

A FAMOUS PLAYHOUSE

Old Drury Lane Has Outlived Many Vicissitudes.

PHENIX AMONG THEATERS.

London's Home of Pantomime Has Seen the Scams of Many Conflagrations—Attacks Upon Royalty Within Its Walls—The "Rejected Addresses."

On the night of Feb. 24, 1809, as the scene of commons was engaged upon rather important debate, sundry of the members observed through the shadows a faint red glow which eventually became so alarming in its intensity as to interfere with the order of the discussion.

The destruction of "The Lane"—the old building since its foundation in 153—was one of seven familiar disasters to London theaters in twenty years; but, whatever else happened Drury Lane must be rebuilt. Nor was the decision on the part of the proprietors unbusinesslike in the least.

Drury Lane has passed through many vicissitudes in the course of its existence. The first building was very considerably described by Pepys, who writes of the discomfort caused by a that found its way through the roof and drenched the occupants of the pit and also the bad acoustic quality of the place.

The second building, which was designed by an architect and opened in 1674, had a much shorter life, but was on two occasions the scene of attempts upon the royal dignity. In 1716 Freeman tried to shoot Prince of Wales, who afterwards became King George II., and in 1807 the king was the victim of a similar successful attack at the hands of a fanatic.

It was this same building which, as Walpole relates in one of his letters, was the scene of a lively dispute in 1744, when an attempt was made to introduce pantomime for the first time. So great has been the change of popular sentiment on this point since that far off date that today there is no London without pantomime.

Drury Lane is almost incredible. The third building, which was opened in 1794, came to an untimely end and has been seen, in 1809, and the inauguration of its successor three years later was marked by an event of considerable literary importance.

The success of the theater, being desirous of giving their new venture a good off, invited the public to submit to section suitable prologues, the purpose to have the honor of being selected for the stage upon the day of opening. A host of writers, including many of the best known names in contemporary literature, responded to the invitation, and this fortuitously suggested to two writers, James and Horace Smith, were beginning to acquire a reputation in the world of letters, the notion of publishing anonymously a collection of prologues parodying the style of various living writers of repute.

It was necessary that the volume should be issued in time for the opening of the theater, the authors were compelled to complete their work in a few days, but it is doubtful whether the quality of the work suffered on this account. Indeed, in evidence to the eighteenth edition, issued in 1823, it is suggested that the prologues gained rather than lost in value by being struck off, as it were, at a white heat.

The success of "The Rejected Addresses" was immediate and lasting. Two brothers found that they had got into fame at a bound, and the authors whom they had so successfully held up to kindly ridicule used their astonishment at the success with which their peculiar style and expression had been received. It was a notable achievement.

WALL STREET WAYS.

Methods of a Brilliant Operator of Many Years Ago.

One of the most brilliant operators of Wall street in the early sixties of the last century was Walter Wellman Morse, though he was by comparison with some of the gray haired market veterans only a mere boy, being just thirty years of age.

Such was the influence his indorsement would carry that after he had accumulated stock at his prices he could tell his daily callers that the stock was due to go up, and immediately there would be enough professional and public buying of the stock to send it up, thus enabling Morse to unload at a profit.

An example of Morse's popularity was illustrated in a scene accompanying the opening of subscriptions for stock in a coal mining company organized by him. The day the subscription book was opened people flocked to the office and fought with each other in their efforts to enter and get their names recorded.

BIRDS AS SCOUTS.

A Gypsy's Warning Before the Battle of Sadowa.

During the night, July 2-3, before the battle of Sadowa, a division commanded by the archduke, retreating before the Prussian army, had bivouacked near a town in Bohemia facing north.

At midnight the archduke, when resting in a peasant's cottage, was awakened by the arrival of a gypsy, who insisted on seeing him personally, having come to report the advance of the enemy.

The archduke, who spoke Romany fluently, asked: "How do you know? Our outposts have not reported any movement."

"That, your highness, is because the enemy is still some way off."

"Then how do you know?" The gypsy, pointing to the dark sky lighted by the moon, observed, "You see those birds flying over the woods from north to south?"

"Yes. What of them?" "Those birds do not fly by night unless disturbed, and the direction of their flight indicates that the enemy is coming this way."

The archduke put his division under arms and re-enforced the outposts, which in two hours' time were heavily attacked.—Field Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood in London Saturday Gazette.

Some Prophecies Fulfilled.

Long before his name was known outside his native country Oliver Cromwell was making one of his rambling speeches in the house of commons. Lord Digby asked Hampton who he was, and Hampton replied, "If ever we should come to a breach with the king, that sloven will be the greatest man in England." Never was any prophecy more completely fulfilled than this.

Almost equally remarkable in its way was Disraeli's prophecy, "But a time will come when you will hear me," made when nothing appeared more unlikely than the brilliant series of triumphs which fulfilled it.

Another instance of a quickly fulfilled prophecy was furnished by Pope Pius VII. when he was told of Napoleon's escape from Elba. "Don't worry about it," he said; "it is a storm that will be over in three months." The story of the hundred days proved his holiness to be right to a few hours.

He Got None.

"What's a pun, father?" "A pun, my son, is a play upon words. There are three kinds of puns—good ones, which you laugh at; indifferent ones, which you take no notice of, and bad ones, which make you throw something at the punster."

"Can you make a pun, father?" "Of course, my son! Now, you're thinking about your supper, aren't you?"

"Yes, father." "Well, that's supper-most in your mind at the present time. That, you see, is a play on— Here, you young rascal, what did you throw that book at me for?"—Philadelphia Inquirer.

Frog Farming in France.

Among the advantages of frog farming in France is the fact that it enables persons of limited means to utilize marshes and ponds which are too shallow and warm for fish culture and practically useless for any other purpose and produce on a comparatively small area a large amount of valuable food material for which there is always an eager market.

Hunted the Hunter.

"Is it really true," asked Miss Chellus, "that you're engaged to Mr. Richley?"

"It is," calmly replied Miss Bute.

"My," exclaimed Miss Chellus, "he was a great catch!"

"I beg your pardon," retorted the other haughtily; "catcher."—Catholic Standard and Times.

Objects of General Interest.

"Those flashy Van Punks have moved. Do you know where they went?"

"That's the very thing their unhappy landlord asked me."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The poet's verse slides into the current of our blood. We read it when young, we remember it when old.—Smiles.

FOILED THEIR PLOT.

The Way Mme. Alboni Frustrated a Scheme to Hiss Her.

"Once upon a time, when Mme. Alboni was at Trieste," writes Henry C. Lahee in "Famous Singers of Today," "she was informed of the existence of a plot to hiss her off the stage. Having ascertained the names of her detractors and where they were to be found, she donned male attire, to which her short hair and robust figure helped to complete her disguise, and went to the cafe at which the conspirators met. Here she found them in full consultation, and taking a seat at a table, she listened to their conversation for a time. After awhile she addressed the leader, saying: 'I hear that you intend to play a trick upon some one. I am very fond of a little practical joke myself and should be glad if you would allow me to join you on this occasion.'

"With pleasure," was the reply. 'We intend to hiss an opera singer off the stage this evening.'

"Indeed! And of what is she guilty?"

"Oh, nothing, except that, being an Italian, she has sung in Munich and Vienna to German audiences, and we think she ought to receive some castigation for her unpatriotic conduct."

"I agree with you, and now please tell me what I am to do."

"Take this whistle," said the leader. 'At a signal to be given at the conclusion of the air sung by Rosina the noise will begin, and you will have to join in.'

"I shall be very glad to do so," said the singer and put the whistle in her pocket.

"In the evening the house was packed—every seat was occupied—and the audience warmly applauded the opening numbers of the opera. In due course Mme. Alboni appeared, and at the point at which she was about to address her tutor a few of the conspirators began to make a disturbance, not waiting for the signal.

"Without showing any concern Mme. Alboni walked down to the footlights, and, holding up the whistle, which was hung to her neck by a ribbon, she exclaimed: 'Gentlemen, are you not a little before your time? I thought we were not to commence whistling until I had sung the air.'

"For a moment a deathly stillness prevailed; then suddenly the house broke into thunders of applause, which was led by the conspirators themselves."

A GRATEFUL PATIENT.

The Coin That Was Measured by a Famous Surgeon.

Dr. Grenfell, an old London hospital pupil, in a sketch of Sir Frederick Treves in the Pall Mall Gazette tells the story of a tiny sovereign gold piece given by a grateful patient to the famous surgeon and guarded by him as a priceless treasure. A sailor from Norway had been operated on by Sir Frederick in hospital. His life had been saved, and he had gone his way. Late one evening a timid knock brought Sir Frederick himself at that unusual hour to his door in Wimpole street. A tall, gaunt sailor in threadbare attire asked if this was where "Mr. Treves lives." At his earnest request, though somewhat under protest, he was allowed to enter. He at once proceeded to get out a jackknife, and from the lining of the belt of his trousers he cut out a small gold piece and offered it to Sir Frederick. On his refusal to accept it the man was so hurt that Sir Frederick listened to his story, and an interesting one it was.

The man had on leaving hospital sought a berth at the London docks, but, being a stranger, had been unable to get one. He had got out of money and had gone hungry day after day, though he knew that he had sewed up in his waistband by his wife in Norway the piece of gold in question. He had got so pulled down by bad living that he at last decided he must spend the money, but that very day he succeeded in getting a berth on a ship, and his advance had given the food he stood so sorely in need of. He had promptly tramped all the way to Wimpole street, and his bearing was such that Sir Frederick found himself "bowing into the darkness, holding the gold piece in his hand and with an overwhelming sense of inferiority strongly impressed on his mind."

A Modest Art Student.

An art student in Berlin wrote to a brewing concern in Bohemia offering to paint for the brewers "pictures suitable for advertising purposes—artistic, appropriate, attractive and cheap." He went on to say: "Sir John Millais was not above taking 40,000 marks from a soapmaker for one of his paintings to be used as an advertisement. Nor did he hesitate to offer other pictures for the same purpose at the same price. Why should not I, who owe my talent and who fears to look my landlady in the face, not do the same? Stay! I shall do better. Am willing to take less than 40,000 marks for my best work."

Slow and Sure.

"How is my son getting along?" asked a parent of the headmaster of a school.

"He's slow and sure," was the response.

"That's satisfactory"

"Not so," rejoined the master. "By it I mean that he is slow to learn and sure to forget."—London Telegraph.

The Practical One.

"All writers are not impractical, are they?"

"Oh, no! One man will write a joke and sell it for 50 cents. Another will write a comic opera around it and draw \$20,000 in royalties."—Louisville Courier-Journal.



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