rate; or any such assessment on a building like Covent Garden Theatre, which is nothing more than a restoration of what had been formerly assessed on its then and now rack rent.

24th Oct. W. D.

No. 93. — *Advertisement from the Proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, on the 25th October.*

For the Benefit of the Fund of the Society for the

Discharge and Relief of Persons imprisoned  
for Small Debts.

NEW THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

This evening—"The Man of the World:"

To which will be added a new musical farce, to  
be performed in honour of the day, called

### THE JUBILEE.

The doors will be opened at half-past five, and  
the play begin at half-past six.

Boxes, 7s. Second price, 3s. 6d. Pit, 4s. Second  
price, 2s. Gallery, 2s. Second price, 1s. Upper  
Gallery, 1s.

To-morrow, *Laugh when you can*, with *Oscar  
and Malvina*.

The proprietors of the new Theatre Royal  
Covent Garden beg leave again most respectfully  
to address themselves to the public, by whose  
judgment they are sensible they ought, in every  
thing within their power, to be guided. They  
presume to think that the present regulation of  
the prices of admission will, on due consideraton,  
be found to be supported by every argument of  
reason and justice; and are happy to see that it  
meets with the approval of a very large majority

of the community. The proprietors are not aiming at wealth and exorbitant gain; they are merely labouring for a fair subsistence. It has been authoritatively and satisfactorily proved, after the fullest and most impartial investigation, that the adoption of the former prices would subject them to a certain loss of three-quarters per cent per annum upon their capital; but some persons have said that this evil might be obviated by a system of stricter economy. If the proprietors, in the erection of the new theatre, have erred on the side of expense, it has been, first, from an honest desire to consult the accommodation and ensure the safety of all who resort to it; and, secondly (as the public had a right to expect they should,) to collect such performers, and display such scenery, dresses, decorations, &c. as might best contribute to render the exhibitions of the drama worthy of a critical and enlightened people. Under what heads can a severer economy be introduced? The actors and actresses cannot be expected to give their labours for a smaller compensation than they received in the old theatre, or than they can receive in Theatres out of London,—and the proprietors have not hitherto been able to undertake to afford them a greater; nor does the prospect of such an advance form an item of their calculated future expenditure. In the scenery, dresses, decorations, lighting, &c. of which every article is daily increasing in price,

all reduction of expense is evidently impracticable. The undisguised truth is, that, even at the present prices, the necessity the proprietors are under of providing every thing new for almost every representation will, with the closest economy for some years, reduce, if not totally absorb, their profits.

The proprietors hope they shall not be thought intrusive for again appealing to the reason and justice of the frequenters of the theatre, to save all who are concerned in it from utter ruin. They trust that they shall not be disappointed in their confident reliance, upon this occasion, on the liberality, wisdom, and justice, of a great and generous nation; and they are persuaded that, as unfortunately it is not at their choice to alter the present terms of admission, which are as moderate as they could make them, they shall be allowed by their uninterrupted exertions, to endeavour, as the only return they can offer for the patronage and favour they request, while they have the honour of evincing, by increasing efforts, their unabated zeal for the improvement of the amusements of the public.

\* \* This advertisement was first inserted on the 24th.



No. 94. — *To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle, October 25.*

Sir,

By your paper of this morning, I observe with great satisfaction that another gentleman, animated, like myself, by a zealous attachment to the rights and liberties of the subject, and anxious to promote the termination of a contest, protracted beyond any former example, and marked, on the part of the managers, by a conduct which cannot be too pointedly condemned, has taken the field, clad in brilliant and conspicuous armour, the champion of the public. He has treated the subject with such forcible eloquence, and has evinced such a profound knowledge of the law, as applicable to the late occurrences, that I might forbear to intrude farther on your attention. However, as your regard for the public opinion induces you, with a liberality which I trust the inhabitants of the metropolis will long bear in remembrance, to allot so considerable a portion of your paper to the discussion of a question in which all are so deeply interested, I will endeavour to continue my own feeble exertions, in support of what has become the general cause of Englishmen. In the preceding letters I flatter myself I have clearly ex-

plained, and illustrated also by authority, the principle on which the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre originally obtained and on which alone they can continue to enjoy their patent; namely, the ACCOMMODATION OF THE PUBLIC. Whether there has been actual misconduct on the part of the managers, such as to occasion a forfeiture of the patent, is a question on which I do not mean to pronounce an opinion, hoping it is at present *sub judice*; I have only stated what circumstances would, if established, amount to an abuse, and I have only called, and still call, for inquiry on the part of those by whom, in the discharge of their duty towards the crown and the public, it ought as I conceive to be instituted. I have no hesitation however in declaring that, if the patentees shall ever attempt to impose prices, which, upon due investigation, shall appear to be unreasonable, or if they shall venture to exclude any class of his majesty's subjects from the accustomed places allotted for their accommodation, I conceive they will run great risk of learning from judicial authority that they have incurred a forfeiture of their privileges. I would conjure the managers, if an appeal to their judgment were not a waste of language, not to con over, as they appear to do, the *mere words* of their patent; still less to publish particular passages, which, so far from tending to prop their fallen cause, only expose, more ostensibly, the folly by which they seem

to be actuated, and the narrow view in which they appear to contemplate their obligations and their rights. The meanest clerk in a solicitor's office could inform them, that the clause in their patent, authorising them to raise, on any occasion, the prices of admission, is controulable by the Court of Chancery ; that the exercise of the right must ever be regulated by reason ; that the insertion of such a power is perhaps more against them than a favourable circumstance, and that what relates to the liberty of peaceable representation, without let or molestation, is only the usual language of every grant, conferring no right nor privilege in itself, but only an expression of that which is implied by the grant itself. I feel it however incumbent on me to state, that I consider the proprietor of a theatre in a new distribution of an internal arrangement, and in enlarging its original capacity, authorised to allot a reasonable part of the building for the exclusive use of those who pay an adequate consideration for such private boxes, and therefore that any outcry on such a subject is both *unreasonable* and *illegal*. The public sustain no injury and have to complain of no grievance by such an arrangement, if the former place allotted for promiscuous resort, be still retained without material abridgment ; on the contrary they are benefited by the additional means that such private boxes afford of maintaining the splendour of the establishment, and of promoting the grandeur of theatrical exhibition. I am also satisfied

that an indictment may be supported by the persons renting such boxes against those who shall attempt, by insult or other molestation directed personally towards the lessees, to disturb them in the peaceable enjoyment of their interest in such property.

To return to the subject of increased prices, I am convinced, impartial persons will agree with me in thinking that the conduct of the managers has been throughout most injudicious. There exists not perhaps a nation on the earth so considerate as the people of Great Britain. None, whom, by a system of fair and open conduct, it is so easy not only to conciliate but to lead, and to engage in the most strenuous support of what they think is right, and ought in reason to be required. The experience of the last year affords proofs of beneficence and compassion in the inhabitants of the metropolis, which ought not to have been forgotten; and, after such splendid instances of generous humanity, so recently evinced, it appears to me, that they are entitled to expect, from the patentees, a conduct different from that to which they have been exposed. History does not afford one instance of grosser insult offered by managers of a theatre to a British public, or endured with more dignified patience. The firm, but peaceable, resistance which they have evinced, during a repetition of the most goading provocation,

tends, in my opinion, to increase the respect due to the national character. It shows, when contrasted with proceedings of former times, our progress in civilization, and certainly, from a remembrance of former excesses, ought to have produced a due impression on the minds of the managers. It is not, sir, my intention to investigate the propriety of an advance in the price of admission; my objection is more to the manner of exacting it than to the increase itself. It may or may not be reasonable, but, whilst I beg leave to express my own doubts on the subject, I must, on the part of the British public, enter a protest against the conclusiveness of a report made *ex-parte* upon a reference SO LONG DELAYED, SO RELUCTANTLY ADOPTED, and appealed to only as it were in *dernier resort* after the patentees had committed themselves towards the public, in a manner to render it of vital importance to obtain, at all events, and by whatever means, a colourable sanction for their proceedings. The accounts were made up principally by themselves, upon their own scale; and I cannot say that I have been particularly edified by the expressive zeal, which, on other occasions connected with the dispute, has been manifested by those in their employ. Why, sir, the reference was not thought of by the managers until after a week's experience of a fixed resolution, on the part of the metropolis, not to submit to what they were justified,

by the conduct adopted on the occasion, in considering to be an imposition. It was not proposed until every species of intimation, and every attempt to stifle the complaints of the public had, failed in succeeding to drown the voice of disapprobation, at what appeared a manifest deception—and it seems to be ultimately adopted only through the apprehension, that the roof of the theatre would be rent by a convulsion, which the obdurate insolence of an arrogant and conceited pedant, by an ill-judged pride, and pompous affectation of mistaken firmness, had so tremendously excited; a convulsion that, in description, may be compared to the dire commotion recorded by Homer, which made even Pluto tremble in the realms below—where

“Ghosts complain’d of violated night.”

It will not, indeed it cannot, be forgotten, in what manner the SABLE DIVINITY of the place, at length aroused by a shout which would have torn hell’s concave, came forth *ab penetralibus* with visage grim, and with amazement, which can be assimilated only to that experienced by the dark sovereign of the drear abodes—when

“Deep in the dismal regions of the dead,  
Th’ infernal monarch rear’d his horrid head,  
Leap’d from his throne, lest (JOHN BULL’S) arms should lay  
His dark dominions open to the day.”

Are the public to be bound by the result of a reference thus obtained, and against which they so solemnly *protested at the time*? Why, sir, upon the conflagration of the theatre, were not the circumstances which it is now pretended, rendered the required advance necessary, for the maintenance of the establishment, not prudently communicated as they might have been, without injury to the credit of the proprietors? Why was not the public mind judiciously prepared for the proposed advance, as it might have been, by a proper statement, at an earlier period? Why was not the mode of reference to respectable individuals, resorted to in the first instance, and made use of with less publicity of circumstances, the basis of an appeal, which might have proved successful, to the generosity of the British public? Why, especially, was an engagement made with a very amiable and meritorious female it is true, but an engagement neither necessary, nor expected, nor desired, at an immoderate salary, and *upon terms wholly inconsistent with that state of distress*, to which we are called upon to give such implicit credit upon the mere assertion of a manager, and without an offer even of submitting the matter to any mode whatever of investigation? Was such conduct calculated to persuade the people, that the demand was reasonable, and to induce an acquiescence in what was not solicited from motives of compassionate consideration; not urged upon a

representation of facts, and under the sanction of *indifferent* persons—competent to have formed a judgment upon the merits of the case, but imposed with the insolence of authority, exacted as the tribute of a despotic sovereign, and as the mandate of one whose sole will was to be the law?

If I have enlarged upon those circumstances, perhaps at an unreasonable length, it has been to avenge the honour of the country, in the face of Europe, and to vindicate the people of England from those insinuations, to which the language, adopted by other newspapers (obviously in the interests of the managers) might give rise—to the serious injury of the national character upon the Continent. The opposition manifested to the increase of prices has been excited only by the imprudence and the fault of the managers themselves. The public, in asserting their rights, have shewn a scrupulous anxiety to abstain from personal violence, and to confine their resistance within the strictest limits of the law, as received from their ancestors; as sanctioned by long usage, and as recognized even by the language of judicial determinations.

MODERATOR.



No. 95. — *To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.*

Sir, Oct. 27, 1809.

If any thing were wanting to produce a conviction of the absurdity, by which the conduct of the proprietors is marked, in every stage of their proceedings, the deficiency would be supplied by their last address.

What are we to think of the intellects of those, not to speak of their capacity to carry on the business of the theatre, who, after such a manifestation of the public displeasure at the increased prices, testified, without intermission, by signs so unequivocal, could affect in the first instance, not to comprehend the wishes of the audience, and, after the continuation of incessant uproar, during one month, increasing the exhibition of each succeeding night, have the cool assurance, in spite of the public voice thus unequivocally expressed by the frequenters of the theatre, to declare that they ARE HAPPY TO SEE that the measure, which they have sought to force upon the town, by means the most reprehensible, MEETS WITH THE APPROVAL OF A VERY LARGE MAJORITY OF THE COMMUNITY !!! In the name of common sense, and of ordinary calculation, by what criterion have the proprietors been able to effect this important discovery? By the receipts

of the theatre? By the concourse of splendid equipages 'to the place? By the confluence of the community to support the oppressed proprietors? By plaudits, proceeding from people of known respectability and independence, silencing the cries of discontent, which the will of the majority will always secure, by a principle of gravitation, peculiar to such assemblies? By the total absence of what is called rank and fashion, from the spot? By the universal groans and hisses, of crowded houses, assembled for no other purpose than to mark the most decided disapprobation, and every night successful in the attempt, in spite of any assistance, which the proprietors may have been able to obtain from prisons, stews, or galleys; or from that more formidable body instituted for other purposes than to over-awe a British audience, in the exercise of their lawful rights? Can it, sir, be believed, that if a large majority of the community approved the conduct of the proprietors, they would have allowed themselves to have been deprived, during a month, of a favourite amusement, and have permitted those scenes of confusion to be acted, which, if they have not witnessed, they have learnt from the daily reports of every newspaper? It is impossible! and, to a person, who can have the folly to deceive himself in such an imagination, and risk the consequences of indignation, if not already at its highest pitch, likely to be increased by such a declaration, which

can be considered only as an accumulation of insult on the public, one can only say—*jam de te actum est tempus abire tibi*;—such a person may write grammar, but never sense—nor is he capable of presiding over an establishment, the first duty of which is the conciliation of public opinion. To fill the measure also of absurdity, the public is told, that the propriety of the increased demand, is proved **AUTHORITATIVELY !!!** Why, sir, what does this mean? That the manager is to constitute a tribunal of his own without appeal, and that the public are bound by the ambulatory opinions of a few individuals, having no authority to proceed on their part, no power to arbitrate in the business, and appointed under circumstances, which denoted their most decided disapprobation of the proceeding. I have sufficiently enlarged on this particular in the last letter I have been induced to trouble you with. These additional observations on what appears to me the misconduct of the proprietors, and wishing to occupy that space which will, I trust, be better filled with a report of loyal demonstrations, amongst all descriptions of his majesty's subjects, of attachment to the private virtues of the sovereign, waving all considerations of political differences.

**MODERATOR.**

No. 96.—*To the Lord Chamberlain.*

(Sunday Advertiser, Oct. 29.)

My Lord,

We have refrained from addressing your lordship, because we hoped that the authority, vested in your office, would have been exerted for the preservation of the public peace, and the maintenance of the public rights. The scenes which have of late been exhibited at a theatre calling itself royal, and thereby implicating, in a degree, the executive government of the country in its measures, are without a precedent in the annals of this or any other country. These scenes have been suffered to continue for upwards of five weeks, without the interference of any authority, save a summary mode of proceeding by the Bow-Street magistrates. You know, my lord, that the proprietors of this theatre act under a royal patent, which patent, by the bye, could never have been intended as a perpetuity, as the nature of every other patent in this country, and even the charters of our great commercial bodies clearly evince; the patent of a theatre can never be considered as a GRANT IN PERPETUITY, because the patentee in that case might set the very laws at defiance, and laugh at the authority of those who first granted it.

Misconduct in the management of the concern, improper representations, and invasion of the rights of the public, for whose benefit the patent must have been first granted, or imposition in the demands of the proprietors, are all undoubted points upon which the public have a right to refer to the fountain of justice, in which the patronage and controul of a theatre are vested. We call then, my lord, upon you, to refer the present case of unheard-of insult, and contempt of public feeling, to his Majesty in Council, for his royal interference in behalf of his people, and for the purpose of preventing disturbances which may eventually lead to consequences little considered by shallow politicians,—to close, upon your own undoubted authority, the theatre against which the public complaints are raised. Is the public voice no longer to be heard? is it no longer a matter of importance to the government of the country? Are the public rights no longer to be attended to, but to be open and exposed to the speculations and machinations of an actor, whom the patronage of the public has enriched to the extent of purchasing a quarter share in a patent, the patentees of which have always been enabled to live in the sumptuous affluence of noblemen? The public calls for no undue sacrifice; it demands a detailed statement of the affairs of the theatre; not such a summary as was delivered to the committee appointed by the managers. It demands

that only, my lord, which every man in the state is called upon, in these times, to afford,—a disclosure of the actual state of his affairs. The absence of this, with the wresting from the public the best situation in the theatre for the purpose of PRIVATE BOXES, a scheme of immense profit to themselves, and a departure from the terms of their patent, which is for a PUBLIC theatre, form the ground and base upon which the public complaint against the managers is raised. The cause is radically bad, but the mode of prosecuting it is infinitely more so. The public, accustomed to express not only their disapprobation, where cause appeared for it in the conduct of a theatre, but to have their wishes obeyed by the great and admirable predecessors of the pretenders of the present school, has, on the late question, been unequivocal in the expression of its indignation! What has been the result? Individuals of that public have been selected, and, where unprotected by powerful friends, dragged to prison and shut up with felons and convicts! Public justice has been turned against the public, because it expressed its resolution to oppose imposition.

The house is nightly filled with orders,—money is refused at the door (mark, my lord) of a patent theatre, in order to fill the house with persons *hired to applaud*, and to *resist the public voice*, and to inform against that portion of the audience who have spirit enough to resist imposition and

resent insult. That it is the public voice is clear. What faction or party could keep alive such a sentiment as has been expressed to that theatre for THIRTY nights? Would the dependents of government dare thus to brave public opinion? Would ministers dare thus? Would the king himself venture thus to resist it, or tax us without the authority of our representatives? And shall stage-actors, my lord, and retired traders, who have realized fortunes sufficient to speculate in the profits of a theatre, dare to assume a power which the constituted authorities of the country would risk the salvation of the country by attempting? No, my lord, depend upon it, it is not the fear of fines or imprisonment, nor the introduction of engines, or instruments of torture, nor open trap-doors upon the public stage, that will awe into submission, or degrade to the characters of enslaved Parisians, those who have hitherto been a terror to corrupt or insolent managers, and are justly the arbiters of their conduct.

THE TOWN.

No. 97.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

To prevent any prejudice arising against me, from the report of the grand jury of Westminster, I beg leave, through the

medium of your paper, to state the following facts. During the present public contention with the managers of Covent Garden Theatre, I have not either been apprehended or held to bail by any police-officer, or any other person whatever, for any conduct I may have pursued there. I received no information from the managers of the theatre or their solicitor that any bill of indictment was preferred against me, and was entirely ignorant of any such measure having been adopted, until I perceived in the newspaper my name as one against whom a bill had been found. I trust, on investigation, I shall satisfactorily prove that I have much more cause to complain than to be complained of.

I remain, sir, &c. &c.

WILLIAM DWYER.\*

30th Oct.

No. 98. — *Mode proposed to raise a sum for the erection of a third Winter Theatre in the Metropolis.*

(The Times, October 30.)

To accomplish this object it is proposed to apply to parliament for a bill, giving the subscribers

\* Bookseller, Holborn. — Editor.



power to carry it into effect, by enabling them to raise a capital, not exceeding £200,000, by transferable shares of £100 each.

Proprietors to be divided into classes, entitling the original subscribers to advantages, according to the amount of their subscription, above their share in the dividend of profits.

Each original subscriber of one share to have a free admission for two years; two shares an admission for five years; three shares an admission for ten years; five shares an admission for twenty-five years; ten shares an admission in perpetuity.

The admissions to be transferable to a nominee for the whole term, or for any period not exceeding twice in one season.

The number of subscribers in each class not to exceed one hundred.

Profits to be annually divided among the shareholders, in proportion to their respective shares.

The affairs of the company to be managed by a board of directors, with power to appoint a sub-director, secretary, solicitor, acting manager, and all other officers and servants of the theatre.

The qualification of directors to consist in holding ten shares.

Directors to be chosen at annual meetings.

Qualification of voting at annual meetings to consist in holding five or more shares.

Two and a half per cent. on each share to be paid at the time of subscribing, for the purpose

of defraying the expenses of procuring an act of parliament, or such other legal authority as shall enable the proprietors to purchase land, tenements, and other property, on a proper site for the building; and also to defray the expenses of making surveys, plans, estimates, &c. The remainder to be made by calls or instalments, of not more than ten per cent. at any one time.

That the following gentlemen be of the committee for conducting the affairs of this undertaking, viz :

RT. HON. THOMAS SMITH, Lord Mayor elect.  
 HON. M. STEWART, M. P. RICHARD RAMSBOTTOM, Esq. M. P. RICHARD CUMBERLAND, Esq.  
 WILLIAM MARSH, Esq. CHARLES HUTTON, L. L. D. JOHN CURWOOD, Esq. JAMES TADDY, Esq. JOHN NEWMAN, Esq. CHARLES BROOK, Esq. JOHN WYATT, Esq.

No. 99. — *Theatrical Intelligence Extraordinary.*

(Morning Chronicle, October, 30.)

For the benefit of the proprietors,

On Tuesday evening last was rehearsed, for the first time, before the governor of the Bank of England and a select party, the well known farce of

“WHO’S THE DUPE,”

To which was added, as answerable to the above farce,

“ JOHN BULL.”

When the performers are *perfect in their parts*, the whole is intended to be brought out at the Theatre Royal Covent Garden, with *new flats, convenient trap-doors*, and other grand scenic decorations.

Previous to the farce, the two principal proprietors will sing a catch, by way of prologue to the farce.

\* \* \* The public are respectfully informed, that, as the proprietors, *conscientiously*, are determined not to receive more than six and a half per cent. on their capital, that nothing under *full price* will be taken.

VIVE LA FOLIE.

No. 100. — *O. P. and M. T.* — Offered to the notice of J. K.

(Morning Chronicle, 31st Oct. 1809.)

Submit, stubborn Kemble, submit, do, I pray,

Thy int'rest *alone* sure might tempt thee ;

For know, if for ever *O. P.* 's done away,

Thy playhouse will always be *M. T.*

H. G.

No. 101. — *To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.*

Sir,

I do not consider it necessary to add to the observations contained in my former letters, on the conduct of the managers, in exacting originally an increase of prices, without a due preparation of the public mind for the reception of an innovation introduced under circumstances likely to excite, if not to warrant, strong suspicion of unfairness, and of an inclination, on the part of the proprietors, to avail themselves of the catastrophe which had destroyed the rival house, under the idea that the public, in consequence of having only one theatre to which they could resort, would be the more likely to comply with their demands. I shall also forbear from making any remarks on the policy of prosecution against the individuals apprehended by the agents of the managers at the theatre, against the greater number of whom it now appears **NO CHARGE CAN BE SUBSTANTIATED**, the grand jury having repudiated, it should seem, **A GREAT MAJORITY OF THE BILLS PRESENTED!!!**

I leave others to expatiate upon the reflections to which this circumstance must give rise in the

mind of every Englishman who has witnessed the number of persons dragged, each evening of the performances, in a manner most brutal and ignominious, at the instigation of a box-keeper, or of more menial officers, to a nocturnal tribunal of magistrates, and, at the midnight hour, compelled to submit to the horrors of imprisonment, in case no friend happened by any fortunate accident to be near, or no compassionate stranger were inclined to run the risk of entering into a responsibility, in some cases, equal to that which would have been required even in a case of felony. The fact, that so many persons, seized under such circumstances, were enabled to find the sureties required, appears to me decisive proof, that the indignation of the public was general; and before, I am persuaded, that it has subsided, I shall expect the unequivocal testimony of crowded audiences paying for admission and assenting to the new prices, during so long a period as that which has intervened since the opening of the house. Such a resort to the theatre is the only true criterion that the assent of the town is voluntary, and not compelled by terror or apprehension of prosecution, *infirmis vincula caritatis*. I mean not, sir, to enter into any discussion with respect to the conduct of the magistrates, who have, in many instances, been misrepresented. They have certainly been placed in a situation of great difficulty, and

I think the public ought to be obliged to them for the attention which they have shewn, by dedicating the hours of repose to the discharge of their duties. Had they not attended, many persons arrested must have passed each night in confinement, who, by *their* assiduity, have been liberated, without soliciting the indulgence of those by whom they were seized. I now, sir, proceed, agreeably to my promise, to consider various points of law, which the controversy has raised, and which are of great public importance, as I consider them materially connected with the liberty of the British people. In the preceding letters, I have stated upon JUDICIAL AUTHORITY what I conceive to be the PRINCIPLE upon which the patent, vested in the present proprietors, was originally granted in 1660, and I have clearly shewn, that in contemplation of law, as expounded by a very eminent CHANCELLOR, it is held subject to a TRUST for the benefit of the PUBLIC. Whether, previously to the legislative regulations enacted for the government of the public shews, individuals had a right to open places for theatrical exhibition, or, in a more enlarged view of national liberty, the people of England have a right to call upon the crown to provide such entertainment, it is unnecessary to examine upon the present occasion. The proprietors, in order to exclude the public from any right of interference with the manage-

ment of the concern, have chosen, most injudiciously, to stand upon their patent. It is upon this ground also that I am ready to maintain the contest, as it is sufficient for the purpose of my argument, that these patents were admitted to have proceeded from the bounty of the crown, and to shew, by judicial authority, that the bounty was **CONDITIONAL** and not **ABSOLUTE**; as I have already established in my former letters.

The proprietors, therefore, having preferred to abide by their patent, subject to all those rules of law and equity, from which no exemption can ever be claimed, or is likely ever to be obtained, must be held bound by the election which they have made.

At the same time, I will readily grant an option to their advocates, and I should advise the proprietors to be more discriminate than they appear to have been in the selection of arrangements for the defence of their cause in the public prints.

The proprietors will not, I think, set up the right of the public against the crown, having, during a century, fatigued the crown with applications against the public, and, like greedy courtiers, fattened upon its indulgence. If, however, they shall be disposed to set up the crown against the public, it will become necessary to investigate the nature of the title under which

they claim ; and, without enlarging on the subject, I will remind them that, in the last century, when they attempted, previously to the statute, to seize an actor in the Hay-Market and prosecute him for vagrancy, their patent proved unsuccessful, and they were laughed out of Westminster-Hall amidst the shouts and execrations of an indignant multitude.

I will also refer them to CIBBER, a strenuous advocate of patent-right, who admits that, at the time of this controversy, "the common opinions abroad were that, if the profession of an actor was unlawful, it was not in the power of the crown to licence it; and if it were not unlawful, it ought to be free and independent as other professions, and that a PATENT FOR THE EXERCISE OF IT WAS ONLY AN HONOURARY FAVOUR OF THE CROWN, TO GIVE IT A BETTER GRACE OF RECOMMENDATION TO THE PUBLIC." The same author also admits that, upon the first formation of the company, "the court took cognizance of their private government, and that their particular differences, pretensions, or complaints, were generally ended by the king's personal COMMAND or DECISION." And, upon the union of the patents in 1684, "that it took place by the king's advice, which *perhaps* amounted to a COMMAND." These quotations, and indeed the whole of the book from which they are taken, deserve the serious consideration of the proprietors. They tend to



establish no such pretensions as those which have been advanced so imprudently on *their* behalf, and they show how impolitic has been their conduct, in raising any question, with respect to the fundamental principles of the establishment.—*Quâcunqve viâ datâ*, the argument is against them; and if their patent may have been cured of any original deficiency, by certain legislative declarations, which seem to imply a right in the crown to confer patents of this nature; if, in consequence of this mark of royal munificence and commendation, they have enjoyed exclusive advantages, and have received peculiar privileges, the protection which they have obtained has proceeded from an undertaking, on their part, towards the public, which they are bound to perform, in proportion to the favour which they have experienced, in confirmation of a title so questionable in its original creation.

Closing, therefore, my remarks on the conduct of the proprietors, I shall proceed to the consideration of the principle, which I asserted in a former letter, respecting the right of the public to express their dissatisfaction in a theatre at the conduct of a manager. To prevent, however, misconception or misrepresentation, I think it right to observe, that it is not my intention to enter at all upon the merits of the particular cases which wait the determination of a competent tribunal. The number of bills, found by a grand jury, bear

a small proportion to that of presentments and commitments, and many instances may have occurred, in which an indictment may be successfully maintained. I can conceive many such cases, in the confusion which has prevailed. Persons engaged in pugilistic contests within the theatre, real or pretended, destroying the furniture of the house, pelting performers, insulting persons by opprobrious names, because seated in particular parts of the house, and not offending the audience by indecorous behaviour on their part; exhibiting obscene placards, but especially pictures with gibbets and the portraits of individuals, even although proprietors,—from the tendency of such signs to provoke an indignant audience to acts of violence, if not to murder: such persons, and their abettors, are certainly offenders in the eye of the law. Nor, notwithstanding my difference of opinion even with yourself, can I consider those, who have raised an outcry, to the extent which is said to have prevailed against the PRIVATE BOXES, not to be exempt from its animadversion. I also conceive any person, who may have enticed others to the theatre, having no opinion of their own upon the subject, and merely to support them in opposition to the increased prices, not to be free from the danger of prosecution. Such cases as I have put are manifestly illegal; and, however the parties concerned may, in some degree, be excused in the consideration of ultimate punishment,

from the nature of the provocation given by the managers ; and, however the proprietors, by misconduct on their part, and by the gratuitous introduction of persons to over-awe, by violence, the audience, in the lawful expression of their displeasure, if the fact be established by evidence, may not be in a situation to deserve approbation for instituting a prosecution, as perhaps to obtain a *criminal information* against the supposed offenders ; yet I conceive such cases amount, in law, to an offence against the public peace, and may be the subject of an indictment. The opinion that I shall steadfastly maintain is, that the majority of the audience may lawfully express their displeasure (to the full extent of the accustomed mode in which displeasure is usually declared at a theatre) at the conduct of the managers, in demanding an increased price of admission, does not imply a right to commit the indecencies of savage dancing, of brutal sparring, and of tumultuous concitation ; although, with respect to the speeches delivered on such an occasion, much must depend upon the import of the precise words used by the speaker.

Such, sir, are my impressions upon the subject, and as such, in the discharge of any official functions, I should have stated them distinctly to a grand jury, at a quarter-sessions. Whether I should have noticed the existence of the dispute in a general charge is with me a matter of considerable doubt ; at all events, I should have

sought merely to enlighten a grand jury, by leading their minds to a due discrimination, and I should have cautiously abstained from any declaration which might be thought to pre-judge any question which might be brought before me. In judicial determination upon the particular facts, I certainly should never have attempted to lay down a general principle of law, as applicable to every case, when the decision must eventually be governed by a nice attention to any special circumstances: nor should I have delivered a speech, which some of the contending parties would have sought immediately to circulate triumphantly amongst all classes of society, as a judicial determination in their favour. The industrious tradesmen, clubs, and mechanics, of the metropolis, have as founded a claim to be assisted against imposition, in an attempt to abridge their amusements, by an increase of the usual prices, as the patentees of the theatre to the protection of their property against rioters and incendiaries. I shall continue the subject in my next letter.

MODERATOR.

No. 102. — *Advertisement.*

SUBSCRIPTION THEATRE. — The public is respectfully informed that the subscription for peti-

tioning parliament for leave to erect a theatre in the metropolis, is FULL.

By order of the committee,  
Henry Fry, Solicitor.

Nov. 2, 1809.

No. 103.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

I have hitherto been a silent observer of the riots, (if the just and unanimous resistance of an imposition by a free people, can with propriety be so called,) which commenced with the opening of the new Theatre Covent Garden, and have since continued, with little or no abatement, not caring to interfere, though my own private opinion had always been decidedly adverse to the managers. But, in reading in your paper this morning the transactions at Bow-street respecting Mr. Ridley and Mr. Clifford and his friends, who were all apprehended precisely for the same offence, the conduct of the magistrate appears to me so inconsistent, that I hope to be allowed, through the medium of your paper, to offer a few observations on the subject. Mr. Ridley, it appears, was ordered to find bail; but Mr. Clifford and his friends were, without hesitation, discharged. What can be the reason of this distinction, I am utterly at a loss to divine. Here

is the inconsistency I complain of, and which must be apparent to every person endowed with common sense. If the magistrate considered the behaviour of Mr. Ridley, in the theatre, last night, such as to justify him in requiring bail, then why did he discharge Mr. Clifford and his friends for the same offence without it? if, on the contrary, he required Mr. Ridley to give bail, merely from the circumstance of his expressing his determination, at the office, to follow up the same resistance, I should be glad to be informed, if his conduct was not illegal last night, how he can be punished for repeating it whenever he may think proper? or by what law, either statute or common, a person can be prosecuted for the frequent repetition of a legal (or at all events not an illegal) transaction.

As I am upon the subject, I beg to trespass a few moments longer on your time. I do not profess to be a lawyer, only to know as much as every man ought to know of the laws of his country; in case of a breach of the peace, a magistrate is empowered to call on the offenders to give security to keep it for the future, and, on failure, to commit them until they do so. I apprehend the offenders may also be indicted for the breach, but then they cannot be confined until a bill is found against them by a grand jury, when a bench, or judge's, warrant may be issued for their apprehension; until a bill is found they are

to be considered innocent. Suppose for instance, a person is charged with a breach of the peace, immediately after a session, and for want of bail is confined till next session, when an indictment is preferred against him, but no bill is found; the poor fellow would, in this case, suffer a long imprisonment without having committed any offence. If such were law, it would indeed be a serious infringement on the liberty of an Englishman.

If the disturbances at the theatre do (but I think they cannot) amount to such a breach of the peace as a magistrate may take cognizance of, then the magistrate ought to call upon the accused to give security to keep the peace (not to answer an indictment); and, if the managers think proper to resort to the expedient of an indictment, the magistrate has no right to call on the accused for bail at all. As I before observed they are supposed to be innocent till a bill is found against them, and I have no doubt but every one of these persons, who have been thus called on for bail, but against whom no bill has been found, may maintain actions for false imprisonment, not only against Mr. Read, but also against those persons who were officious enough to take them into custody; and I think they are great blockheads if they do not.

W. T.

Russell-square,

Nov. 2, 1809.

No. 104.—*For the Morning Herald.*

Mr Editor,

As the following reasons, which were deemed sufficient to justify Mr. Thelwall in advancing the price of admission to his lectures in 1796, may have some weight with those who are discontented with similar conduct in the managers of Covent Garden Theatre in 1809, I beg leave to request their insertion.

R. F.

Mr. Thelwall states, in justification of the rise, that the former price of admission would scarcely pay the enormous rent of his premises, and the very heavy expenses he had incurred in fitting up his lecture-room, with others incident thereto. "Casual observers" says he, "first exaggerate the receipts, and then set down all for profit; and though, with the candid part of mankind, this alteration will require no apology, I shall briefly explain the necessity of it, to obviate the cavils of those who seem to suppose that they have a right to dictate the price, at which others shall dispose of their talents and exertions. The fact is, that those friends, who reflected upon what I had suffered and were conscious of the incumbrances which had been heaped upon me," (the nature of which Mr. T. explains,) "almost unanimously advised me



to advance the price of admission to my lectures; a circumstance which, if there were no other reason, would be justified on the single foundation of that enormous increase in the price of every article of comfort and necessity, which makes it the duty of every individual, (whether he labour with his head or his hands,) to demand a proportionate increase in the wages of his industry." Vide Prospectus of a Course of Lectures, by John Thelwall, published, February 2, 1796, by Symonds, Paternoster-row.

Who, that is not blindly prejudiced, can deny that these arguments, which in 1796 were esteemed reasonable and sufficient, are not infinitely more applicable to the year 1809?

Nov. 3, 1809.

No. 105. — *To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.*

Nov. 4, 1809.

Sir,

In my last, I thought it incumbent on me to express my sentiments upon those points, on which it is competent to the managers of the Theatre Royal, Covent-Garden, to insist, in order to evince the impartiality by which I have been actuated throughout the controversy. I regret that it has arisen; and, if I have taken

an active part on the occasion, it has proceeded from an anxious wish to contribute towards the settlement of a dispute, which, in the primary aspect of the thing, not only seemed to menace the establishment of the theatre with certain destruction, but likely to produce consequences the most serious to the tranquillity of the metropolis. The letters which I have addressed to you, and which, though frequently of a length perhaps unwarrantable, you have inserted with a liberality that distinguishes your paper as devoted to the cause of the people, whenever it shall appear that they have reasonable grounds of complaint, have attracted in some degree the attention of the public. I am aware of the circumstances, and it only increases the difficulty, which the writer experiences in continuing his correspondence.

“Ne

*Pecceat ad extremum redendus et ilia ducat.”*

That the frequenters of the pit, persons principally engaged in the laborious pursuits of commercial industry, or of official duties, men whose only relaxation consists in the amusements afforded by the theatre, whose incomes are confined, who feel the pressure of the times, and whose limited means allow no other mode of converse with the world than by witnessing its

transactions on the stage; that such a class of the community, accustomed to regulate their expenses by a nice scale of calculation, should feel a repugnance to acquiesce in the proposed augmentation is natural: that the habits of those persons must lead their minds to an accurate estimation of profit and loss, upon adventures of every description, is a reasonable presumption; and that those who resort to the pit of the theatre form that part of the audience which may be said to be truly the most respectable, and who are induced to resort to such a place, not for the gratification of vicious propensity, not for the purposes of dissipation, but with the laudable desire of receiving rational amusement, of retiring soberly to rest, and returning with increased spirits to their daily occupation at the dawn of the ensuing day; that such a description of persons deserve the attention and respect and the support of the proprietors, is surely a proposition which it cannot be necessary to argue at any length. But I am disgusted, more than I can express, when I see the *servants of the public*, for such are the patentees of Covent Garden Theatre, (and even the *ministers of the crown* are not ashamed to adopt that denomination,) attempting to cast discredit on those by whom the theatre is principally supported, and who prove, in general, the most moral, the most orderly, the most polite, part of the audience, and

this merely because their own *good sense*, which stands in need of no bank-directors, or of legal dignitaries, however entitled to confidence or respect, has convinced them, that a grievous imposition has been practised upon, and a grievous error committed by, the referees, in considering that to be capital embarked, in a *perilous concern*, which, upon more accurate and less precipitate investigation, is found, it should seem to be, in fact *profit*, and to be the *premium* paid for an original share in the undertaking, in consequence of its flourishing state, or of collateral speculations, with which the public had no concern, and towards which they have already more than sufficiently contributed!!! The pretence of a reasonable cause for the augmentation of the accustomed prices cannot stand one moment, and must be well known to the proprietors. Hence the cause of the conduct which they have adopted, and which the *good sense* of the public has fully appreciated.

In my last letter, I thought it not only consistent with my profession, but also incumbent on me to point out those cases in which the law would be transgressed, by riotous comportment in the theatre. With respect to the general principle, which regards the rights of the public to express their disapprobation of the conduct pursued by the proprietors, what I proposed to have addressed has been anticipated repeatedly

by abler persons than myself. I therefore shall compress my observations, and I am sensible that they will appear more to be borrowed from those who have preceded me than to be novel in themselves, although they are the result of original reflection and perhaps I may be allowed to flatter myself with the imagination, that I was the first to open a view of the question, which may have been of service to the public, and might have benefited the proprietors themselves, had they condescended to honour the suggestions stated in my first letter with attention.

To me, sir, there appears to have been committed a fundamental error in this business; *hactenus error in hac causâ*. Gentlemen have wished to reason from analogy where none existed, and in a case perfectly anomalous. They have endeavoured to compare the case to that of brewers, of innkeepers, of carriers, of victuallers, of manufacturers, and of the whole class of traders, and other speculators. Yet nothing can be more dissimilar in principle; and the application of the law, by which other concerns are undoubtedly affected, is, in the case of a theatre, impossible. The whole argument, on the part of the proprietors, has hitherto turned upon what is called a *petitio principii* thoughout;—to use an English expression they have only begged the question. The law, as it regards the theatre, is *sui generis*; it depends solely upon custom and convention.

This case is one in which it may be truly said, "CONSUEUDO FACIT JUS." There are many instances of such legal institutions not expressed in any code, but fully established by general understanding and public agreement. The law of the hustings at elections is also a customary law, and perhaps the only case in point. Is there an instance of an indictment *for hissing and hooting a candidate for the suffrages of the public*, when no personal violence has been attempted? Would the idea of such a prosecution be endured, or would a commitment of persons expressing their disapprobation of a candidate, by the loudest possible clamour, as rioting, be attempted by any magistrate? And yet do not all the garbled extracts from our law-writers, which have been so grossly perverted on the present occasion, and even the *abstract* doctrines of the law, apply to such a case. In the name of British freedom, are we to have Bow-Street officers, bom-bailiffs, and other catchpoles, presiding at elections, seizing the inhabitants of Westminster, and dragging them to the offices of the magistrates for wearing cockades, or surrounding, with the usual cries, the hustings of Covent Garden? What, sir, are the limits of the doctrines to be advanced upon this subject, and to what do they not obviously and necessarily tend?

Sir, a principal reason why the law, applicable to other concerns, cannot avail within a theatre,

is this, that which would in any other case amount to a riot, and be tumultuous, is lawful within its walls. Clamour is allowed; and the only question that can arise is whether it proceed from the MAJORITY OF THE AUDIENCE. If the majority be dissatisfied, they may lawfully express their disapprobation, provided they abstain from violence against the persons of others, or against the furniture of the house. The idea that, by payment of money, they abandon their right of expressing their displeasure, is the most extravagant absurdity that can enter the mind of man. Why, sir, if we adopt this novel idea of contract, (or, as I am told, Mr. Kemble once expressed himself, of *\*visiting* the performers,) how can we be at liberty to hiss a play we may disapprove? We may stay away, forsooth! Is this, sir, language to be held to the people of England?

Upon what principle, however, is the distinction to be taken, that, having seen announced on the play-bills a performance that we dislike, and having gone into the house with a knowledge that

\* I am credibly informed, by a gentleman on whom I can rely, that, upon the revival, some years ago, of the *Revenge*, in which Mr. Kemble acted the part of Zanga, the audience in the pit, tired by the length of the monologues, became noisy; on which Zanga coolly advanced, and addressed them in the following words: "Ladies and Gentlemen,—We are much flattered by the honour of this visit, but we fear the object of it will be *disappointed* unless you favour us with some attention."

it is to be represented, we have not entered into a contract (or an *assumpsit* as it has been called) no doubt for the purpose of writing intelligibly to the frequenters of public-houses\* to remain quiet during the whole of the representation, and to permit the miserable trash of a most wretched and starving poetaster, who may have given false or partial evidence to promote the interest of a proprietor, or to linger out the third night as the reward of meritorious services thus rendered against the public:—but I have already exceeded all reasonable limits.

MODERATOR.

No. 106.—*Covent Garden Theatre.*

(From Redhead Yorke, 4th Nov.)

Sir,

Feeling already much indebted to you for many important facts relative to the new theatre, Covent Garden, it will not, I trust, appear irregular to request, of yourself, or of some of your numerous correspondents, who may be in the secret, an explanation of the apparently absurd statement now before the public, on the profits of that theatre. Far be it from me, to reflect on any

\* Vide Bell's Weekly Messenger.



one of those gentlemen composing the committee, who, I am ready to believe, have decided with impartiality, according to the documents laid before them. But I would ask you, sir, or any other person, whether you would embark a large capital in a concern, in which there is a great risk, to obtain only six 3-eighths per cent. or, on doing away that risk by insurance, reduce the profits to three and a half per cent. ; when, in the funds, you could have nearly five per cent. without any hazard. The emperor of the a—ches may easily reimburse himself, by the salary he would grant, as one of the proprietors, to his invaluable self, in the double capacity of player and manager ; but how Mr. Harris or any other, concerned as proprietors only, can be content with such trifling remuneration for the great trouble and risk, incidental to a concern of such magnitude, is, I own, beyond my comprehension. Any light, therefore, you can throw on the subject, will greatly oblige

A LOVER OF JUSTICE.

No. 107.—*Holy Insurrection in Covent Garden Theatre.*

(From Redhead Yorke, 4th Nov.)

There are two distinct periods in the struggles at this theatre, which must not be confounded

together—the first relates to the glorious and successful effort to exclude the detestable Italian slave, Angelica Catalani, from foraging upon a *British* stage; the other to the undecided contest between the public and the managers, respecting the increase of prices of admission. I shall offer a few words upon each of these epochs.

It had been announced, by the proprietors of the theatre, that the wife of the French spy, Vallebrequé, was engaged to amuse and enlighten a *British* auditory, with her pickpocket-notes of broken English. The effrontery and rascality of this conduct formed a theme of public animadversion long before the theatre had opened; so that nothing remained, when it did open, but to carry into practical effect, the unanimous wishes of the country. Fortunately, the ungrateful conduct of this avaricious foreign cormorant happened to be detected, just when she was engaged to pollute the British stage by her presence. A benefit was to be given at the opera-house for the Middlesex-hospital, one of the most charitable institutions in the metropolis; and Catalani was solicited to contribute her vocal powers in aid of the charity. The wretch refused her assistance, although great part of the difficulties with which the institution struggled, was occasioned by the very extensive relief given there to *foreigners*, for whom, exclusively, one of the wards of the charity is appropriated. This refusal roused the public indig-

nation, who would not brook the idea, that a pensioner of Buonaparte, that a vagabond reptile, who had obtained an immense fortune through the liberality of the British people, should turn her back upon public charity. Degenerate and base fools as we are, we have not yet learnt to pardon uncharitableness. Whole volumes might have been written to demonstrate the folly, the danger, and the wickedness of tolerating these foreign sycophants, and they would have produced no effect, except contempt for the writer. This was my case. Catalani no sooner landed in England, than I opened a fire upon her; and why? Because, as I then told the public, I saw in the French official paper, the *Moniteur*, the very day on which Satan spewed her upon our coast, that this woman had been *honoured* by a pension from Buonaparte. In vain I appealed to every sentiment of patriotism, to every motive of public obligation, to every apprehension of evils denounced, to the honour of the British name itself, against the admission of this foreigner. My efforts were fruitless, though exerted unremittingly, and strengthened by the support of several generous and patriotic volunteers in the cause. The intervention, however, of this refusal to sing for a public charity, effected all the good that reason could not accomplish before: a storm was raised, which it was obvious to every one, except to the managing bravos of Covent Garden Theatre, would ultimately compel this Italian

pickpocket, with her insolent and blackguard spouse, member of the Legion of Honour, *alias Chevalier d'Industrie*, to get out of the kingdom with all convenient expedition. That detestable coxcomb, John Kemble, could not or would not, in his avarice, perceive the disposition of the people; and though, by engaging an Italian singer, he virtually acknowledged his incapacity to entertain a British audience, he, nevertheless, resolved to force her, in defiance of public opinion, upon "the national theatre." The fortunate concurrence of the refusal to sing for the benefit of the Middlesex hospital, brought about that revolution, for which some of us had so zealously contended. Not that any change was ever expected to take place in that hermaphrodite race of feeble creatures, classed in natural history under the name of *people of fashion*; as they are not of the genuine British growth, of course, no man of sense condescended to care about their sentiments. But a revolution in the minds of men, who are capable of acting as they think, was an important event; and the government, which had shamefully permitted the introduction of these foreigners, received, at length, a lesson from the people, which at once demonstrates the unexhausted stock of public spirit in the country, and brands with reproach, those who had neglected to set an example of it. Notwithstanding the illiberal refusal of Catalani to sing for the public charity, more than *two thousand* pounds were netted; and the people

had the satisfaction to draw a contrast between Mrs. Billington, Braham, and all the other English performers, who voluntarily offered their aid on the occasion, and that foreign woman, who thus requited, with disdain, the liberality of the public. This act brought matters to issue, and her subsequent attempt to remove the unfavourable impression, which was becoming general against her, only made her character and her race more hateful. When she found that her reputation was gone, and, as a necessary consequence, that her expected hoards would vanish also, she got up a little piece which sets in so full a light, the low, intriguing character of a rapacious and cunning Italian, that we must not pass it over. Oh! that mine enemy would write a book! was a wish of former times; I am content when mine enemy writes such a letter as the following.

“SIR,—As it is not my disposition to boast of *the good I may have done*, I leave my conduct, in this respect, to the judgment of those who, since my coming to England, have solicited my assistance, and to the governors of many charitable institutions. With regard to the Middlesex hospital, I feel that my behaviour has been irreproachable; and, that the numerous reflections which have been made thereon, have originated from a misunderstanding. Dr. Poignand, in a very vague manner, asked me if I should be *unwilling* to sing for the benefit of the Middlesex hospital; when

I informed him of the circumstances which prevented me from singing in public, and at the same time, requested him to let the directors know, that I wished my name to be put on the list of subscribers for 20 guineas (which was on the 7th instant,) to prove the sincere desire I had of contributing to the support of that excellent institution. When I perceived, that my performance would be more acceptable than a subscription, I requested the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, to allow me to sing for the benefit of certain charitable establishments; and, as they, with the greatest willingness, have consented, I shall have the heartfelt satisfaction of singing in a concert, on the 6th of July, at the Pantheon, the produce of which will be applied to the use of public charities. On this happy occasion, I shall sing four of *my most celebrated Italian airs*, and a national song. *If I have deferred announcing this intention till now*, it was only that it might not interfere with the concert of the Middlesex hospital.

A. CATALANI."

Now reader! mark the time when this sly thing brought out her apology — *not until the day after the death of Dr. Poignand, the physician of the Middlesex hospital*. The moment she discovered that this gentleman could not detect her falsehoods, she took up her pen, and indites her impudent attempt at justification. It is to be observed, that Vallebrequé, the husband of Catalani,

declared, that he had, a fortnight before this epistle was written, sent twenty guineas to the governors of the charity by the hand of Dr. Poignand, which sum they "would not receive." This statement, the collector of the hospital declared to be false, he having seen Vallebrequé's letter, *tendering* twenty guineas, but *sending none*, and of course none could be refused. Then he says, "Dr. Poignand *ought* to have paid the money, for my name is always good for that sum." Notwithstanding, it is a fact, that he offered at first, to give ten guineas only; and, after an hour's altercation, he agreed to deposit the twenty, on condition, that his receipt should be ante-dated, on the 7th instead of the 20th of the month, which receipt he afterwards exhibited, and entrapped some of the daily papers to announce as a proof that the money was paid on the 7th! But dead men, every Italian knows, tell no tales: therefore Catalani was at liberty to write what she pleased. With all her subtlety, however, she only made bad worse; her epistle settled her character in the opinion of the people. Unluckily for her, but fortunately for the credit of the national taste, just at the time she was become the object of opprobrium, her contract with the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre got wind; and the cry was loud and universal against this scandalous bargain, by which British performers were to be excluded from the theatre, and the prices of admis-

sion were to be raised *on account of the high wages which this woman was to receive*. The voice of reproof was heard, without intermission, from the month of June, until Covent Garden Theatre opened. An opposition so general and continued, and founded upon so many solid reasons, ought to have some influence upon any speculators, especially upon such as derive their emoluments from the public opinion. But the proprietors were either indifferent to public opinion, or affected to be so; for it is impossible to suppose that the whole British press should be wrong, when the papers which do not agree upon other topics, were of one accord upon this. They were, therefore, the organs of the public sentiment; and there was surely plenty of time for the proprietors to re-consider their engagement, and to annul it when found to be displeasing to those on whose bounty they depended for their future success. Instead of this, they persevered; they opened their theatre at augmented prices, in defiance of the public opinion, loudly expressed for more than four months. It is clear, then, that they are the original aggressors, that they have provoked the commotions which nightly agitated the theatre, and that, instead of appearing as prosecutors against their masters, they ought to be indicted, tried, cast, and pilloried for a *misdemeanour*.

Let us farther examine how this part of the case



stands. The proprietors agreed to give the Italian the enormous salary of *four thousand pounds and a benefit*, for murdering our native tongue before our faces. In consequence of this contract, the proprietors, by way of a *quid pro quo*, levy a contribution upon the boxes and pit, that they may be reimbursed for the *pleasure* which they meant to afford us. We say, that we are much obliged to them for their good intentions, but that we are the best judges what will give us pleasure, and also what we ought to pay for the said pleasure. Accordingly, the clamour was beyond description, every night, until that hollow voice, emitted from the sepulchral stomach of John Kemble, murmured that Catalani's engagement, "being unacceptable to the public, was at an end." Fool! was he so devoid of foresight as not to discover, months before the curtain drew up, that the contract behind the curtain was unacceptable to the public? The attempt to force this foreigner upon the people was a specimen of audacity for which *alone*, the proprietors ought to forfeit their monopoly. I hope that the counsel for the persons about to be tried will ply this argument well and home. Let them not forget to have the alien-act read in court, and let the secretary of state for the home department be subpoenaed, in order that the jury may know upon whose authority Vallebrequé and his *cara sposa* were admitted into this country. Next, let the

*Moniteur*, which announced the pension conferred upon her by Bonaparte, be *read*; I fear it cannot be offered in evidence, but it may be interwoven in an address to the patriotism of a jury. These will be important facts to dwell upon. But to return.

The contract with Catalani having been annulled by the voice of the people, and that seraph's "desire of singing at the new *national* theatre," (by which it is to be inferred that she very properly considers the Italian opera as an anti-national one,) for which she was "induced to forego every interested consideration," (pray ma'am explain your idea of *disinterestedness*,) "to enjoy that satisfaction," being happily frustrated, it follows that the proprietors put, thereby, into their pockets, *four thousand* pounds, *plus* the receipts of the house for one night. It also followeth that, out of gratitude to that generous public which did them this favour, they ought instantly to have reduced the prices of admission. But, it may be said, that they were losers by the disappointment of their speculation, and that, if the Italian had been permitted to squall, their profits would have been greater. To this there is one plain answer—ask the proprietor of the opera-house what company Catalani attracted at the latter period of her engagement there, and you will find that she actually performed before thin houses. It is ridiculous therefore to suppose that the proprie-

tors of Covent Garden could have been reimbursed for their foolish bargain; consequently, they were gainers by their contract being made void, and the public had a right to demand that they too should participate in the common advantage, and that the additional price which the proprietors endeavoured to extort from them upon this ground, should be abated. However, when the public persisted in calling for the reduction, the proprietors *then* shifted their position, and stubbornly rejected, not unmixt with insolence on the part of the managers, the popular wish, upon the plea of the expense they had incurred in building a theatre that was worthy of this great metropolis. Of the *worthiness* of the theatre, I shall treat anon; at present, I confine myself to the plea. It is here necessary to remark that the first struggle between the public and the managers related to the engagement of Catalani, which struggle does infinite credit to the patriotism and good sense of the people. Upon this point there was scarcely a difference of opinion. The present contest is confined solely to the increased prices of admission; and the proprietors have not shewn themselves as deficient in dexterity in this respect as in their contract with the Italian. They contrived to get a select committee of respectable gentlemen to inspect their books; and they also contrived to lay before this committee just so much of their affairs as was necessary to secure a conclusion in their behalf. In fact, it was im-

impossible for those gentlemen to come to any other conclusion, since they could determine only upon such vouchers as were submitted to them. But the whole truth was artfully suppressed, as the public easily perceived when the average number of years of estimate of profit and loss, included one whole year, during which the proprietors necessarily incurred a loss by having the performances at another theatre. These inquiries, however, are foreign from our present object, which is, to shew that the proprietors have been guilty of repeated breaches of the peace, and that they are the immediate causes of the insurrections which nightly disturb the representations at the theatre.

That the *inside* of the theatre is *worthy* of this great metropolis, I deny; first, because I have seen much more elegant and convenient theatres abroad; secondly, because it seems to have been constructed in order to exclude a great part of the audience from *seeing* the performances; thirdly, because that cannot be a *national* theatre, in which a portion is set apart for the exclusive accommodation of a few families; fourthly, because it is unworthy of a great metropolis, or any civilized nation that, in a public theatre 28 little brothels should be let at the rate of £5600 *per annum*, in open violation of morality and public decency. These are substantial reasons for disputing the worthiness of the theatre; and I will add another, namely, that no theatre can be worthy this na-

tion which is a mere monopoly of insipid dullness, and where nothing is to be seen or heard, but tinsel in dress, shews, sing-song, and nonsense.

We now come to the question, whether the manner in which the audience have expressed their disapprobation be such as to have justified the strong measures resorted to by the proprietors? It certainly is a singular case to behold those, who literally are fed, and who live by the bounty and indulgence of the public, dictate to their benefactors, and assume the airs of their superiors. One would almost think, from John Kemble's behaviour, that he fancies himself a gentleman. No drunken slave during a Roman Saturnalia ever presumed, notwithstanding the tolerated licentiousness of those times, to approach his master with the pert impudence with which this fellow has made his appearance before us, his masters. That we should be affronted by this mimic, whose profession, in point of respectability, is far below that of a slave, is insufferable. Yet, the indignities we experience, we have partly brought upon ourselves; for, we have shewn how easy it is for any impostor to dupe us. To the disgrace of the taste and judgment of a British audience, a boy, whom by a perversion of language they called the Young Roscius, was allowed to realize an immense fortune, although there be not a school-boy who could not perform as well, and there are many who can

perform better than he did. Nay, the rage was carried to such an excess that, even the fair sex forgot the gentleness of their nature, and applied very hard words against those who had the misfortune to differ from them, and who despised the public folly. Being present myself, with some friends, one night when Master Betty was murdering Hamlet, and laughing, as every person did, who was not infected by the popular frenzy, at the ridiculous farce, a lady in the next box whispered to a gentleman, sitting beside her, "*those beasts don't like him.*" In the same manner, John Kemble has run a long and precious rig upon our stage. Although there be several players who far excel him in acting, the fellow has usurped the absolute dominion of the theatre, and with equal vanity and impudence, he has brought himself to believe that he is a good actor. If a pompous strut, an unmeaning glare of the eye, projected toward the boxes as if he were counting the seven shilling pieces instead of attending to the action of the play; if an intonation of the voice more ghostly and frightful than the monotony of a ventriloquist, or a groan from a charnel-house; if a frequently false emphasis, an unharmonious cadence, and a coxcomical alteration of the text of the author, constitute the elements of a good actor, John Kemble deserves to be the undisputed King John of the vagabonds. But why should I

make my reader's head H, with an enumeration of the histrionic excellencies of this buffoon of human nature? It is only for the sake of calling his attention to the cause of the insults we are receiving at his hands. Had the incomparable Garrick, had Betterton, or had that chaste, correct, and harmonious, speaker, Brereton,\* given themselves such airs, as this fellow has assumed, we might have overlooked them, in consideration of the delight and instruction we had received from their various powers. But, it is enough to drive one to madness, to see this lump of monotony, come forward and tell us, who have made his fortune, that we shall ruin him if we do not allow him to ruin us. I do not mean by this term, that our purses would be emptied by his exactions; but that our taste and manners would be vitiated, by our being compelled to pay exorbitantly for our presence at the representation of such execrable stuff as we have seen exhibited upon the stage, under the management of this caterwauler. Is it not an unparalleled instance of audacity, in a free country too, that the spectators of a play should be dragged, like felons, before the magistrate, merely for expressing, in any way, their disinclination to be choused, when those who drag them are the greatest disturbers of the public peace?

\* Whom I must ever mention with affectionate regard.

I shall here mention a fact on which the public may rely. It is not true, as is generally supposed, that the police-officers, interfered, at first, in the theatre. The scoundrels who seized the persons first carried to Bow-street, *were not police-officers, but a gang consisting of all the labourers in the service of the theatre:* so that the public peace was violated, in the first instance, by the play-house people. And I would know, whether it be consistent with the preservation of the peace, that police-officers should be called in by one party, to maintain the peace, while the same party employ a swarm of boxing Jews and other ruffians to violate it, and to assault the persons of his Majesty's lieges? On the fourth night of the performances at Covent Garden, I went to the play. The holy insurrection was then in the fullness of its patriotic glory. I hailed it as a new æra — as a revival of the golden age of the true British character. Never was music more sweet, nor concert more melodious to mine ear than the dulcet notes which I then heard. It was my hour of triumph, for I then gained the reward of all my labours against these foreign miscreants. The scene was also sublime; yes, it was truly sublime, to behold an immense multitude roaring and rolling like the waves of the ocean, in tremendous harmony, and observant of order in the midst of universal uproar. But one useful instrument was wanting to complete the scene, to warm the heart, and exhilarate the mind.



For a purpose easy to be understood, it has been latterly bruited, that the jacobins are at the bottom of all this. Mercy upon us! when will these restless imps be quiet! if there be a clap of thunder, jacobins are the cause of it; if it blow an hurricane, the jacobins lend their cheeks in puffing; if an earthquake shake the earth, jacobins are sure to be at work below; if our fields be inundated, the jacobins have contributed to increase the waters! I am sick of this lying nonsense. If jacobinism have shewn its cloven foot, I will tell you where you will find it — in the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre. For the insolence and pertinacity of the vagabonds, have a tendency to level all distinctions, and to destroy all subordination, by placing servants in a condition to dictate to their masters. There is the jacobinism that is afoot. It is to be seen *behind* the curtain; for never was loyalty more conspicuous than *before* it. I was present at the holy insurrection on Thursday night, for the express purpose of finding out jacobinism, because you must all remember the old proverb “set a, &c.” If therefore there had been jacobinism, I must have smoked it, having a good scent. This is a base invention; but, as the vagabonds have raised it, I will, for one, endeavour to keep them to it. Now as the jacobins are at the bottom of this uproar, the theatre *ought to be instantly shut up*; because it is highly dangerous to the public peace, that any receptacle of incendiaries, trai-

tors, and malignants, should be tolerated. It is, therefore, the duty of the magistrate, in all cases wherein public order is endangered, to suppress the beginning of mischief; and as no laws of physiognomy have been yet enacted, by which the door keepers can discriminate a jacobin from a good and loyal man, it follows that the surest method of conserving the peace will be to shut up the house. No patent, no exclusive monopoly, no license, can countervail against the paramount necessity of maintaining the altar, the throne, the laws, the constitution, the liberties, and independence of the country, every soul of which is now in jeopardy for the jacobins who infest Covent Garden Theatre. What ought to add to the general ague is the consideration that no persons of respectability attend to overawe, by their presence, this bloody, resolute, and revolutionizing faction. On Thursday night, I examined the list of the persons who had taken boxes, and found, with the exception of two ladies of title, one of whose husbands had been dubbed a knight the day before, that the friends of order, the altar, the throne, and the constitution, consisted only of surveyors of the theatre, bum-bailiffs with their doxies, lath-splitters and plasterers, bawds, bullies, and whores. There was one colonel in the list; but not having N. P. in his hat, his loyalty was very equivocal. I do admit that the bum-bailiffs made a terrific appearance, especially as the bravest among us, could

not exactly tell, term approaching, with what ammunition their pockets were stored. But as this select band, the forlorn hope of rapacity, must ere long be otherwise employed, there seems to be but little chance that the state will be saved through their efforts.

It is pretty evident that my motives in thus calling the attention of my readers, from politics to the theatre, are not built on the contemptible idea that such a fellow as John Kemble is deserving of public notice, or that a company of vagabonds ought to occupy our minds for a moment; but strictly speaking, the stage is the mirror of the times, and when I hear a set of fools or rascals pretend to say, that jacobinism is the cause of these tumults in the theatre, I must either deny that I possess any intellect, or I must admit that the audience have none. In my opinion the stage is an auxiliary of the state; it should support religion, morals, and law, and when it deviates from that principle, it ought to be suppressed. To assert, that the people have no right to declare their opinions in any way respecting a company of vagabonds, who live by their bounty, is an affront to human nature. I therefore declare my opinion, that the people have certainly a right to express their opinions; but I also think, that the magistracy of the country is disgraced by not taking up the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, as violators of the public peace.

The holy insurrection, of which I have been a witness, convinces me, and must convince every rational man, that the voice of the people is decidedly against them. I certainly should have no objection to pay the additional money, had the genius of our country been revived upon the theatre; but considering the attempt to introduce an Italian slave, a pensioner of Bonaparte, on our stage, the vapid stupidity of the wretches who are employed to write for us, and the sepulchral bestiality of John Kemble, I think it would be a disgrace to my character as a Briton, not to assert that our liberties have not only been invaded by this vagabond, but that our honour as gentlemen has been affronted by him. Under these considerations, I ask for justice. Perhaps my readers may ask what is the sort of justice I require? I will now tell them. I think the British audience cannot maintain their character, or the justice of their cause, without demanding that John Kemble shall be compelled to go down upon his bare knees, and ask pardon in the most humiliating terms, of that public whom he has abused. It must be done upon the theatre, else the altar, the throne, the laws, the constitution, and moral order, will be at an end. The salvation of the state depends upon rebellion and execution. The apology should be as follows:—

“ Ladies and Gentlemen! I-a, am-a, satisfied-a, that-a-I-a-am-a-totally-a-unfit-a-and unworthy-a-to-

a-chouse-a-you-a-out-a-of-a-your-a-money-a. I-a  
-have-a- run-a- rig-a- sufficient-a- to-a- convince-a  
-you-a- that-a- you-a- are-a-a-a-set-a- of-a- noodles  
-a.

No. 108.—*To the Right Hon. the Earl of  
Dartmouth.*

(The Times, Nov. 7, 1809.)

My good Lord Chamberlain,

It is not, my lord, from mere attachment to the style and simple manners of our forefathers that I thus designate your lordship, but from a conviction that your lordship's private character is of that estimable description, which well deserves such an appellation; of this I believe myself to have some knowledge. I remember well attending the same place of worship with your lordship, when we were boys together, and the serious principles which you then imbibed seem, at no period since, to have deserted you. We were afterwards members of the same university, and though then, as now, unknown to your lordship, I always felt considerable pleasure in beholding the pious boy become a virtuous man. The Earl, your father, did not content himself with inspiring you with religious principles, he taught you constitutional ones; he loved his country, and he loved the

English people: I mean that description of them which patricians do not always condescend to study the character of, and which, but too often, they rather tolerate than regard. Thus impressed, will your lordship forgive me for frankly avowing myself to partake of that surprize which so great a part of the public is known to feel, at the apparent apathy of your lordship, respecting the recent transactions at Covent Garden Theatre. Your lordship's authority cannot be doubted; the law declares your lordship to have "the oversight and government of artificers, retained in the king's service, messengers, comedians, revels, music, &c." Your high office does not merely give you a literary jurisdiction, it gives you a moral one; and your lordship has as much right to shut up a theatre, when the conduct of its managers becomes reprehensible, as you have to prohibit the performance of a piece which you think calculated to undermine the morals or the loyalty of the people. Let us, then, dispassionately inquire, my lord, whether the conduct of the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre has been such as to call for your lordship's interference. We will say little, my lord, upon the subject of the rise of the prices; that question is lost and forgotten in the two greater considerations of the personal treatment which the audience has received, and the appropriation of the principal part of the theatre to



private boxes; the latter of course comprises two questions, namely, the *right* and the *moral tendency* of such allotments.

I will, however, say a word, *en passant*, as to the rise of prices, convinced, as I am, that there is no reasonable pretence for such a measure. I happen, my lord, to be a renter of the late Drury-Lane Theatre, and, in that capacity, attended a general meeting, which was held not long before its destruction. At that meeting, one of our trustees, appointed to superintend the funds of that concern, under an order of chancery, entered into a most full and masterly exposition of the whole of its affairs. I understood this gentleman to be a person of great respectability, and an eminent banker; one, in short, whose representations were worthy of the most implicit confidence. He analysed the incumbrances, the management, and the profits, of that establishment; he calculated the incumbrances to be more than £250,000; he had pointed out the miserable, prodigal, and I had almost said profligate, circumstances which attended the management; he enumerated item per item the savings and liquidations which might be effected, under a system of ordinary prudence and principle, and shewed, to demonstration, that the capacity of the concern was such as might be made without any increase of price, (a measure not even suggested,) to meet incumbrances to more than three times

the amount of any which the proprietors of Covent Garden pretend to have to encounter. As for the report, to which some persons of character have descended to lend their names, they could not themselves, as men of sense, expect it to have any weight with a discerning public. Who, I ask, could be satisfied with a statement which carefully concealed the items of disbursement? If the proprietors thought proper to give a singer seventy guineas per night, and an actress fifty, and to let the pith and marrow of the fund be previously exhausted in salaries, annual allowances, &c. &c. &c. is it surprising, that, on striking the balance, they should not appear to derive more than six per cent. upon their capital? With regard to the private boxes, I submit to your lordship, that the patent does not recognize a right in the patentees to take from the public any part of their accommodation. It speaks only of nightly admission and nightly payments or prices for that purpose. Private boxes, that is such as are hired, are altogether an innovation in the theatres royal, and that of a comparatively recent date. My lord, the idea is not English. It is not consistent with that fair and honest equality, which our national temper and character have maintained, time out of mind, at our public places of amusement. There is something aristocratical and supercilious, to a degree of reasonable offence, in the idea of sepa-



rate apartments, separate channels of communication, and separate entrances, for the wealthy and the proud, as if there were pollution in one Englishman brushing close to another in the bustle of a theatre. Ought the great body of the audience to have this affront passed upon them, for the sake of bringing a few hundreds more into the pockets of the proprietors? I understand them to allege, in defence of this measure, that it is only, by such means, that persons of a certain condition can enjoy the theatre, without being annoyed by its profligacy. Profligacy! my lord; your lordship has travelled, as well as myself; and is it, to such a man as your lordship, who must have been informed of, and almost compelled to witness, the foul and scandalous intrigues carried on by means of private boxes in the theatres of Italy and France, that such an answer is to be given? Private boxes were first introduced, I believe, in the former country, and for purposes which redden the cheek of an Englishman but to contemplate! I will not believe, but that your lordship, as a Christian and a faithful servant of the public, has strongly remonstrated against this most suspicious, if not guilty, arrangement at the new theatre. I must change my whole order of thinking, with respect to your lordship, before I can credit that you will be satisfied with such an attempt at justification. I insist, my lord, that

it is within your lordship's authority to compel an immediate alteration in this particular; and, with the frankness of an Englishman, trembling for the moral character of his countrymen, I call upon your lordship to rescue them from opprobrium. As to the personal treatment which the audience have received, at the hands of the proprietors, I forbear to enlarge upon that part of the subject. Who would have believed, my lord, who would have thought it possible, that individuals, of the obscurest cast, and of a calling to which British society has assigned the lowest station, should have been allowed, with impunity, nightly to hire ruffians and prize-fighters to assault some of the most respectable inhabitants of the metropolis; to fasten upon their throats and drag them out of the theatre, or beat them to the earth for venturing to express their disapprobation? Your lordship, I am sure, must not only have beheld these facts with astonishment, but with agony! I have no fears for your reputation, my lord. It cannot be, but that, when the representatives of the people shall be again assembled, and inquire, as they surely will do, into the unaccountably quiescent conduct of government, it will appear, that my good Lord Chamberlain has not been a tame spectator of so much insolence and outrage; but that, on the contrary, he interposed himself between the ruffian and his victim, till, finding, by his con-

ceptions of it, his authority too limited for any effectual interference, he stated his situation to His Majesty's ministers, and left the rest to their responsibility. For the use, or rather the non-use of their authority, they will soon have to account. In the meantime I shall continue to cherish the idea that the Earl of Dartmouth neither has, nor can have acted unworthily.

I have the honor to be,

My Lord,

Your lordship's humble servant,

AN ENGLISH GENTLEMAN.

No. 109.—*King John in a Cocked Hat, or Heigh Ho says Kemble.—A Parody on the famous Grimaldian Song, called "the Frog in the Opera Hat."*

(Morning Chronicle, Nov. 7, 1809.)

John Kemble he would an acting go,  
Heigho! says Kemble;  
He rais'd the price which he thought too low,  
Whether the public would let him or no;  
With his roly-poly, gammon, and spinnage,  
And ho! says manager Kemble.

The mob at the door made a mighty din,  
Heigho! says Kemble;

They dash'd like devils thro' thick and thin,  
 And over the benches came tumbling in,  
 With their roly, &c.

'Twill do says manager Kemble.

Soon as they pass'd Bill Shakspeare's hall,  
 Heigho! says Kemble;

They thought the lobbies were much too small,  
 So they gave a loud roar and they gave a loud bawl,  
 With roly, &c.

Hollo! says manager Kemble.

"Pray *what do you want?* (in a sort of a huff)

Heigho! says Kemble;

Says Mr. Leigh—"Nonsensical stuff,

Pho! none of your gammon, you know well enough,  
 With your roly, &c.

You do, great manager Kemble."

He held by the tip his opera-hat,

Heigho! says Kemble;

"Indeed the concern's as poor as a rat;"

Says Bull, "No dam'me, we won't stand that,"

With our roly, &c.

'Twon't do, great manager Kemble.

He folded his arms, in a sad nonplus,

Heigho! says Kemble;

With Queen Anne's prices he made a fuss,

Says Bull, "What the devil's Queen Anne to us,"

With roly, &c.

'Twon't do, great manager Kemble.

He swore to himself an oath, by Styx,

Heigho! says Kemble;

Kind ladies and gentlemen, none of your tricks,  
 I love *seven shillings* much better than *six*,  
 With my roly, &c.

I do, says manager Kemble.

Then roar'd the gallery, gentle souls,

Heigho ! says Kemble ;

No private boxes, no pigeon-holes,

We'll douse your glims,\* in a crack, by goles,

With roly, &c.

No, don't, says manager Kemble.

I can't those private boxes rob,

Heigho ! says Kemble ;

With Lord O'Straddlet I drink hob and nob,

And I'm hand and glove with my Lord Thingumbob ; †

With his roly-poly, gammon, and spinnage,

Good night ! says manager Kemble.

No. 110.—*New Theatre.*

[From the same, Nov. 8.]

As Covent Garden Theatre must soon be ruined or shut up, Drury Lane is at end, and the old company of St. Stephen's have quarrelled so about their salaries and precedency, that the partnership is dissolved ; the public are respectfully informed, that a new-raised strolling company have, *by special command*, been induced again to open St. Ste-

\* Put out the lights. † L—d B-y-m-e. ‡ D-e N—f.

phen's for the ensuing season, trusting much to the liberality of a British audience, as all the first-rate performers are in disgrace.

Those members of the society, who have notoriously *made the most* of their former inferior situations, will be carefully promoted; the candle-snuffers, who have *made the most* of their *candle-ends*, will be placed in a line more suitable to the display of their talents; and the *scene-shifters*, who have been more successful in their deceptions upon the public, will meet with all due encouragement. Those gentlemen who have hitherto been always unsuccessful, will be now placed elsewhere, every man being fit for something. It is presumed that, as they have hitherto failed wherever they have been tried, their new situations must be those for which nature designed them. To complete the number of characters necessary for a *great National Theatre*, a selection of young men has been made from those who have shown *most spirit* when brought before the public, in the late popular piece called the *Royal Culprit*.

The company will commence the season with a new tragi-comic *Farce*, called the *Administration*, or the *No Popery Rump*. The part of *Expedition* will be given to a promising young nobleman; who, having twice failed in his attempts upon Cambridge, has been thought peculiarly adapted to the character. *Old Conscience* and *Bigot* are to remain, as the parts cannot be better filled. *Ways*

*and Means* will be moved into the Treasury, the necessity of this change being obvious.

The duel-scene between *Intrigue* and *Prosy* must, it is feared, be omitted.

Great hopes are entertained of being enabled to procure the public favourite, *J. Kemble*, whose present concern is declining so fast, and who has shown himself so admirably qualified to take the principal part of *Old Vigour*.

No. 111.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

Desirous of judging, from our own observation, of the conduct of the managers of Covent Garden Theatre, and that of the oppositionists, I was of a party on Tuesday night, which went at an early hour (about a quarter of an hour before the overture to the *Exile* began) the better to view the sort of persons who gained admission. We found about a hundred in the pit. A phalanx was formed, two deep, in front next the orchestra, and scouting parties were stationed in the centre and back, composed of the very outcasts of society, aided by some *respectable* police-officers and pugilists. Taking our station near the centre, we found a party of four or five mis-

creants, one a sweeper of a tennis-court, a rascal of the vilest description; another of the gang, in brown striped breeches, black stockings, and a black neckcloth, apparently a thief; two others, stout men, with unwashed and unbarbed faces, *tatsmen*, or hustlers, and a secondary officer of police, formed this groupe. Upon addressing the black-neckcloth fellow with "Are you l—g, or a thief! I beg you'll stand off." The fellow silently backed. Another set consisted of a stable-boy, in a fustian jacket and trowsers, covered with filth, two blackguards in loose drab coats, a negro, with an oil-skin hat and silver-band, and a fellow who seemed to be a waterman to hackney-coachmen, or a link-boy. Here also, at hand, were two police-officers, who, with some skulking scoundrels, serving as spies, presently surrounded us. In the boxes were a most motley groupe. The *ladies* seemed to have *got up their duds* for the occasion. The *gemmen* had on their best attire, with here and there a turned cravat. One fellow sported a scarlet uniform of some *wollunteer corpse*, and in an elegant manner quizzed the audience through a pair of old woman's tortoise-shell spectacles. His party was composed of two ladies, with delicate *ruby* arms, and a respectable looking barber, near St. Martin's Lane, who shaves at the *new* price—three half-pence. Mr. Lazarus too occupied, with two young ladies, a front row in the front boxes. Similar parties continued



arriving until half-price, most of whom seemed to be *tried men*, when many of these scoundrels decamped; the O P's being too strong for them. One fellow (a constant visitor, as I learned from some gentlemen who recognized him) was very boisterous in pushing about the "Off, off's," as if by accident, till at last he was compelled to "make himself scarce," as Mrs. JORDAN says. In GARRICK's days no such wretches would have been suffered in the pit as those who nightly infest the theatre before the curtain draws up. The managers injure their cause by such an insult to the public. If they must have *paper-men*, to countenance their pertinacity, they ought at least to admit none but persons who can afford to maintain some decency of appearance.

MERCATOR.

*Queenhithe, Nov. 9.*

No. 112.—*Rolla's Address from the Tragedy of Pizarro parodied.*

(Statesman, Nov. 9.)

"Yet never was the hour of peril near, when, to cheer you, words were so much needed."—*Pizarro.*

*Enter K—— as Rolla.*

My *disgraceful* associates! partners of my *spoil*, my *trouble*, and my *shame*! Can *Johnny's* words

give comfort to your *drooping* spirits and *heavy* hearts? No,—you have judged, as I have, the foulness of their *wicked* tongues, by which those bold intruders would delude you. Your *stupid* heads have compared, as mine has, the *motives* which, in a cause like this, can animate their minds and ours. *They*, by a strange frenzy driven, bawl and call aloud for the *Old Prices*; we give them *blows*, and *threaten* them with *imprisonment* to obtain the *new*. *They* laugh at threats *they* do not fear; and defy all Bow Street runners whom they hate. *We* serve JOHN BULL whom we treat with *scorn*; and *our money* is the *god* whom we adore. Whene'er they move in *anger* they make a *dreadful noise*; whene'er they pause in amity, we will *despise* their friendship. *They boast* they come to *improve* our *estate*, *encourage* our *talents*, and *free* us from all *foreign aid*. Yes, they want to impress *liberality* on *our* minds; but no; *we* are the slaves of *passion*, *avarice*, and *pride*. *They* offer us their protection; *we* want no protection but those we have already.\* *They* call on us tamely to *submit* to them, for the desperate chance of something better, which they promise. Be our plain answer this: OUR PRICE IS FIXED AGAINST THE PUBLIC VOICE; the *drama's laws* our fathers gave we'll *break*; our faith and trust we'll put in *Jews* and *gladiators*; for *they* no doubt will try our sinking fame to

\* Messrs. Gr-h-m, R—d, and Tow—d.

raise. Tell the *rioters*, and tell them too, we seek *no change*, and, least of all, *such* change as they would give us.

No. 113.—*Irregular Lines upon Irregular Proceedings.*

POEMA HEROI-COMICUM.

(From the Morning Chronicle, Nov. 10.)

——“ *Ridentem dicere verum,  
Quid vetat?*”

RECITATIVE.—Air, *Rumdi idity, row, row, row.*

Uproarious cits! and Bond Street loungers, tremble!  
The world is threaten'd with the loss of K—ble!  
Sound the alarm! your vocal noses blow!  
And vent, like Bedlamites, your frantic woe!

AIR.

The first of critics,—first of actors,—  
First of semicolon-factors,—  
Out of patience with the age,  
Swears, alas! he'll quit the stage!

Tasteless nation!—tasteless nation!  
On ourselves have we brought down  
Rumours of a resignation,  
Hung in terror o'er the town.

We, forsooth, must needs be hank'ring  
After *boxes, prices, grace!*  
Hence, within his bosom cank'ring  
Rose the spleen that marks his face.

Who shall now, of all his cronies,  
 To their kind protection take  
 All his *variae lectiones!*  
 Made for variation's sake?

Who shall fix, with equal care,  
*Points*—in doublets or in speeches;  
 Who adjust, with such an air,  
 Slash'd soliloquies—or breeches?

Little heeding things that merit  
 Deep research and curious art;  
 Others do but take the spirit,  
 And direct it to the heart.

## RECITATIVE.

Hush'd be your sorrow, and your rage suspended,  
 Complaint's superfluous, when th'occasion's ended:  
 No longer let your dolorific quill  
 The sable tears of sympathy distil!  
 Relenting John,\* in pity to mankind,  
 On second thoughts, may change his mighty mind;  
 Yes!—may resume the task of punctuation,  
 And bringing back stray'd commas to their station.  
 Pray, gentle reader, ere I close the strain,  
 Let this prognostication soothe your pain:—  
 "As long as Britain shall maintain her ground,  
 And twenty shillings make one sterling pound,  
 So long (should fate permit them here to stay)  
 Will Mr. K—le and the Sidd—ns play!!!"

## CHORUS ALLEGRISSIMAMENTE.

Good people, pray don't be uneasy;  
 You are threaten'd the better to please ye,

\* See the Bill and Advertisement of Tuesday, October 24.

For the devil a step will they budge;  
 You may think what you will of the matter,  
 It's only a *Jeu de Theatre*,  
 Their exit is nothing but *Fudge!*  
                     *Fudge! Fudge! (Da Capo.)*  
 Their retirement nothing but *Fudge!*

Signor SECCA COGLIONI, Plebeian.

No. 114.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

I was induced last night to visit Covent Garden Theatre, in consequence of an address inserted in your paper, as intended to be delivered on the part of the proprietors, indicating, that they intended to make certain concessions to the public. Several friends had agreed to go with me, but were prevented from attending at the commencement of the play; at which time, supposing the address would be spoken, I went alone. The appearance of the pit, on my entering, convinced me it could not be the intention of the proprietors to offer any conciliatory terms, at least on that evening. A set of men were placed there, evidently the very lees of society, disposed of in various parties, as convicts are previous to embarkation, with an officer of police at their head, but, on this occasion, for a different purpose. The pit was not half full, and three-fourths of those who

occupied it answered the above description. The first act was heard with tolerable silence; but, in the second, some disapprobation being shewn, these men made themselves conspicuous by standing up, threatening to commence their feats of brutality; which they have done, in almost every instance, with impunity. This movement obliged those behind to stand up likewise. A gentleman, standing by my side, pointed to a man on the seat directly before, and whose face fronted us, as being the very same, who, on the Thursday evening preceeding, had d—d his eyes, and said “if he would come out, he would give him a d—d good MILLING.” This the gentleman of course denied; which offer was kindly repeated this evening. The persons around us exclaimed “What rascality is practised by the managers, in employing such miscreants!” At this moment, a pressure impelled me beyond the person above described, who, before I reached him, raised his arm and gave me a violent blow on the breast, which knocked me down. Before I could recover, I was taken up by the skirt of my coat, and again thrown down. On recovering my legs, I exclaimed “I will have you to Bow-Street for the assault.” I was now surrounded by his party, and dragged by the neck-handkerchief into the passage; during which time, I was struck on the head. On gaining the outside entrance, they would fain have left me, and entered the theatre

again. I immediately seized the man who had thus ill-used me, and insisted he should go before the magistrate; they, supposing it would intimidate me, swore I should go; and, with my shoes nearly off, and the loss of my hat, the gang escorted me to the public office. On my arrival there, I despaired of obtaining justice, as the constables in waiting winked at each other, as if acquainted with the nature of my complaint, and treated me most shamefully, before I could obtain a hearing. By this time several gentlemen entered the office, (one of whom brought my hat,) who were witnesses of the whole of the transaction, and offered to give their evidence. The men several times endeavoured to shuffle off, but I still kept my hold. Great was my surprise, on appearing before the magistrate, to find them endeavouring to prefer the charge against *me*, and I know not what would have been the consequence, had not the above gentlemen arrived, most opportunely, to my aid. The man, from whom I received the blow, would positively have sworn I struck him first. The magistrate (whose name I do not know, never having been in the office before,) asked me why I was there. On my answering, he required my name and address, and the oath was administered. I then described the manner in which I had been treated, and a Mr. PURSE corroborated my statement, which was considered sufficient to substantiate the assault. The man,

upon being interrogated, said his name was HART BRAHAM, a Jew. When, failing to prove that I was the aggressor, he asserted I had been very noisy in the theatre, and wished to bring several of his associates to prove it. The magistrate, however, observed, "that has nothing to do with the accusation against you, which has been already proved, and you are ordered to find bail."

From the kind assistance I received from the gentlemen about me, (all of whom were entire strangers,) I consider it my duty to make this affair public, and return them my most grateful thanks; and I am happy to congratulate the public, in this instance at least, of the hireling system having failed.

MICHAEL THOMSON.

19, Villiers-Street, Adelphi,

12th Nov.

No. 115.—*To the Editor of the Times.*

Sir,

A statement, relative to the dispute between Mr. ALFRED CRACE and myself, having appeared in a paper of this day, which is extremely erroneous, I take the liberty of requesting you to insert the following INCONTROVERTIBLE TRUTH.



I went to the new theatre last Saturday evening at half-price; and, having entered the box No. 36, on the second tier, I observed, in the front seat of the adjoining box, (No. 35,) Lieutenant Drury, of the West London Militia, in company with Mrs. Drury and Mrs. A. Crace. Mrs. Crace's father and mother *were not* in the box. In a few minutes Mr. Drury saw me, and said—"Here is room if you will come down;" upon which I was permitted to pass from the back part of the one box to the front seat of the other. I submit this would not have been suffered, if the company had not heard the invitation. I took my seat between Mr. and Mrs. Drury, and very soon placed the initials O P in my hat; at which Mrs. Crace expressed her displeasure, and *I immediately removed them*. Mr. Crace (*who had not been previously in the box, nor, as I understood, expected*) then came to the door, and called Mrs. Crace out; upon which, I intreated her to keep her seat and *I would withdraw*. She, however, quitted the box. In the latter part of the evening, Mr. Crace accosted me in the lobby, and said—"Mr. MILLER, you have acted like a blackguard in taking my seat, and insulting Mrs. Crace." I answered, that I was invited to the seat by Mr. Drury, *in whose name the places were taken in the box-list*, and had therefore, neither taken his seat, nor insulted Mrs. Crace. He replied, "that is no matter, sir, you are a great blackguard;" and withdrew. Sunday morning I

wrote the following billet to Mr. Crace;—  
 “Mr. Miller calls upon Mr. Crace to appoint a time and place, where himself and friend will meet Mr. Miller and friend, on the subject of the insult Mr. Miller received from Mr. Crace last evening at the theatre. Mr. Miller himself leaves this, and will call again in the course of an hour for Mr. Crace’s reply.

New Millman Street, Sunday Morning.”

I left this letter at Mr. Crace’s house, in the presence of a friend, and called again, in the company of Mr. Henderson. Mr. Crace came to the door, and said he should not retract a word, and *declined giving any other answer to my letter*. In the evening I wrote him the following;—

“Sir,—After the numerous civilities which have been interchanged between us, it will be with great reluctance that I adopt such measures, in relation to the insult I received from you last night, as the occasion demands; but unless you think proper to make me a suitable apology, or comply with my request of this morning, I feel it a duty I owe my own character, to make the affair public, which I shall certainly do at the theatre to-morrow evening. I am, sir, &c. JOHN MILLER.”

The second letter was taken and delivered to Mr. Crace, by Mr. Henderson and Mr. Haddock, to which Mr. Crace declined giving any answer, until he had consulted his friends. Monday, about noon, a Bow-street officer called upon me,

and produced a warrant against Mr. Henderson, Mr. Haddock, and myself: I engaged to appear before the magistrates at 7 o'clock in the evening, where I attended accordingly, and was ordered to find bail, myself in £100 and two sureties in £50 each, for sending Mr. Crace a challenge to fight a duel. Mr. Henderson and Mr. Haddock were both discharged on their own recognizances. I beg pardon for the intrusion I have made on your columns,

And am, Sir, &c. &c.

JOHN MILLER.

24, New Millman-street, Nov. 14, 1809.

No. 116. — *To the Editor of the Times.*

—— Notandi ibi sunt mores.

Horace Ars Poet. v. 156.

Mr. Editor,

As I am one of those persons who cannot be pleased with the advance of the prices of admission to the theatre, (conceiving that such advance has been made for the sole purpose of enriching a *few* of the performers), I have amused myself, for half an hour this morning, with reading Cicero's oration for the player Roscius, in order to see how he acted towards the Romans for the many favours which

he received from them. I need not tell you, sir, that Roscius made the first figure on the Roman stage. Now, Cicero gives him this amiable character: "He was generous, benevolent, and a contemner of money; and, after he had raised an ample fortune from the stage, gave his pains to the public for many years, without any pay:" whence Cicero urges it as incredible, that he who, in *ten years* might have gained some thousand pounds, which he refused, should be tempted to commit a fraud for the paltry sum of four hundred. See *Pro Roscio*, 8.

Such, sir, was the famous Roscius, and such his gratitude towards the Roman people. Now let me ask, "*Quid NOSTER Roscius egit?*" Perhaps the comparison may not be liked, but what is that to me?

Let the *vain tyrant* sit amidst his guards,  
His puny green-room wits and *venal* bards,  
Who meanly tremble at the *puppet's* frown,  
And for a *playhouse* freedom lose their own.

In spite of *new made laws* and new made kings,

The freeborn muse with liberal spirit sings.

Bow down, ye slaves! before these idols fall,

Let genius stoop to them who've none at all.

*Ne'er will I flatter, cringe, or bend the knee,*

*To those, who, slaves to all, are slaves to me.*

CHURCHILL.

I must declare, sir, that I am truly astonished at the exorbitant sums which have been paid to

players, opera-singers, opera-dancers, &c. but I hope and believe that the public now begin to see this subject in its proper light. That learned writer, Dr. Adam Smith, in his inestimable work, "The Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations," vol. 1. p. 157, draws the character of these people with his usual knowledge and discernment, and he tells us, "*that, when the public opinion begins to alter, with regard to such occupations, their pecuniary recompense will quickly diminish.* More people will apply to them, and the competition will quickly reduce the price of their labours. *Such talents, though far from being common, are by no means so rare as imagined.* Many people possess them in great perfection, who *disdain* to make this use of them, and many more are capable of acquiring them, if any thing could be made *honourably* by them." Let us hope, then, that the time is now arrived, when the public opinion *does* begin to alter with regard to such occupations; and let us hope that this alteration will deter gentlemen from quitting the noble profession of the law, and even the solemn duties of the church, (for such has been the case,) for the business of the stage; particularly when it is considered, however great a person's talents in this way, yet, "the exercise of them, *for the sake of gain, is but a sort of public prostitution.*" See Dr. Ad. Smith, *ubi supra*.

I am sorry to perceive, sir, that *fighters* are

still sent into the theatre; and I find, that now they do not hesitate to knock down all before them. It is notorious that orders are issued, every morning to various persons, who, in the evening, are collected in a body and introduced into the theatre, with directions "*not to be very nice*" with such as dare to express their disapprobation of the conduct of the managers. I am far from being one who would encourage or assist the least disturbance in a theatre, or any other place; but I cannot help thinking, that the conduct of *some* persons, from the time of opening the theatre up to this moment, has been such as the public at large can never sanction or approve. Remember, sir, that Roscius did not treat the Romans with *ingratitude* and insult; but, *after he had raised an ample fortune from the stage, he gave his pains to the public for many years without any pay.*

I am, Sir, &c. &c.

AN ENGLISHMAN.

Nov. 14, 1809.

No. 117. — *Ship-News Extraordinary.*

(Morning Chronicle, Nov. 14, 1809.)

O P MONTH. Came in the *Rattle-snake, Placard, Catcall, and Bugle*, gun-boats, from a chase

after the *Imperieux*, 50-gun ship, which, it will be remembered, captured, in the confusion of a fire, in one of our out-ports, some time since, the famous *Old Priceian* frigate. These vessels were attacked in the *Pit Straits* by some of the enemy's *men of war*, which, however, they *beat off*. In *Dungeoness* bay, they struck upon the *Brandon* rocks, and all of them sprang leaks; they must have inevitably gone to the bottom, but for very expeditious *bailing*. Indeed, several smaller boats which accompanied them, among which was the "*Mary Austin*," and which were not so well manned, parted company; but it is hoped the *Subscription*, 300-gun ship, which is sent out after them, will be the means of their recovery. The inhumanity of the port-admiral, *Gramean-read*, cannot be too strongly censured; who, being himself on shore at *Dungeoness* bay, and seeing the distress of three smaller vessels, yet *committed* them to the fury of the elements. It being suspected that the above *Pit Straits* are infectious, from the noisome stench of the *sharks* who have lately infested those *seas*, all ships coming from thence are put under strict quarantine for one hundred, or even sometimes for five hundred, days, by the *NP harbour-masters*, whose authority, for the present, supersedes that of the commanders at this place.

No. 118.—*Inventory of Theatrical Property.*

(From the Morning Chronicle, Nov. 16.)

“The dream of a shadow.”—PINDAR.

“What the *lofty* grave tragedian taught.”—MILTON.

Mr. Editor,

The other night I fell asleep, after reading the celebrated inventory, in the 42d Tatler, of the moveables of Christopher Rich, Esq. and my fancy speedily presented to me a vision of a similar nature, which, in my mind, confirms the sage doctrine of modern metaphysicians, that our dreams result from our waking perceptions, or, as King Lear has long ago told us,

“Nothing can come out of nothing.”

I imagined myself, then, sir, in the *Garden* of some *Convent*; but the vegetables seemed to my fancy to be flourishing without root, and the nuns of the place were so totally divested of all sanctimonious graces, that they seemed rather a rout of Thracian revellers, than any beings even by courtesy termed Christian. “While I was wrapt in the wonder of it,” from an arch-way, at the end of a piazza, stalked forth a tall figure in deep mourn-



ing,—his hair was made as white as chalk, and upon the tips of his fingers he sustained an opera-hat, over which he bowed with the solemnity of an undertaker. But it soon struck me, that the respectful style of his approach was rather the trick of custom than the dictate of veneration; and it appeared, indeed, that disgust had induced him to come forward to offer for sale a certain quantity of *property*, which was thus described in the inventory. He read it aloud to the polite assembly I have already mentioned, precisely as follows; except that he pronounced it in a way so remote from its orthography, that I could not but wonder by what singular artifice he had contrived to falsify all the terminating syllables of the language:—

*Imprimis*—Hamlet's *inky* cloak—quite new, never indeed worn.

N. B. None of the sable professions need apply; as the said *inky* cloak is *green* lined with *red*, the same having been bought of a slopseller at Elsinour, upon Hamlet's being shipwrecked coming from England.

*Item*—Cardinal Wolsey's handkerchief—curiously laced in the old English *costume*.

*Item*—Othello's ditto, for Cassio to wipe his beard with. All the strawberries as much *raised* from the ground as those Richard sends for from the Bishop of Ely's garden in Holborn.

*Item*—Iago's ditto—folded so snugly as to lie in the smallest possible compass of the inexpressible Canary pantaloons;—besides, I have given up the part to Cooke, who plays it *like a villain*.—Now that's villainous!

*Item*—Six *easy* chairs for Queen Catharine in the *restless* scene. The cushions have always tumbled about so, in the Queen's slumber, that the *swimming Jewess* waked her Majesty one night with laughing.

*Item*—A royal cap and feathers—for Macbeth to strut and fret his hour in—so tall—in short, as Hamlet says, a *forest* of feathers—that a mad fellow called the thing a *shuttlecock* from Brobdignag.

*Item*—My beard in King Lear.—*Curse that same goat's beard!*—The first night the audience supposed half the *curse* stuck in my throat, because I could not get it out; I mean the *beard*. Thus I gave it!

That she may curse her crime too late, and feel  
How sharper—cuk!—uk!—uk!

*Item*—A great bell of a *ton* weight, for Lady Macbeth's dressing-room, for the Queen to ring *two* upon. Singularly recommended by the following passage of the poet:—

Go, bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,  
She *strike upon the bell*.

*Item*—A basket-hilted sword, to be used in the dagger-scene;—adopted in pursuance of Shakspeare's plain direction:—

I see thee yet (*the dagger*) in form as palpable  
As *this* which now I draw.

*Item*—Twenty *reports*, or more, to throw at the prompter's head, in the same character: hinted at only by the great man—

Bring me no more *reports*, let them *fly* all—

that is, as I understand it, not the Thanes, but the said *reports*.

*Item*—All the prompter's books of the playhouse;—rendered *offensive* by the usual marks of entrance upon the stage—Enter O P.

N. B.—As I never will enter O P again, that is, *opposite* to the prompter—I have put the prompter *opposite*: in other words, altered his *station* at the theatre: he is *right* on the *left* side.

Here my ears were assailed with a din so alarming, that I awoke, and consequently conclude.

O. P.

No. 119.—*On a late Exhibition in the Pit of  
Covent Garden Theatre.*

(From the Public Ledger, Nov. 16.)

Two cockneys took their night-caps to the play,  
But found no rest, to Bow Street dragg'd away.  
Had Kemble acted, and O P been quiet,  
They might have slept, and 'scap'd the charge of riot.

O. P. Q. IN A CORNER.

No. 120.—*To the Editor of the Constitutional  
Review.*

Sir,

When I last addressed you on the subject of Covent Garden Theatre, it appeared that reason was gaining the ascendancy of passion, and good order taking the place of riot; and I thought that a fair and impartial statement, deduced from the accounts laid before the public by the proprietors of that theatre, might still farther allay the popular ferment; but in this my wishes have been frustrated, and my expectations disappointed: allow me, then, to lay before the public, through the medium of your Review, some observations which arise from the conduct of those who,

I believe, are erroneously called the *British Public*.

Generosity, bravery, a desire to protect the liberty, the laws, the constituted authorities, of their country, have ever been the characteristics of Englishmen: whenever these are violated, we may be sure that the very dregs of the people, men who, from their vices, are dangerous to all societies, endeavour to agitate the public mind for purposes (although not avowed) which go to endanger the happiness and welfare of their country. How far these apply to the rioters at the theatre will be shewn by the observations I am about to offer.

The press, that *palladium* of British liberty, is the first object of attack. The groans and hisses, which are nightly given, by these votaries of disorder, at the doors of those newspaper-offices which are not biassed by clamour, are sufficient to prove their cause bad, their conduct infamous. The watch-words of the party are, liberty and no extortion; their conduct illiberal, unjust, tyrannical.

The officers employed for the safety of persons and the protection of the peace of this city are assaulted in the execution of their duty, the public peace disturbed, the magistracy and law-officers become the subjects of groans and execrations, and all under the specious, but I fear false, shew of loyalty.

Not content with attacking public benefits and public men, their next aim is to destroy the social

comforts of a gentleman, by a brutal assault on his house. That the talents of Mr. Kemble, and the competency, in point of fortune, at which he has arrived, by incessant exertions for the information and amusement of the public, should excite the envy of assailants, are not to be wondered at; but that their conduct should be palliated by a daily newspaper, that pretends to be the guardian of the rights and liberties of the subject, must excite, in the minds of all true Englishmen, sentiments of surprise, mingled with indignation.

Obscene remarks and rude behaviour towards females have already driven from the theatre almost every person of liberal sentiments; the confusion that nightly prevails has effectually prevented the attendance of persons of respectability and the lovers of the drama; and yet we are impudently told, that the confused noise that takes place is the voice of the public; but let it be designated by its proper titles,—it is the halloo of drunkenness, assisted by ignorance, buoyed up by disaffection.

That some persons have been led away by the specious arguments, but more by the example, of a barrister, attended commonly by the editor of a popular newspaper, is not to be doubted; but they should consider, that the one attends to be in practice for a future meeting at Hackney, or to agitate disorder merely to derive pecuniary profit by pleading the cause of those who may be led into riot by his instigation, while he keeps within the pale of

the law; and the business of the other is to record the placard, eminent only for extreme stupidity, or to keep alive disorder, and, by being the *faithful* recorder thereof, increase the sale of the newspaper which he conducts.

Legislators have often been obliged to curtail civil liberty, on account of its degenerating into licentiousness. Let therefore the heads of families, the master-workmen, in fine, let every good subject, instruct those about them to beware of this danger, and also exert their utmost influence to prevent those scenes of riot which have too long disgraced the metropolis.

J. K.

Nov. 23, 1809.

No. 121. — *John Kemble, in the Character of Coriolanus, addressing the Plebeians.*

(From the Morning Chronicle.)

—— *What's the matter*, you dissentious rogues,  
That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,  
Make yourselves?  
—— *What would ye have*, curs?  
—— Who deserves greatness  
Deserves your hate. — Hang ye! trust ye!  
With every minute you do change a mind,  
And call him noble that was now your hate;  
Him vile that was your garland. *What's the matter?*

————— *What's their seeking?*

Would the nobility lay aside their ruth,  
And let me rise my sword, I'd make a quarry  
With thousands of these quarter'd slaves, as high  
As I could pitch my lance.

They vented their complainings, which, being answered,  
And a "*petition granted them, a strange one*" —

MENENIUS.

What was granted them?

CORIOLANUS.

FIVE tribunes to defend their public wisdom!  
The rabble should have first unroof'd the city,  
Ere so prevailed with me. Take these rats hither,  
Worshipful mutineers!

Your valour puts well forth; pray follow.

Go, get you home, you fragments!

All the contagion of the south light on you!

You shams of men, you! Herds of boils and plagues

Plaster you o'er, that you may be abhorred

Farther than seen, and one infect the other

Against the wind a mile!

*Act 2, Scene 2.*

SICINIUS.

Sir, the people must have their *voices*, neither will they bate  
one jot of ceremony.

*Scene 3. The citizens approach.*

CORIOLANUS.

————— Bid them wash their faces  
And keep their teeth clean. (Apart.)



Pray now, if it may stand with the tune of *your voices*. I have here the customary gown; I will make much of *your voices!!!*

Most *sweet voices!*

————— Here come more *voices!*

*Your voices*; for *your voices* I have fought;

Watched for *your voices*: *battles\** thrice six

I have seen and heard of; for *your voices* have

Done many things, some less, some more:

*Your voices! O worthy voices!!!*

No. 122. — *To Mr. Fry, Solicitor to the proposed  
Subscription Theatre.*

(Times, Nov. 23.)

Sir,

You have boldly avowed, in an advertisement signed with your name, that the subscription for your intended theatre is full. The public have a right to expect from you, that the list of subscribers, with their addresses, should be advertised directly. More than one object will be effected by your doing so. Every body will be then able to judge of the respectability and responsibility of the parties, and the probable success or failure of the undertaking: it may remove a suspicion, that the nightly disturbances, at Covent Garden Theatre, are con-

\* Some editions read it *battles*.

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nected in some measure with this subscription;  
and it may also remove a very general opinion,  
that I and my family are the principal subscribers  
to the scheme.

THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK.

No. 123. — *Dryden's Ode to Music imitated, &c,  
or, the Covent Garden Row.*

(From the Morning Post, Nov. 25.)

'Twas at a *glorious row*, for Clifford won,  
By German Wienholt's son,  
After the play was done,  
Aloft in drunken state  
Was plac'd the stupid candidate  
For O P fame and fun.  
His fit compeers were plac'd around,  
Their brows with deadly-nightshade bound :  
So should desert like theirs be crown'd ;  
The *black-ey'd* Dolly by his side,  
Look'd like a Dutchman's bloated bride,  
Blushing with *spirits* \* and with pride ;  
Happy, happy, happy, pair,  
None but O Ps should have such *fare*.

The ——— plac'd on high,  
Whose pages let for "*filthy hire*,"  
With *fingers light* struck the smooth *lyar*,  
The trembling notes mount gallery-high,  
And heavenly joys inspire.

\* Vulgarly termed—Jackey.

Of *Proteus* Nixon was the song,  
 A grocer's porter all the day,  
 Who left his shop at night to stray,  
 And join confusion's throng ;  
 When amidst the howling pack  
 A *dragoon's* fury-form belied the *hack*,  
 He to th' infernal pit his step address'd,  
 With O P flaming high upon his crest.  
 Oft as his friends were hard by numbers press'd,  
 His coward form shrunk back ; he sneaks behind the rest.

Next he sang the boxes fill'd  
 With nought but rabble rout ;  
 In daring falsehoods he was skill'd,  
 To pass for truth about :  
 The greasy night-cap too he sang,—  
 Of *Jacobins* the pride,  
 How high upon a pole it hang,  
 Scatt'ring its *perfume* wide.

Each brainless hound admires the sound :  
 A *Jacobin* ! they shout around ;  
 A *Jacobin* ! the vaulted roofs rebound.  
 With ravish'd ears young *Wienholt* hears,  
 Assumes the God,—affects to nod,  
 And shakes his lengthen'd ears.

The praise of *Clifford* then the *lyarist* sang,  
 Clifford ever bold in wrong ;  
 The jolly dog in triumph comes,  
 Sound your rattles, beat your drums :  
 Flush'd with a purple grace,  
 He shows his brazen face !  
 Now give the whistles breath ;—he comes ! he comes !

Clifford bold, although but young,\*  
 Rowing joys did first ordain,  
 Old Brentford echo'd back the strain:  
 Upoar's blessings are a treasure,  
 High destruction is a pleasure:  
     Rich the treasure,  
     Sweet the pleasure,  
 When we count the plunder'd gain.

Sooth'd with the sound, the boy grew vain,  
 Fought all their battles o'er again;  
 Again, in fancy, beat his foes;  
 At length he tumbled on his nose,  
 And tried to stand—in vain.

The *lyarist* saw the madness rise,  
 His glowing cheek, his ardent eyes;  
 And, whilst the Bow-street's power defied,  
 Chang'd the sound, and check'd his pride:  
     He chose a mournful muse,  
     Soft slumber to infuse;  
 He sung of Cowlam, (call'd him good,)  
     By too severe a fate  
     Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,  
     Fallen from his self-raised state,  
 And weltering in his blood.  
     Deserted in his utmost need,  
     By those his purse before had freed,  
     On a bare bench expos'd he lies,  
     With not a friend to wipe his eyes,  
     Or aid him, from the seat, to rise.

Sang next the horrors of the pit,  
 And each successful breeze;

\* Young in law.

How daring magistrates commit  
 Poor innocent O Ps  
 The coatless orator he sang,  
 The scarecrow of an hour,  
 When late the house with laughter rang,  
 To see their fallen power.

With downcast looks, the senseless blockhead sate,  
 Revolving, in his fear-struck soul,  
 The various turns of chance below ;  
 And now and then a sigh he stole,  
 To think the dangers of a row.

The *fabling lyarist* shrank to see  
 Despair was in the next degree,  
 (For that he knew would spoil his fee :)  
 He struck a lighter note, to move,  
 (As wine will bid the fancy rove,)  
 If possible, his soul to love.  
 Softly sweet, in legend measure,  
 Soon he sooth'd his soul to pleasure.  
 Row, he sung, was toil and trouble,  
 O P but an empty bubble ;  
 Never ending, still beginning,  
 Fighting still, and still destroying ;  
 If the wench be worth thy winning,  
 Think, oh think her worth enjoying.  
 O Ps are not worth the wearing,—  
 Only got by falsehood swearing.  
 Lovely Dolly sits beside thee,  
 Take the good the gods betide thee.

The rabble rend the roof with loud applause ;  
 Thus love was crown'd, the rowing was the cause.

The boy, unable to conceal his pain,  
 Gazed on the fair,  
 Then tore his hair,  
 Stamp'd and rav'd, rav'd and stamp'd,  
 Rav'd and stamp'd, and rav'd again.  
 At length, with love or wine oppress'd,  
 Drunk as a dragon sank upon her breast;  
 But now to keep his seat no longer able,  
 Fell like a German boor beneath the table.

Now strike the fabling lyar again,  
 A bolder yet, and yet a bolder strain,  
 Bring too the footpad demigod,  
 Who once outwitted wise Apollo;  
 O'er paths by truant Venus trod,  
 Light Mercury is sure to follow.

J.

No. 124.—*Copies of the Affidavits on which the Motion for a Conspiracy against Mr. Clifford and others, was founded.*

J. D. Wilson, of No. 34, Russell-street, in the county of Middlesex, music-seller, maketh oath, and saith, that on the evening of the 30th day of October last, a number of persons were assembled, in a riotous manner, in the pit of Covent Garden Theatre, during the representation of dramatic pieces, and, after the admission of half-price had commenced, hallooing, hooting, hissing, crying

“off, off, off!” and making so great, and such incessant, noise, as to prevent but a small part of the performance, after the commencement of the half-price, to be heard by the audience, for the purpose, as deponent believes, by force and numbers, by tumults, clamours, and terror, to compel the proprietors of the theatre to reduce the prices of admission to what they had been prior to the burning down of said theatre. And this deponent further saith, that many of the persons so engaged in interrupting the performance wore in their hats the letters O P, meaning, as deponent believes, old prices. And this deponent believes that the said persons wore the said letters as a badge, for the purpose of exciting and encouraging the persons there assembled, so, as aforesaid, to conduct themselves for the purpose aforesaid. And this deponent further saith, that J. Ridley, of Compton-street, Soho, leather-seller, was, at the commencement of the second act of the play then performing, in the pit, and one of the persons who so wore O P in his hat; and that he, the said John Ridley, made a great noise and hissing. And this deponent further saith, that, on same night, and during said riot, the said John Ridley was apprehended by a peace-officer, and taken before James Read, Esq. a magistrate for the county of Middlesex and the city of Westminster, and, while he was under examination, by the same James Read, the said John Ridley said,

“ that he had the letters O P in his hat, and meant to have them again to-morrow,” or words to that, or the like, effect ; meaning, as this deponent believes, that he would go into the said theatre, on the evening of next day, with the said letters O P in his hat, for the purpose of exciting the persons in the said theatre to riot and tumult.

Sworn in court, this 20th of November, 1809.

By the court.

JOHN D. WILSON.

*Another.*

Henry Bennett, of New Inn Buildings, Wychstreet, in the county of Middlesex, gentleman, maketh oath, that, on or about the evening of the 4th November last, a number of persons were assembled, in a riotous manner, in the pit of Covent Garden Theatre, during the representation of dramatic pieces, and, after the admission for half-price had commenced, hallooing, hissing, crying “ off, off,” and making so great, and such incessant, noise, as to prevent but a small part of the performance, after the half price commenced, to be heard by the audience, for the purpose, as deponent believes, by force and numbers, by tumult, clamour, and terror, of compelling the proprietors of the theatre to reduce the prices of admission to what they had been prior to the burn-



ing down of the old theatre. And this deponent further saith, that many of the persons engaged in interrupting the performance wore in their hats the letters O P, meaning, as deponent believes, old prices. And this deponent believes, that the said persons wore the said letters as a badge, for the purpose of exciting and encouraging the persons there assembled, so, as aforesaid, to conduct themselves for the purpose aforesaid. And this deponent further saith, that he saw Henry Clifford, of Stone-Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, in the said county, esquire, on or about the said fourth day of November instant, come into the pit, after the admission of half-price, as deponent believes, had commenced; and, immediately upon his entering, several persons, then in the pit, called out—"Mr. Clifford,—three cheers for him!" and immediately three cheers, or huzzas, were given, by many persons then in the pit, and other parts of the theatre, who had in their hats the letters O P, meaning, as deponent believes, old prices, and who were, at the time, preventing the dramatic performances from being heard, by hallooing, hooting, hissing, and crying "off, off!" and the incessant noise described. And, while the said tumult and riot was going on, this deponent heard Henry Clifford say, addressing himself to the persons then engaged in the said tumult and riot, "That is right, go on,—persevere,—when you leave the house, disperse;" and immediately after, there was a great

noise, shouting, and disturbance, in the pit. And, after the performances were over, the said Henry Clifford addressed several persons then present, desiring the O P's to disperse. And this deponent further saith, that the said Henry Clifford came into the pit of the said theatre, on or about the evening of the 7th day of November instant, at half-price, with the letters O P in his hat, and he was joined by several other persons, with O P in their hats, and who were making a great noise and riot, some of whom had rattles, horns, and many other noisy instruments, with which they made a great noise during the dramatic performance, so that but small part thereof could be heard. And this deponent further saith, that he hath seen a person of the name of Scot, of Verulam-Buildings, in the said county, gentleman, as deponent was afterwards informed and believes also that a person of the name of John Berkitt Wienholt, of Thames-Ditton, in the county of Surry, gentleman, and also a person of the name of William Henry Savage, of Walsingham-Place, near Lambeth, in the said county of Surry, gentleman, as deponent was informed and believes, several evenings in the said theatre, since that time, in company, together making a great noise and riot, with the letters O P in their hats, and who were found, by several others, in different parts of the said theatre, making a great noise and disturbance, during the performances in said thea-

tre, having the letters O P in their hats : and particularly on the 8th of November last, he, this deponent, saw the said John Berkitt Wienholt, and William Henry Savage, in one of the lower boxes of the said theatre, holding up and exhibiting a placard, which had the following words, —“ We conquer or die ! ”—and continued making a great noise and riot during the performances at the said theatre, so that but little part thereof could be heard ; and many persons, having O P in their hats or on their breasts, continued running to and fro on the seats in the pit, pretending ; and other disorderly and riotous conduct and behaviour, to the annoyance and disturbance of the peaceable part of the audience in the said theatre.

HENRY BENNET.

Sworn at my chambers, in Sergeants' Inn, Chancery-Lane, London, 26th November, 1809, before me,

J. BAYLEY.

No. 125.—*Elegiac Verses on the Decease of Old Prices.*

( From the British Press, Nov 27.)

Here lies O P, who, while in life,  
Kept London town in constant strife,

And made men cry, where they were wont to laugh.

*The gods on high*, from that abyſs

*The pit*, heard this vile demon hiſs,

And ſtruck him dead!—Lo! this his epitaph:

“ His horn is blown, his rattle ſprung,

His bell, yea, his *death-bell* is rung,

And in the *dust* his ſpirit laid:—

*De mortuis nil niſi bonum*,

Is all that may be ſaid upon him—

For of the bad, what may be ſaid?

“ As *ſpirit*, his vile ſchemes to cheer,

Was *Chronicle*d his ſour *ſmall-beer*,

Who *ſpiritless* upon the *bier* lies low;

Bad were *The Times* that gave him breath,

And, had he not been *Preſs'd* to death,

He might have wrought a world of woe!

“ Upon the ſtage he'll strut no more,

His *loud rehearsals* all are o'er,

The *ſilent hearse*, all that is left him now;

A *coffin* now his *private box*,

(That *house* that wants nor *keys* nor *locks*.)

And *Charon's* boat his only chance to row.

“ To *manage managers* he tried,

And all his country's laws defied;

To *bow* to *Bow-Street* he eſteem'd a ſtain;

He ſcorn'd the *baize* and ſpurn'd controul,

But *grace* is now his *pigeon-hole*;

May we ne'er look upon his like again!”

HODGE PODGE

No. 126.—*On the nightly Uproar at Covent Garden.*

(From the Public Ledger, Nov. 25.)

Our writers dramatic must welcome, of course,  
This downfall of sense and ascendance of sound;  
Where pantomime gains an accession of force,  
And long sinking dialogue's finally drown'd.

Let them join the loud dunces in boxes and pit,  
Of clamour and nonsense the instruments willing;  
Who care not a shilling for genius or wit,  
And whose own is confin'd to their care of a *shilling*.

And yet these curmudgeons, who willingly waste  
Half a guinea (the *Opera's* worth it, no doubt!)  
Must be wanting in thrift, or deficient in taste,  
Must be asses *with* ears, or be spendthrifts without:

*Half-a-guinea* for singers and shallow-pate scrapers,  
Whose resin, not reason, provides them with meals!  
Or a *Pirouette* puppet's *ad libitum* capers,  
Whose toe's in his head, and his head in his heels!

Ye critics, who jingle your bells at your ease,  
And flourish on foolscap appropriate wit,  
Put *both* round your noddles instead of O P's,  
And seem to the stage what ye act in the pit.

So I shall no more in astonishment gaze,  
 So ye will no longer the reason dissemble  
 Why guineas are thrown to *Da Ponte*\* and *Des Hayes*,  
 And shillings regretted to *Shakspeare* and *Kemble*.

H.

No. 127.—*Private Boxes.*

(From the same.)

O Venus, regina Cnidi Paphique, &amp;c.

O Venus, Queen of Drury Lane!

Soft partisan of amorous doxies;

O'er tall Soho no longer reign,

But patronize our Private Boxes.

Let Cupid, ardent chaperon,

To Hart Street lead the London Graces,

As loose of manners as of zone,

With bosoms bare, and brazen faces.

Bring with thee, dame, a tempting show

Of girls fantastic, gay, and jolly;

Age, without thee, is sapient woe,

And with thee, youth is joyous folly.

Bring too the footpad demigod,

Who once outwitted wise Apollo;

O'er paths, by truant Venus trod,

Light Mercury is sure to follow.

J.

\* The Opera-House poet.

No. 128.—*Covent Garden Theatre.*

Two reasons have hitherto prevented me from making the scenes at this place a subject of remark: the *first*, that the REGISTER has never meddled with theatrical matters; and, the *second*, that to obtain, at this distance, correct information was difficult. The first impression upon my mind was, that the demand of *Old Prices* was unreasonable, seeing that all things have so much advanced in price; and, besides, it appeared to me to be a violation of the rights of property to attempt to compel people to sell entertainment at the price pointed out by the purchaser, who was at liberty to leave the commodity to others, if he did not choose to take it at the seller's price. The argument of *monopoly* had some weight against this reasoning, though it did not appear to me conclusive against the proprietors; nor did I care a straw about their account that was published, because whether they got more than six per cent. or not, appeared to me to have nothing at all to do with the matter.

As to the *private boxes*, considered as a source of *immorality*, I do not think much of that, being of opinion, that the quantity of immorality will be the same, whether those boxes be private or public. But, if it be correct (of which I can

hardly doubt now) that the construction of the house pens up, *drives back*, and *degrades*, the middling class of people, that appears to me to be a solid ground of objection; and a ground, too, upon which the audience have a full and complete right to make a stand; because, the liberty to act plays is not given for the *private advantage of the players*, but for the *entertainment of the public*; and, it appears to me, that those who act under the patent, have no more right to drive back, and degrade the people, than has the minister of any church, by appropriating all the convenient and comfortable and conspicuous parts of that church to the exclusive use of the rich. To this distribution, therefore, of the room in the theatre, I should have objected, even if the price of admission had been but half what it formerly was; and, if the description given me be correct, I must say, that the proprietors do seem to have lost sight of that respect which it is always their duty to shew towards the public at large. I am willing to suppose that they meant no disrespect; but certainly such is the appearance. But I might have got over this; I might even have wished to forget the employment of the Jews and bruisers; but how is it *possible* ever to forget the attempts that have been made upon the *personal liberty* of so many of the people? Here the matter becomes a *political* one, and a matter, too, of far more interest to us than the result of the war in Spain and



Portugal, adding thereunto the result of our garrisoning of the island of Sicily. The movements of Messrs. Read and Graham are of infinitely more interest to us than the movements of Baron Douro and the Duke of Dalmatia; and the victory of Mr. Clifford a thousand and a thousand times repays us for the loss of the battle of Wagram, which produced the fall of Austria.

In my next I will put upon record an account of this trial; but, in the meanwhile, let me not omit to express my admiration of *the conduct of the jury*, and particularly of the answer, which they gave to the judge, when they said, that they thought it *very harsh* to construe so slight a matter into an act of *riot*. There spoke the good sense of Englishmen; there breathed the mild spirit of English law! *Rioting* indeed! Had there been a spirit of *rioting*, would there now have been a bench or a door, or any moveable thing in the house? Yes, it is indeed, "very harsh" to call what is passing at the theatre *rioting*; it is carrying the terrors of criminal law into places of amusement.

I have not time for further remarks at present; but, I cannot refrain from expressing an earnest hope, that the proprietors will adopt, *without loss of time*, MEASURES of CONCILIATION. Other measures, of almost every sort that has a name, they have tried in vain; and, therefore, I hope they will now try what CONCILIATION will do.

N. B. I wish very much to be furnished with a correct account of all the instances in which *bail* has been required at *Bow Street*, and the circumstances of the parties from whom demanded. This is a very important matter.

WM. COBBETT.

*Botley, 7th Dec. 1809.*

No. 129.—*Gray's Bard—(A Parody).*

(From the Morning Post, Dec. 8.)

“Ruin seize thee, ruthless John,  
 Confusion on thy banners wait;  
 Tho' bless'd with all the smiles of *ton*,  
 They mock the air with idle state:  
 Helm nor hawberk's twisted mail,  
 Nor e'en thy sister's acting shall prevail,  
 To save thy soul from nightly fears,  
 From O P's curse, from O P's cheers.”

Such were the sounds that from the gallery's height  
 Roll'd thundering to the pit below;  
 Rous'd slumbering Uproar from her seat,  
 And wak'd the yell of clamorous *Row*:  
 Fierce Wienholt stood aghast in speechless trance;  
 To arms! Fitzgerald cried, and shook the sconce:  
 Perch'd on'a box, with haughty brow,  
 Flush'd with the purple stream, in angry mood,  
 Rob'd in his soldier's garb, he stood,  
 Prepar'd the loose placard to throw.

With haggard eyes, surcharg'd with blood,  
 Shatter'd his garments, torn his hair,  
 His arms wide sprawling to the air,  
 With hurried voice and accent loud,  
 Thus bellow'd to the rebel crowd :

“ Hark how each private box's desert cave  
 Sighs to the torrent's voice beneath—  
 Our fierce battalions deafening clamours breathe,  
 And high in air their hundred arms they wave;  
 Swearing they'll not an added ducat pay,  
 For *high-born* Shakespeare's harp, or *softer* Otway's lay.  
 Stopp'd is the *Bank clerk's* prattling tongue  
 That rous'd the stormy scene,  
 Brave Cowlam sleeps upon a craggy bed,  
 O P's, ye mourn in vain;  
 Clifford, whose lawless bold harangue  
 Made lofty Graham bow his crested head :  
 In dreary *Rufus' hall* they lie,  
 Struck with dismay, and ghastly pale,  
 Far, far aloof, the promis'd witness fail,  
 The *Attorney-General* screams, and passes by.  
 Dear lost companions of the noisy art,  
 Dear as the *ruddy drops* that glad my eyes;  
 Dear as the hopes that lately fed my heart,  
 When first I saw the daring conflict rise.

No more I weep, they do not sleep;  
 In yonder hall, a grisly band,  
 see them sit, they linger yet,  
 And only wait a rallying hand—  
 With me in dreadful harmony to join,  
 And howl destruction to the Kemble line.”  
 Peering high, and near the roof,  
*Pale* Confusion shew'd her face;  
 In accents wild, and sharp reproof,  
 Thus address'd her fallen race :

“ Mark the hour, and mark the night,  
 When Thames shall echo with delight;  
 And to your ears the dreadful verdict bring :  
 When *Henry's antique* towers shall ring  
 With shouts that strike *Thames Ditton* with affright.  
 The wolf of law, with unrelenting fangs,  
 Tearing the bowels of our mangled mate;  
 Fell Conviction, hovering o'er us, hangs:  
 The scourge of Justice, ah ! what ills await ;  
 Amazement in the van, and fear combin'd,  
 And poverty and cold imprisonment behind.  
     What tho' Clifford, daring chief,  
     Has gain'd *by chance* a short-liv'd fame,  
     That will to us bring no relief,  
     Who fed the fire and fann'd the flame ;  
     From us the gallant hero's dead,  
     And Wienholt too has *veil'd his head*.\*  
 The swarms that in the Statesman's beams were born  
 The public taste has laugh'd to scorn,  
 And all our efforts overwhelm ;  
 In easy sail their *new-built vessel* goes,  
 Shakespeare the prow, and Kemble at the helm ;  
 Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,  
 That, hurl'd in dread repose, has lost its evening prey.  
     Lo ! they fill the tragic bowl,  
     A rich repast prepare ;  
     Reason's feast and flow of soul  
     Again will triumph here ;  
 While punishment and vengeance scowl  
 A baleful frown upon our baffled host.  
     Late we heard their battle bray,  
     Arm to arm, and force to force ;  
 Thro' hours of havoc urg'd the course,  
 And thro' all Bow Street's squadrons mow'd their way.

\* In a night-cap.

These hours are gone, and gone our fame,  
And nearly sunk is O P's name.

Judgment suspended o'er their head,

Above, below, they deal the blow,

And o'er the plain our flying squadrons spread ;

The *brothers*, smiling at our dismal doom,

Deep stamp their vengeance strong, and dark'ning terrors gloom.

But stay, ah ! stay, nor thus forlorn

Leave me unbles'd, unaided here to mourn.

In yon dark cloud, that skirts the western skies,

They melt, they vanish from my eyes ;

But, ah ! what dazzling scenes on Kemble wait !

Descending slow, their glittering skirts unroll ;

Visions of glory, spare my aching sight ;

Ye *crowded houses*, rush not on my soul ;

No more their long-lost Shakespeare they bewail,

The flash of his far-beaming eye they hail,

And with him Otway, Southerne, Rowe,

Sublime, their starry frontlets rear.

And gorgeous dames in gallant show

In mimic majesty appear ;

In the midst a form divine,\*

Her port proclaims her of the Kemble line ;

Her light'ning eye, her awe-commanding face,

Attemper'd sweet to ev'ry grace.

What sounds of acclamation fill the air !

What strains of trembling rapture round her play !

Hear from thy grave, immortal Shakespeare, hear ;

She breathes a soul to animate thy clay ;

Bright Nature calls, and, soaring as she sings,

Waves, in the eye of Heaven, her many-colour'd wings.

Lo ! they adorn again

Fierce war and faithful love,

And truth, in fairy fiction dress'd.

\* Mrs. Siddons.

In buskin'd measures move  
 Pale grief and pleasing pain,  
 With horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.  
 And, hark, a cherub choir;\*  
 Gales of harmony, that bear,  
 Sounds that my very heart-strings tear;  
     Their horrid warblings pain my startled ear,  
     That, lost in Melody's soft notes, expire.  
 Vain was our hope that deem'd the sanguine cloud  
     Rais'd by my breath would quench the orb of day;  
 To-morrow he repairs his golden flood,  
     And warms the nation with redoubled ray.  
     Enough for me, with dread I see  
 The different doom our fates assign;  
     Your is despair and legal care,  
 Sorrow and defeat are mine."  
 She spoke, and headlong from the gall'ry's height,  
 Deep in the rearing pit she plung'd to *endless night*.

FALKLAND.

\* Cherub choir — Dickons, Mountain, Liston, Bolton, &c. &c. &c.

No. 130.—*Covent Garden Theatre versus Shakespeare.\**

(From the Morning Chronicle.)

Poor Shakespeare is hardly beset,  
In this most tyrannical age :  
His *wig* is turn'd out of the *pit*,  
And his *wit* is turn'd off from the *stage*.

WIGSBY.

No. 131.—*The Progress of Civilization.—On the Conduct of a certain Barrister, in the Pit of Covent Garden Theatre, on Friday Night.*

(From the British Press, Dec. 13.)

Two centuries ago a Shakespeare rose,  
T' improve mankind and to adorn the stage ;  
Another Shaks care modern times disclose,  
The stage disgracing by fell strife and rage.

N. P.

\* Mr. Shakespeare, a barrister, was taken to Bow-Street for wearing his professional wig in the pit.

No. 132.—*Playgoing Wigs.*—*To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.*

(Dec. 14.)

Sir,

I am a lady who, no matter whether from illness or age, have lost the flowing ringlets that once played in graceful negligence around my neck. I have lost them in reality, but only in reality—for, thanks to the perfection to which our peruke-makers have carried their delightful art, I can still in *appearance*, vie with the flaunting misses who have not met so unkind a fortune in this respect as myself. I intreat your permission to ask, through the medium of the Morning Chronicle, the advice of some of your correspondents, on the dilemma in which a late circumstance has placed us. You are to know, sir, that I am come to town but for a few days, and am dying to see the inside of Covent Garden Theatre; but, before I venture there, I must beg to be informed, in wigs of what colour, how many curls, &c. &c. a lady may risk her presence at that place, without danger of being taken out by these horrid Bow-Street people. That I may not be in such jeopardy, from wearing an *illegal wig*, or be debarred the pleasure of giving my friends in the



country a description of the *splendid edifice*, I intreat an early answer from some of your polite correspondents; and trust that you will excuse this intrusion, which proceeds from the extreme anxiety of

Your obedient servant,

KATE CAXON.

No. 133.—*The new-built Playhouse, O!*

(From the Morning Chronicle.)

Tune—"The Bay of Biscay, O!"

Loud roar'd the watchman's rattle,  
Dust-bells began the din,  
Announc'd the hour of battle!  
'Twas half-price rushing in;  
Whilst o'er the rascal crew,  
Vast consternation flew,  
At the fight,  
On that night,  
In the new-built playhouse, O!

The catcalls next shrill sounding  
'Midst O P's vocal strain;  
The magic dance, resounding,  
Near rent the walls in twain!  
Our victors strengthen'd grew,  
O'eturn'd the Bow-Street crew,  
At the fight,  
On that night,  
In the new-built playhouse, O!

Then, must'ring up our forces,  
 Attack'd the thieves again ;  
 But number'd in our losses  
 A few brave O P men.  
 The victory was ours,  
 Brave O P loudly roars,  
 At the fight,  
 On that night,  
 In the new-built playhouse, O!

No. 134.—*The O P Victory.*

(From the Morning Chronicle, Dec. 16.)

Tune—"Old Towler."

Again the vocal tumult roars,  
 The O Ps take their ground,  
 On all sides reinforcement pours,  
 At rattles' well-known sound ;  
 Then shouting forth their fav'rite songs,  
 They beat time as they sing,  
 Britons strike home! avenge your wrongs,  
 And then—God save the King.  
 With a hey ho rattle,  
 Hark forward to battle.

While as the battle fierce did glow,  
 John Kemble stood in view,  
 Begg'd silence—making then his bow—  
 "O Ps, I yield to you.  
 Brandon shall quit us in a trice,  
 No private box shall be;  
 And, pitites—you shall have old price,  
 You've gain'd the victory.  
 With your hey ho dancing,  
 Hark forward and prancing."

No. 135. — *Trial of Mr. Clifford.*

Sir,

I have just read the report of Mr. Clifford's trial upon an action brought by him against Mr. Brandon for false imprisonment; and it seems to me the most extraordinary thing in the world, how a jury of Englishmen, however composed, whether special or common, (this was truly *half and half*;) could possibly, after the evidence they heard, and the summing up of the judge, Sir James Mansfield, return a verdict *for* the plaintiff. Whatever mischief may arise from this mischievous verdict (nor should I wonder if much serious mischief be the result) will lie at the door of that jury. I the more wonder that, Mr. Serjeant Shepherd, counsel for the defendant, seems to have entirely overlooked two very material points. First, that Mr. Clifford, at the time he was apprehended, still wore the *ensign of riot*; and that therefore, though the actual row in the theatre might have ceased, yet his instigation and sanction of that riot still continued in full force, and in full force to a yet more serious extent, and a much more alarming purpose, than any thing done within the theatre could accomplish; namely, to the encouragement and *prompting* the alarming processions of riot and tumult practised and organized in the streets, after

the theatre broke up, to the terror and dismay of the whole town; and which, I make no doubt, would have been *repeated* on that night, and if not personally headed by Mr. Clifford, at least headed by the sanction of his name, and under his O P banner, but for the circumstance of his apprehension, which had the temporary effect of somewhat damping their ardour and activity. Not being myself of the law, I have no such professional delicacy as seemed to haunt Mr. Serjeant Shepherd at times throughout his pleading, lest he might be *personal* to his brother counsel, Mr. Serjeant Best. I make therefore no hesitation in adding to what he advanced upon that head, that even if there appeared to be a *preconcerted plan* on the part of Mr. Clifford, to accept an invitation and command among the rioters, it existed on this occasion. Mr. Best told the jury, that a Mr. Hipkins *proposed* the going to the play, and that Mr. Clifford went *only* in consequence of the proposal made to him; adding — “the plaintiff, therefore, gentlemen of the jury, did not even intend to go himself, till it was proposed by his friend.” But unluckily his own witness, the aforesaid Mr. Hipkins, when *he* comes to be called upon for *his* evidence (very uncivilly to be sure) flatly contradicts his own sponsor, and his friend’s counsel, by stating (by mistake, no doubt) that he accompanied Mr. Clifford to the theatre, “*at Mr. Clifford’s request.*” Now this is a very material difference; and if given cor-

rectly by the *Courier*, in which I now read it, proves a great deal; for it proves one of two things, either that *Mr. Clifford* was the *proposer* of the party to the theatre, or that his counsel, Serjeant Best, *falsely stated* Mr. Hipkins as the proposer, for what exact *purpose and object*, his already quoted sentence to the jury sufficiently explains. Now I take the real case to have been this; that it was *agreed upon*, between Mr. Clifford and his friend Mr. Hipkins, that he, Mr. Hipkins, should *propose* a trip to the theatre, as if quite *accidentally*; that he, Mr. Clifford, should close with the proposal as quite *accidentally* likewise; but that, when Mr. Hipkins came to give his evidence, he either was in some stew for his own personal safety, perhaps, or he had *forgotten his part*, and therefore blundered out the *truth*, that *Clifford proposed to him* to go to the theatre. Now this I can easily imagine to have been the plain *fact*: it was just what a professional man, *meaning* to head and sanction a riot, would do. He would first *get invited* to go to the scene of action, and by a man who should prove a good witness for him as to his *harmless* demeanour while there. Having secured these two points, he would reckon himself pretty tolerably safe out of harm's way, let what will come of it. And so he *would* have been, if he had not proved *too much*. But his zeal in the cause over-reached his professional prudence and caution, in the act of hoisting the

ensign of riot. I do not much wonder that his discretion was lulled, and caught napping. An *invitation* to so flattering a distinction as that of heading a popular party of rioters is very intoxicating; wiser and longer heads than his have been turned by it;—it is what few *citizens'* heads can withstand. But, then, how was it to be accepted safely? Why nothing easier. Simply by *getting a stranger* to ask him “if wearing an O P in his hat was illegal;”—(to which he thought proper to answer “no;”)—then, *getting the stranger* to put the O P (in joke I suppose, comical rogue;—for no man alive could *in earnest* have borne “the insolent liberty,” as Mr. Serjeant Shepherd very properly termed it, from a *real stranger*) into his hat; but which Mr. Clifford, good-natured, easy, man! *suffered* to remain in all night, even *after the joke was over*: for it was still in his hat when he had left the theatre, and when he was apprehended. This was carrying the joke a little too far, farther at least than was necessary as a mere *passive* act, as stated by Mr. Clifford and by his counsel to have been, unless he had some *farther object in contemplation* by continuing it in his hat *after* he had left the theatre, and unless that object was as an ensign of fellowship and sanction to the *riotous spirits awaiting his orders* for their street-procession, I am at a loss to guess what else it could be for. I will ask any one of common honesty, or common sense, whether it was a *natural* conduct

for any man, invited (as he says he was) *accidentally* to go to the theatre, *accidentally* asked “whether wearing O P was illegal?” (By the bye, how came this *perfect stranger* to know that his opinion was *worth* asking upon that point, unless he *knew him* to be Counsellor Clifford?) *accidentally* having his hat taken from his head, and *accidentally* replaced, ornamented *accidentally* with O P, —demeaning himself (which he took especial care to prove by his friend and witness Mr. Hipkins) most peaceably, quietly, and *perhaps demurely*, to prove that he was not riotous; nay, “exerting himself,” as his counsel, Serjeant Best, stated, and broadly asserted, “to *remove* what symptoms of riot did manifest themselves,” (though he did not attempt to bring any evidence whatever of *such an exertion*, of such an *overt act* of peace, order, and quiet); —I ask any one of common honesty, or common sense, whether it was *natural* for such a peaceable, orderly, quiet, limb of the law to persist in wearing the *accidental* O P in his hat after he quitted the theatre? Nothing could be more *unnatural* than such conduct in any one, not knowingly, designedly, and *wilfully*, attending the theatre for the express purpose of encouraging and sanctioning the rioters by his presence and participation. How otherwise came he to be *cheered* on his entrance with “*here comes the honest counsellor ?*” This fact we have from his chosen friend Mr. Hipkins: and being thus hailed does not look

very *accidental*: on the contrary, it *clearly proves* that they *expected* and were looking out for him: they even "made room for him and his distinguished friend *Biddy Hipkins* to pass into the middle of the pit." This fact we likewise have from the same unquestionable authority. And what does it prove, or rather what does it *not* prove? it proves to demonstration that Mr. Clifford did *not* go *accidentally* to the theatre; it proves that he was *not accidentally* asked whether wearing O P was illegal; that his hat was *not accidentally* thus ornamented: but it proves, on the contrary, that he was *pretty well known to his constituents prior* to this *accidental* introduction; and they looked for him, longed for him, and were so overjoyed at his appearance, that however well *tutored* they might have been as to *their* demeanour when he should *accidentally* make his entrée among them, they forgot all legal instructions, disregarded all *professional cautions* given them, and betrayed the important secret that he was *accidentally* become *their patron, their leader, and guide!* Whenever he gets out of this scrape, it will perhaps be a lesson to the learned gentleman, how upon any future occasion he pitches upon a *chosen* friend whose nerves were not quite firm, or a *chosen witness* who flatly contradicts his counsel in the very first sentence he utters of evidence; or a *chosen few*, whose imprudent and unmanagable warmth of zeal for his person, advice, and sanction, overleaps all bounds



of discretion, and betrays the very secret they were enjoined to conceal, that he was chosen the generalissimo of their forces. Well might his counsel, Serjeant Best, observe, with an affected air of candour that makes one smile, "that, considering Mr. Clifford's situation in life, he should not *perhaps* have made himself so conspicuous; that he might have hissed *perhaps*, but that *he* should have thought it *imprudent* to wear O P." He adds, but not quite so happily — "*the plaintiff thought otherwise*, however, and *perhaps* he was *right*." I implicitly believe him, not only "that the plaintiff thought otherwise," but that he had bestowed *a good deal* of thought *otherwise* upon the subject; and had digested those thoughts into a cool, preconcerted, *determination* to go to the theatre to be the "Magnus Apollo" of the rioters; with this implied assurance from their *delegate stranger*, "Te duce, sequar." Look at his whole conduct throughout; cunningly imagined and cautiously designed, but unluckily executed, or rather *marred*; and marred provokingly enough by himself, and his particular friends, Mr. Hipkins and his constituents, *all proving too much*. And it certainly is a very galling and aggravating consideration, and hath been so esteemed ever since the days of King David. "For it is not an open enemy that hath done me this dishonour, for then I could have borne it; neither was it mine adversary that did magnify himself against me, for then per-

adventure I would have hid myself from him : but it was even thou, my companion, my guide, and mine own familiar friend ! we took sweet counsel together in the house of *Bosville* as friends." It would be difficult to describe *his guide*, Counsellor Best, or *his companion and own particular friend* Mr. Hipkins, more accurately, who, in proving that he had dined at Col. Bosville's, and that the party was *accidentally* made at *his* house, proved more perhaps than was absolutely *incumbent* on any counsel or *friend* to prove. We are not indeed indebted to the trite adage "nosciter a socio qui non noscitur a se," whereby to judge of Mr. Clifford. He was *not unknown* already to the public "*a se*:" but it *may* help us with regard to this Mr. Hipkins, who of course must be "*a gentleman of character and honour*," because Serjeant Best said he was; but, according to the adage, we must class him as an *active citizen*, being, with Mr. Clifford, the guest of Colonel Bosville, who is, I apprehend, the identical Citizen William Bosville, Esq. the very dear friend and the very late and dear correspondent of Citizen Caitiff Cobbett, and *his chosen channel* for attempting on the public the most impudent deception and the most barefaced imposture ever *invented* or thought of by a shameless and mischievous miscreant. This *accidental* proposal of adjourning to the theatre just to see "*what was going forward*," forsooth, — though Citizen Bosville might not *possibly* have

even heard this *accidental* proposal of his two guests, and of "leaving his table," being a *true patriot*, he was much too staunch an advocate for the "liberty of the subject" either to cramp or to heed their secession. Or he might *possibly*, on the contrary, have actually *sat in council* with them upon this momentous subject; yet was he *too wary* to be of their party to the theatre. "Old birds are not to be caught with chaff."

Caitiff Cobbett, that "*rogue in grain*," has taught the enlightened mind of Citizen Bosville to be occupied with *higher matter* than the Covent Garden riots. *They know* the danger of entrusting nice and delicate projects to the execution of others; they are *truly sensible* how a blundering "*fellow in a sailor's jacket*," or an imprudent though "*a very good friend of ours*" may, by proving *a great deal too much*, completely *blow* any given *contrivance*, and wholly *mar* any given speculation, from an *accidental* visit to Covent Garden Theatre, an *accidental* distinguished reception *into the bosom of the pit*, and an *accidental* hoisting of an O P banner of riot, down to *a forged self-abusive placard*, and its truly ingenious accompaniments.

Serjeant Best said "he would prove, *till the jury were tired of hearing it*, that the plaintiff took no part in the riot, and *only* wore O P in his hat." And, in good truth, I do think he was *partly* as good as his word; for, it is only on the sup-

position of their being "tired of hearing it" that their *judgements* were so impaired, worn out, and exhausted, that they returned a verdict *for* instead of *against* the plaintiff. To Serjeant Best's exertions and zeal Counsellor Clifford stands his debtor; though his *prudence and discretion* may be placed perhaps to the credit side of the account between them. He proved *too much*; as for instance, among others:—Quoth the learned serjeant, "While he, Clifford, was in the pit, he held no conversation with any body but his friend." Good and guarded: but the learned serjeant *just then forgot* his short dialogue with *the stranger*. "And (he adds) he, as well as twenty other witnesses whom the learned serjeant could call, would tell the jury, that the plaintiff took no part whatever in the riot." Roundly asserted: but had I been on the jury, I confess I should have had some curiosity to have heard these twenty witnesses, if it were only to have had a peep at the twenty *staunchest* O P's of that night; who were, I make no doubt, all *known*, subpoenaed, and ready in court or in Westmister-hall to be called. If nineteen out of the twenty had not contradicted Serjeant Best's assertion, and each other, then Counsellor Clifford had *tutored them* better than he did Peter Pipkin, or Hipkin, and his O P constituents.

Well might the judge say "he could not conceive what had brought Mr. Clifford to the play,

or induced him to take his place in the pit, except for the purpose of taking part in those tumults and riots, or at least to countenance and encourage them." Nor can any one else, I believe, but Peter Pipkin or Serjeant Best. The jury clearly thought as the judge did, expressly declaring, that they rested their verdict, not on any the least doubt of Councillor Clifford's countenancing and encouraging, consequently aiding and assisting in, the riot, but on the doubt whether Brandon or Taunton were *duly and legally* empowered to apprehend Clifford after the riot was over. This is one of the loopholes of the law, at which many a rogue creeps out. By this rule, why not make it necessary to apprehend a thief or a murderer while the theft or the murder is *actually committing*, or else make their apprehensions even so soon *after*, or even so near the spot, illegal? You cannot often apprehend a thief or a murderer at that precise time. True, nor can you always apprehend a *rioter* in the actual moment of riot: but, if he had been *observed*, during the riot, *conspicuous* in it, hoisting the *ensign of riot* and defiance, encouraging others to riot by his example and authority, (*though not opening his lips*,) which in this case Clifford's marked reception among them, being hailed with three distinct cheers, with "*here comes the honest counsellor*," and the way cleared for him to the centre of the pit and

rioters,—if these are all proved to demonstration, as they have been, is *he*, when he is divested of his “legion of honour,” to depart unmolested, with his flag of defiance still flying? Is *his* person to be *esteemed sacred*, because he had removed twenty or thirty feet from his *late post of honour*, or because the warwhoop which he had *personally and chiefly* contributed to raise had ceased some five or ten minutes? is he therefore *intangible*, till he be again caught in the “*bosom of his family*,” and in “*the very act?*” I am no lawyer, but, as Mr. Serjeant Best now and then said of himself, “I am a plain man,” and in my plain opinion, I cannot but think, that Mr. Read, who presided at the Bow-street office that night, was exceedingly deficient, to say the least of it, *in his duty*, in so *very soon*, and with so *very little inquiry*, discharging Mr. Clifford, instead of holding him to bail, as I think he had done others with *less* evidence against *them* than he had in Mr. Clifford’s case. Others, though very few, have been discharged without bail, but *none*, that I recollect, without much questioning, and a strict examination of some time; whereas, Mr. Clifford’s *name* seems no sooner announced than he was discharged with scarce a question. Serjeant Best stated the *steadiness* of his conduct in the theatre as a proof of his peaceable demeanor. He stated, likewise, the *coolness* of his conduct when apprehended, and when before the

magistrate, as a proof of his innocence. He made no resistance:—why? because, *perhaps*, he *wished to be apprehended*. “The plaintiff, said Mr. Best, with a great deal of temper and moderation, as the learned serjeant thought, *coolly* asked the defendant, Brandon, if he would *swear* to what he had said; observing, that, if he had done so, he would have been exalted to a stage somewhat higher than that of Covent Garden Theatre.” Now that observation of Serjeant Best’s, as a professional pleading pun, was not amiss; but I cannot agree with the learned serjeant in the *consequence* of his *swearing* to what he had said. One consequence would most undoubtedly have been, that Mr. Read *could not* have discharged Mr. Clifford. The learned serjeant’s statement was, that, “by and by, after being sent for, the defendant, Brandon, came to the office, and *very flippantly* said, that the plaintiff, Clifford, was a rioter, and had been encouraging the riot the whole night long.” And so say I; and he might very safely have sworn to it, as he wore his *ensign of riot* the whole night long, from his entrance with three cheers, and “here comes the honest counsellor.” But Brandon has not been box-keeper of Covent Garden Theatre so many years without knowing a little of the world, a little of active citizens, and a little, probably, of the shrewdness and sharpness of lawyers; and, when Counsellor Clif-

ford so *coolly* put it to him "whether he would swear to what he had said," Brandon might very naturally suspect that he had some *trap* ajar, to catch him, and therefore, not unnaturally, declined swearing to the precise words, which he was well aware, by the question, that Counsellor Clifford had duly marked "*verbatim et literatim*," and would, perhaps, if they came to *swearing*, outswear him, or, as they say, "swear him out of his Christian name." Serjeant Best says, the *consequences* of kissing the book intimidated him. That he was *intimidated* I believe, and that it was by Counsellor Clifford's *cool and easy assurance*, in asking him "whether he would swear," which, under these circumstances, he not unnaturally declined. The learned serjeant said, "the defendant would not swear: and the plaintiff *owned*, (candid creature!) to the circumstance of wearing O P in his hat, and asked the magistrate if there was any offence in that? Mr. Read said "no," and the plaintiff was discharged." These are Serjeant Best's precise words, as reported, and I dare say correctly, by the *Courier*; by which it does not appear that Mr. Read asked Mr. Clifford even *one question*, nay, that he only pronounced the monosyllable "no," and forthwith discharged him and the monosyllable together. Had he *dispatched* all his business as quickly as this, he need not have adjourned the rioters to Covent Garden



watch-house for the night, instead of examining them "out of hand," for fear of his worship being fatigued. And Counsellor Clifford may thank his stars that his *accidental* visit to the theatre had not taken place a few nights *later* than it did, when the *coolness* of the watch-house would have rendered his *cool* conduct before Mr. Read unnecessary, at least till the next morning. Counsellor Clifford has been altogether, *hitherto*, tolerably lucky. Though he began by an *accidental* invitation, just to see *how things were going on*, I much doubt whether the *chapter of accidents* will yet bear him harmless. His counsel, the learned serjeant, "could not help admiring the dignified moderation of Counsellor Clifford, in not laying his damages at a larger sum, viz. £100; that it was not *profit* the plaintiff looked for, that even *that sum* would never find its way into the pocket of the plaintiff." True enough, Mr. Best, his damages amounting only to £5; the other £95 having "lost their way to *his pocket*." He assured the jury, and *pledged* himself, which, by the bye, he had better left alone, "that it should be employed for the purpose of assisting those who laboured under *oppression* similar to that which was complained of to-day." Amiable benevolence! God-like melting charity! But did it never occur to their sapiences, Serjeant Best and Counsellor Clifford, that this *promised appropri-*

tion of the £100 “dignified damages,” sounds very like, if not a bribe, *a most palpable encouragement* and comfort to other rioters, who laboured, and *may* labour, under *oppression* similar to that complained of by Mr. Clifford? We have heard of *funds* for different purposes, and Counsellor Clifford, through his organ Counsellor Best, publicly avows his *pledge* of contributing to *a fund* for the purpose, in plain English, of *defending rioters!* All *combinations* have their *funds*. The corresponding societies, you know, Mr. Clifford, had *their* fund; the united Irishmen had *their* fund; and now *you* tell us that the Covent Garden O P rioters have *their* fund likewise, to which you are a large and liberal contributor, in *promise and pledge*, but from the issue of your trial, must, I fear, dwindle from the “dignified moderation” of £100 to the yet more “dignified moderation” of £5! What must your liberal and feeling heart suffer at disappointing the sanguine expectations of the *oppressed*, in your original pledge, minus £95; which deficit, as Serjeant Best has announced and guaranteed you to be “a gentleman, and a man of an ancient and noble family,” I think you *must in honour* make good to the fund to redeem your *united pledge*. I again repeat, that Counsellor Clifford owes much to Serjeant Best; perhaps, indeed, *more* than he *owes* the fund, but I cannot think that “of a bad bargain

the learned serjeant has made the best ;" if so, "bad is *the best*," in my opinion. Counsellor Clifford had better have pleaded his *own cause*, when he would, probably, though I will not be too sure, have dispensed with some of his learned friend's flourishes in his own praise, which flourishes contain some awkward specimens of *over proof*. And Mr. Read would have discharged his duty more to the purpose, had he considered Counsellor Clifford as an individual who had *purposely* exposed himself to the situation in which he stood, in order to *dare him*, the magistrate, to meddle with him, and thus not only countenancing and encouraging the riots, but *volunteering* himself the *ring-leader and champion of the rioters*. And Mr. Read, instead of being intimidated from meddling with Counsellor Clifford, *as such* should, according to my plain way of thinking, have made a point of bringing the question to issue in *his* individual person, *of all others*, and converting him from the *worst* into the best example to others. Unless a cool, deliberate, systematic, *challenge* to the law of the land, like this of Mr. Counsellor Clifford's, is taken up boldly and decidedly, instead of being *blinked* by a magistrate, he is not fit for his situation, nor worthy of his office. We have already seen the consequence of *his* declining to take up Mr. Clifford's gauntlet. "Upon the verdict for the plaintiff being given,

a burst of uproar and applause broke forth in such a manner as to disregard entirely the decorum of a court of justice:—cries of huzza, by hundreds at once, which were communicated like electricity to the multitude in the open hall, and echoed in Palace-yard on the instant.” A pretty picture of our boasted laws, and of the decorum of our courts of justice! In the evening a *bumper-pit* at Covent Garden at half-price, three cheers of victory to begin with, and triumphal shouts of “Clifford for ever,” with a grand display of O Ps; placards, and laurel! Why, Clifford’s popularity will vie with Cobbett’s! The next time he attends the theatre, *he* will be, like that caitiff, “a man almost, if not quite, worshipped:” though, he must excuse my being

NO VOTARY.

December 7th, 1809.

No. 136.—*Mr. Clifford’s Action against Brandon.*

(Cobbett, 16th Dec.)

The issue of this action is of a good deal of importance, as relating merely to the conduct of the proprietors of the theatre on the one part, and to that of the audience on the other part; but, when considered in its probable influence upon the general freedom and the personal safety of the

people, it is of a degree of importance not easily to be described.

Viewing it in this light, I must, of course, think it my duty to put upon record a short account of the trial, having first stated the grounds upon which the action was brought.

For many weeks past, the audience, at the new-built theatre of Covent Garden, have, by noises of various sorts, by the exhibition of placards, cockades, medals, and by other means, expressed their disapprobation of the advance which the proprietors have made on the former prices of admission, and also of the construction of the interior of the house, by which, it appears, that the middling class of the people are shut out from their usual chance of obtaining comfortable and respectable seats. Various are the means, which, it seems, the proprietors have resorted to, in order to stifle this opposition. Amongst others, the causing of persons to be seized, the causing of persons *composing part of the audience*, to be seized as *criminals*, to be dragged before the police magistrates, who are justices of the peace receiving a salary from government, and removable at the pleasure of the minister of the day; to be, by the said magistrates, held to bail, or committed to prison; and, it appears, that many very respectable persons, not happening to have bondsmen immediately at hand, have been committed to

prison, and to a prison, too, chiefly used for the confinement of the worst and lowest of wretches.

One of the persons thus seized, some few weeks ago, was Mr. Henry Clifford, a barrister of great eminence for talent in his profession, and no less distinguished for the soundness of his political principles and his attachment to the cause of English freedom. This gentleman, having been one evening in the pit of the theatre, and having, amongst the other marks of his disapprobation of the conduct of the proprietors, put in his hat a paper with the letters O P, which have been used as a sign of opposition, being the initials of the words OLD PRICES, this gentleman, for having thus acted, was, after the play was over, and as he was going along the passage from the interior of the playhouse, seized, without any warrant, by a police-officer, who acted under the express orders of a Mr. Brandon, a servant of the proprietors, who appears to have had the chief management in these arrests.

Mr. Clifford was, it appears, dragged, in the usual way, from the theatre to the police-justice's office at Bow Street, where it was not thought wise it seems, either to force him to give bail or to send him to prison. He was, therefore, discharged; whereupon, he brought his action against Mr. Brandon for *false imprisonment*, which action was tried, in the court of Common Pleas, before

Sir James Mansfield, the chief justice of that court, on Tuesday the 5th instant.

Mr. Brandon's plea was, that what was passing at the theatre, on the evening when Mr. Clifford was seized and dragged to Bow-Street, amounted to a riot; that Mr. Clifford had *taken part in that riot*; and that the seizure was made *legally*.

Mr. Serjeant Best, who was counsel for Mr. Clifford, contended, that all this was false; that what was going on at the theatre was *not a riot*; that, if it was, Mr. Clifford had *no hand in it*; and that, if it had been a riot, and he had had a hand in it, still the arrest was illegal, because the pretended riot was *at an end* when the seizure was made, and that, therefore, the seizure was illegal, and the imprisonment false, there having been *no warrant* granted for making the seizure. Mr. Serjeant Shepherd, counsel for Mr. Brandon, took, of course, the exactly opposite assertions.

It would be useless to attempt any analysis of these speeches; but there is one point of Mr. Shepherd's doctrine, relating to the functions of *juries*, that ought not to escape particular notice, and, indeed, marked reprobation.—The report of this speech makes him say:—"Whether, under the circumstances of the case, as they had been detailed in evidence, the defendant was justified, *in point of law*, for having ordered the seizure of Mr. Clifford, the jury must decide. They must decide this question, according to the *principle of*

*law*, which, in that as in other cases, *he hoped, they would receive from the directions of his lordship*; —because, if his lordship, or any other learned judge, should *happen* to mistake the law, any advocate for the person, to whose disadvantage the misdirection had been given by any such learned judge, *thank God*, had another court to apply to, so as to have any error, if such should be found, corrected. The jury, he was sure, would see, that it was *fit*, the law, in this as in all other cases, should be laid down by those who are the judges of the land, and that it *should not vary*, from day to day, with the opinions of gentlemen who are summoned, from time to time, to perform the functions of jury-men. *Melancholy*, indeed, would it be for the constitution, and for this, or any other country, governed by law, were there not a tribunal, composed of persons competent to decide upon all questions of law;—men, *whose lives had been dedicated to the study of the law*, the former part to the *practice*, and the latter part to the honest upright *administration*, of that law.”

I never heard any thing like this before. It argued a strong misgiving in the mind of the serjeant, that the jury was not on his side, and that the judge was. But it is the *argument*, it is the *reasoning*, which I wish to point out to the reprobation of the reader. We have often seen attempts to chip away the functions of jury-men, and I wish I could say that they had been made in vain;



but here is an attempt to nullify their functions altogether; and to hold them forth to the country as being no longer of any use.

This was precisely one of the cases contemplated in the words of my motto. *Points of law* were here *intermixed with matters of fact*; but, Serjeant Shepherd would have the jury not think of meddling with the *law*, though, if they so acted, they might as well have left the *whole* to the judge. There was no question about the *fact* of Mr. Clifford's having been at the theatre, or his having worn the O P. There was no question at all about this; and, therefore, if the jury were not to exercise their judgment upon the question of *law*—if they were not to judge whether what took place at the theatre was a *riot*; and, supposing it to have been a riot, if they were not to judge whether the conduct of Mr. Clifford amounted to a *participation* in that riot; and, again, if they were not to judge whether (supposing there to have been a riot) the riot was at an *end* when Mr. Clifford was arrested; if they were to judge of none of these things; if all these points were to be left to the chief justice, what was the use of the jury? What possible use could it be to impanel twelve men upon such a matter, when Mr. Clifford himself stated his having been at the theatre and acknowledged his having worn the O P, and when the defendant acknowledged his having ordered Mr. Clifford to be seized? The truth is, that, in

this case, as in most other cases of a similar nature, there was nothing in dispute, and, of course, nothing to decide upon, but the points of law; so that, if Serjeant Shepherd's doctrine had been sound, it must have been mere mockery to submit the case to a jury. What were the questions?

1. Whether Mr. Clifford was at the theatre,
2. Whether he wore the O P.
3. Whether there was a riot at the theatre.
4. Whether Mr. Clifford's conduct amounted to a participation in it, if it was a riot.
5. Whether the riot, if it was one, was still going on when he was seized without a warrant.

The first two, which the serjeant would call questions of *fact*, were of no importance; and those the jury might decide upon. But, as to the other three, they were to be decided upon by the judge. As to the questions, upon which alone any doubt could possibly have existed, the jury were, according to Serjeant Shepherd's doctrine, to be no more than the mere mouth-piece of the judge, and the functions they were to perform might have been performed full as well by the crier of the court.

Talk of *law* and of *fact*, indeed! Why, what are these three latter questions, above stated, but questions of fact? Or, at least, the question of fact is so interwoven with the question of law, that there is no such thing as separating them.

This reasoning of Serjeant Shepherd applies to all cases; to all possible cases. To cases of treat-

son, for instance. Suppose a man to be arraigned for treason, upon the ground of his having written a certain paper, and sent it secretly to other persons, which acts are asserted by his accusers to come under the legal definition of compassing the death of the king. If, in such a case, the accusers are prepared with proof of the accused person having *written and sent the paper*, they know beforehand, if the serjeant's doctrine be sound, the *jury will have nothing at all to do with the decision*; and thus the man is not found guilty by *his peers*, but by the judge alone.

There is nobody who denies, that judges have more knowledge of the law than juries can be expected to have; but, it does not hence follow that the life, fortune, or fame, of any man ought to be left to the judge, in any case whatever; and it is plain, that if, in this case, the jury was to follow implicitly, and to decide upon, the opinion of the judge because he was a man who had made the law his peculiar study, there is no case in which they ought not to decide upon the same principle; and that, of course, there is no case wherein a jury can be of any use whatever, except as mere instruments in the hands of the judge, and that the old idea of a man's being *tried by his peers* is perfect nonsense.

This doctrine of Serjeant Shepherd did formerly prevail, and was, by wicked political judges, acted upon in *cases of libel*; but, in 1792, this doctrine,

which had long disgraced our courts of justice, was extinguished by an act of parliament, brought forward by Mr. Fox, and passed for the express purpose; and which act of parliament declares, that, in cases of libel, as in other cases, the jury shall judge of, and decide upon, *the law as well as the fact*. Before this act was passed, Lord Mansfield and some other judges had acted upon the contrary maxim; but it ought to be observed that this maxim had been repeatedly condemned by the great Lord Camden, who was certainly one of the most honest lawyers, as well as one of the most wise men, that this country ever knew.

Serjeant Shepherd allowed, that it was possible for the judge to *misdirect* the jury; for him to lay that down as law which was not law. But, said he, "in such case, *thank God*, there is *another court*, to which the party, against whom such misdirection may operate, may appeal, and to which court, in such case, his counsel will advise him to appeal." The serjeant does not appear to have named this other court; but he could mean no other than the *House of Lords*, the probable *expense* of appealing to which court the serjeant forgot to mention; or, perhaps, he thought that that formed no objection to such a mode of proceeding. No, Mr. Serjeant, we have been taught to look for protection to a jury of our equals; and, whatever may be your taste, there are very few of us who are in love with "*the law's*

*delay,*” one of the things which the great studier and master of human nature has reckoned amongst the causes of self-murder. Observe, too, that, besides the delay of the law, how it must, in such case, operate in favour of the *rich* and against the *poor*. If the judge misdirect the jury against a rich man, he can appeal; but, how is it possible, be the case ever so gross, for a poor man to appeal to the house of lords? What man, even in middling circumstances, ever did make such an appeal? Does the serjeant recollect one? If he does let him name him.

Having remarked upon this doctrine, manifestly having in view the object of preventing the jury, in this case, from deciding upon their own opinion, let us see what was the result.

The chief-justice, according to printed reports of the trial, gave it as his opinion, that what was going on at the theatre, on the evening when Mr. Clifford was seized, was *a riot*; it appeared too, that he thought that the acts of Mr. Clifford made him *a participator in the riot*; and, it also appeared, that *he did not consider the riot at an end*, when Mr. Clifford was seized.

The jury, however, notwithstanding the above doctrine of Serjeant Shepherd, gave a verdict for *the plaintiff*, Mr. Clifford, with damages of FIVE POUNDS.

## JUROR'S NAMES.

STEPHEN PITT, Church Street, Kensington, Esq.

EDWARD JENNINGS, Young Street, ditto, Esq.

WILLIAM DAY, Brook Green, Esq.

GEORGE SCOTT, Upper Mall, Hammersmith, Esq.

THOMAS ROGERS, York Buildings, Esq.

The above were the only five of the special jury.

THOMAS GREENWAY,

RICHARD NORTIN,

GEORGE READER,

JOHN SEYMOUR,

THOMAS RYAN,

WILLIAM BEST,

MARK COOK,

} Tales-Men from the Com-  
mon Pannel.

Before the jury retired, the judge had desired them, if they should find for Mr. Clifford, to state upon which of the two grounds they gave their verdict; whether upon the ground of *Mr. Clifford's not having been guilty of a riot*, or upon the ground of his having been apprehended *after the riot was over*. When, therefore, the jury returned, and gave their verdict, the judge is reported to have asked them for an explanation of the ground upon which they gave it. But I shall now insert this part of the report, as I find it in the newspapers, it being of the utmost consequence that no misrepresentation of what passed should take place.

“ Sir J. Mansfield then requested the foreman to acquaint him with the ground on which their verdict had been given, with reference to what he had referred in his charge, whether they found for the plaintiff upon the *illegality of the arrest*, or upon the ground that Mr. Clifford *had not been guilty of a riot*.

“ The foreman replied, that on the illegality of the arrest they were unanimous. With respect to the question of Mr. Clifford having been concerned in a riot, there was a difference of opinion. That question, however, had not been decisively discussed, as the jury was unanimous in their verdict on the first principle.

“ Sir J. Mansfield.—I am sorry that that question was not decided, for it leaves the thing which I wished to be decided as equivocal as ever. I am indeed very sorry that the jury did not agree on the distinct grounds of the verdict, for this shocking mistake of the public will still go forth, and public outrage may be continued by a *furious mob*,—it deserves no better name;—they may think themselves authorized to take justice into their own hands, and gratify their revenge by violence and outrageous conduct, even, perhaps, *to the ruin of their country*. What may be the consequence of such a spirit, it is impossible to foresee; but certain I am that it leads to *every kind of horror*,—possibly to the *subversion of government*, certainly to great evils, perhaps *the worst that can be endured by a nation*.

“Juryman. — We found the verdict on the ground that the plaintiff was illegally apprehended.

“Sir J. Mansfield.—That’s *equivocal*, and decides nothing;—for he might be a rioter, and yet illegally apprehended, by being taken after the thing was over.

“Juryman.—It was generally thought rather *harsh* to construe wearing O P into an act of riot, and by some, that it would be *inconsistent with the rights of Englishmen.*”

With respect to Sir James’s apprehensions of *great national danger* from what is going on at the theatre, I must say, that I do not participate in them. I have seen nothing, in any of the accounts that have reached me, that would induce me to suppose, that the opposition at the theatre has been at all marked with a *mobbish* character. We see that scores of the oppositionists are seized even in the midst of their companions, and dragged off to the office of the police-justices, where neither those justices, nor any of their officers, meet with any insult or hinderance in the execution of their office. They demand bail, they send to prison, and no sort of resistance is made. It is remarkable, too, that, of the wounds said to have been received in the several scuffles, almost the whole have been received by the oppositionists. Scarcely a man on the other side has received a personal injury. Besides, it has been proved, under the hands of very respectable men, that *common*



*bruisers* had had *free admissions*, not only for themselves but also to give to others, and, I cannot help thinking, that it will be finally made to appear, that, in measures of *force*, the managers set the example. I cannot, therefore, see much ground for Sir James Mansfield's political fears; I cannot see in the conduct of the O P's any thing that appears to me to threaten the *subversion of the government*, or even the *ruin of the country*. We have before heard of the ruin of the country; it is a very common phrase; it has been apprehended from various and innumerable causes; but, really, I should not have apprehended it from hissing, hooting, and groaning, at the theatre, however often repeated; I should not have supposed, that even the pelting of all the players off the stage, with orange-peel and rotten-apples, was any indication of *national ruin*.

Indeed, I, for my part, should be much more apprehensive of national ruin from doctrine like that of Serjeant Shepherd; for, if that doctrine, such as it is described in the report, were once to be generally acted upon, there would be an end of the main object for which we are now disposed to fight in our country's defence; namely, *the trial by jury*. If that doctrine had been acted upon, in the case of the *seven Bishops*, in the reign of James II. those bishops would have been found *guilty*, and, of course, *punished*. If, in short, that doctrine had been acted upon, neither of the

villains, Scroggs and Jeffreys, would ever have been accused of *tyranny towards juries*, for they never would have met with any opposition, but, on the contrary, would have found juries to be *a most convenient sort of 'scape goat*. Juries, like all the other institutions, intended as safeguards of freedom, become, if perverted from their purpose, not only no safeguards at all, but the instruments of *greater tyranny than would have been practised if they had not existed*. A judge, with the eyes of the public fixed upon *his* decision, would be more likely to be cautious how he lent himself to the abuse of law, than if those decisions, though really his, passed for the decisions of juries. We cannot, therefore, too often, or too strongly, repeat our abhorrence of this doctrine, which, if acted upon, would make juries nothing more than the means of screening the misconduct of judges from public hatred and indignation.

In some of the reports of this trial, Mr. Serjeant Lens is represented as urging the judge to call upon the jury for a statement of *the reasons* upon which they founded their verdict. This does not appear to have been done by the judge, who merely asked them to say, upon which of *two distinct grounds* they founded their verdict; which, though *new* to me, was very different indeed from calling upon the jury for *their reasons* generally, which, in my opinion, would be a most daring

violation of the rights of juries. . A man may be very capable indeed of forming a correct conclusion, and, from various causes, very incapable of clearly stating his reasons, especially before a numerous assembly, who, from the very nature of the circumstances, must be watching every word he utters. Besides, is it not manifest, that, in one and the same case, different men may come to the same conclusion upon different grounds? Nay, must it not necessarily happen, in many cases, that the jury are not, at first, unanimous, and that their verdict is the result of some giving up their opinions to others? Into what endless labyrinths, then, would every case lead the persons impanelled, as well as the court, were it to become customary to ask jurors *the reasons* for their verdict?

Serjeant Shepherd talked of the mischiefs that must arise from jurors not taking *the law* of every case implicitly from the judge; and amongst those mischiefs he stated that of the law's *changing*, continually, with every change of jurors. This is the old argument of Scroggs and Jeffreys, but it is not the more amiable or convincing for all that.

If laws were all written; if all possible cases were provided for in a manner so clearly as to leave nothing to be supplied by reasoning or construction; and if we had a security from Heaven for all judges being honest and impartial; then

(though, by the bye, it would be quite fatal to the Serjeant's profession) I should say, leave the law to the judge, for he has spent his life in reading the law and the jury have not. But, the fact is, that there is not one case out of one thousand which the law has so clearly provided for as to leave nothing to be supplied by construction; and there is, in almost every case, especially of the sort of that now before us, so much depending upon the views and intentions of the parties, and the character of the act depends so much upon those circumstances, the true weight of which can be felt only by men who are taken from amongst the people, that I have no scruple to give it as my decided opinion, that a jury of twelve honest and impartial men are, leaving all other considerations out of the question, more likely to come to a just decision than any single judge that ever sat even upon the English bench. The Serjeant, however, should have remembered, that the institution of juries grew out of a scrupulous regard for the *safety of the persons and the property of the people against the arm of encroaching power*; and that the great maxim of our benign law is, that it is better for a hundred times a hundred guilty persons to escape punishment than that one innocent person should suffer. The laws have all been grounded upon the known existence of the power of juries to interpret those laws; and, therefore, if this power of juries be taken away, or, which is

the same thing, suffered to remain only in name, you do, in fact, change the nature of those laws.

I do not wish to inculcate an idea that our judges are fickle in their interpretation of the law; but, surely, Mr. Serjeant Shepherd will not pretend to say, that different interpretations have not been given by different judges, of the same law; nay, of the same clause of the same written statute; and that, of course, different decisions have taken place upon evidence of the same facts, or facts of exactly the same description, produced in different cases? When the Serjeant was a young man, he must have seen the delightful puzzling that this created amongst the wisecracks at a Quarter Sessions. Our judges are, and have been, for many years past, as good, perhaps, in every respect, as judges ever were; but, still they are no more than men, and no men are perfect. It is neither the wisdom nor the integrity of the judges that I should distrust; but, the power which Serjeant Shepherd contends for is, as Sir Arthur Piggot said, in the debate upon the Irish Insurrection Bill, "a power that I would give to *no man*." In short, the Serjeant's doctrine would, if acted upon, render juries totally useless; and we might as well consent, at once, to the revival of that infamous instrument of tyranny *the Court of Star Chamber*, which was established for the purpose of inflicting punishments upon persons whom juries could not be prevailed upon to find guilty.

No. 137.— *Covent Garden Theatre.*

(Cobbett, 16th Dec.)

In my last sheet, at page 892, I recommended to the managers of this great scene of public amusement *measures of conciliation*. A correspondent, who says that he agrees with me in opinion as to *all* the points upon which I touched, in the article referred to, begs of me, in a very earnest manner, to state *the terms*, upon which *I think* peace between the managers and the public ought to take place.

It reasonably may, and I am afraid it will, appear presumptuous in me, who live at such a distance from the spot, who have never seen the theatre, who am not likely ever to frequent it, and who, of necessity, must be greatly deficient as to many points of information upon the subject; I am afraid, that, under these circumstances, it may be thought presumptuous in me to put myself forward as a *mediator* upon this occasion. Yet, I must confess, that I am very anxious to see an accommodation take place, and chiefly, because I am persuaded that, in the end, it must take place, and that, as long as the dispute lasts, it will only serve to withdraw the attention of the public from matters of greater importance; and, if I am deficient

in point of information; if, in some respects, I want the advantages that my brother journalists in London possess; on the other hand, my distance from the scene has prevented me from being personally a party in the contest, from receiving hasty impressions, and from having my opinions tinged with resentment; while it so happens, that I am totally unacquainted with either of the managers, and, as far as I know, with any individual having the smallest share of property in the theatre. When, in the year 1800, I was proprietor of a daily paper, I had a free-admission card sent me, as was, and is, the custom with respect to persons in that situation, which card has been continued ever since, and is also the custom. But, for the last five years, I have not entered a theatre; I have not, that I know of, ever *seen* either MR. HARRIS or his SON; nor have I, off the stage, ever seen MR. KEMBLE but once, which was in the year 1800; and with neither have I ever had any communication whatever, in any way, or upon any subject.

It is, however, after all, with great diffidence, that I offer my opinion as to what ought to be the *terms* of accommodation; nor should I attempt it, were it not quite impossible to make things worse than they now are.

In this case, as in all others where there are un-  
merous parties, and where the quarrel is of any  
length of duration, the grounds of the quarrel

change; and at this moment, the O P means *no hired bruisers, no legal persecution*, much more than it means *Old Prices*. The advance of price has been lost sight of amidst the scuffles in the pit, the examinations at Bow-street, and the commitments to Bridewell. These are what the public *now* complain of, nor will it be very easy to wear them from their minds. The number of those, who have now had a relation, a friend, an acquaintance, or a neighbour, dragged by thief-takers before Police-Justices, and by those Justices dealt with, is now not small; every day it must become greater; so that, if the dispute continue much longer, inevitable ruin must fall upon the theatre.

There appeared to me to be something very unwise, on the part of the managers, at the first starting off. To show the *water-engines* to the audience; to treat them with such inexpressible contempt, and especially before it was possible for them to be met for the purpose of opposition, was, to say the least of it, extremely unwise. This unequivocal mark of contempt, together with the construction of the house, by which the middling class of people were shut out from their usual chance of comfortable and conspicuous places, seems to have been the great cause of an opposition to the thing, blended with resentment against Mr. Kemble, who appeared, of course, to be the author of the unmerited indignity. After this it was no wonder, that he became the great object



of attack; that he became more obnoxious than all other persons and things put together; that neither his person, his character, nor his family, was spared. I was very sorry to see this; because I remember, and *the Electors of Westminster* will, I am sure, when I remind them of it, have the justice to acknowledge, that, during our long and arduous and anxious struggle, in 1806, the whole of the players, all the persons, of any note, belonging to both theatres, were at work against us, *the Kembles excepted*. Indeed, it was, in great part, owing to the dirty tricks and villainies of the theatres, that MR. PAULL,\* whose fate I shall ever lament, lost his election. But, it was remarked at the time, that, in no instance whatever, did any one of the Kembles interfere. It has, therefore, I must confess, a good deal vexed me, to see this family become the object of popular indignation, while praises have been bestowed upon others, who, at the time referred to, took an active and most wicked part against popular rights, and who, if the opportunity offered, would, I doubt not, do the same again to-morrow.

When people are angry with one another, when their minds are completely embittered, they view one another's actions and character through a false medium, and very often they condemn that which, at other times, they would applaud. Hence the charges of *pride* and *haughtiness* preferred against

\* Who cut his throat, let us hope, in a fit of delirium.—*Editor*.

Mr. Kemble. . Now, the fault of those, whose calling it is to afford amusement to the public, generally is, that they are too supple, slavish, and base. It must be remembered, that the attack upon the prices and upon the private boxes was accompanied by an attack upon Mr. Kemble. The names and epithets bestowed on him that evening cannot have been forgotten. Well, what was he to do? Was he to have *no feeling*? Would an audience of Englishmen have liked to see him come and *crouch* down before them, like a Russian or Prussian peasant before his owner? Is there any man of us, who would have done it? Let us put ourselves in Mr. Kemble's situation, and then see what our judgment will be upon his conduct. The truth is that, in shewing that he felt resentment, he appears to me to have shewn much more respect for the audience than he would have shewn, if he had discovered no feeling at all; for then, it would have been impossible to ascribe his conduct to any thing but contempt. Besides, though Mr. Kemble is a *player*, still he is not to be supposed to be upon a level with every man who acts upon the stage. When we are angry with him, we may ridicule his black-letter taste and his pedantry of pronunciation; but, surely, there is some difference between Mr. Kemble and such a man (I forget his name) as I saw once or twice in the character of Sir . . . . somebody, in a sort of crying farce, called *Speed the Plough*. Yes: I am sure an English audience, if they will

but take time to cool, have too much discrimination and too much justice to deny, that there is some difference between Mr. Kemble, the faithful representative of Hamlet, Henry IV. and so many other finely drawn characters; that there is some difference between Mr. Kemble and such a man as I have just spoken of, whose chief merit appeared to consist in his wonderful powers of moving up and down the skin of his forehead, and of drawing his eye-brows down upon his cheek or tucking them up under his wig. Yes; (and, I am sure, that no man, whose candour is not stifled by passion, will deny it;) there is some difference between Mr. Kemble and an actor like this; and it is not to be supposed, that Mr. Kemble's feelings, upon such an occasion, would be, or ought to be, the same as the feelings of a mere gesticulator, a mere maker of mouths.

It has been urged against Mr. Kemble, that he has been *enriched by the public*, and that, therefore, his present conduct is marked with *ingratitude* as well as with contempt.

Reader, divest yourself of passion here, or it will be useless to proceed. Now, then, *make the case your own*; suppose yourself of any trade or profession, and that you have acquired a fortune thereby; do you not look upon that fortune as *your own*? Do you consider it as the well-earned wages of your labour, your study, the exercise of your skill; or do you consider it as a *boon* from

your several employers or customers? Do you, if you are now retired from business, in looking over your gardens and fields, consider yourself as under a debt of *gratitude* for them? Do you, if you are now labouring for a fortune, consider yourself as labouring to incur a debt of *gratitude*? And, if not; if you look upon *your* earnings as your own; as the fruits of your industry and talents; I put it to your candour to say, whether it be just to consider Mr. Kemble as owing a debt of gratitude to *his* employers, or customers, as having, in short, received his fortune in the way of a boon.

Amongst the terms of reproach, which Mr. Kemble has, through his want of discretion at the outset, brought upon himself, is that of *upstart*. So true it is, that when once people are thoroughly angry, they never think of what they say.

Mr. Kemble and his sister have been *celebrated* as players for upwards of *twenty years*, I believe. And, ought they, at the end of twenty years of a life of such labour, to be called *upstarts*, because they are said to possess considerable fortunes? How would any man who, by his industry or talent, has acquired a fortune, like to be, on that account, called an upstart? No man would like it; and, really, I am afraid, that this treatment of the Kembles, if it be persevered in, must have the effect of preventing, in future, any very great endeavours to arrive at excellence in acting. It must

have a tendency to degrade the whole thing, and to make stage-playing little more than grimace and buffoonery.

In any thing that I have said here, I by no means wish to justify or apologize for the conduct of Mr. Kemble, if he is to be considered *the author* of any of the insults offered to the public, and especially of the measure of seizing people, seizing *part of his audience*, by the hands of *thief-catchers*, dragging them before a police-justice, causing them to give bail, and some of them to be committed to a prison amongst vagabonds and thieves; and all this for having committed no greater offence than that of hoisting a sign of disapprobation, or making a disapproving noise. The employment of the *bruisers* and *Jews* was bad enough; but, it was a more *manly* mode of proceeding. I could easily have forgiven this. It is the employment of the thief-takers, and the endeavour to introduce into the theatre the terrors of *criminal law*; the mischievous, and I can hardly forbear calling it the *malicious*, attempt to brand and to prosecute as *rioters*, persons who expressed their disapprobation, in a place where to express disapprobation, without any limit, had always been the custom. It is this that sticks with me, and this it evidently is, which sticks with the public: or, at least, with every man who knows how to estimate injuries.

Nevertheless, when I consider how greatly the

English stage is indebted to Mr. Kemble; when I consider how much he has done towards preventing mock-sentiment and senseless sing-song from totally usurping the stage; when I reflect that there is in this whole nation hardly any person arrived at the years of maturity, who has not derived pleasure from the performances of the Kembles; and, when I consider the character of the English public, in whom vindictiveness was never yet found towards their most cruel persecutors, I cannot help thinking, that a declaration on the part of Mr. Kemble, that the absolute right *without limitation*, of expressing disapprobation, shall never again be disputed, would become the ground of reconciliation and harmony.

There are, however, other points in dispute, and, upon these I shall now proceed to offer my opinion, repeating my observation, that I do it with very great diffidence, unacquainted as I must be, with many of the circumstances, and that I should not venture to offer any opinion at all upon the subject, were it not quite impossible for me to make matters worse than they are.

First, as to the *Prices*, though the initials of Old Prices have become the signal of opposition, it is manifest, and was so from the beginning, that, if the *public*, properly so called, had had their fair share of the room in the house, the opposition on account of prices would very soon have ceased. It is, however, since the question

has been so much agitated, worth while to inquire a little into the soundness of this ground of objection.

From the first it struck me, as I observed in my last number, to be a violation of the rights of property *to attempt to compel people to sell entertainment at the price pointed out by the purchaser*. In a common case, there is no doubt at all that it would be so : but, then, in this case, comes the argument of the *patent* and of the *monopoly*. But, though this has weight ; though it forms a distinction between this and common cases, it does not, after all that I have, since last week, attentively read upon the subject, appear to me to be conclusive against the managers.

A *monopoly* always means an *exclusive* leave to do whatever the grant allows of. Now, this is not the case in the present instance ; for, not only *may* others obtain permission to act plays, but plays are actually exhibited by other persons at this very time, and in the same metropolis.

I shall be told, that the other persons have not such *convenient places* and such *good actors* ; but, really, I cannot believe that this will be seriously urged against the charge of *a shilling* more for the boxes, and *sixpence* more for the pit, at Covent Garden Theatre ; I cannot believe this at any rate.

It has been said, that there is now *only this one* theatre, worthy of the name, and that, therefore, the public have *no choice*. But whose fault is that? There is a patent for the other theatre. Why is not that rebuilt? And, if Covent Garden has, by accident, a real monopoly of the profit, it has also had a monopoly of the *expense*. It is impossible not to admire the exertions, which must have been made to rebuild that theatre in so short a space of time; and shall this nation, always so ready to extol and reward industry and enterprize, deny the merit upon this occasion? The *monopoly*, of which so much has been said, does, in fact, arise from the superior industry and enterprize of the managers of this theatre, and, were it not for that industry and enterprize, the metropolis would have no theatre at all. It often happens, that, of two persons of the same profession, or trade, living in the same place, one has all the business and the other none; but, would you, therefore, accuse the first of being a monopolist?

As to the *amount* of the advance in the price, it is really not worth attention. There is no person, who goes into a box, that can possibly think any thing of a shilling, nor can sixpence be worth a thought with any one going into the pit; and, as to what has been sometimes said about *the hardness of the times and the pressure of*



*the taxes*, good God! do not the managers and the proprietors of the theatre feel these in common with the rest of us?

It is notorious that, within the last nineteen years, almost every thing has doubled in price; and, though I allow, that the extension in the space of the theatre, and the consequent increase in the number of the audience, make up, in some degree, for alteration in the value of money, still, while *every thing* else is advancing in price, it does appear to me unreasonable; it does appear to me not like Englishmen, for us to object to so trifling an advance of price at the theatre.

Since the last nine or ten years the journeymen printers have made a stand for a rise in their wages. I have always said to my printers; "Get me my work done; if your journeymen will not work at one price, give them another." I have always been against all measures of force, intended to prevent any man, or set of men, from getting what they can for their goods, or their labour, being convinced, that every evil of that sort, that every system of overcharge, will soon be destroyed by its own hands.

I think, that the public have no right to inspect the *accounts* of the playhouse proprietors any more than the accounts of any tradesman, who opens his shop door to all customers promiscuously; and, it was excessively foolish, in the managers, to make *a shew* (for it was nothing

more) of exhibiting their accounts. I could not help thinking, upon seeing the name of SIR FRANCIS BARING in the list of inspectors, how evident it was, that the *public* had at least *as good* a right to demand a look at *his accounts* for the last twenty years; to overhawl all his loans, &c. &c. when, I believe, they would find that, with much less labour, and with about a thousandth part, perhaps, of the intellect of Mr. Kemble, he has amassed a great many more guineas than Mr. Kemble has farthings.

Oh! it is not; say what you will, in your anger; it is not, and you will not say that it is, just! that it is common sense; to grudge this gentleman, the comparatively trifling sum that he has so hardly earned, while you say not a word against masses of wealth, which the contractor, without any labour whatever, has derived from the public.

That *any* description of persons, *in business*, persons who are daily conversant in buying and selling, should have objected to so trifling a rise in the prices at the theatre, would have surprised me; but, I was beyond measure surprised to see that objection made by the *proprietors of newspapers*, speaking in their own persons; because the year has not gone round yet, since *we raised the price of our papers*, upon the very grounds on which the Covent Garden managers have raised the price of their seats. We never thought of exhi-

biting our *accounts* to the public; nor did any man of us ever dream, that he had incurred any debt of *gratitude* to the public for whatever share of fortune he might have been able to amass.

These are my reasons for thinking that, if certain other points were conceded by the managers, it would be unreasonable and unjust to endeavour to compel them to withdraw their new prices. The advance is, in fact, beneath notice; and, I cannot help thinking that, when the public give themselves time to reflect, there will no longer be any opposition upon this score.

But, with respect to that part of the *construction of the house*, which shuts out, drives back, and *degrades*, the people, that ought to be done away, and, notwithstanding Sir James Mansfield's opinion upon the subject, I think, that the audience have just as much right to hiss and to hoot at it as they have to hiss and hoot at a play, or a performer, or a scene, that they dislike. It is an *innovation*, and an innovation, too, which must be offensive to the best description of people. It is an erection of distinctions, which did not before exist. This ground of objection ought, therefore, to be completely removed, and, until it be, the opposition will, in my opinion, be not only justifiable, but laudable.

1. Then the circle of *private boxes* should be done away, and the whole of the space thrown

open to the whole of the public, as in the old theatre.

2. The "*pigeon holes*," as they are called, should be done away, and the shilling gallery thrown open.

3. All the *actions and prosecutions*, arising out of the row, should be dropped instantly.

4. A declaration from Mr. Kemble, in person, on the part of the whole of the managers, that they recognize, in the fullest sense of the words, an absolute right in the audience, or in any part of the audience, assembled at the theatre, to express, either by signs or noises of any sort, their disapprobation of any person, or of any thing within the theatre.

This is what I think the managers ought to do; and, if they express their readiness to do all this, I am sure, that the opposition to the prices would soon dwindle into nothing. Indeed, the whole thing will have been changed; for, the theatre will not, in fact, be the same; and therefore an advance of price may be very consistently justified, in this case, though, in the opinion of some persons, it could not be justified before.

Amongst the "*terms of peace*," as they were called, proposed some time ago, were included a BEGGING OF PARDON on the part of Mr. Kemble, and the DISMISSION of Mr. Brandon. This was excusable, perhaps, under the circumstances

of the moment; but, I am sure, or, at least, I hope, that there is no Englishmen, who, upon cool reflection, would propose such a thing. There is a meanness in the idea of inflicting vengeance upon Mr. Brandon; and especially as the party inflicting it would be always hidden from the party on whom it would be inflicted. And, as to bringing Mr. Kemble forward for the *express* purpose of *begging pardon*; to compel him to come forth like a culprit, and humble himself before a promiscuous assembly, including, no doubt, all his private enemies; to insist upon degrading any human being in such a way, as I am sure it is what no man with a drop of English blood in his veins would demand, so I hope, that, for the credit of the English stage, for the honour of theatrical talent and of literature, it is what nothing upon earth would induce Mr. Kemble to submit to.

Such is my view of this matter. As I said before, I must necessarily be greatly deficient in information, as to many points. I may be wrong in my judgment. But, of one thing I am certain, that it is impossible for the subject to be taken up by one with a mind more unbiassed. I will confess, that I am very anxious to see the row and termoil put an end to. Its continuance can do no good, while, by diverting the public attention from more important matters, it may do, and is doing, much mischief. I wish most

anxiously to see the matter settled by the good sense, and justice, and forgiveness, of the people, and, above all things, that the *law* may have nothing to do with the matter. At any rate, as I said before, if the communication of my opinions, upon the subject does no good it cannot possibly do any harm.

No. 138.—*Death of O P.*

(From the General Evening Post, Dec. 19.)

Died suddenly, last Thursday, at the Crown and Anchor tavern, as he was entertaining a large party of friends, the celebrated O P, at the advanced age of 66.

To this extraordinary character we may apply what Whitelocke has said of Lord Stafford—“Certainly never man acted *such a part on such a theatre*, with so much wisdom, constancy, and eloquence.” His birth was accompanied by many portentous circumstance. Like Bacchus, whom, as his enemies would maliciously insinuate, he not a little resembled, he was born at the moment his mother was consumed by the flames. In his infancy, he was noisy, fretful, and violent; but this proceeded from *bad management*; for, in general, he was remarkably good-tempered, and maintained, to the hour of his death, the character

of a *rattling roaring fellow*. Sometimes, it must be admitted, he was rough, and even terrible, in his manner; but those who were best acquainted with him say, that this was *half play*. Although a good pugilist, he had a particular aversion to *private boxing*. In literary talents he was by no means deficient, and is suspected to have been author of many humourous pieces, in prose and verse. Like Sir Roger De Coverley, he has given name to a dance. The hats, made according to his direction, are much approved of; but his principles made him an enemy to *patents*. We fear that his matrimonial connexions were not very fortunate, as his enemies have often reproached him with *his horns*.

That O P was a zealous Christian, we may judge from his hatred of the Jews; but his political principles have given rise to very various and opposite opinions. That he loved the king, there is no doubt; nay, it is well known that he chanted —“God save the king,”—every night before he went to bed. To foreigners he had an uncontrollable aversion. The liberty of the subject, and the trial by jury, were his constant themes. He was engaged in many law-suits, and always proved too strong for his antagonists; nor was this surprising, as his advocates were always the BEST.

The deceased has been frequently accused of too great a regard for gold, nor can we entirely exculpate him from this charge; certain it is, that

he would struggle hard before he would part with a *seven-shilling piece*, and he generally offered *half-price* to those with whom he dealt.

Of his funeral we shall say little: it was better attended than that of any public character we remember, except Lord Nelson's: a *pit* was prepared to receive the body in Covent Garden; Clifford was the *grave-digger*; the *funeral service* was read, with much humility and pathos, by Mr. Kemble; the chief mourners were Messrs. Brandon and Harris. A few indecent attempts were made to seize the body for debt; as it turned out, however, to be for a paltry shilling, the bailiffs were not suffered to proceed. Some idle reports have been circulated of the appearance of his ghost, and some pretend to have heard a scratching, similar to that which attended the Cock-Lane apparition. All such superstitious imaginations should be treated with the contempt they deserve, and scouted, as injurious to the memory of this excellent person. He has "fretted his little hour upon the stage," and made his exit. His merits, and frailties, are deposited in the grave, nor will he *rise* till Doomsday.



No. 139.—O P. *The Grand Reconciliation Dinner.*

A DRAMATIC VISION.

(From the Morning Herald, Jan. 4.)

Mr. Editor,

Being remarkable for the mildness of my disposition and my love of harmony, a friend of mine, who knows one, who knows another, who knows one of the stewards of this memorable feast, sent me a ticket for the dinner. I was, in consequence, so much absorbed with the probable events, and being somewhat heavy-headed, that I fell into a reverie, and, from that, into a sound sleep; when the following images presented themselves to my distracted fancy.

Methought the great room, at the Crown and Anchor tavern, was filled with company, almost to a point of suffocation.—Mr. Clifford was the president; and, on each side of him, were arranged Messrs. Kemble, Harris, Powell, and Savage, and who could scarcely eat, from the endless courtesies which they were paying each other. They leered and simpered in commutual civility, until complaisance was exhausted.

On the removal of the cloth, the *fraternal hug* went round; when Mr. Clifford rose, and, after

giving the healths of the sovereign, and his august family, he thus addressed the meeting:—

“Gentlemen,—We are met here this day to celebrate the restoration of theatrical harmony; and I am sure that there is not a muse on Parnassus who does not sympathize with us in this very extraordinary issue. Give me permission to present my learned and worthy friend, Mr. Kemble, to your consideration, that he may exact as much of your esteem in private as he does of your applause in public; he is not only a buttress to the drama, but an illustrator of our vernacular tongue, as he can add feet to a verb, and castrate a noun substantive, with the facility of a Bolognese operator.”

At this instant a clamour arose, at one of the side-tables, for more wine; and which was not silenced until Messieurs Flaxman and Rossi (both R. As.) were loudly announced. This incomparable twain, and types of *Praxiteles*, entered the room with dignity, and each grappled the handle of a large washing-tub, filled with Parisian plaster, to take a model of the united hands of Messieurs Clifford, Kemble, Harris, and Townsend. They certainly invited John Bull to a participation of the honour, but he, growlingly, declined the partnership. When the cast had been perfectly made, Mr. Kemble gracefully proposed that the following words be engraved on every thumb-nail:

*Ne m'egratignez pas, camarade;*

to commemorate the unexpected and public nuptials between oil and vinegar. During the ceremonies of the coalition, Mr. Harris complained that Mr. Kemble had squeezed him too hard.

In order to give a more mirthful tune to the conversation, the facetious Mr. Munden was called upon to sing; when he favoured the company with the ensuing merry adventure, which he ably sang in the shape and measure of a *canzonette*.

THE GHOST OF O P.

The Tune—" *Mary's Dream.*"

The moon was madd'ning half mankind,  
 While desolation thinn'd life's tree,  
 When 'mid night's damps, at Kentish-Town,  
 I met the spectre of O P,  
 " O P, (said I,) why thus so wan ?"  
 Then, snivelling, thus quoth he to me :  
 " Go, mend your galligaskins, Joe,  
 " And think no more of poor O P !

" Rattles and catcalls now must sleep,  
 Placards be wrapp'd round bad bohea,  
 Bugles be scoff'd, and horns of tin,  
 For fate hath crippled poor O P !  
 Now I'm *Whereas'd* in Death's Gazette,  
 And soon a mass of dust must be ;  
 Pray do not leak upon my tomb,  
 Nor soil the sod that hides O P !

" May discord rage behind your scenes,  
 Aud flash her brands at John and thee  
 May all your wives have triple tongues,  
 And then you'll think of poor O P!  
 On Saturdays may forfeits dire  
 Vex Fawcett, Young, and Emery;  
 May Claremont cease to murder belles:  
 That will be bliss to poor O P!"

Mr. Munden was vociferously applauded for this descriptive ditty, which is assuredly crammed full of lyric beauties; but it gave particular delight to the company, inasmuch as they knew, upon the open authority of Mr. Munden, that O P was not only derived from the precincts of the theatre, but that he was disquieted even in extinction.

Mr. Cooke was next summoned to sing; and, after a few apologies, he chanted this parody, which he delivered with wonderful address, when we consider that the matter of the subject is so utterly foreign to his habits.

Let the Sultan, sable John,  
 Act the rake and play the don:  
 Well, well, every man must have his way!  
 But, to my poor way of thinking,  
 True joy is—drinking!  
 Could I have Merlin's art, 'clep'd black,  
 I'd change the Thames to *Cogniac*:  
 Well, well, every man must have his way!  
 But, to my poor way of thinking,  
 True joy is—drinking!

Mr. John Bull was now desired to entertain the party with a ballad, or madrigal in his own way ; when honest John had thrown a satirical glance or two at the president, and his *quondam* antagonist, he hemmed, adjusted his cravat, and bawled out the following libellous nonsense, with the powers of a Stentor.

Tune—" *The Frog in the Opera-Hat.*"

Hal Clifford would once a reforming go,

Heigho ! says Clifford ;

He swore, by the mass, that he'd nonsuit his foe,

And under his jerkin he hid his flambeau ;

With his rowley, powley, gammon and spinnage,

" I'll do it," roar'd patriot Clifford.

He went to the pit, where he saw a great fray,

Heigho ! says Clifford :

" We want," cried O P, " those vile boxes away,

For if they don't sin there, I'm sure that they may ;"

With a rowley, powley, gammon and spinnage,

" They shall vanish," said patriot Clifford.

Then he toil'd day and night to take vice by surprise,

Heigho ! said Clifford ;

Till policy came and threw dust in his eyes ;

Now he can't find his way, though the sun burnt the skies ;

With his rowley, powley, gammon and spinnage,

" I must halt here," said patriot Clifford.

" Though suspicion may think that my zeal was a flam,

Heigho ! said Clifford ;

" The vulgar no more shall antipathy cram,

For the lion is going to bed with the lamb ;

With his rowley, powley, gammon and spinnage ;

I've done it," said patriot Clifford.

“ See John and I swim in the manager’s boat ;

Heigho !” said Clifford ;

“ Though integrity smiles while we both are afloat,

Yet he’s a d—d fool who can’t turn an old coat ;

With his rowley, powley, gammon and spinnage,

A’nt I clever !” said patriot Clifford.

Now he swears reformation has got a new tune ;

Heigho ! said Clifford ;

Lo ! he and John Kemble, like loon scratching loon,

Sip their dramatic broth with the very same spoon ;

With his rowley, powley, gammon and spinnage,

“ It’s over,” said patriot Clifford.

While a murmur of dissatisfaction was vibrating on every ear, at the tendency of some points in John Bull’s song, the candles began to burn blue, and the company to look aghast ; when the ghost of O P rose, with an evident intention of defending himself from the influence of calumny. When he came opposite to Mr. James Brandon, he suddenly stopped, and, shaking his rough head in fearful guise, most pathetically exclaimed ;—

Oh, Jemmy Brandon ! Jemmy Brandon, oh !

On this intimation, the worthy box-keeper incontinently rose from his seat, and, assuming a tragical attitude, in the manner of the new school, thus menaced his immaterial, but immortal, enemy :—

Avaunt ! perturbed, ghastly, vile, O P !—  
 Shake not thy gory locks at me ; thou canst  
 Not surely say 'twas I that did it !  
 Dare me to Bow-Street, or tumultuous pit,  
 And look as grimly as the old Brown Bear ;  
 If, trembling, I inhibit—proclaim me for  
 The baby of a box-keeper !  
 Accurs'd O P, take any shape but that,  
 And my firm nerves shall never tremble !

As the influence of terror was becoming contagious, the following extemporaneous catch was sung by Messrs. Incledon, Bellamy, and Taylor :

Mr. Incledon.—O P. is threatening, c—se his soul ;  
 Hit him o'er his grisly jowl.  
 Mr. Bellamy.— Lick him !  
 Mr. Taylor. — Kick him !  
 Omnes. — Drown him in the negus bowl !

On this decided invitation, the enraged company seized *la anima de morti*, and threw it into a vast bowl of red-wine negus. For some minutes O P contrived to keep his head above water, by sticking his teeth in a large slice of lemon, that was lightly floating, like Lord Fanny's honour, upon the surface ; until Mr. Henry H——s struck him over the sconce with a file of Morning Posts ; when, feeling his dissolution approach, he lifted up both his hands, and woefully exclaimed, “ Remember O ”—he would have said P also, but

the angry fates denied his spirit that privilege, and he sank to the bottom of the Red Sea, like Hecate's first cousin, never to rise again! Alas, poor ghost!

A consultation was now held, among the principals, as to an appropriate inscription for O P's tomb, when Mr. Dibdin produced the following pithy lines:—

Here lies O P.  
Who was nothing,  
Not even a *Critic*!

But as this was a palpable plagiary from *Piron's* mausoleum at Paris, it was, *uná voce*, rejected, and Mr. Townsend (who has been already noticed as one of the high contracting parties, in the consolidation of a dramatic peace,) was entreated to solicit his well-bred muse to furnish them with an apt epitaph for this defunct rebel. It may be needless to aver, that this gentleman-usher to Justice condescendingly consented; and his invocation had scarcely time to reach the confines of Parnassus, when the *Pierian* grace descended upon his imagination. Idea engendered with idea, until, eventually, in nine seconds, the ensuing classical monumental *morceau* was delivered from his bright and teeming brain:—

O P is dish'd!  
His glass is run!  
He's tipp'd all nine!  
He's cut and run!



It is unnecessary to say, that Mr. Townsend's superior poetry was rapturously adopted: in truth, when we consider the brevity, beauty, and imagery, of this sepulchral composition, it must be acknowledged to be an *unique* thing, and as admirable as it is original.

A subscription was immediately raised to inter O P; but a warm dispute arose as to the place of burial, as he had occasionally, when in existence, assumed the semblance of Christian, Jew, and Infidel: but these points of conscientious delicacy were over-ruled by Mr. Kemble, who suggested, that his ashes should be deposited in *Knave's Acre*.

But the time had now arrived, Mr. Editor, when it was destined that all this visionary inapplicable nonsense should vanish; as I was roughly awakened by my washerwoman, who broke the bonds of sleep asunder, by tapping me on the shoulder (a very sensitive part of my anatomy,) to present her bill for blanching one shirt per week, and which, unhappily, had not been liquidated since Candlemas.

THE MORAL.

Thus, while a mortal varlet's breast  
Ideal transports feels,  
The reck'ning comes, and then his heart  
Sinks downwards to his heels.

Inflated man is arrogant and gay,  
Till Fate has scratch'd him—then he finds he's clay!  
Alack, a day!

Yours, &c.

MARMADUKE MUZZY.

No. 140.—*Description of the Grand Theatrical Medal.*

OBVERSE.

An allegorical head designating avarice and folly.

CIRCULAR MOTTO TO THE FIGURE.

“This is the Jew which Shakespeare drew.”

AND UNDERNEATH.

“V. P.” (The voice of the people.) “No private boxes.”

MOTTO OF THE OBVERSE.

“Avarice and titled lust alone we blame,  
Yet blush we must, for 'tis a nation's shame.”

REVERSE.

A wreath of oak leaves, under which lie a trumpet and rattle.

MOTTO TO THIS DEVICE.

“What d'ye want.” — “O P O. B. D. P. O.”

[Old prices, open boxes, and deference to public opinion.]

CIRCULAR MOTTO TO THE REVERSE.

“The drama's laws the drama's patrons give,  
And he who lives to please, should please to live.”

A vast number of these medals were sold at Hathaway's, near the Royal Exchange, many of them finely executed in silver.

No. 141.

Subscriptions for the assistance of persons considered as unjustly prosecuted by the proprietors and managers of Covent Garden Theatre are received, on account of the treasurer, at the following places: — The office of the Statesman, 87, Fleet-street; Mr. G. Smith, 14, Giltspur-street; Mr. Welch, stationer, 2, Salisbury-court, Fleet-street; Mr. Vokins, stationer, 2, Sloane-street, Knightsbridge; Mr. Huntly, stationer, 1, Duke-street, Grosvenor-square; Mr. Hill, grocer, Cock-hill, Ratcliff; Mr. Waller, Crown-and-Anchor Tavern, Leadenhall-street; and Mr. Tegg, 111, Cheapside.

The public are respectfully informed, that a committee will be appointed in a few days to investigate the claims of such individuals as may consider themselves entitled to assistance. The accused will thank any gentleman, who can furnish them with information or evidence that may be serviceable in their defence, to communicate the same to Mr. Harmer, their solicitor, No. 6, St. John's Square, Clerkenwell.

Amount of subscriptions.

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
The Statesman Paper	5	5	0		John Bull with his		
True Blue	5	0	0		bugle horn	5	0

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
An Enemy to Imposition.....	2	2	0	proprietors, and is disgusted with the presumptuous insolence of the manager of the new theatre .....	10	0	0
A Friend to the Theatre, but an Enemy to Private Boxes	1	1	0	Mr. Courtenay .....	1	1	0
The House that Jack Built .....	2	2	0	W. H. Ormond-street	1	0	0
One of the Gods confined with hoarseness.....	0	10	6	Justice Burn against Justice Bow-street	1	0	0
J. R. ....	1	1	0	Mr. H. A. Gray's Inn	1	0	0
Arthur .....	0	14	0	F. C. of Sandgate ..	1	1	0
M. W. Esq.....	1	1	0	E. W.....	1	1	0
Mr. T. Tegg, Cheap-side.....	5	5	0	F. P. ....	1	1	0
Oh! my Aitches.....	0	7	0	J. T. ....	1	1	0
C. Roberts, Esq.....	0	10	6	A Cobbettite .....	1	1	0
A Carpenter .....	0	5	0	T. R. ....	0	10	6
"What do you want." ..	1	1	0	Publicola, (sent to the Times) .....	1	1	0
A small taste for Black Jack .....	1	1	0	An enemy to hired ruffians, (ditto) ..	1	0	0
Father Justice.....	0	10	6	F. H. (ditto) .....	1	0	0
A Loyal Subject.....	1	1	0	Boxkeeper's Oath ..	0	7	0
P. Williams, Esq. ..	1	1	0	.....	0	7	0
W. Harbert, Esq. ..	1	1	0	.....	0	10	6
"He must become worse to make his prices good." .....	1	1	0	Mr. Rock .....	0	10	6
A detester of imposition.....	2	2	0	<i>Friends to the Liberty of the People.</i>			
One who revolts at the unjustifiable extortion of the				From a club held at the London Coffee-House, the subscription of the club .....	5	5	0

£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
<i>Individually from the Members.</i>			Mr. W. Anderson,		
The chairman, Sam. Wright, Esq. .... 1			jun.....	1	0
Sir Wm. Rawlins .. 1			W. T. a friend to		
Lewis Gilson ..... 1			ditto .....	1	0
Peter Scholey..... 1			The mite of an op-		
Thomas Kearsay..... 1			pressed actor ....	0	5
David Laing ..... 1			One of the public ..	3	0
Godfrey Scholey.... 1			No hired ruffians or		
James Wardle..... 1			builders of brothels	1	1
James Layton..... 1			Mr. P. Butler, of		
John Nichols..... 1			Shorncliff .....	1	1
An enemy to unjusti-			No excessive bail ..	1	0
fiable demands,			W. S. M.....	1	1
lawless coercion,			A Pitite, served out		
and offensive dis-			by Dutch Sam ..	1	1
tinctions among a			For a trial by Jury..	1	3
free people .....			E. P. ....	0	10
E. M. ....			A Lover of Justice .	0	2
Shakespeare's Ghost			An enemy to the in-		
"Let the galled Jade			troduction of hired		
wince." .....			boxers.....	1	0
Four at the old price			Evasive Oath Jemmy	0	10
from one that will			B. H. Nicholas-lane,		
never go at the new			a detester of im-		
Not Caught .....			sition .....	1	1
An old Barrister.... 1			An honourable and		
A penalty upon Ge-			impartial charge to		
neral Black Jack,			a grand jury ....	1	1
for an assault com-			One word against		
mitted some years			new prices,—mo-		
ago upon his Aid			nopoly .....	1	1
de Camp..... 1			Harris, jun. but no		
			Manager.....	0	10
			A Bow-street Runner	0	5

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
An enemy to crim.				An enemy to pride,			
con. ....	0	5	0	oppression, and			
Dublin Tinman ....	0	7	0	avarice .....	1	1	0
John Kemble, alias				W. Capel, Esq. ....	1	1	0
Bill Soames.....	0	2	6	A Blackguard Citizen	0	1	0
Two journeymen				Mary Austin's rattle	0	10	6
soap-boilers ....	0	5	0	A trifle to support the			
John Kemble is a				liberty of the sub-			
Bull, but John				ject against thea-			
Bull is not a Kem-				trical tyranny ....	2	0	0
ble .....	1	1	0	An enemy to hired			
Gallows Black Jack	0	5	0	boxers, and no			
A Citizen, but not a				great friend to			
Blackguard ....	0	7	0	hired magistrates .	1	0	0
A friend to impartial				Equal justice to une-			
justice.....	1	1	0	qual ranks .....	1	0	0
An eye-witness to the				A subscription from			
merciful proceed-				P. D. a firm friend			
ings at Bow-street	1	1	0	to the legal rights			
No Bow-street <i>read</i> .	1	1	0	of the people....	2	0	0
Justice and Truth <i>ver-</i>				Fifteen old friends to			
<i>sus</i> Kemble and				Spangle Jack the			
Brandon.....	1	1	0	Showman, by S.S.	5	5	0
Black Jack in his				J. G. ....	1	1	0
proper line, by a				G. T. ....	1	1	0
Rope-Maker ....	1	1	0	Samuel Bishop ....	1	1	0
The key to the pri-				J. F. no friend to			
vate boxes .....	1	1	0	John Kemble ....	1	1	0
A peep behind the				J. B. N. ....	0	10	6
curtain .....	1	1	0	A bold and unre-			
An enemy to Turkish				served opinion, on			
sofas in a theatre .	1	1	0	all occasions, will			
Justice with an im-				be supported by			
partial hand ....	1	1	0	every honest man	1	1	0

Appendix.] COVENT GARDEN JOURNAL: 787

£ s. d.	£ s. d.
A Briton . . . . . 0 10 6	—vide Quevedo's
" Upon my Honour" 0 10 6	Visions . . . . . 0 2 6
Errors excepted . . . . 0 10 6	" Times a Tell-Tale" 0 2 6
S. Brooksbank, Esq. . 5 5 0	Eight wax-lights for
To purchase a new	one woman to
rattle for Mary Aus-	dress by economy 0 10 0
tin on an enlarged	J. P. K.'s beauty lies
scale, and to pro-	in his perriwig . . . . 0 10 0
vide music for a	One of Croaking
future perform-	Bill's interesting
ance . . . . . 2 2 0	females . . . . . 1 0 0
Mr. W. Wishart . . . . 1 1 0	Ten lamplighters in
J. S. E. . . . . 0 5 0	their own clothes . . 0 10 6
Cardinal Wolsey's	A Swearing-man dis-
Night-cap . . . . . 0 2 6	posing of bacon to
John Bull, "What do	a jury . . . . . 0 10 0
you want?" . . . . . 0 6 0	Bad luck to the
Kemble, "What do	" aitches" . . . . . 1 1 0
you want?" . . . . . 0 7 0	Neddy, 'tis strange the
Britons, who shall	first sling I threw,
Conquer? . . . . . 0 6 0	—Closed the glass
The six-legg'd Pig in	eye, and chaste Ma-
the Pantomime—	tilda's too . . . . . 0 10 6
Vide Preface to the	A. B. . . . . 1 0 0
Iron Chest . . . . . 0 2 6	A friend and suppor-
The Embers of the	ter of all due, but a
Press expiring in	detester of all un-
Globe-lane . . . . . 0 2 1	due, authority . . . . 1 0 0
" An Opium Pill,"	A friend of the <i>Times</i> -
vide ditto . . . . . 0 2 6	serving—, but no
Tempora Mutantur . . 0 10 6	partner in his or
The angelic Fencing-	Kemble's gold . . . . 0 2 6
Master's exit in a	William Wigget . . . . 2 0 0
perpendicular line,	Mr. T. Charing-Cross 0 10 6

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
No grand-juryman, or tradesman to the theatre.....	1	0	0	Towards a pillory ...	0	10	6
Old Price.....	0	6	0	Buffers to be had, ap- ply at the box- office .....	0	10	6
M. H. ....	1	1	0	Four subscriptions sent by twopenny post.....	1	2	0
A Christian recover- ing from the wrath of a Jew .....	0	10	6	Mr. F. Dietrichsen..	1	1	0
The Chubby Tax Ora- tor, R. T.....	0	10	6	An enemy to vagrant extortioners, partial magistrates, .. at- tempts to pack ju- ries, perjured ruf- fians, boxing black- guards, and bagnio- keepers, and to the introduction . . . of French customs in our public places of amusement....	7	7	0
The man whose great bell was stolen, T. S.	0	10	6	The Black Jacker's first subscription..	5	5	0
G. S. B. ....	1	1	0	An enemy to the pride and insolence of modern players ..	1	0	0
A Bow-lane Whig ..	1	1	0	----- .....	0	15	0
A smirking conspi- racy defeated by a bill thrown out..	10	0	0	Three .....	1	11	6
T. A. M.....	1	1	0	New Key to the Old Price .....	0	10	6
Sent to Mr. Miller's last evening, but the paper, with the designation, is mis- laid.....	4	4	0	Mr. C. Sumner ....	1	1	0
An Enemy to Annual Boxes and Co. ..	0	7	0	A Swell Drayman who never pays ..	0	2	6
Let one give now who never gave before .	0	3	6	The boy who whipped a top for the pre- servation of his			
A little John Bull ..	0	7	0				
A Monk .....	0	7	0				
A bonus for aitches, and a Jew-be-lying	1	0	0				
Oliver Price .....	0	2	6				
Sir Edward Mortimer from his Iron Chest .....	0	7	0				



£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
			One of the Public ..	1	1 0
health, at the ex-			One who neither de-		
pense of a dying			sires the managers'		
landlord .....	0	2 6	atches, nor the		
_____ .....	1	1 0	honourable em-		
Graham, not Read ..	0	10 6	ployment of his		
An enemy to partial			box-keeper .....	0	5 0
Justice—Read this	0	10 6	An Enemy to Op-		
An aid-de-camp not			pression .....	1	1 0
of the private boxes	0	2 6	_____ .....	0	1 0
_____ .....	0	5 0	A Friend to Justice ..	0	10 6
A partial charge to an			A Friend to the Diu-		
impartial jury ....	0	10 6	retic Psalm-singer		
An enemy to the in-			from Essex .....	0	7 0
solence of mana-			John Bull v. Read,		
gers, and the means			Mainwaring, Aris,		
they pursue to ex-			and Co. ....	1	0 0
tort and enforce			Hiss! hiss! hiss! hiss!	0	7 6
the new prices ....	1	0 0	A Knight of Malta's		
A clergyman who de-			abhorrence to the-		
plores the vices of			atrical despotism ..	0	7 0
the times .....	0	10 6	_____ .....	0	7 0
A call on " the So-			Harris worse than		
ciety for the Sup-			Kemble .....	0	2 6
pression of Vice"			John Kemble in the		
for their support ..	0	10 0	blanket .....	0	10 6
For the honest law-			The humours of Old		
yers who will pro-			Drury .....	0	2 6
tect an Englishman	0	10 0	An enemy to theatri-		
To him who will give			cal boxes .....	0	5 0
anaccount of Bran-			Speedy peace and soon	0	2 6
dson's presents ....	0	10 0	Noisy Jack, but not		
A mite towards the			Jack Kemble ....	0	10 6
£3000 expended			Read—learn and do		
on — dressing-			justice .....	0	2 6
room .....	0	10 6			

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Mother Goose.....	1	0	0	Fish-street, per G.			
J. W. ....	1	0	0	Willats (1st sub-			
G. and E. W. ....	2	2	0	scription) .....	2	10	6
T. Atkinson, per post	0	1	0	W. Jackson, jun. Se-			
Collaredo Hypocrito				ven Dials.....	0	5	0
Sycophanto Meon-				A Jew, and an enemy			
sarto, a grandee of				to imposition ....	0	5	0
Spain, and Chief				"There they go" ..	0	2	6
Confidento of the				A Friend to Justice..	0	5	0
Supreme Junta ..	0	5	0	H. L. P. ....	1	1	0
From a triad of odd				A religious Alderman	0	5	0
fellows, viz. the				.....	0	5	0
consistency of <i>The</i>				An architect's accom-			
<i>Herald</i> , superlative				modation .....	0	2	6
chastity of <i>The</i>				Doll Tearsheet ....	0	2	6
<i>Post</i> , and tender				Kemble's fee to the			
feelings of <i>The Day</i> ,				Chief Cashier for			
2s. 6d. each.....	0	7	6	introducing him to			
Cameleon-like, <i>The</i>				the Governor of			
<i>Times</i> their optics				the Bank.....	0	2	6
threw—On Kem-				.....	1	0	0
ble's gold, and in-				Britons strike home	0	9	0
stant chang'd their				C. W. G. a West-In-			
hue .....	0	5	0	dian .....	1	1	0
Professor Brandon ..	1	1	0	W. Bishop, Esq.....	1	0	0
A man who hates				R. Pearson, white leaf	0	1	0
cheats .....	1	0	0	England expects every			
J. C. Ryland .....	1	1	0	man will do his du-			
A Country Magis-				ty, C. B. ....	1	1	0
trate, and an enemy				Query—Are private			
to exorbitant				boxes allowed by			
bail.....	5	0	0	the patent?.....	0	5	0
From a few friends				A day's pay for a hir-			
visiting the parlour				ed ruffian .....	0	5	0
at the Falcon, Old				W. P.....	0	10	6

£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
J. M. ....	0	10	6	Savings of a pitite,	
C. H. ....	0	10	6	by staying away	
_____	0	10	6	from the theatre,	
O. P. success to the				(1st subscription)	1 8 0
cause, a mite from				JCoventry, Moorfields	0 1 0
a poor orphan....	0	10	6	A man of straw, not	
_____	0	5	0	Jemmy B. ....	0 2 0
_____	0	10	6	Two stout fellows	6d
A friend to fair pro-				each .....	0 1 0
fits .....	0	5	0	The gout in his sto-	
_____	0	1	6	mach .....	0 2 6
_____	0	5	0	Esther's contribution	0 5 0
_____	0	0	6	Mrs. Phillips .....	0 10 0
_____	0	5	0	B. C. Y.....	0 5 0
Paid for a red night-				_____	0 5 0
cap.....	0	2	6	The mite of a defen-	
Paid twelve oppress-				der of Old Prices	0 2 6
ed actors .....	1	1	0	One of the club who	
Lodge No. 2, grand				have all given their	
independent knights				honour not to go	
of the round table,				to Covent Garden	
held at the Angel				Theatre until old	
in John street, Mi-				prices are restored	1 1 0
norities, by the hands				Three of the poor in	
of the Secretary,				the pigeon holes..	0 1 6
J. M. C. ..	2	11	6	May the managers re-	
A Heroine in the				pent in time, lest	
cause of liberality	0	10	6	they should want	
Caroline's mite ....	0	5	0	a subscription....	0 6 0
The impartial choice	0	2	6	A British audience, no	
May the luxuries of				prize-fighters, fen-	
the rich never inter-				cing masters, and	
ferere with the				police officers....	1 1 0
amusements of the				"I'll rack thy bones	
public .....	1	1	0	with aitches" ....	0 10 6

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
An OP cockade.....	1	1	0	Three times to the pit			
L. W. Esq. Upper				at the old prices,			
Mall, Hammer-				by one who will			
smith .....	0	9	0	never go at the			
.....	0	10	0	new .....	0	10	6
An enemy to extor-				Found in a private			
tion .....	1	1	0	box, J. Ridley's			
Old Price .....	0	6	0	trumpet and Mary			
Public opinion ....	1	1	0	Austin's rattle ..	0	10	6
The ghost of Gene-				T. H. jun.....	0	10	6
ral Hale.....	1	1	0	W. H.....	0	10	6
"For whatso'er may Britons rouse and vex,				J. H. L.....	0	7	6
With pride they still protect the gentle sex."				Dutch Sam.....	0	7	0
Mary Austin to wit..	1	1	0	A well wisher to the			
A gentleman who				cause of justice ..	0	10	6
would wish to see				J. P. K. Great Rus-			
an appeal from the				sell street, 6 per			
quarter sessions to				cent. and no more	0	10	6
the King's Bench	0	10	6	A weaver removing to			
A few odd sixpences				Woodford, Essex	0	1	0
from the corner				Not more than 6½			
house but one of				upon honour ....	0	0	6½
Suffolk street....	0	7	0	A lie, a wretched lie,			
An enemy to theatri-				a d—d lie, upon my			
cal as well as poli-				soul a lie .....	0	5	0
tical aggrandize-				.....	0	5	0
ment .....	0	10	6	To defend theatrical			
.....	0	7	0	Magna Charta ..	2	0	0
"He that exalteth				An unlucky dog....	0	6	0
himself shall be				Oh! brave monopo-			
abased" .....	0	5	0	ly .....	1	1	0
Mr. Simeon Thomp-				A friend.....	1	0	0
son .....	1	1	0	A friend to the expir-			
Mr. Whiston Powell	1	1	0	ing liberty of Old			
C. G. ....	1	0	0	England.....	0	10	6

£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.	
True courage triumphant over hired brutality . . . . .	1	12	6	Mr. Sam. Curtis . . . . .	1	1	0
E. T. H. Esq. . . . .	1	1	0	“ Sent by a few who are agreed,—The laws of England do not need,—To be supported by a reed. (Read)” . . . . .	4	12	6
No Aitches and Co. . . . .	0	10	6	A lady rejoices to see John Bull assert his independence . . . . .	1	0	0
Working of hard metal, Marlborough street . . . . .	0	15	0	Seven small subscriptions amounting to . . . . .	2	3	0
In addition to Mrs. Kemble’s £ 600 a year for overlooking the mantua-makers . . . . .	1	0	0	C. Kear, Esq. Clifton . . . . .	2	0	0
An Old Barrister (2nd subscription) . . . . .	1	1	0	The majesty of the people insulted by Kemble’s “ what do you want” . . . . .	2	2	0
Hear, <i>Read</i> , mark, learn, — justice should be impartially administered . . . . .	1	0	0	Mr. Robert Milar . . . . .	1	1	0
Second subscription from the club at the London Coffee House, for the liberty and rights of the people, by the Sec. Mr. L. Gilson, Messrs. Rolfe Scholey and Atkinson . . . . .	3	3	0	A few lads . . . . .	7	7	0
Mr. White the proprietor and editor of the Independent Whig . . . . .	2	0	0	W. Harris . . . . .	1	1	0
The Black-Jacker’s 2nd subscription . . . . .	5	0	0	G. Ross . . . . .	1	1	0
				J. Jolly . . . . .	1	1	0
				J. Newland . . . . .	1	1	0
				W. Philpot . . . . .	1	1	0
				G. Pole . . . . .	1	1	0
				Saved . . . . .	1	1	0
				Let them produce their patent . . . . .	0	10	6
				To the memory of Fitzpatrick who humbled Garrick and demolished full price . . . . .	0	10	0
				Mr. Day, 87, High Holbourn . . . . .	5	5	0

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
A few independent Jews and no hired ruffians .....	2	6	6	From the society of eccentrics, by the hands of Mr. J. Fox, Sec. ....	5	5	0
Eleven subscriptions by an Englishman	0	10	6	W. Day, Goswell st.	0	10	6
Twelve ditto .....	2	14	0	J. B. for O P and no P. B. ....	0	10	6
For a bridle to curb Black Jack.....	0	10	6	A salt eel for the Sieur Brandoni Chargeall, private boxonian profess- or .....	3	3	0
Diminish your prices, Black Jack ....	1	0	0	First subscription from the Fountain- eers .....	2	9	6
An enemy to Bow- street interference with the just rights of Englishmen ..	1	0	0	Multum in Parvo, the Black-Jacker's 3d subscription ..	5	5	0
W. ....	1	1	0	Out, not in.....	1	1	0
Euclid .....	1	0	0	S. B. ....	1	1	0
Two gemmen who are fond of old pri- ces, &c. ....	0	10	6	W. A. ....	1	1	0
Mr. off, off, off!....	1	1	0	A friend to the drama and the laws and customs of Eng- land, who thinks the expenses on dresses, decorations and machinery, have of late been carried too far, and that it is high time they should be checked.....	5	5	0
Mrs. off, off, off! ..	1	1	0	" Oh! man! man! dressed in a little			
Three brothers of the ancient order of Druid's Lodge, No. 2, held at the Old Rose, Ratcliff - Highway .....	0	15	0				
.....	1	1	0				
Two friends who would be open to conviction were the necessity proved for raised prices..	2	2	0				
Threesmall subscrip- tions .....	4	7	6				

£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
			the impertinence		
			of vagrants . . . .	1	1 0
			Members of the nail		
			and screw club, by		
			their secretary D.		
			Britt . . . . .	2	4 0
			A. L. a friend to the		
			O Ps . . . . .	0	10 6
			J. P. Noswall . . . . .	2	2 0
			A few staunch advo-		
			cates to the cause,		
			by the chubby face		
			grator, R. T. . . . .	1	12 6
			Two gentlemen from		
			Cornwall, disgusted		
			with the impu-		
			dence and brutali-		
			ty of managers . .	0	10 6
			To meet corruption		
			in every shape . .	0	10 6
			Robert Milne, (2nd		
			subscription . . . .	1	1 0
			S. Curtis, ditto . . . .	1	1 0
			C. Williamson, Esq.	5	0 0
			Five pig's faces for the		
			Jews . . . . .	5	5 0
			A dose of antimonial		
			wine from the		
			grapes, Church-		
			row, Aldgate . . . .	4	4 0
brief authority, still					
ignorant of what is					
most assured"—					
Shakespeare	1	1 0			
I prithee, Harris, tell					
outright how much					
may be the cost of					
gilding well a ve-					
nal PRESS and al-					
so a rotten POST	0	10 6			
From the printer of					
old prices, Rupert					
street, towards					
equal justice . . . .	0	10 6			
Three sugar bakers'					
clerks . . . . .	1	1 0			
Three sugar bakers . .	1	1 0			
An enemy to mono-					
polies . . . . .	2	0 0			
A few friends sub-					
scribed last Satur-					
day night . . . . .	2	1 6			
_____ . . . . .	0	10 6			
The British Forum					
by the hands of J.					
G. Jones . . . . .	2	7 0			
Richard Ellis . . . . .	2	2 0			
A friend to the injur-					
ed, to defend them					
against the insol-					
ence of Jews and					

These with many others of inferior sums, made the subscriptions at the period of pacification to amount to upwards of £450.

The undernamed were the officers of the Committee,  
 MR. SAMUEL MILLER, 13, Skinner street, TREASURER.  
 MR. J. POWELL, 3, Grove place, Camden town, SEC.

No. 142. — *A List (which is supposed to be correct) of the Proprietors and Tenants of the Private Boxes.*

*Four Annual Boxes, rented by*

Prince of Wales.		Duke of Cumberland.
Duke of York.		Duke of Gloucester.

*Four purchased by*

Duke of Northumberland.		Mr. Knox.
Earl of Egremont.		Mr. Antrobus.

*Twenty-four at present rented or occupied by*

Princess of Wales.		Mrs. J. Orby Hunter.
Duke of Devonshire.		Marquis of Stafford.
Lady Holland.		Mr. Angerstein, (City.)
Earl Sefton.		Mr. White, (Office House of Commons.)
Mr. Vaughan, (City.)		Marquis of Salisbury.
Duke of Northumberland.		Mrs. Boone.
Mr. Meyrick.		Duke of Bedford.
Marquis of Abercorn.		Marquis of Stafford.
Prince Stahremberg.		Earl Grosvenor.
Lord Mountjoy.		Mr. Hope.
Mr. Coutts.		Mrs. Boehm.
Lord Cholmondeley.		
Lady Spencer.		



No. 143. — *The projected third Theatre.*

(Morning Post, March 26, 1810.)

From a Correspondent.

The argument on which the opponents to the establishment of a third theatre seem to have placed their main strength is, that the increased population, which they admit to be at least double that at the time the original patents were granted, has been provided for, by the enlargement of the present houses; whereas, it is evident, that enlargement is the cause of the great discontent of the public, because not more than half the company can either hear or see. Before Covent Garden was enlarged, in about 1784, and Drury-lane rebuilt, in 1793, neither of those houses could contain more than £300, when full, at the late prices of 5s. for boxes, and 3s. for the pit; but, in those houses, every word of the drama could be distinctly heard, and every feature of the actor clearly seen. At this moment, if Drury-lane were standing, the two houses would contain at least £1500, when full, at the same prices. Thus, it appears, according to the accommodation which these patentees had provided for the play-

frequenters of this day, five houses of the old size might be supported by the public; but, owing to their enormous size, their proprietors justly complain, that on an average of years, they have not been more than half filled.

The argument on which the objection is made, is the establishment of a third theatre, and to have placed them near each other, is that the increased population, which they would be at least double that at the time the original houses were erected, has been provided for by the enlargement of the present houses; whereas it is evident, that enlargement is the cause of the great decrease in the tickets, because not more than half the company can enjoy them at once. It is true, Covent Garden was enlarged in about 1724, and Drury-Lane rebuilt in 1729, neither of these houses could contain more than 2,000 when full, at the present time, but the houses are not so large, in those houses every word of the drama could be distinctly heard, and every feature of the actor clearly seen. At the present time, the houses were standing, the two houses would contain at least 4,000, what could be the consequence? It appears, according to the computation, which these gentlemen have published for the city,

## SCRAPS.

### *To the Israelites in the Pit.*

“Cease, cease, the public here to knock, sirs,  
The *pit* was never made for **BOXERS.**”

### *New Seats and new Prices.*

“Surely, the manager devoid of grace is,  
He *pigeons* both our *pockets* and our *places.*”

“Mendoza, it is said, expressed the high sense of his displeasure, at serving up such a treat to his Jewish brethren, on a night of their attendance, as the *Fitch of Bacon.*”

“A new tragedy is talked of, called ‘The Manager in Distress.’ It is said to be founded upon Mr. K——’s application to a certain noble lord, and the threat of prosecution for keeping a *disorderly house.*”

“Upon examining the orders issued to the Jews, they have been all found to be written on *fool’s-cap paper.*”

“ In consequence of the great requisition of the police at the theatre, robberies are reported to be very frequent on the roads in the vicinage of the metropolis.”

*Quotation from Hamlet.*

“ LET THE DOORS BE SHUT UPON THEM, THAT THEY MAY PLAY THE FOOL NO WHERE BUT IN THEIR OWN HOUSES.”

“ In consequence of the general hoarseness in town, occasioned by a clamour for old prices, the confectioners, it is said, have determined, in the sale of their pectoral lozenges, to follow Mr. Kemble's plan, by charging an advance.”

“ A man, interested for the managers, having attempted to wrest a horn out of the hand of an O P, the wag instantly exclaimed—“ Let my horn alone, *you've got two of your own!*”

“ Such was the fondness of our forefathers for dramatic entertainments, that there were no fewer than nineteen playhouses open in this metropolis, at different periods, previous to the year 1633, when Prynne published his “ *Histrionatrix*,” which had the effect of suppressing them during the reign of hypocrisy and fanaticism.

Six playhouses were allowed to be open at one time, during the reign of Charles II. viz.

One at Blackfriars, for the king's company,  
 The GLOBE, on the Bank-side.  
 The BULL, in St. John's Street.  
 One in Salisbury-Court.  
 The FORTUNE and the COCKPIT in Drury-Lane."

"In Shakespeare's time, the prices of admission to the Globe theatre were—boxes 1s. pit, 6d. and (as is mentioned in Beaumont and Fletcher's prologue to the Woman-Hater,) gallery 2d."

"An officer of the guards, upon the temporary cessation of hostile acts, by the O Ps, wittily said—"Effodiuntur *opes* irritamenta malorum." The pun lies upon the word in italics, which means "riches" in Latin. The translation is—The OPs, the occasion of all mischief, have been routed out."

"Sir William Curtis, M. P. presented, in the present session of parliament, a petition from certain persons of the city of London, for leave to raise the sum of £200,000, to be expended in the erection of a third theatre. We understand that a counter-petition is in progress from the common council."

"Dudfield, the druggist's shopman, was lately nonsuited for informality in the declaratory part

of an action, which he brought against Mr. Read, for taking excessive bail. We understand that his expenses, on this occasion, cannot be less than *one hundred and twenty pounds!*"

"An advertisement has appeared in the Morning Chronicle, of 10th March, 1810, desiring that those persons, who may have any claim upon the fund established for the benefit of persons considered unjustly prosecuted by the managers, will bring them forward. (Mr. Dudfield's case will, no doubt, come under the distinction of **LEGAL EXPENSES**, set forth in this advertisement."

"Mr. Brandon, it has been said, some time previous to the final cessation of hostilities, declared, at the Welkin, in Broad-Court, Bow-Street, that he should not be much concerned if the theatre were torn to pieces, as his employers would certainly come upon the county for the damages !!!"

"A wag being asked by his friend, in the theatre, why he did not wear an **O.P. medal**,—"Oh! (replied the wit) I have long ceased to *meddle* in such affairs."

"When the *bonnet-wags* first appeared in the pit of Covent Garden Theatre, a gentleman, who had seen such things during the revolution in

France, observed, that he thought the person who wore it might more properly divide with the *Mountain* (i. e. gallery) party."

"From the late symptoms of opposition to the manager of the opera, it is supposed that the frequenters of the drama are imitating those who oppose the minister. Indeed it is not improbable but we shall soon hear of theatrical whigs and tories."

"What a pity it is that the O P's were deprived of Mr. F-l-l-r's exertions on their side! He, who could fearlessly attack the sp—r of one house, would feel little hesitation in assaulting the man—r of the other."

"The following is an extract from the reply of Mr. Whitbread to the ministerial party in parliament, on the question of Lord Chatham's narrative:—'An honourable and learned gentleman has been pleased to term this side of the house the O P party; I concede to the honourable member the truth and applicability of his designation. We truly are so; *for, as the O P's had evidently the law on their side, so have we the constitution.*'"

Some estimate may be formed of the numbers of the non-paper audience, during the late contest, from the produce of a FREE benefit, given, as has been already specified, on the night of the ROYAL

JUBILEE, to the society for the relief of prisoners for small debts: the amount was only £56 : 18 : 6, and it seems not to have been paid into the funds of the society until the 7th Feb. 1810. It looks strange that the due appropriation should have been delayed above a quarter of a year!

EDITOR.

“ In gentlemens’ chambers, sure every one knows,  
We’ve always a BAG to receive dirty clothes;  
At the theatre now, should you dare put your chin in,  
The case is quite chang’d—’tis a BOX for foul linen!”

Morning Chronicle.

“ While the public insist on their right to O P,  
And the managers stick to their text of N O,  
Thro’ the one and the other, ’tis as clear as U C,  
In the place of a play, we must witness R O.”

Morning Chronicle.

“ Since nought can appease Johnny Bull but O P,  
And the promis’d suppression of every P B;  
The playhouse, no doubt, will continue M T,  
For king John has proclaim’d, he’ll be sooner D D.”

Morning Chronicle.



## FINALE.

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### A DIALOGUE IN THE SHADES.

SCENE—LETHE, A PUMP-ROOM.

The ghosts of Garrick, Macklin, Foote, Dr. Johnson, Quin, and other eminent wits, sitting with glasses in their hands.—They all join in the following chorus.

Let us yet suspend the drinking  
Of this stream, dissolving care ;  
Pleasure must arise from thinking  
What we are and what we were.

GARRICK.—Heard the news, my light-bodied cousins, hey ! from the *upper flies*, hey ?

JOHNSON. — What now, friend David ? it should seem as though you received intelligence that your favourite *Jubilee* has been revived at Stratford. I am concerned that our friend Shakspeare is not present to receive the high-flown congratulations of your hilarity.

GARRICK.—*Jubilee*, indeed ! why so it was

indeed,—hey! Sam. Do you know Sam, that a monstrous *cenotaph* has been erected to the memory of our immortal bard, and the *orgies* have been extremely classical. *Vale, vale, vale*, which in good round English may be rendered—*off! off! off!* has been the constant accompaniment to the orchestra *dirges* this month back.

JOHNSON.—Pray descend from your stilts; or I may be inclined to remark, in disparagement of your comprehensibility, what a wit said formerly in reconciling your powers to your size—“Garrick’s six feet high.” Do you really mean to tell me that a cenotaph has been erected on the occasion you mention. Yes, the radix of the word is *κενος*, *vacuus*, and *ταφω*, *sepelio*. Now, I considered him more worthy of a pyramid or a mausoleum.

FOOTE.—Look-ye, Johnson; a bloated citizen has been just ferried over the lake, and hot from the Jubilee in honour of George III. he was stifled in the mingled effluvia of calipash and claret. He brings intelligence of a new *shop* being fitted out in Covent Garden. The fellow has seen what he calls *us* of his day, and reports the present articles as d—d *flat*. To make use of a musical metaphor, the proprietors *raised their notes* to a key rather discordant with the taste of the town, and there seems to be a great deal of *scraping* previously to the restoration of the concert.

(All cry out “Introduce the worthy Citizen.”)

*Enter* CITIZEN.

Bless my soul! vy now vat I vould give that my friend Tim Twist knew as how I got among all the great play-folks of our own time! A thought now crosses me vich I suppose vill not be, by and bye, much in my favour; as how I have often made free with my old master Giles Fools-cap's till, for the purpose of laughing and crying at Garrick.—Save ye, gentlemen.

JOHNSON.—Well, friend, what intelligence do you bring from upper and terrestrial regions?

CITIZEN.—As I live, that's the surly man who wrote the big dictionary of vich my cousin Folio made such a wast fortune! Muster Johnson, your dictionary can be had at either end of the town so as to cram into a breeches-pocket, and fetches about half-a-crown in that shape. O! sir that you were alive to write Marmion, or the Lady of the Lake. Why, sir, it would be better than a farm at Clapham.

JOHNSON.—Retard the pacing of your prattle; dull, but knavish I warrant you; much like my old friends the *city-booksellers*. Do you comprehend my interrogatory?

CITIZEN.—Why I can't say as how I do, Mr. Johnson.

FOOTE.—How the d—l, Sam, d'ye expect he should know what you mean by the *upper regions*,

a fellow who has not *radiance* enough in his pericranium to give light to a dark garret. But pray, friend, what story is this you amused Charon with;—nay, by which you put him upon an imposition which he practises on every ghost that has arrived since your communication? He swears that things here must come to *their proper level*, as well as above, and henceforth he will take no less than an obolus and half; nay, farther, he insists upon cutting some wood in our groves to build a state-cabin for ghosts of condition. If things proceed in this manner, the whole republic of the Acherontian shore will rise in opposition to such innovating principles.

CITIZEN.—Lord! how some people have the knack of discovery! My good sir, how closely you have hit the mark. Opposition to *innovation!* why, there never was known such a *row*, such a kick-up, since *that there* Mr. Macklin's time. Well, I will tell you the whole, full, and true, account of the matter. Not that I witnessed the business myself, but as I heard it from a wild goose-cap of a nephew, who wasted so much of my paper, and the progress of my types, in printing what he called *place-cards* (I think) that the dog sunk the business of the shop for several days.

MACKLIN.—Thou long-winded, prosing, son of Mammon, acquaint us *directly* of the matter which thou hast to communicate.

CITIZEN.—Why, sir, you recollects hearing as how the old house was burnt down, and Messrs. Kemble and Co. burnt out. But, in a *giffy*, the charity of the public provided a sum sufficient to build an *hospital* for the entire *trade* from London to the Land's-end. To be sure, the building is a vastly fine thing. Let me see, they called it the National Theatre. A very fine advertisement signified that the town should see it on the 18th of September, but at a rise upon the pit of 6d. and 1s. upon the boxes. Gentlemen, I suppose you all know pretty well the temper of John Bull: he would not consent to this, particularly as it was to pay for an Italian singer who was to perform in English operas. My sister Deb. who is quite a city madam, says she heard her at the *operar*, and that her notes are the loudest and clearest she ever knew: but my nephew, Bobby, denies that, and swears her notes are not half so loud or so sweet in his mind as those of the *uproar* at Covent Garden. The proprietors, besides this, built a row of boxes, for the great folks, which they called annual, but which the public termed *private*, for certain reasons. The three *bones of contention* then were—the rise in the prices, the Italian's engagement, and the private boxes. Such speeches as were made on the occasion, Bobby said he never heard,—not even excepting those of Mr. Pitt, whom I met this morning, walking all alone, vastly gloomy, with his finger on his lip.

I suppose it is in consequence of a message which I brought him about his pupils affair with Lord Kilpatrick. But to return to my story. When I left London, for this here place, nothing was talked of but the O Ps, as they style those who will not pay the new prices of admission to the play-houses. The great Kemble must certainly quit the stage,—all the abuse is levelled at him.

JOHNSON.—Pray does he yet make a dyssyllable of the word *aches*, or dress up a *beard* into a bird?

FOOTE.—Will Shakspeare must be as much obliged to him for such a dressing as the Virgin Mary is to those zealous papists who grace her noddle at Loretto with a *full-bóttomed wig*.

GARRICK.—You see, now, Master Sam—hey! Johnson; you see now that this great building is a complete cenotaph—it bears Shakspeare's *name* but not his *body*,—eh!

JOHNSON.—It would be much better, between you and me, if the public gave the last *vale* to the *tumulus*; for the manager says clearly to himself, when the people throng to hoot him, paying however for the same:

“Populus me sibilat at mihi plaudo,  
— dum nummos contemplor in arcâ.”

Were the *Rambler* now in existence, he should take such a motto to the advice he should give the town on the occasion.

CITIZEN.—Mr. Harris, sen. signified, through what he called his mouth-piece, Mr. Kemble, *that he was at Bath*; and could not attend on the public.

QUIN.—I would have said what Rich wrote to me once upon a similar occasion,—“Stay there, and be damned.”

GARRICK.—You may recollect the trouble in which I was once when the high-sounding name of the Persian *Artaxerxes* could not quell the insurrection against my new attempts at Old Drury, eh!

CITIZEN.—Lord! lord! sir, you don't know; I suppose, that they have got a great Persian at present in London. A ghost who arrived last night brings the news. The whole city is in confusion about him; the length of his beard, and the number of his wives, above all, of his children, are the only subjects which go down with the citizen's wives over their scandal-broth. Perhaps it will be as convenient for the managers of the playhouse that he should arrive, as it was last Easter to the Lord Mayor that the big whale diverted the attention of the public.

MACKLIN.—Were it permitted me again to revisit upper airs, I should have a fine subject for a farce, which I would entitle the “Drama a-la-Mode.” The character of Sir *Pertinax*, with a more becoming surname, I should adapt to John Bull. He will persevere; and I know *from expe-*

*rience* that he has brought his saucy servants to a sense of their duty.

FOOTE.—What open ground for *making tea* of this business there would be, did “destiny and the sisters three,” as Gobbo says, not cut my thread of communication with the superior world. I shall however console my Lady Kitty Crocodile by informing her, that it is probable more *Eves* than one will be caught in original sin, through the medium of the private boxes.

GARRICK.—How goes the taste of the town—eh, honest cit, in the way of the drama, hey! what have you understood to go down best?

CITIZEN.—Why, sir, all the people of my acquaintance informed me that DON JUAN was highly diverting, and CINDERELLA wonderfully interesting.

GARRICK.—O! Christopher Rich! thou emperor of *all mimes!* what a foundation for taste hast thou laid in an unlucky hour! Surely, wert thou here, thou wouldst gambol in *harlequinade* at such information!! Sam Foote, who, think you, *clowns* it for those miserable ragouts of exhibition?

FOOTE.—THE PUBLIC, without doubt, friend David.

QUIN.—Methinks you termed them ragouts. Now, in my humble judgment, they resemble an *olla podrida* more. How long, friend, had the riot (as we are all disposed to term it in our insane



obstinacy) lasted, when the last letter-carrier arrived from terra firma?

*Enter a Shopman's Ghost, Half-Drunk.*

I overheard your question, hem! gentlefolks, hem! curse on that Crown-and-Anchor, hem! Why, do you see, after continuing sixty-six nights the managers gave in, and clubbed toasts with their O P friends, as they, hem, now call 'em. In making an oration in favour of the great Clifford, a fish-bone, which I was twirling about in my mouth, sent me into this goodly company. This last was an entertaining dinner: Clifford and John Kemble became like the two friends I read of in a little book called Pylades and Orestes, I think. Some people think that lawyers receive *double fees*; but no one could imagine so poorly of our leader, Mr. Clifford.

FOOTE.—Was a lawyer the *leader of opposition*? Then, take my word for it, “the cheats of Scapin” were nothing, in comparison with the hoax on poor hood-winked, honest, but humiliated, John Bull.

JOHNSON.—“Timeo Danaos etiam dona ferentes.”

GARRICK.—The “Masque of Comus” was nothing, I dare say, compared with this revel of conciliation.

QUIN.—I wish I were at the *feast* ; though I dare say it was not piqué with overflowings of reason, yet no doubt there was plenty of good turbot and Madeira.—(*licks his lips.*)

MACKLIN.—I propose that the two intelligencers be pledged in the Lethæan liquor, and invited to share in the joys of forgetfulness. All of us, in our time, “have played many parts.”—Allons. (*They all drink.*)

#### FINALE.

Lively liquor, purely flowing,  
Limpid, light, expelling pain ;  
Brisk and bright, thy novel glowing  
Hence repels dull mem'ry's reign.

## POSTSCRIPT.

**THE Publisher and Editor** of the preceding compound begs to inform his Readers, that this Work was published in Weekly Numbers, with the following short address superadded at the top of each wrapper.

“As the Editor’s chief inducement for adopting this mode of publication is, in case he should have misrepresented any circumstance, that he may have an opportunity to correct it during the progress of the work, he especially solicits the reader, who may discover an erroneous statement, to favour him with the means of making it correct.”

While the Work was going through the press, he also inserted advertisements in the newspapers, “that, wishing to give every opportunity for the correction of any error into which he may have fallen, in the Covent Garden Journal, he intends to delay the publication of the last number until the 28th of April, with a view to the insertion therein of any authentic information he may receive on the subject.”

The limited time having now elapsed without his receipt of a single communication, on the subject of his advertisement, that was not complimentary to his execution of the task which he had undertaken, he conceives that he may fairly venture to presume, that he has succeeded in compiling a full, faithful, and satisfactory account of this singular and long-pending contest between the Proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre and the Public.

PALL-MALL,  
APRIL 28, 1810.



THE END.



14 DAY USE  
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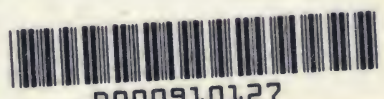
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