More Anecdotes of the Theatre

ANECDOTES

Uniform with this Volume

ANECDOTES OF PULPIT AND PARISH

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY

ARTHUR H. ENGELBACH

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ARTHUR H. ENGELBACH

AUTHOR OF "ANECDOTES OF BENCH AND BAR"

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ANECDOTES OF THE THEATRE

A GOOD story is told of a rich banker at Paris, who, though a sexagenarian, fancied himself a perfect Adonis, and was always behind the scenes, hanging about and making love to Mademoiselle Saulnice, to whom the machinist of the Opera House was paying his addresses. Determined to be revenged, and profiting by the moment when his rival, in uttering soft nonsense, had inadvertently placed his foot upon a cloud, the machinist gave a whistle, which was the signal for raising the cloud. When the curtain was drawn up the audience were not a little edified at seeing the banker, with powdered head, and gorgeously attired in evening costume, embroidered coat and waistcoat, ascending to the clouds by the side of Minerva, represented by the object of his devotion.

UPON another occasion, in the days of pigtails, when an elderly gentleman, with French gallantry, was stooping down to present an actress with a bouquet and kiss her hand, she was suddenly told the stage was waiting ; off she ran, and appeared before the audience unconscious that her aged

admirer's wig had fallen off and clung to the spangles of her dress. Loud was the laughter of those in front, and louder still was it when the bald-headed victim appeared at the wing shorn of his capillary ornament.

THE following bon mot is ascribed to Compton. Meeting a friend one day when the weather had taken a most sudden and unaccountable turn from cold to warmth, the subject was mooted as usual, and characterised by the gentleman as being "most extraordinary." "Yes," replied Compton; "it is a most unheard-of thing. We've jumped from winter into summer without a *spring*."

ONE morning Compton and Douglas Jerrold proceeded together to view the pictures in the "Gallery of Illustrations." On entering the anteroom they found themselves opposite to a number of very long looking-glasses. Pausing before one of these, Compton remarked to Jerrold: "You've come here to admire works of art! Very well; first feast your eyes on that work of nature!" pointing to his own figure reflected in the glass. "Look at it: there's a picture for you!" "Yes," replied Jerrold, regarding it intently; "very fine, very fine indeed!" Then, turning to his friend: "Wants *hanging*, though!"

QUICK and free from the slightest taint of ill nature was Jerrold's remark about the affectionate letters written from America by an actor who had left his wife in London without money, and who

had never sent her any. "What kindness!" he said aloud, with strong emphasis, when one of the letters was read aloud in the green-room of the Haymarket. "Kindness!" ejaculated one of the actresses indignantly, "when he never sends the poor woman a penny?" "Yes," said Jerrold—"*unremitting* kindness."

BARHAM records a story of King, the actor, who, meeting an old friend, whose name he could not recollect, took him home to dinner. By way of making the discovery, he addressed him in the evening, having previously made several ineffectual efforts: "My dear sir, my friend here and myself have had a dispute as to how you spell your name; indeed, we have wagered a bottle of wine upon it." "Oh, with two P's," was the answer, which left them no wiser than before.

A STORY is told of a somewhat pompous announcement, at one of Foote's dinner-parties, when the Drury Lane manager was among the guests, on the arrival of "Mr Garrick's servants"; whereupon: "Oh, let them wait," cried the wit, adding in an affected undertone to his own servant, but sufficiently loud to be generally heard: "But, James, be sure you lock up the pantry."

COMPTON had a wholesome horror of amateur actors, and on one occasion, when an egotistical young gentleman buttonholed him to discant on acting, he administered an unmistakable reproof

to the presumptuous one. "I am anxious to become a professional now," said the young man, "for I always get splendid notices, and all my friends think I should make a great hit." "What line?" inquired Compton. "Well," smiled the youth, "I play all the funny parts, but I don't succeed in making my audience laugh heartily. I want to make them scream as you do—to make the house ring with laughter, in fact." "Ah," dryly replied Compton, "change your line of character a bit; try Hamlet, and let me know how you succeed."

THE late Sir Henry Irving delighted in telling the following story of Compton. "I shall never forget," said Irving, "the speech which he made on the first hundredth night of *Hamlet*, when, after the performance, the event was celebrated by a supper, given by my dear friend, Mr Bateman, at which a number of our friends and associates were present. Mr Compton was then playing nightly the character of Sam Savory, in the farce of *The Fish out of Water*. This farce had preceded *Hamlet* one hundred nights, and he took occasion to impress this fact upon us in the following way. We were all in high spirits. Mr Bateman's health, Mr Compton's and my own were drunk amidst enthusiasm and jocularity. Compton, with his peculiar gravity, ended the reply to the toast with which he was associated somewhat after this fashion: 'Thank you, gentlemen, for your appreciation of my efforts in that immortal drama, *The Fish out of Water*. I take this opportunity of thanking my friend Irving

for the really indefatigable support which he has given me in that agreeable little trifle of *Hamlet* with which, as you know, we are in the habit of winding up the evening.' The burst of laughter which greeted this, I shall ever remember."

FANNY KEMBLE says in her Memoirs: "When I was acting Lady Townley, in the scene where her husband complains of her late hours, and she insolently retorts: 'I won't come home till four to-morrow morning,' and receives the startling reply with which Lord Townley leaves her: 'Then, madam, you shall never come home again,' I was apt to stand for a moment aghast at this threat; and one night, during this pause of breathless dismay, one of the gallery auditors, thinking, I suppose, that I was wanting in proper spirit not to make some rejoinder, exclaimed: 'Now then, Fanny!' which very nearly upset the gravity produced by my father's impressive exit, both in me and in the audience."

CHARLES KEMBLE used to tell a story about some poor foreigner, dancer or pantomimist in the country, who, after many annual attempts to clear his expenses, came forward one evening, with a face beaming with pleasure and gratitude, and addressed the audience in these words: "Dear public! moche oblige. Ver good benefice—only lose half-a-crown—I come again."

THE late Mr Charles Mathews related that on one occasion, in *The Critic*, the gentleman who had rehearsed Lord Burleigh's part in the morning was missing at night. "Send in anybody," said the stage manager. The "anybody" was found, dressed, and the book put into his hands. He read the stage direction: "*Enter Lord Burleigh, bows to Dangle, shakes his head, and exits.*" "Anybody" did enter, bowed to Dangle, shook his (Dangle's) head, and made his exit.

CYRIL MAUDE tells a good story of theatrical "spoof." "On one occasion," he writes, "we were rummaging in some of the old Haymarket boxes in search of some old records when, at the bottom of one, we came upon some very ancient music in manuscript, upon which Time had laid so heavy a hand that it crumbled to pieces when we touched it. Our stage manager was struck with an idea, and so, picking out one of these pieces, he sent it to be carefully framed. A couple of days after he went to our musical director with a face upon which was nothing but solemnity, and informed him that, knowing him to be a lover of musical curiosities, he would be glad to hear that he had come across an original piece of Beethoven's music, which was for sale at the extremely low price of half-a-guinea. Our enthusiastic musical director would not rest until he had seen the treasure, which he instantly purchased, declaring it to be an undoubted specimen of the great master's original work. He was not particularly pleased to learn a few days later that it

was a piece of an old band part used in the younger Colman's day.

IT is a fact well known to theatrical managers that people frequently get into theatres by mistake. When Mr (now Sir Herbert) Tree first revived *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at His Majesty's the Haymarket Theatre across the road was attracting large audiences with a revival of *Caste*. One night, after the first act of *Caste*, two burly countrymen descended from the gallery and demanded an audience of the business manager. He was sent for, and on arrival politely asked what their grievance was. "Well, look 'ere, mister," said the spokesman of the two, "we want our money back: Tree ain't been on yet, and as for merry wives, why those two girls won't be married in their natural!"

AN incident of a similar nature happened at the Lyric Theatre, where Sarah Bernhardt was electrifying audiences at the time. More than half through the piece the business manager was informed that two of the audience wanted to see him. He at once went down and found an indignant farmer and his wife. "This ain't fair at all, sir," blurted out the old man. "We paid five shillings for our two seats; we've been 'ere for two hours and ain't understood a blooming word; *and Arthur Roberts ain't been on yet!*"

DURING the run of *The Little Minister* at the Haymarket Theatre, everything and everybody was very Scotch, and it was generally agreed

that at the Christmas gathering the bagpipes must be a feature of the entertainment. A piper from the Scots Guards was duly engaged. He strutted about playing some tune which delighted his audience enormously. "But a very old friend of ours," writes Cyril Maude, "then a member of our company, and a keen soldier, was not satisfied. 'Wait a moment, boys,' said he, full of the memory of Dargai, which was uppermost in most men's minds just then, 'I'll get him to play the "Cock o' the North." 'Hear, hear!' came from all sides. Our old friend walked up to the piper and patted him on the shoulder. 'That's very good, my man,' he said, 'but give us a taste of "The Cock o' the North."' The piper's face was a study as he replied: 'Man, a've bin playin' it for the last quarter of an oor.'"

SOME of the old stage directions were truly absurd for their comprehensiveness. Colman the Younger mentions a repentant miser in the fifth act of a play who is directed to "*lean against the wall and grow generous.*"

IT is said that one night when Garrick was performing Macbeth, and the murderer entered the banquet scene, Garrick looked at him with such an expressive countenance, and uttered in such an expressive manner, "*There's blood upon thy face,*" that the actor forgot his part, and rubbed his face, saying: "Is there?" instead of: "*'Tis Banquo's then,*" thinking, as he afterwards acknowledged, that his nose was bleeding.

GARRICK delighted in elaborate practical jokes, which he would plan and carry out with the laborious elaboration of the elder Mathews. The eccentric Dr Monsey was often his butt. One evening when the doctor called, he found Garrick ill in bed, though announced for the part of King Lear. The actor, in feeble and whining tones, explained that he was too ill to act, but that there was a player at the theatre, called Marr, so absurdly like him, and such a mimic, that he had ventured to entrust him with the part, and was certain the audience would not perceive the difference. The other seriously remonstrated with him on the danger of attempting such a trick, the disrepute and the certain ruin that would follow if he were found out. Garrick persisted, and begged the doctor to attend and report the result. On his departure Garrick leaped up, rushed to the theatre, and acted the part. The doctor, bewildered and half doubting, hurried back at the close of the play, only to find the actor in his bed again, though he had not had time to get rid of his Lear's dress.

KEMBLE, on one occasion being interrupted by the crying of a child in the gallery, at last came forward, and in his deep solemn tones addressed the audience: "Ladies and gentlemen, unless the play be stopped, *the child cannot possibly go on.*"

ONE night at a country theatre, Mrs Siddons was "taking the poison" in the last act of some gloomy tragedy, when a boor in the gallery

called out: "*That's right, Molly; soop it oop, ma lass.*"

CHARLES MATHEWS once told the story of a "boots" at a country hotel where he was staying, asking to be paid for going to the theatre. Mathews, struck with the fellow's civility, gave him one evening an order for the play. The following day Mathews said to him: "Well, Tom, did you like the play?" "Oh yes," replied the "boots," in a dubious kind of way, "*but who's to pay me for my time?*"

ONE of the most effective pieces of acting of which there is a record was that of a Spanish actor who threw down a representative of the French monarch, and put his foot upon his neck so naturally that the French ambassador, who was present, jumped upon the stage and paid him the tribute of admiration by running him through with his sword.

"WHEN I was a poor girl," said the late Harriet Duchess of St Albans (who was at one time a poor actress of the name of Mellon), "working very hard for my thirty shillings a week, I went down to Liverpool to perform in a new piece, something like those pretty little affecting dramas they get up now at our minor theatres; and in my character I represented a poor friendless orphan girl, reduced to the most wretched poverty. A heartless tradesman prosecutes the sad heroine for a heavy debt, and insists on putting her in prison, unless someone will be bail for her. The girl replies:

'Then I have no hope: I have not a friend in the world.' 'What! will no one be bail for you to save you from prison?' asks the stern creditor. 'I have told you I have not a friend on earth,' was the reply. But just as I was uttering the words, I saw a sailor in the upper gallery springing over the railing, letting himself down from one tier to another, until he bounded clear over the orchestra and placed himself beside me in a moment. 'Yes, you shall have *one* friend at least, my poor young woman,' said he, with the greatest expression in his honest, sunburnt countenance; 'I will go bail for you to any amount. And as for *you*' (turning to the frightened actor), 'if you don't bear a hand, and shift your moorings, you lubber, it will be the worse for you when I come athwart your bows.' Every creature in the house rose; the uproar was perfectly indescribable; peals of laughter, screams of terror, cheers from his tawny messmates in the gallery, preparatory scrapings of violins from the orchestra, and, amidst the universal din, there stood the unconscious cause of it, sheltering me, 'the poor distressed young woman,' and breathing defiance and destruction against my mimic persecutor. He was only persuaded to relinquish his care of me by the manager pretending to arrive and rescue me, with a profusion of theatrical bank-notes."

ONE night Sarah Bernhardt was playing Fedora to a crowded house. The poison scene, as usual, elicited a tempest of applause from the audience; but ere the clapping of hands and the

stamping of feet had completely died away loud peals of laughter burst forth from the upper part of the theatre. The sober-minded people in the boxes and stalls gazed reproachfully at the boisterous "gods"; but in a moment they too began to laugh, for in the front row of the third gallery, and in full view of all, stood *two one-armed men* who, unconscious of the amusement which they caused, were energetically co-operating to prolong the applause by clapping their remaining hands together.

WILLIAM BENSLEY had to play Henry VI. in *Richard the Third*. After the monarch's death in the early part of the play he had to appear for a moment or two as his own ghost in the fifth act. The spirits were at that time exhibited *en buste* by a trap. Now our Henry was invited out to supper, and being anxious to get there early, and knowing that little more than his shoulders would be seen by the public, he retained his black velvet vest and bugles, but, discarding the lower part of his stage costume, he drew on a jaunty pair of new, tight, nankeen pantaloons, to be as far dressed for his supper company as he could. When he stood on the trap he cautioned the men who turned the crank not to raise him as high as usual, and of course they promised to obey. But a wicked low comedian was at hand, whose love of mischief prevailed over his judgment, and he suddenly applied himself with such good will to the crank that he ran King Henry up right to a level with the stage; and moreover gave his Majesty such a jerk that he was forced to step

from the trap on to the boards to save himself from falling. The sight of the old Lancastrian monarch in a costume of two such different periods—mediæval above and nankeen and novelty below—was destructive of all the decorum both before the stage and on it. The audience emphatically split their sides.

A FRIEND attending on Charles Mathews the Elder, the celebrated comedian, in his last illness, intending to give him some medicine, gave in mistake some ink from a phial on a shelf. On discovering the error his friend exclaimed: "Good heavens! Matthews, I've given you ink!" "Never mind, my boy—never mind," said Matthews faintly; "I'll swallow a bit of *blotting paper.*"

CONGREVE'S brilliant comedy, *The Way of the World*, was heartily hissed on its first performance. The author came forward at the close, and coolly asked the audience: "Is it your intention to damn this play?" "Yes, yes! Off! Off!" were the cries that saluted him. "Then I can tell you," he answered, "this play of mine *will be a living play when you are all dead and damned.*" He then walked slowly away.

ACTORS in their nervousness have sometimes made curious alterations in the text. The best known is the one that was addressed to Hamlet: "Stand back, my lord, and let the parson cough!"

instead of "and let the coffin pass." Charles Kemble fell into one of these mistakes when playing Shylock. Instead of: "Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?" he said: "Shall I lay surgery upon my poll?"

WHEN Sir Charles Sedley's comedy of *Bellamira* was performed, the roof of the theatre fell in, by which, however, few people were hurt, except the author. This occasioned Sir Fleetwood Sheppard to say: "There was so much fire in the play that it blew up the poet, house and all." "No," replied the good-natured author; "the play was so heavy that it broke down the house, and buried the poor poet in his own rubbish."

ONE of the happiest retorts ever made upon a critical assailant by a badgered manager was that given by Mr Edward Henry to the self-sufficient representative of an obscure weekly in Manchester. Mr Henry was at that time the manager of the Queen's Theatre, and on one occasion Byron's *Old Soldiers* was produced by a travelling company. The piece did not please our critic at all. As soon as the act-drop had descended he pounced upon Mr Henry, vented his noble indignation, swore that he would tear the piece to tatters, annihilate its authors, etc., etc. "All right," answered the manager, with the most imperturbable coolness: "We change the bill on Friday, *and your paper does not appear till Saturday.*"

GARRICK was once present with Johnson at the table of a nobleman where, amongst other guests, was one of whose near connections some disgraceful anecdote was then in circulation. It had reached the ears of Johnson, who, after dinner, took an opportunity of relating it, in his most acrimonious manner. Garrick, who sat next to him, pinched his arm, trod upon his toe, and made use of other means to interrupt the thread of his narration; but all was in vain. Johnson proceeded, and when he had finished the story he turned gravely round to Garrick, of whom before he had taken no notice whatever. "Thrice," says he, "Davy, have you trod upon my toe; thrice have you pinched my arm; and now, if what I have related be a falsehood, convict me before this company." Garrick replied not a word, but frequently declared afterwards that he never felt half so much perturbation even when he met "his father's ghost."

ON one occasion when Mrs Billington was singing a passage with an *obbligato* for the trumpet, her husband, who was the conductor, thought the trumpeter might play louder, and so repeatedly urged the musician that at last the Teuton exclaimed: "Louter! louter! eh? Mein Gott! *vere is de vint to come from?*"

GEORGE BARTLEY was a sensible, unaffected actor, without any pretension to genius, but thoroughly dependable to the extent of his talent. When he first joined the Covent Garden Company,

Fawcett was stage manager, and in possession, of course, of all the best parts. One day he sent for Bartley and said: "George, I'm going to give you a chance. *Hamlet* is put up for next week, and you shall play the First Gravedigger. I've plenty to do, and it is but fair to give you a turn." Bartley expressed his gratitude. Fawcett shook hands with him and walked away, muttering to himself, but loud enough for Bartley to hear him: "*There's a wind at night comes up that cursed grave-trap enough to cut one's vitals out.*"

A WAG, seeing a parcel lying on the table in the entrance hall of a theatre, one end of which, from its having travelled to town by the side of some game, was smeared with blood, observed: "That parcel contains a manuscript tragedy"; and on being asked how he knew replied: "Because the *fifth act* is peeping out at one corner of it."

NOT a bad joke was uttered by Madame Vestris to Arnold, who told her that a *ci-devant* tailor had applied to him for an engagement at the English Opera House. "You had better bring him out as *Pantaloon*," said the beauty, laughing.

DR JOHNSON treated Mrs Siddons, who called upon him in Bolt Court, with the most marked politeness. Frank, his servant, could not immediately bring her a chair. "You see, madam," said the Doctor, "wherever you go, *there's not a seat to be had.*"

THE first night of *The Stratford Jubilee* in Dublin Robert Mahon had to sing the song of "Shakespeare's Mulberry Tree," composed by the elder Dibdin, commencing with the words:

"Behold this fair goblet was carved from the tree
Which, oh! my sweet Shakespeare, was planted by thee."

He walked on and began the song holding in his hand a fine cut-glass rummer. The audience looked at this "fair" glass "goblet" "carved from the tree," with much mirth, and soon hisses commenced. When the play was over Mahon had the folly to insist that he was right. "'Tis true," he said, "the property man did stand at the wing with a wooden cup in his hand, which he wanted to thrust into mine; but could I appear before the audience with such a rascally vulgar thing in my hands? No; I insisted he should that instant go and fetch me an elegant glass rummer, and here it is."

AFTER the dreadful accident at Sadler's Wells, in 1807, during the run of *Mother Goose*, when twenty-three people were trodden to death, owing to a false alarm of fire, Joe Grimaldi met with a singular adventure. On running back to the theatre that night, he found the crowd of people collected round it so dense as to render approach by the usual path impossible. Filled with anxiety, and determined to ascertain the real state of the case, he ran round to the opposite bank of the New River, plunged in, swam across and, finding the parlour window open, and a light at the other end of the

room, threw up the sash and jumped in, Harlequin fashion. What was his horror, on looking round, to discover that there lay stretched in the apartment no fewer than *nine dead bodies*. These were the remains of nine human beings, lifeless, and scarcely yet cold, whom a few hours back he had been himself exciting to shouts of laughter.

DURING the run of *The Merchant of Venice* at the Lyceum, Sir Henry Irving drove in a hansom to the theatre, and in a fit of absence of mind one night tendered cabby a shilling for his fare, whereas it should have been eighteenpence or two shillings. Whereupon the cabby, who had recognised the actor, said: "If yer plays the Jew inside that theayter as well as yer does outside, darn'd if I won't spend this bob on coming to see yu." It is said Sir Henry was so pleased with the retort that he promptly gave the man half-a-sovereign.

THERE used to be a little wooden seat which had been let into the proscenium wall of the Lyceum Theatre which afforded an excellent view of the stage from behind. The Chinese ambassador sat there one night during the run of *Hamlet*. When Ellen Terry was in the midst of her mad scene Sir Henry Irving went round to see how his celestial friend was getting on. He was in the act of walking on to the stage—the playing of Miss Terry had affected him so that he was burning to congratulate her on the spot. Irving was only just in time to hold him back; another half foot and he would have made his

first appearance. "I wonder," says Sir Henry, "what the audience would have thought of the entrance of somebody in the most gorgeous of robes, whose name was not on the programme."

"PEOPLE think they see everything on the stage," Ellen Terry once said to an interviewer. "Nothing of the sort. Acting is an art which can show what you want to show, and hide what you want to hide. I remember years ago playing with a well-known actor. He was full of tricks, and was the possessor of a false tooth. In a certain play he was on the stage with me, and I had to sit with my face in full view of the audience. Suddenly, in a most serious part, he pulled out his handkerchief and put it to his mouth. I knew what was coming—I knew it—the false tooth! He dropped something from his handkerchief on the ground at my feet! I trembled—I could scarcely go on. The manager noticed it, and at the conclusion of the scene came up. "Why, what has upset you, Miss Terry?" "I expect I did," said the culprit, who was standing by; "but I think it very hard on me that Miss Terry should be upset only because I let fall—*an acid drop.*"

KEAN, it is well known, was easily upset when acting, even by a trifling noise. Years ago a habit prevailed in a seaport town he visited, among the occupants of the gallery of the theatre, of cracking nuts throughout the performance. This played havoc with Kean when he acted there. On

the following morning he called those who travelled with him together, and after loudly bewailing his sufferings, and anathematising the gallery boys, gave instructions to his followers to go into the town and buy up every nut within its walls, either in the shops or on the quays. This was done. The result for the two following evenings was perfect success, crowned by the chuckles of the tragedian; but oh! the third night! The fruiterers, perplexed by the sudden and unaccountable demand for nuts, had sent to Covent Garden and other sources for a plentiful supply to meet its hoped-for continuance; the demand fell off, there was a glut in the local market, the nuts so deluged the town that they were sold more abundantly, and cheaper than ever. Crack! crack! crack! was the running fire throughout the succeeding performances, and the rest of Kean's engagement was fulfilled in torment.

WHEN H. J. Byron's play, *Dearer than Life*, was produced at the Queen's Theatre in Long Acre, all had gone well with it until the end of the second act, after which there was a very long delay. The audience grew more and more impatient, the band played waltz after waltz; still the curtain was not taken up. Byron was walking uneasily up and down the corridor at the back of the dress circle, chafing over the mishap, and tugging, as he always did when agitated, at one side of his moustache, when a friendly critic, almost as anxious as himself, came up to him and said: "What, in the name of goodness, are they doing?" "I don't know,"

moaned Byron. At that moment the distinct sound of a saw hard at work behind the scenes was heard above the uproar: *saw, saw, saw!* "What are they doing now, my dear Byron?" "I think they must be *cutting out the last act*," was the author's witty retort.

WHEN walking, H. J. Byron was in the habit of suddenly stopping in the street, and committing to paper any idea that occurred to him in connection with one of his plays. On one occasion, Mrs Bancroft tells us, he was jotting down an important inspiration, leaning heavily against the hall door of a house in the neighbourhood of Doughty Street, where he lived, when suddenly it was opened by an elderly lady, who was coming out. Byron fell into the hall, upsetting the lady, who, alarmed, screamed loudly. Byron laughed to such a degree that he couldn't get up, while Mrs Byron stood on the doorstep, trying to explain and apologise; but the lady, when she recovered herself, exclaimed: "Take him away, ma'am, to some asylum!" The more Byron tried to apologise the less able he became to do so, for the sight of the elderly lady, with her bonnet on one side, her bag and umbrella on the mat, and her eyes starting from her head with fright, sent him off into a kind of hysterics. He laughed uproariously whenever he related this tale.

AN amusing story was told to Mrs Bancroft by Madame Goldschmidt—better known as Jenny Lind. The incident occurred during one of

the provincial tours of the great "Swedish Nightingale" and her operatic company. The tenor of the troupe stammered so painfully that it was often very difficult to follow him, or to even guess his meaning, although when he sang not a trace of his affliction could be observed.

One day they were about to start by train from one town for the next place on their list, where they had to appear on the same evening. They were all, except the tenor, seated in the railway carriage, when suddenly the afflicted member of the company discovered, on looking into the luggage-van, that a certain black box which carried the important part of their wardrobe had been left behind. The train was on the point of starting as the tenor, in a terrible state of excitement and anxiety, rushed up to the carriage where the others were seated and stammered out:

TENOR. "The b—b—b——"

BARITONE. "What's the matter?"

TENOR. "The b—b—b——"

BASSO. "What is it, my dear fellow; what is it?"

TENOR. "The bl—bl—bl—bl——"

BARITONE. "*Sing it*, man; *sing it*, for mercy's sake!"

TENOR (*in recitative*). "All, I fear, is lost!"

BASSO (*shouting*). "*What's* lost?"

TENOR. "I fe-ar—is lost!"

BARITONE (*getting nervous*). "What do you mean, man? Go on!"

TENOR. "The black box!"

BASSO. "Yes—yes!"

TENOR. "The black box!"

BARITONE. "What of it, man—what of it?"

TENOR. "The black box has been for—got—t—en!"

ALL THE COMPANY (*jumping out*). "Oh, my goodness! We shall have no clothes!"

PHELPS used to tell the following story of an amusing contretemps which happened when he was playing Virginius in the old Sadler's Wells days. It happened on one occasion that the "super master," who acts as the leader of crowds, had met with an accident, and could not therefore fulfil his duties as First Citizen in the forum scene, where Appius Claudius claims Virginia from her father. So the little part which leads the chorus of voices was given to the man who was second in command. As the time grew near he became very anxious and nervous, although the stage manager had gone through the words with him several times. The scene in the tragedy where Virginius appeals to the crowd for their support against the demand of the tyrant Appius Claudius is as follows:—

VIRGINIUS. "Friends and citizens, your hands, your hands——"

CROWD. "They are yours, Virginius; they are yours."

VIRGINIUS. "If ye have wives—if ye have children——"

CROWD. "We have, Virginius; we have."

But the poor nervous man, in his fright, put the cart before the horse, and the dialogue ran thus:

VIRGINIUS. "Your hands—your hands——"

CITIZEN. "We have, Virginius; we have——"

VIRGINIUS. "If ye have wives—if ye have children——"

CITIZEN. "They are *yours*, Virginius; they are *yours*!"

MACREADY, when playing Hamlet in a country theatre had occasion to severely find fault during rehearsals with the actor—a local favourite—who took the part of the King. His Majesty determined at night to be revenged upon the great man by reeling, when stabbed by Hamlet, to the centre of the stage (instead of remaining at the back), and falling dead upon the very spot Macready had reserved for his own final acting before he expired in Horatio's arms. Macready groaned and grunted: "Die farther up the stage, sir." "What are you doing down here, sir?" "Get up and die elsewhere, sir," when, to the amazement of the audience, the King sat bolt upright upon the stage, and said: "Look here, Mr Macready, you had your way at rehearsal, but *I'm King now, and I shall die where I please.*"

A COMICAL incident occurred one night at the Haymarket Theatre during the production by Beerbohm Tree of *Henry IV*. As most of us know, one of the scenes ends with the stage being strewn with dead soldiers. On one occasion some of the scene shifters, who were in the flies, having to walk across a beam to get to their places, managed to

knock off a quantity of dust in passing. The dust fell upon the faces of the annihilated warriors, more than one of whom promptly began to sneeze. The effect of the scene for the one night was irretrievably ruined.

CYRIL MAUDE tells a good story about Henry Kemble in his delightful book: "The Haymarket Theatre." Kemble, George Giddens and Maude went one autumn to fish in Shetland. Among the people staying at the hotel with them was a man who took the greatest interest in all their doings, and especially Kemble. At last one day he managed to get into conversation with Maude, and questioned him eagerly about his friends. "And who," he asked, "is that stout gentleman?" "Mr Henry Kemble," replied Maude. "Ah! I thought I knew his face," was the reply. "How stupid of me; of course, he was Cissie in last year's pantomime at Drury Lane." He had mistaken Kemble for that other clever comedian, Mr Herbert Campbell.

SOTHERN, when starring in the country, was invited by the officers of some garrison to dine at their mess. After dinner they asked him to give them his famous drunken scene from *David Garrick*. As they would accept no excuses, Sothern at last consented, and gave the scene faithfully, at the same time conveying a well-deserved lesson. At the close of the scene the actor, according to stage directions, on leaving, drags down a curtain. On this occasion Sothern, affecting to be carried away

by his impersonation, caught hold of the tablecloth, and with one vigorous jerk swept off plates, glasses, bottles and decanters in one collective ruin.

IT was formerly customary to make the Grave-digger in *Hamlet* a comic character, and all sorts of tricks were effected for that purpose. Among other comicalities, it was held sacred that he should wear an indefinite number of waistcoats. Paul Bedford in his Reminiscences relates how he acted once at Nottingham. Edward Wright was the First Gravedigger, Paul the second. The First Grave-digger prepared himself to take the town by storm by having encased his person within a dozen waist-coats of all sorts of shapes and patterns. When about to commence the operation of digging the grave for the fair Ophelia, the chief began to unwind by taking off waistcoat after waistcoat, which caused uproarious laughter among the audience. But as the chief digger relieved himself of one waistcoat, Paul, the boy digger, encased himself in the cast-off vests; which increased the salvos of laughter, for, as No. 1 became thinner, No. 2 grew fatter and fatter. Wright, seeing himself undone, kept on the remainder of the waistcoats, and commenced digging Ophelia's grave.

TONY LEE, a player in Charles II.'s reign, having a violent cold, could not forbear coughing as he lay dead upon the stage, having been killed in a tragedy. This occasioned a great deal of noise and laughter in the house. Tony waggishly

lifted up his head and, addressing the audience, said: "This makes good what my poor mother used to tell me; for she would often say that I should cough in my grave, because I used to drink with my porridge." This set the house in such good humour that it produced a thundering round of applause, and made everyone pardon the solecism he had committed.

QUIN'S jests were of the roughest kind. Once at Epsom races he was required to share his bedroom with a clergyman. When the latter was getting into bed, Quin noticed that his linen was not over-clean, and cried out: "What, parson, *are you coming to bed in your cassock*?"

SAILORS are generally hearty patrons of the drama. Stephen Kemble used to narrate that when he was manager at Portsmouth, where "business" was so indifferent that the theatre could be opened only once or twice in the week, he was waited on by a sailor, with a request that he would open the house for him, "for," he added, "I sail to-morrow, and God knows if I shall ever see a play again!" The cost, he was told, would be five guineas, which he cheerfully paid, insisting, however, that no one was to see the performance but himself. He selected *Richard the Third*. The house was duly lit, while the sailor took up his position in the front row of the pit, and laughed and applauded at intervals. At the end he thanked the manager cordially for the entertainment, and took his leave.

BARRY was in no part so eminent as in Romeo. At the time when he attracted the town to Covent Garden by his admirable delineation of the character, Garrick found it absolutely necessary to perform himself as Romeo at Drury Lane, in order to obtain at least some share in the attention of the public, and to divert into his own coffers a driblet of the stream of gold which was flowing into the treasury of the rival house. Garrick, however, wanted the physical advantages of Barry, and, great as he was, would perhaps have willingly avoided such a competition. This at least seems to have been the prevailing opinion; for, in the garden scene, when Juliet exclaims: "O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?" an auditor in the pit archly gave the explanation of this fact by replying: "*Because Barry has gone to the other house.*"

DICKENS used to relate with much humour a little scene he witnessed at the Rochester Theatre. An actor had forgotten his part, and could not get the prompter to give him the "word." After many adjurations, and the usual appeals to his own invention, he assumed a tragic attitude, and addressing his companion on the stage with: "*I will return anon,*" stalked off the stage to seek the neglectful prompter.

LITTLE Edward Knight, passing the evening among some friends in the city, was requested in his turn to favour the company with a song. He politely declined, alleging that he was so indifferent

a performer that any attempt of his would rather weary than entertain. One of the company, however, insisted that Knight had a good voice, and said that he had frequently had the pleasure of hearing him sing at the Drury Lane Theatre. "That may be," replied the witty comedian; "but as I am not a freeman *I have no voice in the City.*"

MACKLIN, when sitting at the back of the boxes, was prevented from seeing the stage by a gentleman who stood up in front. He tapped him with his stick on the shoulder, and addressed him with the most studious politeness: "When anything entertaining occurs on the stage, perhaps you would let me and my friend know; for you see, my dear sir, that at present *we must totally depend upon your kindness.*"

COLMAN THE ELDER and Harris had a quarrel at Covent Garden Theatre one day, when Billy Bates was standing by. Colman, disdaining a war of words, walked out of the house; and Harris, bouncing about the stage, exclaimed: "A little impudent rascal! I'd a good mind to double him up, and put him in my pocket." "Then," quietly observed Bates, "you'd have more wit in your pocket than you ever had in your head, a great deal."

WHEN Mrs Siddons was playing Mrs Beverley at Bath, the theatre was hushed into the most sympathetic stillness. Her whispers were eagerly caught, and, according to the well-known expression,

a pin might have been heard to drop. Suddenly a little Jew started up in the pit and called out angrily : "*My Got ! who dat sphit in my eye ?*"

DURING his first success at Drury Lane, Kean overheard a group of old stage carpenters discussing the various performers of Hamlet they had seen in their day. "Well," said one, "you may talk of Henderson and Kemble, and this new man, but give me Bannister's Hamlet. *He was always done twenty minutes sooner than any of 'em.*"

THE father of Grimaldi, the famous clown, who was living near Red Lion Square, was visited during the famous Gordon Riots by an uproarious mob, who assumed that, as a foreigner, he belonged to the obnoxious faith, his hall door not being chalked with the words "No Popery." The shout "No Popery !" was raised, and they were preparing to sack the house, when Grimaldi suddenly threw up the second-floor window, and making comic grimaces addressed them : "Gentlemen, in dis hose dere be *no releegion at all* !" This happy speech produced roars of laughter, and the mob passed on, giving him three cheers.

WHEN performing at a theatre in Ireland, Cooke had some quarrel with an actor of the company. Before going on as Hamlet, he was seen sharpening his sword in the green-room, and was heard to say : "I and Mr Laertes will settle our

little dispute to-night." As he was known to be violent and unscrupulous, this news alarmed the intended victim, who, at the very commencement of the fencing match, flung himself on Hamlet, and seizing him by the collar threw him down on his back, and kept him there until he had given a solemn but *sotto voce* assurance that he would do no mischief.

A MANAGER of a small Welsh theatre had lost his wife, and showed much grief on the occasion. With a view to pay her all respect at the dismal procession to the grave, he requested that the members of the company would all attend in proper mourning. They repaired to the house on the morning of the funeral, and found him struggling with his tears, but still, with the instinct of his office, giving suitable directions, appointing to each his partner in the mournful procession, and, as it occurred to some present, with the same intelligence and prevision that he brought to more cheerful arrangements upon his stage. When all was ready to start, a question suddenly arose. Who was to follow immediately after the chief mourner? No one was eager to take this place, and it was at last, to prevent confusion, submitted to him. He gazed distressfully at his interrogator, his eyes streaming with tears, for he had really thought that, having done with business, he might now indulge his grief; but in a moment the manager asserted himself, and he answered with professional decision: "*Oh, the tragedy people first, by all means.*"

GARRICK was once on a visit at Mr Rigby's seat, Mistley Hall, Essex, when Dr Gough formed one of the party. Observing the potent appetite of the learned doctor, Garrick indulged in some unbecoming jests on the occasion, to the great amusement of some of the company. When the laugh had subsided the butt of Garrick's wit thus addressed the party: "Gentlemen, you must doubtless suppose, from the extreme familiarity with which Mr Garrick thought fit to treat me, that I am an acquaintance of his; but I can assure you that, till I met him here, I never saw him but once before, and then *I paid five shillings for the sight.*" No more jokes from Mr Garrick that night!

THE manager of a Berlin theatre got up a drama in which a human head was to be offered to a tyrant. In order to produce as much effect as possible, he resolved to use a human head. On the stage was placed a table covered with a cloth. On the table was a basin, and an actor, concealed under the cloth, poked up his head through a hole in the table, so as to seem to be placed in the basin. The effect was prodigious; the audience applauded and trembled. Unluckily a wag, who had been strolling about the stage, had sprinkled a spoonful of snuff on the basin, and just as the tyrant finished his address to the severed head of his enemy the head replied by a hearty fit of sneezing, changing the audience "from grave to gay" in an instant.

BANNISTER used to tell a story of his having been introduced, with Mrs Bannister, to an elderly lady of exceeding "high notions." After

the presentation had taken place, the lady asked a wit of the day who was present: "Who are the Bannisters? Are they of good family?" "Yes," replied the wit, "very good indeed: they are closely allied with the Stairs." "Oh!" said Lady Lucretia, "a very ancient family from Ayrshire, dates back to 1460; *I am delighted to see your friends.*"

TOOLE tells an amusing story of an attempt to charm Sims Reeves with his own songs. It was at St Anne's, near Blackpool. Sims Reeves was staying there, and Toole called at his hotel to see him. Finding he had gone out for a stroll, Toole strutted out to try to meet him. "Under a shady tree, comfortably seated with a newspaper," says Toole, "I saw my friend. He did not see me. I went quietly behind him, and gave him a snatch of 'My Pretty Jane,' rendered as lovingly as possible, after his most delicate manner. No response. So I thought I would rouse him up, and I began with an imitation of his *forte* style, 'Twas in Trafalgar Bay.' I had not finished when he turned round with much amazement expressed upon his features, and—*it was not Sims Reeves!*"

WHILST Kean was manager of the Princess's, Mr Boucicault produced a drama entitled *The Vampire.* The opening scene represented the highest regions of the Alps by moonlight, whilst a storm of thunder and lightning was raging. The Vampire (Boucicault) is seen lying dead on a mountain peak, and as the ray of the moon touches

his body he returns to life. The thunderclaps were produced at given signals by the carpenter up in the flies. One night in the height of the season a tremendous clap startled the audience, and interrupted the Vampire in the middle of a speech. "Very well, Mr Davids," said he, looking up at the flies, in a voice to be heard by the thunderer, but not by the audience; "you are making more mistakes; that clap of thunder came in the wrong place." Davids, bawling to the monster, replied: "No fault of mine, sir; it wasn't my thunder. *Thunder's real out of doors; perhaps you can stop it there.*"

WHEN George Daniel of Canonbury, the book and print collector, went to look over the curiosities of the elder Mathews at Highgate, almost every time the actor showed him, as he thought, some unique volume or engraving, Daniel cried out: "Ay, ay! Very rare, very valuable! But I have a duplicate of it in my library." At last Mathews, getting out of patience, exclaimed: "Why, damn you, you have got duplicates of everything I have, excepting my game leg; *I wish you'd got one of that.*"

KEMBLE would correct anybody at any time and in any place. Charles Mathews was once performing privately before the King, who was much pleased with his imitation of Kemble and said: "I liked Kemble very much. He was one of my earliest friends. I remember once he was talking, and found himself out of snuff. I offered him my box. He declined taking any—'he, a poor actor,

could not put his fingers into a royal box.' I said: 'Take some, pray, you will ob*leege* me.' Upon which Kemble replied: 'It would become your royal mouth better to say ob*lige* me,' and took a pinch."

STEPHEN KEMBLE, the brother of John, was so stout that he could play Falstaff without "stuffing." He was no genius, though he played Falstaff and Lear tolerably, and also Richard the Third. In the latter play he once involved himself in an unforeseen dilemma. Having knelt to Lady Anne to declare his love, he found himself fixed to the floor by dint of his own gravitation. In this difficulty he was compelled to lay aside the tyrant and sue to his victim for help. "*Help me up, help me up!*" he exclaimed, in tones painfully energetic; and it became the Christian duty of the offended Lady Anne to set her crooked-back lover on his legs again.

HAYDN the composer was a great admirer of the silver-toned Mrs Billington. When Sir Joshua Reynolds showed him his celebrated picture of this lady, where she is represented as St Cecilia listening to the heavenly choir, he observed: "It is a very fine likeness, but there is a strange mistake in the picture. You have painted her listening to the angels; you ought to have represented the angels listening to *her*."

MADAME CATALANI having been engaged at Covent Garden Theatre, Mr Harris, the manager, determined that she should make her first appearance in *The Free Knights*. The O.P. riots

were at that time at their worst, and the celebrated artist was informed that on the first night of her appearance she would probably be pelted with apples. "Ah, mon Dieu, sare!" she exclaimed with the greatest earnestness; "I 'ope dey vil be *roasted*!"

ON the 12th of April 1819 the tragedy of *The Italians*, by Charles Bucke—a piece damned off-hand on the first night—was placed upon the boards for the second and last time. The galleries were all but deserted, the boxes and dress circle in as sorry a condition, and the pit about half full of people, who appeared to have come to enjoy an anticipated "row." The management, dispirited by the inauspicious aspect of affairs, brought the play to an abrupt termination with the third act. The groundlings declared that, having paid their money, they were determined to see the piece throughout. Thereupon Stephen Kemble released the hose from its privacy, carried it up into the gallery, and deluged the refractory playgoers with copious streams of water. Another moment, and a number of umbrellas were put up by way of protection, and the picture presented by the rushing water, the flapping umbrellas, and the noisy cries and gesticulations of the audience was most comical. More reasonable means eventually prevailed, and the solitary and dripping few turned their backs to the stage.

MISS HENRIETTA HODSON tells an excellent story about the manner in which she once, when in her teens, assisted in killing and murdering *Hamlet*. The troupe was a strolling

company, under the management of Mrs Glover; and the theatre a railway arch, without scenery, in a small town in Scotland. For Miss Hodson's benefit *Hamlet* was given, the *beneficiare* having to impersonate Ophelia and, in the last act, Osric. As no Ophelia can be mad in anything but a white dress, and Miss Hodson was not possessed of such an article, a table-cloth over a white petticoat was made to do duty for the dress in the mad scene; and by means of a sword belt buckled round the waist the same garment might be transformed into a tunic for Osric. Unfortunately, when all was settled, Hamlet had one of those sudden indispositions to which the children of Thespis are so frequently subject. In this emergency Hamlet's landlord—a tall, raw-boned Scotsman, who knew the part—volunteered to impersonate the Prince of Denmark. Among jokes of the audience, who recognised the volunteer Hamlet, all went off pretty well. But, alas! when Osric was fighting the duel with Hamlet the treacherous belt gave way, and all at once the young prince stood before the audience in the drapery of the mad Ophelia. After this it was impossible to finish the piece, and to conciliate the audience a Scotch reel, in which all the members of the company took part, was substituted for the tragic termination penned by Shakespeare.

WHEN the Cato Street conspirators were to be executed Kean sat up all night in a room opposite the debtors' door of the Old Bailey to get a full view of the proceedings. The next morning he watched the sickening performance with the

greatest attention, and as he was going on the stage in the evening, to act in a part in which he had to die, he observed: "I mean to die like Thistlewood to-night; I'll imitate every muscle of that man's countenance."

AT a representation of *King Lear*, whilst Garrick, in the last act, was melting in tears over the dead body of Cordelia, his face all at once assumed an expression of merriment quite foreign to the part he was playing. At the same time Edgar and the officers were seen to make unsuccessful attempts to repress laughter; even Cordelia re-opened her eyes, and burst out in an uncontrollable fit of merriment. The audience thought that all of them had gone mad. Was

> "This the promised end?
> Or image of that horror?"

But soon the innocent cause of this merry conclusion became apparent. On the front seat of the pit sat a stout butcher, accompanied by his bulldog. Leaning far back in his seat, the man had placed the dog between his legs, and the animal, seeing the bustle on the boards, stood erect on his hind legs, leaning his paws on the railing which divided the stage from the pit. It was a very hot evening, and the butcher, in order to wipe his head, had taken off his wig and placed it on the head of his bulldog. In this posture, and with this attire, the dog stood looking earnestly and fixedly at the actors, and had

caught Garrick's eye. The scene proved so irresistible that Lear forgot his sorrows and laughed outright; and instead of ending with a dead march the tragedy concluded with roars of laughter.

ELLISTON, in his younger days, once took Buxton in his tour. The theatre there, at that time, was one of those wretched little buildings, resembling the Globe of Shakespeare's days, open to the sky, and devoid of every theatrical appointment. The play acted was Tobin's *Honeymoon*, in which he took his favourite part of the Duke of Aranza. All went on amazingly well, considering the circumstances, until the scene with the "mock Duke" in the fourth act. Here, Jacques is discovered sitting in a large arm-chair, which, to give it dignity, had been covered over with an old curtain. On rising from his seat, the hilt of the Duke's sword most inopportunely got entangled in one of the sundry holes of the loose coverlet, which, on the actor walking towards the front of the stage, "like a wounded snake dragged its slow length along." This certainly provoked something more than a smile; but it so happened that the chair in question had been borrowed for the occasion from a neighbouring inn, and *being originally fashioned for the incidental purposes of a sick-room*, its available conversion was so palpably disclosed to the whole body of spectators that the people absolutely screamed with laughter—in fact, they laughed for a whole week afterwards.

DURING a provincial tour, Sir Herbert Tree was playing in Dublin to small audiences, while another theatre was full to overflowing, the attraction there being a bouncing and voluptuous woman who was more than generous in the display of her person. "What's the use?" sighed Tree. "*How can Art ever compete with Nature.*"

WHEN Tree was touring America in *The Seats of the Mighty* the author, Mr Parker, took him to see Niagara Falls, and so arranged it that the first view should be as impressive as possible. He watched closely and eagerly, expecting an outburst of awe and rapture over the sublimity of the spectacle, but he was dumbfounded when no emotion whatever appeared in Tree's face. "Well?" said Parker. "Well," said Tree, "*is that all?*"

IN 1862 the pantomime *Harlequin Bluebeard* was produced at Drury Lane Theatre. The hero of the piece, in the character of a pasha, rode in procession on a large elephant. This specimen of natural history had not been borrowed from the Zoological Gardens, but issued from that wonderful laboratory, the stage machinist's workshop. The body was of basket-work, the legs canvas, the feet and head modelled, the tusks wood, the trunk and tail wire-work—all covered with painted canvas. To give this creature life and motion, a man was placed in each of the legs. On one occasion the internal structure of the near hind leg had been drinking, and entered his leg in a very quarrelsome

disposition, talking of fighting the off fore leg for some affront. The march commenced; the elephant moved, but evidently badly lame in the near hind leg, which dragged along in a shaky and sleepy manner. In vain did the other legs remonstrate, the near hind leg would not stir. In an unfortunate moment of over-zealousness, off hind leg kicks the irritable near hind, which retaliates, and is heard to swear from his cavernous enclosure that he'll "punch 'is bloomin' 'ead." Fore legs join in the fray, and a general kicking ensues. Bluebeard's position on the undulating mass is anything but pleasant, and ends in a fall. Wild yells of laughter greet the catastrophe, in the midst of which the elephant topples over, and the four legs conglomerate in a free fight. Here was burlesque with a vengeance. It could go no further, so the manager wisely discharged the legs, and in the future substituted a palanquin for the elephant.

CHARLES MATHEWS used to tell a good story in support of the truth of the remark anent a Scotsman, a joke and a surgical operation. When "starring" in Edinburgh, his landlord, who seldom attended any other public meeting save the "kirk," asked Mathews if he would oblige him with "a pass for the playhoose." This favour being readily granted, the "guid mon" donned his cheerful black suit and witnessed Mathews' two great performances: Sir Charles Coldstream in *Used Up*, and Plumper in *Cool as a Cucumber*, both downright "side-splitters." Meeting his landlord on the stairs, as he proceeded to his own room after the performance,

Mathews was cordially greeted by that gentleman, of whom he then inquired how he had enjoyed the entertainment. "Aweel," said the northerner, "it pleased me vera much, ye ken, and I conseeder you played unco' naturally; but, heigh, mon, *I'd a hard matter to keep frae laughing.*"

THERE was a scene in the comedy *Tragaldabas* in which Frédéric Lemaitre had to drink a bottle of champagne; but, as dramatic companies can scarcely afford to treat their members to a bottle of Epernay, it was customary to substitute some other sparkling beverage. One evening Lemaitre put the glass to his lips and, making a horrible grimace, exclaimed: "Call the manager; tell him I want to speak to him." General commotion, in the midst of which the manager makes his appearance. "Come forward," said Frédéric gravely. "What do you mean by this untimely hoax, sir? Do you think I feel inclined to be your accomplice in deceiving the public?" "*I!*" exclaimed the dumbfounded manager. "*You* sir—*you.*" Then, turning to the pit, Frédéric added: "Gentlemen, you think that I am drinking champagne, but it is nothing of the kind; it is simply seltzer water!" The public, amused at the actor's impudence, loudly cheered and applauded his sally; whilst the manager exclaimed: "It is a mistake, Mr Frédéric—a pure mistake, on my honour. You shall have a bottle of champagne directly." Whilst waiting for his real champagne, Frédéric whiled away the time by making a

speech to the pit concerning seltzer water, and the general want of honesty in managers.

CATALANI was very fond of money, and would never sing unless paid beforehand. She was invited with her husband to pass some time at Stowe, where a numerous but select party had been invited, and Madame Catalani being asked to sing soon after dinner willingly complied. When the day of her departure came, her husband placed in the hands of the Marquis of Buckingham the following little billet :—

"*For seventeen songs, seventeen hundred pounds.*"

This large sum was paid without hesitation, proving that Lord Buckingham was a refined gentleman in every sense of the word.

AN Edinburgh tradition tells of an actor-manager who, when going on in a particular situation of great excitement, used to work himself up by kicking the property man, it being understood that he should afterwards apologise, and give the fellow a shilling. One night, when the house was very bad, the property man planted himself at the wing to receive the accustomed kicking, but the canny actor-manager restrained himself, saying, as he passed him by : "Not to-night, Barkins ; *the treasury won't stand it.*"

A BLASÉ young Englishman, after a tour round the world, returned to London, and was asked by a younger friend to go with him to the theatre to see *Hamlet.* At first he declined, alleging that he

took no interest in Shakespeare, but was ultimately persuaded to go. Towards the end of the play, when the burial scene was being enacted, the younger man proposed to leave, while the other requested him to remain. On this the former said: "I thought you told me that you did not care for Shakespeare?" "True," he replied; "but this reminds me that in former days *I used always to drive home with Ophelia while the burying was going on.*"

MANY years ago (writes George Seton in his "Budget of Anecdotes") the following startling incident occurred in a caravan attached to a travelling circus in an English town. On a low shelf, imaginatively called a bed, there reclined the pallid form of a dying woman, young and good-looking, who during the performance of the previous evening had come heavily to the ground in leaping through a hoop on a horse's back. Overhearing the hearty peals of laughter through the frail partition which separated her from the "ring," she was told, in reply to her inquiry, that they were caused by the witty sallies of her husband, the favourite clown, who shortly afterwards entered the little chamber of death, and had an affecting conversation with his sinking wife. Seated by the bedside was their innocent child, a girl of about five years of age, who had just been performing the part of a fairy, her wand still in her hand, and the gauze wings on her shoulders. After a brief interval the poor clown had to respond to a call from the master of the ring, as soon as he had painted out with a piece of chalk the traces of

tears upon his cheeks, in front of a broken looking-glass. During his absence the doctor arrived, and in the course of a few minutes the anxious husband again returned, breathless from a concluding somersault, only to find his poor wife a lifeless corpse, after a premature delivery. A strange pair they looked—*he*, fresh from the plaudits of a delighted audience, in the paint and motley of his calling—*she*, the sharer of his cares and joys, with hollow sunken eyes and fallen jaw, beyond the reach of sorrow and suffering. Kissing the cold lips with frantic earnestness, "Dead—dead—dead!" was all that the wretched man was able to mutter between his choking sobs. While in this pitiful condition, he was *again* called upon by the excited spectators to appear, and after being sorely pressed by the master of the ring, and fortified by a stimulating draught, he re-entered the arena, where he never before showed more wit or agility, and at length left the ring amidst deafening applause. "Well, my dears," said the doctor to his children at the supper-table, "how did you like the circus?" "Oh! we didn't see the Queen, father. The man in the ring said she was unwell, but would be there to-morrow; and the clown was so good in the scene with the savage." "Do you know *why* you didn't see the Queen?" inquired the doctor. "No," said the children. "Well then I'll tell you—because she was *dead*! The clown was her husband; I left him kissing her cold lips, and I daresay he is there now. It is a strange world; such a sight as that I never saw before, and hope never to see again."

DR ABERNETHY was once consulted by a patient in very low spirits, who, after recounting all his distressing symptoms, anxiously asked the skilful doctor what he would advise him to do. "Go and see Grimaldi," was the reply; on which the poor hypochondriac sorrowfully rejoined: "*I myself am he.*"

MADAME MODJESKA, the Polish actress, was asked in a large London drawing-room to recite a poem in her own language. "But," said she, "you will not understand me, and I like to be understood." The company insisted so much that she at last yielded, and striking a tragic posture recited something in Polish. The hostess and her guests were lost in admiration. Next day everybody knew that Madame Modjeska had given them as a recitation *the numeral adjectives from one to a hundred.*

IT is the custom in country theatres, when a military play is acted, and men are required on the stage as soldiers, for the colonel of the regiment then quartered in the town to lend a certain number of his men to the manager, who were glad for good conduct to add a little money to their pay. On a certain occasion of the kind, the regiment was an Irish one. At the end of the act a decisive battle was fought between the two armies. The soldiers were represented on one side by men attached to the theatre, and on the other by regulars from the garrison. One of the performances was a "bespeak"

night, and "under the patronage of the colonel and officers of the regiment," all of whom were present. Everything went well up to the battle scene, when the signal was given for the fight to cease, and for the regulars, who personated the beaten foe, to retreat. But on this eventful evening they took no notice. They still fought on, in terrible earnest, and punished their opponents so unmercifully that at last they threw down their arms, and used their fists instead. The result was a real all-round scrimmage. Actors concerned in the scene shouted to the men to retreat as they had done quietly night after night, but in vain. Eventually the curtain had to be dropped on the conflict; when the manager, who made an angry appearance on the stage, furiously asked the men: "What does all this mean? Why didn't you retreat?" One of the soldiers, a sergeant, with his face much damaged, replied indignantly: "Is it retrate you'd have us, *with the colonel in front*? Devil a bit!"

STRAKOSCH, the impresario, relates that Adelina Patti, at the time he first brought her out as an "infant prodigy" in the United States, had a very distinct notion of her own value. It was yet too early to stipulate for extravagant pay, but every time she appeared in public she fixed upon the precise kind of toy or present she was to receive for her trouble. One evening when Strakosch had got up a concert at Cincinnati, he suddenly remembered that he had forgotten to buy the doll the child had asked him to get for her.

"Very well," said the little artiste, "then I won't sing!"

"But the house is full, the people are waiting."

"No matter, I must have my doll before I go on the stage."

"But you shall have it to-morrow—a real nice one!"

"No—I want it at once."

The audience was growing impatient. The manager, exasperated, was compelled to rush off in quest of the doll. The shops were closed. What was to be done? Meantime, little Adelina, heedless of all pressing entreaties, sat in the green-room, serenely indifferent to the flutter and excitement around her. At last Strakosch induced a toy-dealer to open his shop, and, running off with the handsomest doll he could find, he threw it at the feet of the little songstress of ten summers, who at once tripped on the stage, and sent the audience into raptures. "Ah! she'll look sharp after the money some day!" exclaimed the irate manager, behind the scenes.

ONE night during an engagement, the evening being hot, Mrs Siddons was tempted by a torturing thirst to avail herself of the only relief to be obtained at the moment. Her dresser, therefore, despatched a boy in great haste to "fetch a pint of beer for Mrs Siddons." Meanwhile the play proceeded, and on the boy's return with the frothed pitcher he looked about for the person who had sent him on his errand, and not seeing her inquired: "Where is Mrs Siddons?" The scene-shifter whom

he questioned, pointing his finger to the stage where she was performing the sleeping scene of Lady Macbeth, replied: "There she is." To the horror of the performers, the boy promptly walked on to the stage, close up to Mrs Siddons, and with a total unconsciousness of any impropriety presented the porter! Her distress may be imagined; she waved the boy away, in her grand manner, several times without effect. At last the people behind the scenes, by dint of beckoning, stamping, etc., succeeded in getting him off with the beer, while the audience was in an uproar of laughter, which the dignity of the actress was unable to quell for several minutes.

THE public once took exception to Mrs Farrel's impersonation of Laïra, the heroine of *The Mourning Bride*, especially in the dying scene. The moribund thereupon rose from the spot chosen to give up her breath, and, advancing towards the footlights, said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I am very sorry to have incurred your displeasure, but, having accepted the part only to oblige a friend, I hope you will kindly excuse me." After this little dying speech, she returned to the spot, assumed once more a recumbent position, finished dying, and the attendants covered her with a black veil.

WHEN Foote was acting in Dublin he introduced into one of his pieces, called *The Orator*, the character of George Faulkner, the well-known printer, whose manner and dress he so closely imitated that the poor fellow could not appear in

public without meeting with scoffs and jeers from the boys in the streets. Enraged at the ridicule thus brought upon him, Faulkner one evening treated to the seats of the gods all the devils of his printing office, for the express purpose of their hissing and hooting Foote off the stage. Faulkner seated himself in the pit, to enjoy the actor's degradation, but when the objectionable scene came on, the unfortunate printer was chagrined to find that, so far from a groan or a hiss being heard, his gallery friends joined in the general laughter. The next morning he arraigned his inky conclave, inveighed against them for having disobeyed his injunctions; and on demanding the reason for their treachery was lacerated ten times deeper by the simplicity of their answer. "Arragh, master," said the spokesman, "do we not know you? 'Twas your own sweet self was on the stage, and shower light upon us if we go to the playhouse to hiss our worthy master." Failing in this experiment, Faulkner commenced an action against Foote, and got a verdict of damages to the tune of three hundred pounds. This drove Foote back to England, where he resumed his mimicry, and consoled himself by humorously taking off the lawyers on his trial, and the judges who condemned him.

THERE was dignity in J. R. Kemble's rebuke to an aristocratic play-writer, the Hon. Mr St John, who had written one of the innumerable Mary Queen of Scots plays, and had an interview with the manager in the green-room, when his play was

refused. High words followed. "You are a person I cannot call out," said St John contemptuously. "But you are a person I can *turn out*," was the ready reply, "and you shall leave this place at once." The offender had the good sense to return and apologise.

MRS JORDAN, having reasons for complaint against her Irish cook, one morning summoned the professor of gastronomy to her presence, paid her a month's wages, and discharged her. The *cordon bleu* was offended at such an unceremonious dismissal, and indignantly taking up a shilling, and banging it on the table, exclaimed: "Arrah now, honey, sure and you think yourself moighty grand! But, look'ee, with this *thirteence* won't I sit in the gallery, and won't your royal grace give me a curtsy, and grin and caper for me? And won't I give your royal highness a howl, and a hiss into the bargain?"

SUZANNA LAGIER was a good actress, but extremely stout. She was one night enacting a part in a melodrama with Taillarde, the original Pierre of *The Two Orphans*, and this actor had at one moment to carry her fainting off the stage. He tried with all his might to lift the "fleshy" heroine, but although she helped her little comrade by standing on tiptoe, in the usual manner, he was unable to move her an inch. At this juncture one of the deities cried from the gallery: "*Take what you can, and come back for the rest!*"

ACTRESSES, like other folk, can be very nasty to each other at times, as the following anecdote will show. That delightful actress, Mrs Alfred Wigan, began life as a stilt-walker. When a child, with her little feet strapped to a couple of tall poles, she would stalk in and out of the coaches on the hill at Epsom, and sally and cajole small change out of the assembled sportsmen as they lunched. Or in the summer, in Mayfair, old dowagers taking tea at open drawing-room windows would be startled by the sudden appearance of a pathetic little figure, clad in tawdry muslin and spangles, tendering her scallop-shell across the balcony and pleading for coppers. After her success in life, one day when she was directing the rehearsal of a modern comedy on the stage of the Olympic, some little question of manners arose, and Mrs Keeley ventured to express an opinion at variance with Mrs Wigan's. "Nonsense, my dear!" exclaimed the manageress. "Such a thing would be unheard of! And I *think* I ought to know. You *must* admit, my dear, that I have seen a *little* more of the inside of a London drawing-room than *you* have." "I know you have, dear," replied Mrs Keeley, without a moment's hesitation—"*through the first-floor window.*"

CHARLES BROOKFIELD, in his amusing "Random Reminiscences," relates the following story anent Henry Kemble and Arthur Cecil. "It was at about half-past eleven at night one thirty-first of December that it suddenly occurred to Henry Kemble and Arthur Cecil, as they sat over

their supper at the Garrick Club, that there were more spiritual ways of beginning a new year than in draining the wassail bowl. Accordingly, they got into their wrap-rascals—Kemble into his well-known brown watchman's cape with the astrakhan collar, and Cecil into his Baron Stein *pardessus* with the beaver facings, and they started to 'walk to a four-wheeler' which should take them to one of the fashionable churches where midnight services were held. But cabs were scarce, and they toddled all the way up Regent Street without seeing one that would take them. There was a hansom or two, but Arthur Cecil would sooner have mounted an Australian buck-jumper than sit in a two-wheeled cab. It wanted but ten minutes of midnight. '*There's* a church, Arthur,' exclaimed Kemble, pointing to the sacred edifice in Langham Place with the marling-spike steeple. 'It's nearly twelve o'clock; we'd better go in there.' 'H'm! But do you know if there's a service goin' on there, Beetle?' asked Cecil doubtfully. 'I'm certain there is,' said Kemble; 'I saw two ladies go in just now. There's another one,' he added, as a devout-looking lady, apparently foreign, entered the building. 'All right, then,' said Arthur; and the two friends crossed the road and went in. The church was dimly lighted, but they found their way into an unoccupied pew near the sanctuary. 'Isn't it curious—the small percentage of men?' whispered Kemble. 'I don't believe I noticed *one*. How different from the Church of Rome!' However, they knelt side by side, and were soon plunged in their devotions,

lamenting lost opportunities in the year that was dying, and making golden resolutions for the year that was about to be born, when Kemble, who was nearest the aisle, was touched on the shoulder. 'Do you want to speak to me?' whispered a tall grave-looking clergyman, attired in a long cassock. 'Thank you very much,' replied Kemble, in an undertone, 'but I—er—I don't know that I do—particularly.' 'Then perhaps,' continued the clergyman, 'you and your friend would like to go before the service begins.' 'On the contrary,' said Kemble, 'we came expressly that we might have the benefit of the service.' 'The only thing is,' said the parson, evidently somewhat embarrassed—'this is a special service for—er—er—for—er—er—*fallen women*.' Kemble and Cecil leapt to their feet, seized their hats and fled, fancying as they hurried down the aisle that they heard a chastened titter from one or two of the poor penitents."

AN amusing account is given by Charles Brookfield of his first introduction to John Hollingshead when in search of an engagement. He writes: "Henry Kemble gave me a card of introduction to John Hollingshead. I spent about five hours a day for over a week between the front and the stage door of the Gaiety Theatre endeavouring to obtain an interview with that kindly humorist, but his well-trained officials always sent me where he was not. At last I met him by chance in Wellington Street, and in my nervous excitement I pressed upon him, not only Kemble's card, *but a shilling*, which I had

carried for days in my palm, as a reward for him who should finally take me into the manager's presence."

JOHN PARRY for many years resided at Surbiton, and was a member of a local choir there; he was always very willing on any occasion to attend with the choir at any special choral wedding. On one occasion he attended in his capacity as a choirman the wedding of Archbishop Benson's sister, stating, when asked to attend, that he would be there *to oblige Benson.*"

CHARLES MATHEWS THE ELDER gives the following account of his first appearance on any stage. In 1793 he heard to his great delight that the manager of the Richmond Theatre would allow any young gentleman to perform who would pay him ten guineas. After some negotiation he prevailed on the manager to allow him and his friend, Litchfield, to appear at the reduced rate of fifteen guineas for the two, in *Richard III.*, Matthews taking the part of Richmond. He writes: "Now, it so happened that I had a passion for fencing which nothing could overcome, and this friend of Melpomene and mine [Litchfield] learnt the exercise at the same academy as myself. Therefore, for the delight of exhibiting my skill and legitimate love of the art, I kindly consented to take the inferior and insipid part of Richmond, who does not appear until the fifth act of the play, I stipulating, however, for a good part in the after-piece. I cared for nothing except the last scene of Richmond, but in that I was determined to have my full swing of carte and tierce. I

had no idea of paying seven guineas and a half without indulging my passion. In vain did the tyrant try to die after a decent time; in vain did he give indication of exhaustion; I would not allow him to give in. I drove him by main force from any position convenient for his last dying speech. The audience laughed; I heeded them not. They shouted: I was deaf. Had they hooted, I should have lunged on in unconsciousness of their interruption. I was resolved to show them all my accomplishments. Litchfield frequently whispered: 'Enough!' but I thought with Macbeth:

"'"Damned be he who first cries, Hold! enough!"'

"I kept him at it; and I believe we fought almost literally 'a long hour by Shrewsbury clock.' To add to the merriment, a matter-of-fact fellow in the gallery, who, in his innocence, took everything in reality, and who was completely wrapped up and lost by the very cunning of the scene, at last shouted out: '*Damn him! Why does he not shoot him?*' His present Majesty, King William IV., was in a private box, with Mrs Jordan, on this occasion, having been attracted from Bushey by the announcement of an amateur Richard; and I heard afterwards that they were both in convulsions of laughter at the prolongation of the fight, which that most fascinating and first of all comic actresses never forgot."

A LADY of fashion being asked her opinion of the Romeo of Garrick and of Barry said: "When I saw Garrick, if I had been his Juliet, I

should have wished him to *leap up into the balcony to me*; but when I saw Barry I should have been inclined *to jump down to him.*"

AS Dowton one evening was playing the ghost in *Hamlet,* he was lowered by means of the trap in the stage, his face being turned towards the audience. Elliston and De Camp, who were concealed below, had provided themselves with canes, and whilst Dowton slowly descended to solemn music, they sharply and rapidly belaboured the thinly clad calves of his legs. Poor Dowton, whose duty it was to look as calm and dignified as a ghost usually does, could scarcely refrain from shouting. Choking with rage, he at length reached the lower regions under the stage, and looked round for his torturers. Elliston and De Camp had, of course, in time made themselves scarce. Just then, Holland, dressed for some part in the highest fashion, issued from one of the rooms. The enraged Dowton, taking him for the offender, seized a mop immersed in dirty water, and, thrusting it in his face, utterly ruined ruffles, point lace, and every particular of his elaborate attire. In vain Holland protested his innocence, and implored for mercy. His cries only whetted the appetite of the other's revenge; again and again the saturated mop was at work on his finery. Somewhat cooled by this retaliation, Dowton at last left his victim; but by this time the prompter's bell had announced the commencement of the piece in which Holland was to appear. What was to be done? The drama was proceeding; it was impossible for

him to present himself in the condition to which he had been reduced. All was confusion worse confounded. An apology for the sudden indisposition of Mr Holland was made, and the public informed that "*Mr De Camp had kindly undertaken to go on for the part.*"

PAUL BEDFORD in his Reminiscences narrates the following amusing story. On one of his provincial tours with manager Yates, the repertoire included a farce, entitled *Deeds of Dreadful Note.* A dummy was used in this piece; it was called "the victim," and being life-size used to travel with the troupe deposited in a capacious bag, which entirely hid it from the vulgar gaze. On leaving Newcastle for York, in the hurry of packing, the bag was mislaid, and the only remedy was to put "the victim" into a potato-sack, which just reached to the neck of the figure, leaving the head exposed to view. In that state it was deposited in the luggage-van with the rest of the theatrical belongings. The company had to change trains at North Allerton, and as the York train was about to start it was discovered that "the victim" was missing. Tom Lyon at once rushed to the luggage-van, and recovered the lost one. He threw the sack across his manly shoulders, and trotted along the platform, to the great disgust of all the passengers, who thought he carried a dead body; for the head of "the victim" hung on Lyon's back, and at every step the agile bearer took it wobbled up and down in a ghastly manner. Arrived at York, the actors took up their abode at the Royal Hotel,

and soon were quietly sitting down to their dinner, when a waiter entered in consternation, and whispered that a police inspector wanted to see the gentlemen who had just arrived. The myrmidon of the law made his appearance, and informed them that it was his painful duty to arrest them all, as a gang of body-snatchers, a party of police being in waiting outside for that purpose. Roars of laughter greeted this communication; "the victim" in the sack was introduced to the police, and the character of the company redeemed. The inspector left, highly amused, and making all sorts of apologies; but the affair was rumoured through the cathedral town, and "the victim" became the most attractive star of the whole company.

JOHN KEMBLE, once playing Macbeth when he suffered from a violent cold, was compelled actually to cough after his decease. When Bannister was informed of the circumstance he said: "Poor fellow, it must be *a churchyard cough*."

SIR HENRY IRVING used to relate an amusing occurrence which took place at Manchester, when Booth played there, somewhere about 1861. *Richard III.* was put up, Charles Calvert, the manager, playing Richmond, and Booth, Gloster. Calvert determined to make a brave show of his array against the usurper, and being manager was able to dress his own following according to his wishes. He therefore drained the armoury of the theatre, and had the armour furbished up to look

smart. Richard's army came on in the usual style. They were not much to look at, though they were fairly comfortable for their work of fighting. But Richmond's army enthralled the senses of the spectators, till those who knew the play began to wonder how such an army *could* be beaten by the starvelings opposed to them. They were not used to fight, or even to move, in armour, and the moment they began to make an effort they one and all fell down and wriggled all over the stage in every phase of humiliating but unsuccessful effort to get up; and the curtain had to be lowered, amidst the wild laughter of the audience.

A CERTAIN actor was playing Richard III. at Wells. Disapprobation of his performance was soon manifested in very palpable hisses, and by the end of the third act the endemic pervaded the whole audience. The acting certainly was bad, but the ill nature of the audience was worse. Suddenly, the poor persecuted player, dropping his character, advanced to the front of the stage, and thus addressed his judges: "Ladies and gentlemen, Mr Kean is playing this part in London at a salary of thirty pounds per night. I receive but fifteen shillings a week; and if it isn't good enough for the money, may the Lord above give you a better humanity." This well-timed reproof, delivered with much point and feeling, won instantly all hearts to his favour.

COMPTON, the comedian, on his way home from a country house, where he had been dining the night before, stopped at a village inn, and

ordered some refreshment. He wore a long black coat over a dress suit, and had a white necktie. The landlord mistook him for a clergyman. "There is a meeting of clergy here to-day, sir, and they are about to dine. I'm sure the dean would be glad to have you join them." "Thank you," said Compton, who was very hungry, "I shall be very glad." "I will take in your card," said the landlord. "I have no card," replied Compton; "you can say, 'Rev. Mr Payne, who is passing through the town,'" The dean said they would be glad to give a strange brother a seat at the table. The Rev. Mr Payne appeared, and the dean with courtesy placed him at his right hand, and asked him to say grace. Compton felt a cold thrill run through him, but with perfect presence of mind recalled the opening portion of the Church service, and hit upon the very words for his purpose. In his rich melodious voice he said: "*O Lord, open Thou our lips, and our mouths shall show forth Thy praise.*"

MACREADY on one occasion opened at Nottingham with *King Lear*. The property man received his plot for the play in the usual manner; a map being required among the many articles, for Lear to divide his kingdom by. The property man, whose education had been somewhat neglected, read *mop* for *map*. At the proper time, Macready, in full state on his throne, calls for his map, when a "super" noble gravely entered and, kneeling down, presented the aged king with a bran-new white curly mop. The astounded tragedian rushed

off the stage, amidst immense laughter, dragging the unfortunate nobleman and his mop with him; whilst actors and audience were wild with delight.

SARAH BERNHARDT, suffering one day from what on the Continent is called "the spleen," attired herself in a shroud, and, with her hair undone, lay down in her famous coffin, an elegant piece of cabinet-work, made of black ebony, and comfortably padded with white satin. She closed her eyes, opened her mouth, and requested an aristocratic friend to play a *miserere* on the organ. Not content with this, she caused a number of tapers to be lit, and sent for her bosom friend, Louise Abbema. This celebrated artist was requested to assume the garb of a nun, and to kneel beside the coffin as in prayer, whilst in the background Sarah's servants were grouped, some praying, others in attitudes of despair. Liebert, the photographer, was then ordered to call with his apparatus, and to take a photograph of the scene, which was so ghastly that when young Maurice, Sarah's son, happened to enter unexpectedly, he fell forthwith in a swoon.

A HUMOROUS circumstance was connected with one of the first representations of *Guillaume Tell* at Drury Lane. During the rehearsals Braham proved so indifferent a toxophilite in the celebrated trial to which Tell is subjected that, at the representation, the arrow had to be discharged by a skilful hand behind the scenes, Braham covering the party, and receiving the approbation due to another.

On one occasion the shaft accidentally missed the apple, and Braham, finding the audience disposed to titter, threw them into a loud roar by advancing to the footlights and saying: "Ladies and gentlemen, it wasn't *I* who shot at the apple."

IF Foote ever had a serious regard for anyone, it was for Holland; yet after his friend's funeral he violated all decency concerning him. Holland was the son of a baker at Hampton, and on the stage was a close imitator of Garrick, who had such a respect for him that he played "the ghost" to his Hamlet merely to serve him at his benefit. Holland died rather young, and Foote attended as one of the mourners. He was really grieved, and his eyes were swollen with tears; yet, when an acquaintance said to him in the evening: "So, Foote, you have been attending the funeral of your dear friend Holland?" Foote smilingly replied: "*Yes, we have shoved the little baker into his last oven.*"

DURING one of the entertainments given by the elder Mathews at Plymouth, a gentleman close to him presented such a melancholy face that Mathews could not stand it. Advancing to where the depressed one sat, he addressed him thus: "I beg your pardon, sir, *but if you don't laugh I cannot go on.*" This was received by the audience with such roars that the unconsciously offending gentleman throughout the rest of the evening laughed louder than anybody else.

NED SHUTER used to give the Cries of London on his annual benefit at the theatre. The day before one of these benefits he followed through several streets a man whose cry of "Silver eels!" was very peculiar, but who on that occasion was unaccountably silent. At last Shuter stopped him, told him he was Ned Shuter, and that he had followed him for half-an-hour in hopes to hear his usual cry. "Why, Master Shuter," replied the poor man, "my wife died this morning, and *I can't cry.*"

CHARLES S. PORTER was the leading actor at the old South Street Theatre in Philadelphia, in his younger days. On one occasion, the play being *The Blind Boy*, he was obliged to apologise to the audience for the young man who was to have played the "Blind Boy," and another was called upon to read the part. His first appearance was on a bridge, where he was seen threading his way, with a cane in one hand, and the play-book in the other. *Whilst his eyes were riveted on the book, his cane was busily engaged in feeling his way.* This was too ludicrous, and poor Edmund, the blind boy, had no sympathy from the audience that night.

POPE, the actor, well known as a gourmand, and for his attachment to venison, received an invitation to dinner from an old friend, accompanied by an apology for the simplicity of the menu —a small turbot and a boiled edgebone of beef. "The very thing of all others that I like!" exclaimed Pope. He went, and ate, till he could literally eat

no longer, when the word was given, and a haunch of venison was brought in. Pope saw the trap which had been laid for him; but he was fairly caught, and after trifling with a delicious slice he laid down his knife and fork, and gave way to a hysterical burst of tears, exclaiming: "A friend of twenty years' standing, and to be served in this manner!"

MRS SIDDONS' first reception in Edinburgh in *Belvidera* was very cool. "I own," she says, "I was surprised, and not a little mortified, at that profound silence, which was a contrast to the burst of applause I had been accustomed to hear in London. Not a hand moved at the end of the scene." She felt as if she had been speaking to stones. At last she gathered herself up for one passage, and threw all her powers into it; then paused, and looked steadily at the audience, when in the hushed silence a voice was heard exclaiming: "*Come, that's no' bad!*" This produced roars of laughter, and the wished-for burst of applause.

FRÉDÉRIC LEMAITRE relates in his Souvenirs that one evening, as he was playing Georges, to Madame Dorval's Amelia, in *The Gambler*, the lady's lace bonnet caught fire by touching the flame of one of the candles on the writing-table in the scene when Amelia signs the document by which she makes over her jointure. Lemaitre, quick as thought, without saying a word, tore the bonnet off her head, and, crushing it to extinguish the flames, put it into his pocket. The action was so sudden that Madame

Dorval herself had no idea what it meant; it had been observed, however, by many of the spectators, who rewarded Lemaitre's presence of mind with a round of applause. Among those who had seen this necessary by-play there was a provincial actor, who, not having observed that the bonnet was in flames, thought it was some original "effect" of the great actor, and hearing the hearty applause muttered to himself: "I must remember that." When, soon after, he was called to play the same part at a provincial theatre he did not forget the interesting episode, and at the moment when Amelia was about to sign the fatal document he wrenched off her bonnet, and put it into his pocket. The audience was astonished, began to whisper, thought it was a case of sudden madness; whilst the actor, not hearing any applause, muttered: "The blockheads! they don't understand it." After the play, one of his friends complimented him on the remarkable manner in which he had played the character of Georges de Germany; "but," said he, "what on earth did you mean by tearing off Amelia's bonnet?" "What!" was the reply, "don't you know? That is one of the great effects of Frédéric Lemaitre."

DURING the run of *The Dancing Girl* at the Haymarket Theatre, an amusing incident occurred one night. At the end of the third act came the dramatic departure of all the Duke of Guisebury's guests, who had to leave Tree standing alone on the stage, a ruined man, determined to commit suicide. The departure of the guests and the calling of the

carriages had to be done with the greatest possible care, so as not to interfere in any way with the dramatic effect of the end of the act. Fred Kerr, who was playing one of the guests, told one of the stage servants *sotto voce* to call him a hansom, just as a joke. Imagine his horror—*and Tree's anger*—when the said stage servant roared out in stentorian tones: "'*Ansom up there, for Mr Slingsby.*"

IN his amusing history of "The Haymarket Theatre" Cyril Maude tells a delightful story of Munden. He writes: "Munden was another of those low comedians whose faces formed no small part of their fortune. The son of a poulterer, he tried his hand as apothecary's assistant and attorney's clerk before he took to the stage. Unlike the other low comedians of his day, his chief amusement was the theatre. His grimaces were absolutely irresistible, and the audiences of the day literally yelled at him. One night, when playing Obadiah in *The Committee*, the audience found him funnier than ever. Obadiah has to be plied with liquor by Teague, and Munden made such extraordinary faces over the draught that the whole house, including the actors on the stage, shrieked with laughter. The scene over, Munden went off the stage, and no sooner was he hidden from the sight of the audience than he began to bellow like a bull. 'Bring me a stomach pump!' he roared, holding his sides. 'I'm a dead man; I've been poisoned. *Lamp oil, lamp oil, every drop of it!*' And lamp oil it proved to be. The property

man had mistaken the bottle for one filled with sherry and water!

"Munden was asked afterwards why on earth he had allowed the whole contents of the bottle to be poured down his throat, when he could so easily have shown that something was the matter. 'My dear sir,' he replied, 'there was such a glorious roar at the first face I made upon swallowing it that I hadn't the heart to spoil the scene by interrupting the effect!'" Cyril Maude comments: "I need not add that Munden was a conscientious actor."

GILBERT, the dramatist, once heard that his *Trial by Jury*, renamed and slightly altered, was being given at a certain hall, and not liking to be swindled he called upon the manager. The author opened proceedings by inquiring whether the hall was not let for amateur theatricals sometimes. It was, certainly, any evening, if not already engaged, and the manager asked Gilbert what he proposed to play. "Well, there's a piece called *Trial by Jury*; I was thinking of that," the visitor replied. "And a very good piece too," the manager kindly assured him; "sure to take." "I know who could play the principal parts very well," Gilbert said, "but I was doubtful about the chorus. Could you help me in this, do you think?" "I think I could, in fact I'm sure of it; you need not trouble about a chorus that knows the music," the manager replied. "Thank you; you are very kind," Gilbert gently answered. "But," he continued, "by the way, are there not some charges—fees—of some kind to be paid for the

right of playing pieces of this sort? I fancy I have heard something to that effect." Then the manager grew very confidential indeed. He looked sly; he even winked; and he said: "Never you mind about that. I don't. Why, we play the very piece you're talking about every night; only we don't call it *Trial by Jury*. We ain't such fools. Gilbert and Sullivan don't know anything about it, and ain't likely to. You leave it to me, and you'll be all right!" It was now Gilbert's turn, and he quietly replied: "I think you've made a slight mistake in my name. *I am* Mr W. S. Gilbert, and I had heard that you were good enough to play my piece without mentioning it, so I came to see." Gilbert declares that the man shrank visibly. From a huge creature six feet high he seemed to descend to the dimensions of a child in petticoats; but Gilbert mercifully spared him, for the sake of the fun he had afforded.

AFTER Mr Boaden had read his *Aurelia and Miranda* in the green-room of Drury Lane Theatre he observed he knew nothing so terrible as reading a piece before such a critical audience. "I know one thing more terrible," said Mrs Powell. "What can that be?" asked the author. "To be obliged *to sit and hear it*," was the cutting reply.

DR JOHNSON being one night at Drury Lane Theatre for the purpose of seeing Garrick play Macbeth, in one of the most interesting scenes of the play he and the whole company in the box where he sat were interrupted by the impertinence

of a young man of fashion, who insisted on having a place, though none was kept for him. The disturbance continued until the end of the act, when the Doctor, turning about with great contempt, cried: "Pshaw, sir, how can you be mistaken? *Your place is in the shilling gallery.*"

SOON after the first performance of *The School for Scandal*, it was reported to Sheridan that Mr Cumberland had observed that he saw it, but could find nothing in it to make him laugh. "This," said Sheridan, "was very ungrateful, for *I laughed heartily at his tragedy.*"

WHEN Woodward first played Sir John Brute, Garrick was induced from curiosity, or perhaps jealousy, to be present. A few days after when they met Woodward asked Garrick how he liked him in the part, adding: "I think I struck out some beauties in it." "I think," replied Garrick, "you struck out *all* the beauties in it."

FOOTE was rattling away one night in the green-room at the theatre when the Duke of Cumberland was present, who seemed highly entertained, and cried out: "Well, Foote, you see I swallow all your good things." "Do you, my Lord Duke?" replied the wit; "then I congratulate you on your digestion, for I believe you *never threw one up in the whole course of your life.*"

QUIN had an invitation from a certain nobleman, who was reputed to keep a very elegant table, to dine with him, and having no manner of aversion to a good dinner, he accordingly waited on his lordship, but found the menu far from answering his expectations. Upon taking leave, the servants, who were very numerous, had ranged themselves in the hall. Quin, finding that if he gave to each of them it would amount to a pretty large sum, asked which was the cook, who readily answered: "Me, sir." He then inquired for the butler, who was as quick in replying as the other; when he said to the first: "Here is half-a-crown for my eating," and to the other: "Here is five shillings for my wine; but upon my word, gentlemen, *I never had so bad a dinner for the money in my life.*"

AS Foote was one day passing by the King's Bench his attention was attracted by a barber's shop, the owner of which, not being able to pay for several panes of glass which were broken when he entered the house, had substituted paper ones for them, and over the shop door was written this inscription:

"Here lives Jemmy Wright,
Shaves as well as any man in England, almost, not quite.[21]

Foote was so much convinced in his own mind that the owner was an eccentric fellow that he was determined to ascertain it immediately; so putting his head through one of the paper panes he exclaimed: "Is Jemmy Wright at home, pray?" On

which the facetious barber immediately thrust his head through another, and replied: "No, *he has just popped out.*" Foote laughed heartily, and gave the man a guinea.

GARRICK, being at a review, found it necessary to dismount, when his horse accidentally escaped from his hold and ran off; when, throwing himself immediately into his professional attitude, he cried out, as if on Bosworth Field: "A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!" This exclamation, and the accompanying attitude, excited great amazement amongst the surrounding spectators, who knew him not; but it could not escape the King's quick apprehension, for it being within his hearing he immediately said: "Those must be the tones of Garrick! See if he is not on the ground." The theatrical and dismounted monarch was immediately brought to his Majesty, who not only condoled with him most good-humouredly on his misfortune, but flatteringly added that his delivery of Shakespeare could never pass undiscovered.

NED SHUTER was travelling in the Brighton stage-coach with four ladies one very warm day. The party were thrown into the utmost consternation by the coach suddenly stopping to receive a sixth person, who was a perfect Falstaff in appearance. The ladies expressed their sorrow to Shuter at this additional encumbrance, but he, with a smile, desired them to take comfort, for he would soon remove the man-mountain. Accordingly, when the

unpleasant intruder had taken his seat, and the coach was once more moving, Shuter, with much gravity, asked one of the ladies her motive in visiting Brighton. She replied that her physician had ordered her to bathe for a depression of spirits. He turned to his next neighbour, and repeated his inquiries. She was nervous, the third bilious—all had some complaint, of which the sea was to be the cure. When they had told the history of their disorders Shuter, heaving a tremendous sigh, exclaimed: "All your complaints put together are trifling to mine—they are nothing. Oh no! mine is dreadful even to think of!" "Good God, sir," cried the fat passenger, with astonishment, "what is your complaint? You look exceedingly well." "Oh, sir," replied Shuter; "looks are deceitful; you must know three days ago I had the misfortune to be bitten by a mad dog, for which I am informed the only cure is immersion in salt water. I am going therefore, for though I am, as you observe, looking well, yet the fit takes me in a moment, when I bark like a dog, and endeavour to bite everyone near me." "Lord have mercy on us!" ejaculated the fat traveller, in a tone that was meant to be a whisper. "But, sir—you—you are not in earnest? You——" "Bow! wow! wow!" "Coachman! coachman! I say, let me out!" "Now, your honour, what's the matter?" "A mad dog is the matter! Hydrophobia is the matter! Open the door! The devil is the matter!" "*Bow! wow! wow!*" "Open the door; never mind the steps. There—thank God, I am once more in safety. Let those who like it ride inside. I'll

mount the box. The Lord be praised for my escape!" Accordingly, he continued on the outside of the coach for the remainder of the journey, much to the satisfaction of the comedian and his companions, who were exceedingly merry at his expense, the former every now and then regaling him with a sonorous: "*Bow!* wow! wow!"

NED SHUTER was often very poor and, being still more negligent than poor, was careless about his dress. A friend overtaking him one day in the street said to him: "Why, Ned, are you not ashamed to walk the streets with twenty holes in your stockings? Why don't you get them mended?" "No, my friend," said Ned, "I am above it; and if you have the pride of a gentleman you will act like me, and walk with twenty holes, rather than have one darn." "How, how," replied the other; "how do you make that out?" "Why," replied Ned, "a hole is the accident of the day; but a darn is *premeditated poverty.*"

TOM BLANCHARD, the celebrated low comedian, was once engaged with a strolling company, for the benefit of one of whose members, on a particular night, he had consented with great good humour to double Guildenstern with the Gravedigger. In the scene where Hamlet calls for the recorders, Blanchard, who could not long refrain from some sort of drollery, came forward furnished with a bassoon instead of the flute. The actor who played Hamlet, exceedingly discomposed at this

sight, was some time before he could arrange his muscles with sufficient gravity. At length, recovering himself, he thus went on with the scene: "Will you play upon this pipe?" "My lord, I cannot." "I pray you!" "Believe me, I cannot." "I do beseech you." "Well, my lord, *since you are so very pressing, I'll do my best*"! And immediately Tom, who was a good musician, struck up with much spirit "Lady Coventry's Minuet," and went through the whole strain, with which he finished the scene, for Hamlet had not another word to say for himself.

WHEN a certain provincial comedian first appeared on the London boards in the character of Falstaff, being a man of some genius he used to puff himself constantly upon his excellence in the part, all which, however, availed but little, as he never could bring a full house. Kean, the mimic (father of Kean, the celebrated tragedian), sitting with a few of the players at the "Garrick's Head" in Bow Street, had taken up and filled a pipe, the funnel of which was stopped; and after several attempts to light it he threw it down in a passion, saying: "By Jove! gentlemen, I am like your new Falstaff: I have been puffing and puffing this long while past, but all to no purpose, for *I cannot draw.*"

OLD Johnson, the player, who was not only a very good actor, but a good judge of painting, and remarkable for making many dry jokes, was shown a picture done by a very indifferent hand, but much commended, and asked his opinion of it.

"Why, truly," said he, "the painter is a very good painter, and observes the Lord's commandments." "What do you mean by that, Mr Johnson?" said one who stood by. "Why, I think," answered he, "that he hath not made to himself the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth."

JOHN KEMBLE was slow at catching a joke. One night Parsons told a rich comic story at which all laughed. Kemble alone preserved a fixed, grave, classical countenance; but when Dodd afterwards sang a pathetic ballad, which excited general interest, Kemble, in the middle of it, burst into an odd fit of laughter, and in a tone tremulous from excessive gaiety exclaimed: "I beg your pardon, gentlemen, but I have *just taken* Parson's joke—ha, ha!—and it is really very good!"

ON the first night when Cooper performed at Louisville, United States, the fame of the great tragedian had drawn a crowded audience, and among the rest a young country lass whom—not knowing her real name—we will call Peggy. Peggy had never before seen the inside of a theatre. She entered at the time Othello was making his defence before the Duke and the senate. The young girl was permitted to walk, unobserved, down the lobby, until she arrived at the stage-box, which she entered. Staring a moment about her, as if doubting whether she was in her proper place, she cast her eyes on the

stage, and observed several chairs unoccupied. It appeared to her that the people on the stage seemed more at their ease than those among whom she was standing, and withal much more sociable. Just at that moment Othello, as fate would have it, looking in the direction of the place where she stood, exclaimed: "There comes the lady." The senators half rose in expectation of seeing the "gentle Desdemona," when lo! the maiden from the country stepped from the box plump on to the stage, and advanced towards the expectant Moor. It is impossible to give any idea of the confusion that followed. The audience clapped and cheered, the Duke and the senators forgot their dignity, Othello joined in the general mirth. The blushing girl was ready to sink with consternation, until some compassionate soul helped her out of her unpleasant situation. It was agreed by all present that no lady ever made her debut on any stage with more *éclat* than Miss Peggy!

THE facetious Joe Hall, the original Lockit in *The Beggar's Opera*, in the year 1739, when the scene-room at Covent Garden was on fire, and the audience greatly alarmed, was ordered by Rich, the manager, to run on the stage, and explain the matter, which honest Joe did in the following extraordinary address:—"Ladies and gentlemen, for heaven's sake, don't be frightened; don't stir—keep your seats. The fire is almost extinguished; but if it was *not*, we have a reservoir of one hundred hogsheads of water over your heads, that *would drown you all in a few minutes.*"

AT Sadler's Wells Theatre one evening during Mr Phelps' management the house was very full and very noisy, and there was every appearance of the performance going off in dumb show. Just before the time for the curtain to go up there were loud cries from the gallery of "Phelps! Phelps!" After a little delay the green baize was drawn back, and Phelps, dressed for his part, came forward. Advancing to the footlights with folded arms, and looking up to the gallery, very firmly he called out: "Well, what is it you want?" "Too full! Too full!" shouted a dozen voices. "Well," replied Phelps, "why don't some of you go out?" This seemed to take the gods by surprise, for there was no response. Phelps therefore retired, the curtain went up, and no more was heard of "too full."

GEORGE COLMAN could be the courtier when it pleased him to be. On one occasion the Prince Regent said to him: "Why, Colman, you are older than I am." "Oh no, Sire," was the answer. "I could not take the liberty of coming into the world *before your Royal Highness.*"

FOOTE tried a joke on the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was not to be caught. The actor forwarded a copy of *The Minor* to the Primate (a play so gross and indecent that Irish audiences would have none of it, though it was a big success in England), with the polite request that if his Grace saw anything objectionable in it he would strike it out. But the Archbishop sent it back without a

mark, and declared afterwards to a friend that if he had put a pen to the manuscript Foote would straightway have advertised it as *corrected and prepared for the stage by his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury.*

IN his "The Haymarket Theatre," Cyril Maude tells some amusing stories of John Palmer. Among them are the following. John Palmer made his debut at the Haymarket Theatre with Charles Bannister, and two more nervous actors probably never trod the boards for the first time. But with experience success came to Palmer too, though like Bannister his circumstances were nearly always embarrassing. At one time, so hard pressed was he that he had to live in his dressing-room at the theatre, and on another occasion, when having to leave Drury Lane to play a season at the Haymarket, he was conveyed thither *in a cabinet among a cartload of scenery to avoid arrest.*

ONE day Palmer was in his garden at Kentish Town when a wasp stung him in the eye so badly that he had to send his excuses to the theatre. The manager went on, and apologised for the actor's absence, but the audience would have none of his excuses, and so great was the clamour that there was nothing for it but to make an attempt to fetch Palmer to the theatre, despite his accident. Palmer came, and went on the stage just as he was. He was greeted with a fire of orange peel, and a storm of hisses by the audience, exasperated at being kept waiting. At last they permitted Palmer to speak.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said he, "I am aware of the odd effect my appearance here may produce after the apology which has been made for my illness, which I thought it hardly possible to describe by communication to the theatre. The fact is, ladies and gentlemen, my illness was *all my eye*!"

ANOTHER good story relates to Palmer's unpunctuality. Cyril Maude writes: "Palmer was notoriously unpunctual, his pet excuse being that his wife *had been confined*, but he made the excuse so often that it was calculated that the good lady became a mother at least once a quarter! More than once, too, he shammed illness, sometimes not sending his excuses to the theatre until the last moment, and that on a first night. He was once very nearly caught by Sheridan, who called with Kelly to inquire after the actor's health. Luckily, Kelly preceded Sheridan up the stairs, and was just in time to tip Palmer the wink, and keep Sheridan outside until the truant had rolled himself in a dressing-gown in the simulated agonies of toothache. So well did he act that Sheridan was much impressed, and *begged him to take the greatest care of himself*."

PALMER'S father was a bill-sticker. One evening when the actor was strutting about the green-room in a pair of glittering buckles someone remarked that they looked like real diamonds. "Sir," said the actor, much annoyed, "I never wear anything else but real diamonds." "Pardon me," was the answer, "I remember when you wore nothing

but *paste.*" "Why don't you stick him against the wall?" whispered Bannister.

MR ROBERT MITCHELL, who supplied Sheridan with coals, had a heavy bill against him, which had been outstanding a long time, and for which he was determined not to wait any longer. He went to Sheridan's house, accused him of having treated him shamefully, and swore he would not leave the house without his money. As the amount was over a hundred pounds, and Sheridan had not as many shillings, compliance was more easily demanded than obtained. Sheridan made most eloquent appeals, and finally asked if "half would do to-day, and a bill for the remainder——" "Not a farthing less than my whole bill, Mr Sheridan," was the reply; "as I said before, I dare not show my face at home without it." After a pause, and apparently much moved, the dramatist replied: "Then would to heaven I could assist you! I cannot —but" (and here he took a deep dip into his pocket) "one thing I can, I will, I ought to do. There" (taking Mitchell's hand, shaking it, and putting something in it), "there, never let it be said that while Sheridan had a guinea in his pocket he refused it to his friend *Bob* Mitchell." Sheridan heaved with emotion, Mitchell stood aghast for a minute or two; then carefully tucked up the guinea in a corner of his leather breeches pocket, forgot his wrongs, and with the affectionate *Bob* ringing in his ears he bolted out of the house, and to the latest hour of his life was fond of displaying "*the last guinea*

his friend Sheridan had in the world!" This is perhaps the greatest feat Sheridan ever did, except when he softened an attorney.

DAVID MORRIS, at one time proprietor of the Haymarket Theatre, was a great character, and prided himself especially on his managerial abilities. Faithfully fulfilling all his own obligations, he expected, justly enough, equal rectitude on the part of others. Observing one morning, at the rehearsal of some music, that one of the band was quiescent, he leant over from the pit, in which he was standing, and touched him on the shoulder. "Why are you not playing, sir?" "I have twelve bars' rest, sir," answered the musician. "*Rest!* Don't talk to me about rest, sir! Don't you get your salary, sir? I pay you to play, and not to *rest*, sir! Rest when you've done your work, and not in the middle of it."

TOWARDS the end of his professional career, Edwin Forrest was taking supper late one night with an old friend, who remarked to him: "Mr Forrest, I never in my life saw you play Lear so well as you did to-night." Whereupon the veteran, rising slowly and laboriously from his chair, and stretching himself to his full height, replied: "Play Lear! What do you mean, sir? *I don't play Lear.* I play Hamlet, Richard, Shylock, Virginius, if you please; but, by God, sir, I *am* Lear!"

IN 1803 Reynolds, the dramatist, produced a musical after-piece in Drury Lane, entitled *The Caravan; or, The Driver and his Dog.* There was some pretty music in it. It had a long run, and brought much money to the treasury, but the chief attraction of the piece was a dog called Carlo. One day Sheridan went to see the performance of this wonderful dog. As he entered the green-room, Dignum, who played the principal part in the piece, said to him, with a woebegone countenance: "Sir, there is no guarding against illness; it is truly lamentable to stop the run of a successful piece like this, but really——" "Really what?" cried Sheridan, interrupting him. "I am so unwell," continued Dignum, "that I cannot go on longer than to-night!" "You!" exclaimed Sheridan. "My good fellow, you terrified me; I thought you were going to say *the dog was taken ill.*"

VANDENHOFF, in his "Dramatic Reminiscences," gives a bit of a conversation between Mrs Glover, Mrs Orger, and Mrs Humby, which for epigrammatic finesse would figure well in Sheridan's witty comedy. The ladies were discussing the marriage between Madame Vestris and Charles Mathews. "They say," remarked Mrs Humby, with a quaint air of assumed simplicity, "that, before accepting him, Vestris made a full confession of all the indiscretions of her life. *What touching confidence!*" "*What needless trouble!*" said Mrs Orger. "*What a wonderful memory!*" exclaimed

Mrs Glover, capping the exclamations of her sisters triumphantly.

HURST was an actor quite of the ordinary stamp, and finding his salary inadequate to support the rank to which he aspired he became a brandy merchant. While he was performing one of the characters in *The Rehearsal*, soon after he had assumed this business, Garrick, who in representing Bayes generally introduced some opportune or personal joke, thus addressed Hurst: "Sir," said he, "you are an actor, and, I understand, a brandy merchant. Now, sir, let me advise you to put *less spirit* in your liquor, but *more* in your acting, and you will preserve the health of your friends, and the approbation of the public." This sally was well received, and, as Garrick intended, augmented the number of Hurst's customers.

THE experienced actor is prepared for all accidents, cool upon all occasions, equal to every emergency. Some years ago a sensational drama was played at the Gaieté Theatre in Paris, entitled *Le Fils de la Nuit*. The chief attraction in this piece was a naval engagement between a pirate brig and two small boats. During the first performance of this effective scene, brilliantly illuminated by electric light, a ludicrous accident almost totally spoiled the whole effect. One of the fifty supers who worked the stormy undulations of the ocean managed to push his head through the canvas waves. For the sake of coolness, he had divested

himself of his upper garment, and there he stood, head and bust in the brilliant light, exposed to the full view of the spectators. Fechter, who represented the pirate captain, and commanded on board the brig, did not lose his presence of mind, but immediately called out: "*A man overboard!*" Aided by the crew, the amazed super was hauled on board, amid the applause of the gratified spectators, who fancied that this rescue from a watery grave formed part of the play.

"DURING the performances of some distinguished amateurs in behalf of the projected Guild of Literature and Art," says Mr Buckstone, "my dresser, named Parsons, was employed to superintend the costumes and the dressing of the various characters to be represented." Wishing to know how they had acquitted themselves, the following dialogue took place:—"Well, Parsons, how did the amateurs get on?" "Never see such a set of muffs in my life." "What do you mean? Are you aware who and what the gentlemen were?—great authors, artists, barristers, and others eminent in literature and science." "I don't care for that," said Parsons; "they were all regular muffs." "What do you mean?" asked Buckstone. "*Mean!* Why, they *couldn't button nothing!*"

A CAPITAL story is told of John Hollingshead's method of dealing with people who made impudent requests for gratuitous admission to his theatres. A so-called "gentleman" wrote to the

manager of the Gaiety some years ago to say that, *as people in evening dress gave a tone to the house,* the writer and a friend would be glad to go to the Gaiety, and would promise to appear in evening dress and white ties if Mr Hollingshead would give them a couple of seats. Mr Hollingshead was good enough to send them a couple of admissions—*to the upper gallery—dress clothes indispensable.*

FOOTE'S natural and ready wit was mixed with an unpleasant dash of unsparing maliciousness. When one of his friends, on a certain occasion, only quoted in jest some trifling circumstance about a "game" leg, Foote, who had a wooden leg, sharply replied: "Pray, sir, make no allusions to *my* weakest part. Did *I* ever attack *your head*?"

THERE was one Hambleton, a fine bass singer in his time, who lived to a great age, and latterly played old men in provincial theatres. One day, when travelling on the top of a stage-coach, it was overturned, and he rolled down a steep bank into a ditch below. His fellow-travellers, who had landed on the roadside, thought him dangerously wounded, if not killed. They descended the slope in great haste, but their fear subsided when they found him lying on his back, running through the scales. Coming to the lowest note he exclaimed: "*I thank God my G is all right!*" Fear gave way to laughter, and the vocalist was lifted out of the mud by light hearts and willing hands.

THE following account of the stage arrangements of a Dutch miracle play occurs in Chetwood's "General History of the Stage," the details "unfit for publication" are omitted. "The heavy Dutch have plays in their own language, but they are generally planned on the Old Testament. I had a description of one given me from an English spectator. It was the story of Abraham sacrificing his son Isaac. But Abraham was armed with *a gun* instead of a sacrificing knife. The angel, to prevent the gun from firing, sprinkled some water on the priming, in a manner not fit to be described. The ram in the bracken—which was represented by boughs of laurel, was a plump, fat Dutchman, with fair brow-spread antlers on his head fixed artificially; and all the decorations were of a piece." This description, it is only fair to add, is of the appliances of the Dutch stage in the first half of the eighteenth century.

JOHN KEMBLE once went to Dicky Peake's house "half-cocked," at half-past nine in the evening. Sheridan, he said, had appointed to meet him there, and he would not neglect being in time for the world. Peake sat him down to wine with Dunn, the treasurer. The three got exceedingly drunk, and all fell asleep, Kemble occupying the carpet. The tragedian was the first to wake. He arose and opened the window shutter, and, dazzled by the morning sunlight, roused his two companions, and their watches being all run out wondered as to the time of day. They soon heard eight strike. "Eight!" exclaimed Kemble; "this is too

provoking of Sheridan; he is always late in keeping his appointments. I don't suppose he will come at all now. If he *should*, tell him, my dear Dick, how long I have waited for him!" Therewith *exit* John Kemble.

WHEN G. F. Cooke was playing in Liverpool the manager found great difficulty in keeping him sober. After repeated transgressions he solemnly promised "not to cause any more trouble as he had given over drinking in a great measure." In the evening of the day upon which this promise was made, Cooke was not to be found when wanted for Sir Pertinax Macsycophant. The audience grew impatient, the manager stormed, and after a long search discovered him at a pot-house near the theatre, drinking with great composure and perseverance out of a small glass. On the irritated manager upbraiding Cooke with breach of his solemn promise, the incorrigible player answered: "I certainly made that promise, and I have kept it; I *have* given over drinking *in a great measure*," and he held the small glass up, triumphantly.

SOWERBY had by sundry applications of too much "spirituous" comfort incurred the severest displeasure of the Manchester public, which they marked in a signal manner by keeping away from the theatre on his benefit night. Just as the curtain was about to rise, Sowerby went up into the gallery, carrying a lantern at the end of a pitchfork, and stumbling over the only two individuals

seated there—viz. the fruit woman and her boy, he exclaimed: "Don't be alarmed, my worthy people. I am come upon the errand of Diogenes, but with this difference in our pursuit—that *he* went about the world looking for an honest man, and *I* am looking in vain *for any man at all.*"

GEORGE FREDERICK COOKE drank himself to death in New York, and was buried there. When Edmund Kean some years after visited America he caused the body to be taken up, and removed to another place, where he erected a monument over it. In the transition from the old grave to the new, Kean abstracted one of the toe-bones of the great actor, which he preserved as a relic, and brought back with him to England. On his return, the Drury Lane company went to meet him at Barnet, in order to welcome him back to the Metropolis. Elliston led the procession, the other actors followed according to rank. On encountering Kean, they were about to welcome him, when he stopped them. "Before you say a word, my merry men," said he, with a serious air, "behold! Fall down and kiss this relic! This is the toe-bone of the greatest creature that ever walked on earth—of George Frederick Cooke. Come, down with you all, and kiss the bone." The little black relic, not unlike a tobacco-stopper, was produced. Elliston, between doubt and reverence, fell upon his knees and kissed it. Stout Stephen Kemble dropped down with difficulty; then another came, and another, and actor after actor followed, from the beginning to the

end of the line, till all had performed the ceremony. The ridiculous relic was preserved for many years by Kean with the greatest reverence, until one day Mrs Kean in a fit of temper flung it from the window into a dry well in the Duke of Portland's garden, where it probably still lies. Kean never knew the culprit, but after a long search he gravely and sadly observed to his wife: "Mary, your son has lost his fortune. In possessing Cooke's toe-bone he was worth ten thousand pounds; now he is a beggar."

LISTON was a remarkably ugly man. Once he played the character of the elder Figaro in *The Two Figaros*, and it fell to his lot to speak the tag of the piece, which included an adaptation of two well-known lines of Pope. The audiences of those days had some slight acquaintance with literature, though the opportunity of being erudite in music-hall matters was denied them; and when Liston came forward and said:

"If to my share some human failings fall,"

the house, cognisant of the actor's grotesqueness of features, and knowing the second line of the quotation, burst into roars of laughter that lasted some minutes. Not a muscle of his countenance did Liston move, not an attempt did he make to go on, till perfect quiet was restored; and then he spoke with most correct intonation, gravely, and as if there was or could be nothing comic in the application, the second line—

"*Look in my face*, and you'll forget them all."

THERE was a silk mercer in the last century who had frequented Bury St Edmunds fair many years, and was remarkable for his imperturbable complacency ; his patience surpassed Job's. Lervey Owen, the actor, took a bet that he would ruffle the worthy dealer's temper. He walked to the booth, and inquired for a particular silk. It did not suit him when shown, and he desired to see another. That was nearer the colour, but a shade too light. A third, that was the right colour, but of too fine a texture. A fourth, too coarse ; a medium texture would suit. A fifth, no ; a sixth, seventh, eighth were taken down, rolled out, and inspected —all rejected. Still the mercer's patience was as inexhaustible as his stock. Lervey persevered. After looking over nearly every piece in the booth, and heaping the counter, the chairs and every available place with rolls of silk, paper, strings, half-unrolled pieces lying about in chaotic confusion, Lervey at length pointed to a roll high up on the topmost shelf, which he desired to have a look at. The obliging mercer mounted a ladder, and with infinite difficulty obtained it, naturally expecting from the trouble his customer gave that he intended to purchase a good many yards. Having placed it before Lervey, he unrolled it, at his request, to the very end. When the roller made its appearance, Lervey took it in his right hand like a truncheon, and flourishing it gravely about his head stuck it in his side. "Come," he said, "that will do; we've got it at last!" "What will do ?" exclaimed the mercer with profound astonishment. "Why, you must know, sir,"

replied Lervey, "that I am the principal tragedian in Mr Griffiths' company; and having to perform Richard the Third to-night, which you must be aware can never be played without a good truncheon, I didn't see one in the stock to suit me, and have come out to buy one. Pray, what's the price of this?" The mercer's virtue existed no longer; he positively foamed with rage, and, jumping over the counter, would probably have broken the roller over Lervey's head, had he not tumbled over his silks, which gave the actor time to make good his escape.

ONE day while Charles Bannister was under examination as a witness in the Court of King's Bench, the Lord Chief Justice retiring caused a temporary suspension of the proceedings. One of the learned counsel, by way of pleasantry, asked Bannister for a song. "With all my heart," he replied, "if I can have an accompaniment." The barrister replied that they had no music there. "I wonder at that," said Bannister, "for you seem to have the *band under your nose.*"

J. B. BUCKSTONE when managing the Haymarket Theatre was constantly being pestered for "paper." One afternoon a man came up to him, claimed his acquaintance, and begged the favour of a couple of seats. Business being bad, Buckstone readily gave them, scribbling the admission on a card. "By the way," remarked the stranger, after thanking him, "we haven't seen any of your plays lately, Mr Buckstone. Let us hope

that you are writing a new piece." "Not I," replied Buckstone; "*I'm too busy writing orders.*"

ANOTHER good story of Buckstone is told by Cyril Maude. Buckstone was crossing the Haymarket late one night when he noticed a man in a state of intoxication vainly endeavouring to embrace one of the pillars which support the portico of the theatre. "How dare you, sir," exclaimed Buckstone, going up to him—"how dare you defile this temple of classic comedy! You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Go home, sir; go home at once!" The bibulous stranger turned a lack-lustre eye on his adviser, and steadied himself with some difficulty against a pillar. "Go home yourself," he hiccoughed, "*you damned bad imitation of Buckstone.*"

A DELIGHTFUL story of John Emery is told by Cyril Maude in "The Haymarket Theatre." One evening, *Pizarro*, in which John Emery played the tender-hearted sentinel, was advertised for performance. A large audience awaited the rising of the curtain, which was so long delayed that signs and noises indicative of impatience became manifest, and someone was sent before the curtain to apologise and to explain that, in consequence of the absence of one of the chief actors, a few minutes' more indulgence must be begged. Hardly had the person retired behind the curtain when John Kemble, who was dressed for Rolla, took his place and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, at the request of the principal per-

formers in the play, I am to inform you that the person alluded to is Mr Emery." No sooner, however, had John Kemble made his bow and retired, than up turned Emery in a great-coat, with dirty boots, and his face streaming with perspiration. He was in such a state of agitation that he could scarcely articulate. "Ladies and gentlemen," he at last managed to say, "this is the first time I have ever had to appear before you as an apologist. But, ladies, for you I must particularly address, my wife was but an hour since brought to bed, and I ran for the doctor." Thunders of applause and yells of "Bravo, Emery!" greeted this speech, and the actor retired with his hand to his heart to "make up." During the piece Emery "got back" on John Kemble. Kemble, as Rolla, had to say to Emery the sentinel: "Have you a wife?" "I have," was the answer. "Children?" "I had two this morning—*I have three now.*" So delighted was the audience with John Emery's impromptu that Kemble had to retire in confusion.

THE tenor Gabrielli, brother of the great female singer of that name, once appeared at the Teatro Argentini in Rome. Before he had got through a dozen bars of his first song the critics began to hiss and hoot, and very deservedly, for he was execrable. Gabrielli thereupon came forward and addressed the audience in these words: "You fancy you are mortifying me in hooting me; you are grossly deceived. On the contrary, I applaud your judgment, for I solemnly declare to you that I never

appeared on any stage without receiving the same treatment, *and sometimes much worse!*" This appeal, though it produced a momentary laugh, could not procure a second appearance for the poor fellow.

A CAPITAL story is told of Elliston's youth. He had (says Cyril Maude) the manners of a saint, but he was not one, though he was known at school as the "young crocodile," from his extraordinary command of tears. He had his amours, like the rest of them, and among his flames was an innkeeper's wife at Wapping. One day, while paying his court to the lady, an alarm was given, and, no better place being found in which to hide him, Elliston was packed into a chest. The minutes flew by and, no release coming, the stifled youth turned to lift the lid; but in vain. Then suddenly there came to him the sound of dripping water, and shouts of "Fire!" His agony of mind was awful. He struggled in vain to get out, and at last fell back exhausted, only to be released by his inamorato a few moments later, the fire having proved but trifling. Describing the scene afterwards to a friend he remarked: "At last I had nothing for it but patience and prayer." "Prayer," rebuked the friend, "should have been preceded by repentance." "Sir," replied Elliston, "I did not pray directly for myself, but that those who were endeavouring to subdue the fire might be *induced to take care of the furniture.*"

CHARLES MATHEWS, himself an extraordinary quick study, and an actor who scarcely ever forgot a part, was intolerant of the needs

of those whose memories were poor. At one time, after he had been absent from the theatre for close upon two years, *The Game of Speculation* was put up for performance. The company asked for the parts. "Parts!" exclaimed Mathews, in great surprise. "Parts! Surely you can't want parts? Why, you played in it the last time I was here."

ONE night when Charles Mathews and his wife were "stars" at the Haymarket the curtain fell to the faintest of faint applause. Mrs Mathews, however, was determined to take the call despite the chilling welcome, and turned to Mr Braid, who was acting with her, begging him to lead her on. But he refused on the ground that the applause was insufficient. "Mrs Mathews," he said, "I was at Drury Lane Theatre the other night, and at the end of the third act Mr Philips received such a call as to his honour he refused. But, parcelled out, *it would last the stars of the Haymarket Theatre twelve months!*"

IN "The Haymarket Theatre" a good story is told of Sir Herbert Tree, and an awkward predicament he found himself in. He had run down to the provinces to play a matinée, and the town being some considerable distance from London there was nothing for him to do but to dress and "make up" for the evening performance at the Haymarket in the railway carriage during the return journey. The guard personally ushered him into a carriage at the provincial station, and the moment the train was well in motion Tree made up and dressed with his

usual care, transforming himself into the objectionable personality of Svengali. The guard, on the look-out for his tip, came to the carriage door at the end of the journey to release his passenger. Imagine his astonishment when, instead of the clean-shaven, immaculate gentleman on whom he had shut the door at the county town, he was confronted by a desperate villain of a murderous type. Scenting a ghastly tragedy, the guard refused to let the villain pass, despite his urgent protestation that he would be infernally late. "That won't do, my man," he said; "you've got to come along with me." It was some time before Tree, with all his eloquence, was able to convince the guard that he was the popular manager of the Haymarket Theatre—Beerbohm Tree.

A COMEDIAN, who had been almost lifted from his feet by the pressure at the funeral of a celebrated tragedian, ultimately reached the church door. Having recovered his breath, which had been suspended in the effort, he exclaimed: "And so this is the last we shall ever see of him, poor fellow! He has *drawn a full house*, though, to the end."

FOOTE was one day taken into White's Club by a friend who wanted to write a note. Lord Carmarthen approached to speak to him, but feeling rather shy he merely said: "Mr Foote, your handkerchief is hanging out of your pocket." Foote, looking suspiciously round, and hurriedly thrusting the handkerchief back in his pocket, replied:

"Thank you, my lord: *you know the company* better than I do."

A GENTLEMAN praising the personal charms of a very plain woman in the presence of Foote, the latter said: "And why don't you lay claim to such an accomplished beauty?" "What right have I to her?" exclaimed the gentleman. "Every right by the law of nations," replied Foote; "every right—*as the first discoverer.*"

THE play of *King Lear* being performed at Reading, the representative of Gloster was on one occasion taken ill, and another actor was found to take the part at a short notice. He got on famously as far as the scene where *Gloster had his eyes put out*, when he came to a standstill, and was obliged to beg permission to *read* the rest of the part.

SOME years ago, when Burton, the American actor, was in trouble, a young lawyer was examining him as to how he had spent his money. There was about three thousand pounds unaccounted for, when the barrister put on a severe scrutinising face, and exclaimed with much self-complacency: "Now, sir, I want you to tell this court and jury how you used those three thousand pounds." Burton assumed one of his serio-comic faces, winked at the audience and exclaimed: "*The lawyers got that.*" The judge and audience were convulsed with laughter; the lawyer was glad to let the comedian go.

IN a country theatre there were only seven persons in the house one night. The pit took offence at the miserable acting of a performer, and hissed him energetically; whereupon the manager brought his company on the stage, and *out-hissed* the visitors.

HENDERSON the actor was seldom known to be in a passion. When at Oxford he was one day debating with a fellow-student who, not keeping his temper, threw a glass of wine in the actor's face. Henderson took out his handkerchief, wiped his face, and coolly said: "That, sir, was a *digression.* Now for the argument."

FOOTE was once met by a friend in town with a young man, who was flashing away very brilliantly, while Foote seemed grave. "Why, Foote," said his friend, "you are flat to-day; you don't seem to relish a joke!" "You have not *tried me* yet, sir," was Foote's sarcastic reply.

STERNE, the reverend author of "The Sentimental Journey," had the credit of treating his wife very badly. He was one day talking to Garrick in a fine sentimental strain, praising conjugal love and fidelity. "The husband," said he, "who behaves unkindly to his wife deserves to have his house burned over his head." "If you think so," replied Garrick, "I hope *your* house is insured."

MISS KELLY standing one day in the street, enjoying the vagaries of a Punch and Judy show, with the rest of the crowd, the showman came

up to her and solicited a contribution. She was not very ready in complying with the request, when the fellow, taking care to make her understand that he knew who she was, exclaimed: "Ah! it's all over with the *drama* if we don't *encourage one another*."

MRS POWELL, the actress, was in court one day, when a young barrister rose to make his maiden speech. He suddenly stopped short and could not proceed. The lady, feeling for his situation, cried out, as though he had been a young actor on his first appearance: "Somebody *give him the word*—somebody give him the word!"

A LAUGHABLE occurrence took place in a theatre at Wigan early in the nineteenth century. The juvenile leading lady, a good actress —a very pretty woman, by the way, and a young mother—was cast to play Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*. Her baby had been placed in her dressing-room for security, and in order that it should be near its mother. But just before the balcony scene the young tyrant became unruly and impossible to control. What was to be done? A mother's tact hit upon the true soothing syrup: she nestled the infant to her breast, and from that moment the young villain became silent as a mouse. Juliet, being called, hastily mounted the supposed balcony, throwing a lace scarf over her shoulders, which concealed the little suckling; and leaning over the balcony, with one arm pensively placed upon her cheek, she looked the picture of innocence and beauty. The scene

opened and went glowingly. But, alas! Juliet had to appear and disappear three times, and in her effort to do so gracefully, and yet conceal her baby, she stumbled against the iron brace that supported the frail structure. Down fell the front of the balcony, and, lo! the love-lorn maid was discovered with a baby at her breast, seated on a tub, and at her foot, accidentally placed there by a thirsty carpenter, was a quart pot of beer. The said carpenter was discovered on all-fours, steadying with his back the rickety structure above. Shrieks of laughter from all parts of the house greeted the tableau, and of the play no more was heard that night.

IN his "Random Reminiscences" Charles Brookfield tells a delightful story of Tree, Comyns Carr and himself. He writes as follows:—"One summer's night in 1888, Comyns Carr and Tree and I had been dining together, and as we walked up the Haymarket soon after ten o'clock we noticed a very trifling conflagration on the terrace of the old Her Majesty's Opera House. Someone had opened the theatre with a season of promenade concerts, and the balcony above the principal entrance was tastefully laid out with grottos and palms in pots, and illuminated with coloured lights, so that an imaginative Londoner could sit there and smoke, and fancy himself miles away—say at Rosherville Gardens. Somehow or other, a Chinese lantern had set alight an eighteenpenny plant, to the great alarm of a sentimental couple who were sharing a glass of shandygaff close at hand. But a waiter soon extinguished

the blaze by a few adroit flicks of his napkin. However Comyns Carr decided that this was a matter to be inquired into, so we buttoned our overcoats up to our chins, with a vague idea of giving ourselves an official appearance, and walked up to the check-taker. 'We've called respecting that outbreak of fire on the terrace at ten-fifteen,' said Carr to the man, in a confidential yet authoritative undertone. 'I presume you'll let us pass quietly, without obliging us to exercise our authority?' 'Otherwise,' exclaimed Tree impetuously, clutching at some imaginary object in his inside breast pocket. 'Sh—sh, mate!' said Carr. 'Gently does it! Give the chap a chance. He seems an orderly well-conducted man.' 'I've nothing about him in my notes,' said I. We had by this time telepathically cast ourselves—Carr as a kind of inspector, Tree as an utterly impossible Gaboriau detective. and myself as a sort of nondescript *mouchard*. The check-taker turned rather pale. 'Are you from—the police?' he inquired, in an awe-stricken tone. 'From the Yard,' said Tree, in a metallic voice. 'If you'll kindly step this way,' said the man, 'I'll fetch the manager.' 'If you please,' said Carr. 'And it is my duty to inform you that anything you say will be taken down in writing, and altered and used against you at your trial.' We were soon on the terrace interrogating couples and cross-examining waiters. Tree turned to me, and said in an audible aside: 'Corky—twice down the terrace and report!' When I got back, the manager was begging that we would all come to his room, and take

a glass of wine, and Carr was taking impressions of the waiters' thumbs in his pocket-book by means of a piece of burnt cork. There was a tall rockery covered with ferns near where he stood. Tree now advanced to it, and pulled out a large jagged piece of rock, which proved to be a kind of corner-stone, for the whole structure fell in fragments on to the tessellated pavement. 'Why, what's that for?' inquired the astonished manager. Tree nodded his head two or three times mysteriously, then slipped the stone into his side-pocket, and ejaculated in sepulchral tones: 'Analysis!'"

SAMUEL FOOTE was generous to his actors and much liked by them; and was much more considerate and business-like than some of his habits would lead one to suppose. An actress complained to him one day of the low salary she received from Garrick, at Drury Lane, on which Foote asked her why she had gone to him, knowing the salary she might have had at the Haymarket Theatre. "Oh, I don't know how it was," she said, "he talked me over so, by telling me he would make me immortal, that I did not know how to refuse him." "Did he so, indeed," replied Foote. "Well, then, I suppose I must outbid him that way. Come to me then when you are free. I'll give you two pounds a week more, *and charge you nothing for immortality.*"

AN amusing incident happened in the Theatre Royal, Dublin, when an Italian company came to play *Faust.* The actor who took the part of Mephistopheles neglected to try the trap-door through

which he was supposed to descend into the infernal regions. His body was too large for the opening, and at the supreme moment he discovered he could not get down above the waist. To heighten the awkwardness of the situation, and to relieve the strained feelings of the audience, one of the "gods" in the gallery, in a rich Irish brogue, exclaimed: "Begorra! *the place is full!*"

MACKLIN was very intimate with Frank Hayman (at that time a well-known historical painter), and happening to call upon him one morning, soon after the death of the painter's wife, he found him wrangling with the undertaker about his high charge for the funeral expenses. Macklin listened to the altercation for some time; at last, going up to Hayman, he said: "Come, come, Frank, this bill, to be sure, is a little extravagant, but you should pay it, if it were only on account of the respect you owe to your wife's memory; for I am sure," he added, with the greatest gravity, "she would have paid twice as much for your burial with the greatest gladness, if she had the opportunity."

IN one of Douglas Jerrold's plays an old sailor trying to snatch a kiss from a pretty girl received a box on the ear. "There!" exclaimed Bluejacket, "like my luck: *always wrecked on the coral reefs.*" The manager, when the play was read in the green-room, could not see the fun, and the author struck it out.

THE elder Mathews one day arrived at a forlorn country inn, and addressing a lugubrious waiter inquired if he could have a chicken and asparagus. The waiter shook his head. "Can I have a duck then?" "No, sir." "Have you any mutton chops?" "Not one, sir." "Then as you have no eatables, bring me something to drink. Have you any spirits?" "Sir," replied the man, with a profound sigh, "we are out of spirits." "Then in wonder's name what *have* you got in the house?" asked Mathews. "An *execution*, sir!" replied the dolorous waiter.

SIR HENRY IRVING was noted amongst other things for the illegibility of his handwriting. On one occasion he wrote a letter of instant dismissal to a subordinate, who with difficulty deciphered it, and—used it as *a free pass to the Lyceum for years.*

MATHEWS being invited by D'Egville to dine with him at Brighton, D'Egville inquired what was Mathew's favourite dish. He was informed "a roast leg of pork with sage and onions." This was provided; and D'Egville, carving, could not find the stuffing. He turned the joint about, but in vain. Poole was at the table, and in his quiet way said: "Don't make yourself unhappy, D'Egville: *perhaps it is in the other leg.*"

A CELEBRATED vocal performer of awkward manners once said to Charles Bannister: "Do you know what made my voice so melodious?"

"No," replied Bannister. "Why, then, I'll tell you: when I was about fifteen I swallowed by accident some train oil." "I don't think," rejoined Bannister, "it would have done you any harm if at the same time you had *swallowed a dancing master.*"

DIGNUM and Moses Kean, the mimic, were both tailors. Charles Bannister met them one afternoon under the Piazza in Covent Garden, arm-in-arm. "I never see those men together," said he, "but they put me in mind of Shakespeare's comedy *Measure for Measure.*"

AN actor on his benefit night, having a very limited audience, when he came to the oft-quoted passage: "'Tis not in mortals to command success; we'll do more, Sempronius—we'll deserve it," heaved a deep sigh, and substituted for the last line, "We'll do more, Sempronius—*we'll do without it.*"

PETERSON, the comedian, lent a brother actor two shillings, and when he made a demand for the sum the debtor, turning peevishly from him, exclaimed: "Hang it! I'll pay you to-day in some shape or other." Peterson good-humouredly replied: "I shall be much obliged to you, Tom. to let it be *as like two shillings* as you can."

IN his last illness Crebillon expressed great regret that he should not live to finish the play which he had in hand, having gone through two acts in it only. The physician who attended him begged

that he would bequeath him the two acts. Crebillon turned to him and, with a smile, repeated a line from one of the acts:

"*Say, shall th'assassin be the dead man's heir?*"

AS Anstee was returning home with some jovial companions through Bath, about three in the morning, they accidentally met with the watch, who was regularly crying the hour. In the exuberance of their spirits, this was construed by some of them to be a sort of satire upon them for keeping bad hours. Anstee therefore insisted that the fellow should cry "past eleven o'clock" instead of three, on pain of corporal punishment. After some remonstrance, the poor man was obliged to comply; but, before he had finished his oration, suddenly recollecting himself he said shrewdly: "I know the *hour* I am to call, but *pray, gentlemen, what sort of weather* would you choose to have?" "*Sunshine*, you scoundrel, to be sure—*sunshine*!" Upon which, notwithstanding it was raining at that time violently, the accommodating watchman gravely cried out in the proper key: "*Past eleven o'clock and, by particular desire, a sunshiny morning!*"

A GENTLEMAN complained to old Bannister that some malicious person had cut off his horse's tail, which, as he meant to sell him, would be a great drawback. "Then," said Charles, "you must sell him wholesale." "Wholesale! How so?" "Because," said Bannister, "you cannot *re-tail* him."

MOODY had at the Bristol Theatre selected for his benefit *Henry VIII.*, in which an inferior performer, Roger Wright, was to enact a part; but not attending the rehearsal, Moody reproached him for his inattention to one of Shakespeare's best plays. "Best plays, Master Moody!" says Roger. "Why, it was damned; look ye here, in the book it is noted in the title-page as one of Shakespeare's *Hist.* plays."

ON one of the nights when Mrs Siddons first performed at Drury Lane, a little Jew boy, in his eagerness to get to the first row in the shilling gallery, fell over into the pit, and was dangerously hurt. The managers of the theatre ordered the lad to be conveyed to a lodging, and he was attended by their own physician; but, notwithstanding all their attention, he died, and was decently buried at the expense of the theatre. The mother came to the theatre to thank the managers, and they gave her his clothes, together with five guineas, for which she returned a curtsy, but with some hesitation added *they had forgotten to return her the shilling which Abraham had paid for coming in.*

A GENTLEMAN in company with Foote, at the Smyrna coffee-house, took up a newspaper, saying he wanted to see what the Ministry were about. "*Look among the robberies*," replied Foote.

WHEN Quin once dined at the country house of a nobleman famous for his parsimony the peer apologised for treating his guest with port wine

only, because the butler had lost the key of the claret cellar. The table being cleared of a scanty dessert, and the port wine finished, the host took his guest into the garden, where there was an aviary with a number of foreign birds, among others an ostrich. "This bird," said he, "has many strange properties, and can digest iron." "Can he?" replied Quin, "why then, I suppose he may have swallowed and digested the key of your claret cellar, and if I might advise your lordship, you had better get another made as soon as possible."

BEFORE there were actresses on the stage, men used always to fill the women's parts. On one occasion, when Charles II. was at the theatre, he grew impatient at the delay in commencing the play. The manager came and apologised by saying that "the queen had not quite done *shaving* yet."

WHEN a certain charge was brought against Foote, to which he proved an alibi, his friend advised him to prosecute for perjury. "I'll do it," said he; "for I'm sure the scoundrel has been egged on in this business by the Duchess of Kingston, and I know no better mode of *egging him off* than by letting him stand in the pillory." Lord Mansfield, after the trial was concluded, and the perjury evident, speaking to Foote from the bench, openly in court, said: "This is a very providential alibi. It has baffled the most infamous conspiracy that ever was set on *foot*."

THE man who played the flute, by some accident broke it while in the orchestra at Covent Garden Theatre. Edwin, running into the green-room, cried out: "Poor fellow! Poor fellow!" "What's the matter, my dear sir?" cried Mrs Webbe. "Why, madam," rejoined Edwin, "poor Mr —— has just split his *wind-pipe*."

GEORGE FREDERICK COOKE, like Liston, frequently took great liberties with his audience. Acting once at Liverpool, he was hissed for being so drunk as to render his declamation unintelligible. He turned savagely upon the people: "What! do you hiss me?—hiss George Frederick Cooke!—you contemptible money-getters! You shall never again have the honour of hissing me. Farewell! *I* banish *you*!" After a moment's pause he added in his deepest tones: "*There is not a brick in your dirty town but what is cemented with the blood of a negro!*"

ON another occasion when Cooke fell under the merited rebuke of a crowded house, by a repeated instance of gross intemperance, having vainly tried to recollect the beginning of Richard's first soliloquy he tottered forward with a cunning yet maudlin intent to divert the indignation expressed into a false channel; and, laying his hand impressively on his chest to insinuate that illness was the only cause of his failure, with upturned eyes supplicating all the sympathy of his audience, he hiccoughed out the unlucky words: "*My old complaint!*"

which was applied so aptly that a simultaneous burst of derisive laughter followed "the weak invention," and renewed hisses at length dismissed him from the stage for the night.

BARRYMORE, coming late to the theatre, and having to dress for his part, was driven to the last moment, when to heighten his perplexity the key of his drawer was missing! "Damn it!" he exclaimed, "I must have swallowed it." "Never mind," said Jack Bannister coolly, "it will serve to *open your chest.*"

GARRICK, whose vanity was pretty well known, was once acting the part of King Lear to such effect as to cause the sentinel on the stage to faint away during the last scene. When the curtain dropped, he ordered the man (by that time recovered) to attend him in the green-room, where he was rewarded for his great sensibility with a *guinea.* The fellow whose turn it was to stand in the same situation the succeeding night, hearing of his comrade's good luck, made a *sham faint*, but, unfortunately, his sole reward was dismissal.

AT the close of the season in which Shuter became so celebrated in the character of Master Stephen in the comedy of *Every Man in his Humour*, he was engaged to perform a few nights in a principal city in the north of England. It happened that the stage-coach he went down in (and in which there was only an old gentleman and himself) was

stopped on the other side of Finchley Common by a highwayman, who, having put the usual compliments to the old gentleman, and received his contribution, turned towards Shuter, who sat on the other side of the coach asleep, or at least pretending to be so. Saluting him with a smart slap on the face, and presenting his pistol, he commanded him to deliver his money instantly or he was a dead man. "Money!" returned Shuter, with a shrug, yawn and countenance inexpressibly vacant. "Oh! sir, they never trusts me with any, *for nuncle here always pays for me*, turnpikes and all, your honour." The highwayman gave him a few curses for his stupidity, and rode off, while the old gentleman grumbled; and Shuter, with infinite satisfaction and mirth, pursued the rest of his journey.

MACKLIN was once annoyed at Foote laughing and talking just as the former was about to begin a lecture: "Well, sir, you seem to be very merry there: but do you know what I am going to say now?" asked Macklin. "No, sir," replied Foote. "Pray, do you?"

BASS was a man of fine abilities and an excellent actor; but his unfortunate devotion to the bottle had prevented his attaining that position in the profession to which he might otherwise have aspired. He used to relate the following story against himself. Several years previous to his coming out to the United States he had been for a considerable period the manager of a provincial

theatre in England, on the boards of which Edmund Kean once appeared for a few nights. During his brief engagement *Othello* was performed three or four times, the rôles of the Moor and his Ancient being alternately assumed by the great tragedian and the manager. One evening they had been dining together, and the bottle had passed so freely that when they went on the stage they were both *bacchi plenus*. They got through the play, however, without their condition being discovered by the audience, until they came to the scene in the third act in which Othello seizes Iago by the throat and delivers the speech beginning:

"*Villain, be sure thou prove, etc.*"

Kean, who, on this occasion was the Othello, as he spoke grasped Iago so fiercely that, being somewhat unsteady on his legs, he fell, dragging his companion down with him. This accident confused them both, and when they regained their feet, Kean, instead of waiting for Bass to continue the dialogue, himself uttered the exclamation:

"*Is it come to this?*"

which properly belongs to Iago. Bass, who was of course "letter perfect" in either part, took the cue, and went on with that of Othello. For a moment or two the audience was not a little puzzled by this interchange of characters; but as soon as the real facts of the case dawned upon them they appreciated to the full the absurdity of the situation, and the remainder of the scene—usually listened to in breath-

less silence—was greeted with frequent peals of laughter. Both actors were alike surprised and disgusted at the merriment they caused. Kean in particular was in a towering rage, being at all times subject to violent outbursts of passion when in any way offended. Anger in some measure sobered him. Indeed, he might have said in the words of Cassio in an earlier part of the play:

> "*It hath pleased the devil Drunkenness*
> *To give place to the devil Wrath.*"

Still, he had no suspicion of the blunder he had been guilty of, and when he quitted the stage he made his way hastily to the green-room, without any of the other performers being afforded an opportunity of pointing out to him his error. As he entered the apartment, however, the reflection of his bronzed visage and Moorish garments in a small mirror over the mantelpiece caught his eye, and turning to his fellow-actor he abruptly exclaimed: "By God! Bass, I'm Othello!" "Of course you are!" was the reply. "Then why the devil did you assume my character?" was the angry query. "Because you, in the first instance, took mine, and *being as drunk as you were, I simply followed your lead.*" Kean was about to make a furious rejoinder to this retort when suddenly, the humorous side of the incident striking him, the heavy frown which had gathered on his brow relaxed, and bursting into a hearty fit of laughter he said: "Well, after all, I believe it was as much *my* fault as yours; but I fancy we shall find the people in front in no very appreciative humour

during the remainder of the evening." However, his acting was so fine that his fears were not realised, and he never once relaxed his hold upon the audience.

FREDERICKS relates that on one occasion, happening to be in Paris for a short time, he went one evening to see the celebrated Frédéric Lemaitre (the creator of Robert Macaire) in a piece in which his rôle was that of an assassin. He kills a woman, is surprised by the *gens-d'armes* in the very act, and, being asked his motive for committing the crime, he should say with cynical coolness: "Je l'ai attaquée; elle m'a resisté; je l'ai assassinée!" This speech, as Lemaitre was wont to deliver it, was one of the most effective in the play. On the night in question, however, he was very drunk, and, with the strange perversity not unfrequently characteristic of an advanced stage of inebriety, he refused to utter the expected words, simply replying to the interrogatory: "*Rien!*" A repetition of the query elicited the same response. The audience grew angry, and gave audible vent to their displeasure, upon which Lemaitre quitted the stage, amidst a storm of hisses. At this insult the audience waxed furious, and matters began to look very serious, when, suddenly, the dead woman rose to her feet, and walked solemnly down to the footlights. The clamour which had previously prevailed was instantly hushed, everyone being eager to hear what she had to say. "Messieurs et mesdames," she began, "*il m'attaquée; je l'ai resisté; il ma assassinée!*" It was enough. The important words had been uttered, and under circumstances

which gave piquancy to the situation. The audience at once recovered their good humour, and greeting the witty actress with a round of applause they allowed the play to proceed.

AT one time it was the practice for the management of Drury Lane to allow the entrée of the green-room to various gentlemen who were neither members of the company nor, indeed, in any way connected with the profession. Amongst others was a tall, powerfully built man, who usually stood with his back to the fire, a silent but observant spectator of all that passed around him. One evening in the autumn of the year 1816 another gentleman mentioned that he had recently witnessed in Paris the death of a young Englishman under very painful circumstances. He had been a frequenter of one of the numerous gambling houses which flourished in the French capital after the restoration of the Bourbons, as they had previously done under the Empire. One night, whilst losing heavily, he discovered that he was the victim of foul play, and at once denounced the swindler who had cheated him, The result was a duel, which it was arranged should be fought *à barriere*—that is, each adversary starts from a given point, and advances to a certain line, firing when he pleases. The Englishman, on reaching the spot beyond which he might not pass, fired, and missed his antagonist, who had not quitted his original position. The latter thereupon walked up to him, and, levelling his pistol at his head, inquired if he had a mother.

Receiving an answer in the affirmative he said coolly: "I am sorry for her," and putting his weapon to the forehead of the unfortunate young man blew his brains out. Various exclamations of horror and indignation greeted the narrative. The individual already referred to made no immediate comment on the story, but presently, taking up his hat, he left the apartment, saying quietly as he did so: "*Gentlemen, I must kill that damned scoundrel!*" For a little over a week nothing was seen of him. At the expiration of that period he appeared once more in his accustomed place in the green-room, silent and impassible as ever. Towards the close of the evening, as he was leaving, he said coolly: "Gentlemen, *I have killed that damned scoundrel,*" and then, without waiting for any comment upon his communication, took his departure. Inquiry was made, and it was ascertained that his assertion was true. He had gone over to Paris, found out the murderer of his countryman, picked a quarrel with him, and in the encounter which had ensued had shot him dead at the first fire.

MACREADY was a great stickler for historical accuracy, both as regards scenery and costume, in any play in which he appeared; and he invariably insisted upon the other performers, male and female, dressing the characters they represented in strict conformity with his views. On one occasion he was to play Virginius, a favourite part of his, and undoubtedly one of his finest impersonations. Mrs Pope was to be the Virginia; and thinking to give

herself a more juvenile appearance, she intended to wear ringlets, for which purpose she put her hair in curl papers. During the morning rehearsal, the season being winter, and the theatre rather cold and draughty, she kept on her bonnet, covering the whole of her head, and coming well forward over the face. Macready consequently did not observe at the time the condition of her hair. When night came, however, and he met Mrs Pope in the green-room dressed for Virginia, and perceived the ringlets, he was horrified. "My dear madam," he burst out, in his nervous excitable manner, "this will never do. No Roman woman, maid or matron, ever wore her hair in that style. It must be altered at once!" "I am very sorry, Mr Macready, that it does not meet with your approval," was the reply, "but what am I to do? It is too late to make any alteration now. *It will curl!*" "But it must not, I tell you, madam!" retorted the great tragedian angrily. "You cannot go on to the stage as you are. Ah, I have it!" he continued, after a moment's pause; "let someone get a bowl of water, put your hair in it for a few minutes, and it will no longer curl." Mrs Pope was not a little indignant at the suggestion; but Macready was an autocrat from whose decisions there was no appeal, and his request, or rather command, had to be complied with, the result being that the lady caught a very severe cold.

ON one occasion Macready—imperious as he was—met with his match. He was to play Macbeth at the Old Park Theatre in New York, and the actress

who was to take the character of Lady Macbeth—a Mrs Hunt—he met for the first time at rehearsal. As was his wont, he gave particular directions as to the manner in which he wished the "stage business" to be conducted in those scenes in which they appeared together. The whole scope and tendency of his instructions were such that, if strictly followed, the lady would, as the French say, have "effaced" herself. Indeed, in desiring that in the banquet scene she should keep well to the back of the stage he, with unconscious egotism, added: "So that the attention of the audience may in no way be distracted from me." Mrs Hunt rather allowed him to infer from her silence that it was her intention to comply with his request, but she was careful not to explicitly promise to do so. She went, too, through her part so tamely during the rehearsal, that Macready did not anticipate that there was any danger of her attempting to make her rôle a very prominent one. What then was his astonishment and disgust, when the evening performance took place, to find that Mrs Hunt—who was in reality an excellent actress—not only systematically disregarded his previous injunctions, but played Lady Macbeth so admirably as to fairly divide with him the applause of the audience. Macready, after the piece was over, remonstrated angrily with Mrs Hunt for her non-compliance with his wishes, and intimated that he should require the manager to insist upon the instructions given her being followed for the future. The lady heard him to an end without interruption, and then quietly replied: "In my contract with

Mr Simpson" (the lessee) "I find no mention of any condition that I am to be instructed by Mr Macready, or anyone else, as to the manner in which I am to play the characters for which I am cast; and I distinctly decline to submit to any dictation in the matter." Then, without waiting for a reply, Mrs Hunt quitted the green-room, leaving Macready speechless with anger and mortification. He was for once fairly beaten, and, having the good sense to recognise the fact, he made no further attempt to interfere with the lady's rendering of the parts she played with him.

AN actor named Priest was playing at one of the principal theatres. Someone remarked at the Garrick Club that there were a great many men in the pit. "Probably clerks, *who have taken Priest's orders,*" said Mr Poole, one of the best punsters, as well as one of the cleverest comic satirists of the day.

ONE of the Kembles made his first appearance on the stage as an opera singer. His voice was, however, so bad that at a rehearsal the conductor of the orchestra called out: "Mr Kemble! Mr Kemble! you are murdering the music!" "My dear sir," was the quiet rejoinder, "it is far better to murder it outright than to keep on *beating it, as you do.*"

REYNOLDS, the dramatist, once met an actor of the "free and easy" type, who told him that he had passed three festive days at the seat of

the Marquis and Marchioness of —— *without any invitation.* He had gone there on the assumption that, as my lord and lady were not on speaking terms, *each would suppose the other* had asked him; and so it turned out.

BOOTH, the tragedian, had a broken nose. A lady once remarked to him: "I like your acting, Mr Booth; but, to be frank with you, I *can't get over your nose.*" "No wonder, madam," replied he; "*the bridge is gone!*"

MISS ALMA MURRAY narrates an amusing episode which occurred at the Lyceum Theatre when under the management of the late Sir Henry Irving. It was in *The Lyons Mail* in the parting scene between Lesurques and his daughter Julie. Sir Henry (then Mr Irving) had instructed her to "*sob and sob and keep on sobbing*" until he was right off the stage, and not to take any notice of his various halts and pauses. The business arranged was that Alma Murray should fall round his neck near the O. P. side with her face buried on his chest, and the whole scene was worked up to the exit, which was on the prompt side. She did what she was told, *and sobbed and sobbed and sobbed,* and the applause was long, being only broken by Irving's pauses and fresh bits of acting. Suddenly she heard the assistant stage manager—Mr Allen—saying: "Poor child, she is carried away by the scene; get her a chair and some water," and he at once proceeded to unlink her arms from Irving's neck. To her dismay

she found that they were both already off the stage a few yards, and that Irving was beginning to change for Dubosc, as he had to appear on the other side of the stage at once. Naturally, Miss Alma Murray said she wanted neither a chair nor water, but having her eyes closed she had not realised they were "off." Fortunately she realised the humour of the situation, and for the rest of the performance played her part with her own inimitable charm.

ANOTHER amusing experience of Miss Alma Murray's—which however she can have hardly thought funny at the time—was once when she was playing Pauline in *Called Back*. In the last act, just as Pauline's memory is returning, and she catches sight of Macari "off stage," she cries out vehemently: "Not that face! Not that face!" As she uttered these words, a dog walked calmly on to the stage and looked up at Miss Murray. Roars of laughter from the audience: Macari, still out of sight of the audience, was convulsed with laughter, and could not come on. The audience soon realised the actress's difficulty, ceased their laughter and gave her a long round of applause, during which the dog was captured and led off. Macari then came on, and the scene was terminated with due decorum and effect.

CHARLES BROOKFIELD gives the following amusing account of his first meeting with Sir Herbert Tree—at that time Mr Tree. He writes in his "Random Reminiscences": "The first time I ever saw Tree was at Cambridge, probably in

1877. He had not been long on the stage, and he was staying at Trinity with a friend of mine called Pashly. Pashly was invited to dine with the Hibernian Club (I presume it was on 17th March), and on his explaining that he had someone staying with him he was told to bring his guest to dinner. It was a tremendous banquet given in the Guildhall, and there were something like two hundred guests. After various toasts, the president in due course proposed the health of 'The Guests,' and a distinguished old Irish peer on his right took a final glance at his notes, and a final gulp of port, and dug his knuckles into the table so as to hoist himself into position to reply, when, at a remote end of the room, a slight, auburn-haired youth rose, pushed back his chair, and addressed the company. 'Mr President and gentlemen,' he said, 'I thank you from my heart for the gracious way in which you have drunk my—our health. I will not inflict a long and tedious speech upon you, but I will give you a few imitations of popular actors. Mr Irving: "Eah! daun't you hear—the sund of bell-ll-ll-lls?"' The elderly peer turned purple and barely escaped a fit of apoplexy. The president turned pale, hurriedly scribbled a note thanking Tree for his kind offer to entertain, but explaining that the prearranged toast list must first be duly gone through, and despatched it down the table by a flying waiter. But the young histrion, with a characteristic gesture, waved the menial aside and proceeded: 'Mr Macready as Melantius, in *The Bridal.*' Two or three more presidential notes were sent begging him to stop, but all in vain. He

went right through his repertoire, from Irving via Toole and Thorne to Edmund Kean as Oroonoko, and then sat down without turning a hair. The Irish peer rose after him, and endeavoured to speak, but failed to utter a single intelligible word."

W. S. GILBERT, the dramatist, and F. C. Burnand, the editor of *Punch*, happened one day to meet in Fleet Street, and after a few minutes' conversation were about to part, when Gilbert said: "By the by, Burnand, I suppose a great number of funny stories are sent in to your office?" "Oh yes!" said Burnand—"thousands." "Then, my dear fellow, *why don't you publish them?*" remarked Gilbert, as he walked off.

LAURENCE IRVING tells a good story of a little newspaper boy and his fascination for Laurence Irving's exciting drama, *The Unwritten Law*. Early in the run of the play a friend asked Irving for a seat for a protégé of his, a newspaper boy, who was so busy that he was unable to get to the theatre early enough on a Saturday to obtain a place in the gallery. He made several attempts, but was always met with "Gallery Full." Irving gave the boy a seat in the upper circle. In the late spring he met his friend again. "What about your newspaper boy?" asked Irving. "Did he like the play?" "He never expressed an opinion," replied the gentleman, "but every Saturday during the run of the play he paid a boy a penny to stand in the queue, so that you have got your upper circle seat back with interest!"

IMAGINATION sometimes plays strange freaks, as Miss Esmé Beringer can testify. On one occasion at the Palace Theatre when she was playing in the fencing sketch, *At the Point of the Sword*, the following incident happened. Her brother, George Silver, was playing with her in the big rapier-and-dagger fight. She missed a parry, and his rapier grazed her forehead. Miss Beringer immediately put her hand up to her head, and a few seconds afterwards caught sight of her sleeve and cuff, which were drenched with blood. She thought to herself: "I'm badly hurt, but I'll be brave and finish the sketch," which she did. Staggering to her brother she said: "George, I'm badly cut. I think I am going to faint." "I wouldn't worry to do that, old girl," he replied. "*It's my blood—not yours*—for you cut my thumb and wrist open!"

ON another occasion, at a Saturday matinée, at the Palace Theatre, Miss Esmé Beringer was reciting "Lasca" by Desprez—a serious recitation. In the middle of it a small boy in the stalls called out at the top of his voice: "Oh! mother, do tell her to go away, *and let the little dogs come back!*" It is needless to say that the fair Esmé found it somewhat difficult to finish her recitation.

MACREADY was a man of ungovernable temper at times, as the following extracts from his diary tend to prove. "*May*—the first of May—the month dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. May I live this month in humility and at peace with all men.

May 2nd. Got up. Breakfasted. Went to rehearsal at 10.30; lost my temper and struck the prompter. *Dominus vobiscum.* This must never occur again. *May 3rd.* Went to rehearsal, full of good resolutions. Hit the prompter twice in the face. Alas, my temper is a great affliction. Gave the prompter five shillings. How can I curb this! *Mea maxima culpa.*"

WHEN playing Macbeth one night at Manchester, Macready's servant, who should have been in the wings with a bowl of cochineal which Macready used to smear on his hands to represent blood, failed to put in an appearance. Macready's exit was only a very momentary and very rapid one, and, finding that the blood he relied on for the next scene was not at hand, he rushed up to an inoffensive commercial traveller, who had been allowed by the special favour of his friend, the local stage manager, to come and watch the mighty star from the side, and without any warning struck him a violent blow on the nose, smothered his hands in the blood that flowed freely, and ran on to the stage again to finish the performance. When the curtain fell, he apologised to the commercial for his apparent rudeness, as he put it, in the most courtly and chivalrous manner, presenting him with a five-pound note.

MACREADY had a trick of talking under his breath during the progress of a scene, and often at the end of his lines. Once, in a costume play, he had to point to a young man who was playing the

part of a beau of the period. The youth who had been cast for the part was untidy and slovenly in appearance, and by no means pleased Macready when he made his entrance. The tragedian looked hard at him, before eulogising him as he should have done, and when he did speak added one of his own habitual asides, so loudly that the house roared with laughter. "See where the young prince comes," said Macready, "a very noble youth, of handsome face and gallant bearing. God forgive me, *look at his dirty neck!*"

SEYMOUR HICKS, in his delightful little book, "Seymour Hicks by Himself," tells a good story of Charles Brookfield. One evening Hicks was sitting at the end of the long table in the old Beefsteak Club talking with some other actors, while at the other end was a group of well-known painters. The Royal Academy had opened its doors that day, and Archie Wortley, who was the centre of the group, was discussing the hanging committee, and criticising them somewhat severely. Wortley's two pictures had been refused, he being unrepresented for the first and only time on the Academy walls. He was irritable and out of temper, and evidently the laughter at the actors' end of the table at one of Brookfield's stories jarred on his nerves, for angrily looking up he said: "Brookfield, I wish you actors would contrive to make less noise. We can see you in the theatre any night we like for ten-and-sixpence." "I know," replied Brookfield. "I thought I could see you to-day at the Academy for a shilling, *but I didn't.*"

JOHN TOOLE dearly loved a joke. On one occasion he went into the General Post Office in the City and asked for a penny stamp. The clerk brought out a huge sheet, and Toole said: "I want *that* one." "Which one?" said the clerk. "*That* one," replied Toole, pointing to the centre one. A long argument ensued, Toole saying that in purchasing a stamp he had a perfect right in law to choose the one he fancied, and so emphatic was he on the point that he had his way, but not before he had created a disturbance, and clerks from other counters had left their work to see what was going on.

MRS CHARLES CALVERT delights in an old reminiscence of the days when many of the street hawkers' barrows, laden with fruit, vegetables, etc., were drawn by large Newfoundland dogs. Her childish heart at that time was often wrung as she watched the poor overburdened animals dragging their heavy loads through the streets. One summer she was spending her summer holidays with an uncle and aunt residing in the country, and the morning after the arrival her aunt said to her: "Your uncle and I are going for a drive in the dog-cart this afternoon, and if you're a good girl you shall go with us." "No, auntie," she cried, "I don't want to go—it would be so cruel." "Cruel!" replied her aunt. "Yes, auntie—*too much for the poor dog.*"

HENRY KEMBLE, known to his friends as "The Beetle," hated cant and humbug of any kind, and a snob beyond all power of expression.

Once, when some empty-headed youth talked of nothing but titled nonentities for about an hour, and at the end of his discourse turned to Kemble for corroboration as to the characteristics of some noble duke, Kemble turned a cold eye on him, and squashed him by saying: "I really can't say anything about the gentleman. The only member of the British aristocracy I know is Lord George Sanger."

WILSON BARRETT used to tell an amusing story against himself. Once when he had a lot of workmen redecorating his private residence, thinking to give them a treat, he asked them if, after work one evening, they would all like to have seats to see him play in *The Lights of London* at the Princess's. They said they didn't mind if they did, and, being given complimentary tickets, all went to witness on a Saturday night their employer's production. At the end of the week Barrett's eye caught sight on the pay sheet of an item against each workman's name, which read: "*Saturday night. Four hours' overtime at Princess's Theatre, 8s.*"

SOME years ago when Charles Collette was playing *The Colonel* at the Theatre Royal, York, an old friend of his—a dignitary of the Church—who was sitting in Collette's dressing-room, expressed a wish to see what the stage was like from the actors' side of the curtain. Between the acts Collette took him on, and in crossing he tripped over some obstacle and fell. Collette assisted him to rise—apologising for the semi-darkness which had

caused the accident. "Oh! don't trouble yourself, my dear Charlie," said the cleric, laughing good-naturedly, "this is not the first time the Church has *been down on the Stage.*"

CHARLES COLLETTE often narrates an excellent Irish bull he heard. One morning in Dublin, not feeling very well, he hired a car on Stephen's Green for an hour's drive, for which the fare was half-a-crown. Collette told the driver to take him to Glasnevin, the Phœnix, or anywhere out of town, and above all to go quietly. He started off at a hand gallop, whilst Collette clung on to the rail. "Stop, stop!" cried he. "Didn't I tell you to go easy?" "Och, to hell wid ye!" the driver shouted back. "Do you think I'm going to be *the whole day driving a bally hour*!"

ONLY a few weeks after Charles Collette had retired from his regiment (the 3rd Dragoon Guards) he made his first professional appearance on the stage at the old Prince of Wales' Theatre, Tottenham Street, under the Bancroft management. Oddly enough, the first words he had to speak on the stage were: "I wonder what they're saying about me at the War Office now?"

GERALD LAWRENCE had an amusing experience in South Africa, where he once took out a company. In the repertoire was *The Lady of Lyons*. One afternoon in Kimberley his manager came to him almost speechless with laughter, and

said that two old ladies had driven up to the theatre and inquired at the box office for two stalls for that night if he could assure them *that the animals were under proper control.* The assurance was promptly forthcoming.

WEEDON GROSSMITH was once the unsuspecting victim of an amusing practical joke. Grossmith went to Simmons' in King Street, Covent Garden, to try on his costume for *David Garrick*, which was to be played at a command performance. In a room adjoining were Arthur Bourchier, Du Maurier, Arthur Williams, Edward Compton, Edward Terry and many others who were on the same errand. They were all waiting for their costumes to be tried on, and it seemed difficult to get any attention. At last a little chap came up to attend to Grossmith. He seemed very quiet, and more like a countryman than a costumier's assistant. In any case, he did not seem to know much about the business, and kept asking: "Will this do?" and offered utterly impracticable suggestions. "I think you'll find the waistcoat all right, Mr Wright," he said at last. "He takes you for Huntly Wright," whispered Compton. "Well, never mind," replied Grossmith. Then the little man said: "Shall I send them to the Tivoli; it's Mr Wilkie Bard, isn't it?" Grossmith had by this time nearly lost his temper, more especially as he heard the others laughing. He told Du Maurier he thought it must be some poor chap they had got in to help in the rush, but as they left the place together Du Maurier

asked Grossmith: "Do you know who the poor chap was?" "No," replied Grossmith. "Well," he continued, laughing, "it was 'Teddy' Payne!" Then, and not till then, did Grossmith realise he had been "had."

ADA BLANCHE, the famous "boy" of the Drury Lane pantomimes, ascribes much of her success in the profession to some advice given her by Ellen Terry. On one occasion, after playing in *Kerry* one night at the Theatre Royal, Brighton, the great actress, who had been in "front," came into the green-room after the first piece; placing her hand on Miss Blanche's shoulder, and looking at her with that bewitching smile of hers, she said: "Very good, little girl; but smile, dear, smile; grin like a Cheshire cat; never look serious in comedy parts." Advice which was never forgotten by the fair recipient of it.

ON another occasion old Laurie, father of Charles Laurie, gave Ada Blanche a practical and sound piece of advice. She was playing a boy's part at Drury Lane, when he came to her one day and said: "Now, little Ada, remember this—always when you are playing boys' parts—*keep your knees in.*"

ONE of Rutland Barrington's peculiarities—the exercise of which the public love, and have grown to expect from him—is that he sometimes sings out of tune. On one of the Gilbert

premières, the celebrated author was seated in a box, watching his work, when a young lady turned to him and said excitedly : " Oh ! Mr Gilbert, Rutland Barrington is singing in tune." " Oh ! don't worry about that, my dear," said Gilbert ; " it's only first-night nervousness ; he'll get over it."

AN excellent story of Arditi, the celebrated conductor, is told by Seymour Hicks in his autobiography. Arditi was absolutely bald, and once managed to convince a bank clerk in Liverpool of his identity by his baldness, and so got a draft honoured which was at first refused. Arditi went into the bank and presented a cheque across the counter made payable to himself. The cashier, who was a great lover of music, and who knew all the celebrated people in the concert and operatic world, looked at Arditi, and handed the cheque back to him, saying : " This won't do. It is made payable to Arditi." " But I *am* Arditi," said the musician. " Oh no ; you're not—oh dear, no. You can't take *me* in. I know Arditi. I have seen him conduct dozens of times," said the bank clerk. " Oh ! " said the old man, " you have seen him conduct ? " " Yes, often," replied the careful business man. " Good ! Then you shall recognise his face," said Arditi. With this, he removed his hat and, turning his back on the cashier, began to beat four in a bar with his umbrella. The effect was magical. " Oh," said the bank clerk. " Yes—yes, I recognise you. I know your bald face now." And he gave him the money instantly.

IN a play at the Lyceum, Henry Irving had to shoot John Clayton dead, but one night, to the dismay of everyone, the gun missed fire! Irving tried it again; no use; and things seemed to be at a deadlock, with Clayton walking about the stage passively waiting to be killed, for what seemed like ten minutes, until Irving solved the difficulty by clubbing the gun and felling him with it.

AN amusing story is told by Rutland Barrington, in his Reminiscences, of Sothern, in connection with his taking the part of Careless in *The School for Scandal* in his early days. Sothern did not sing, and rather than have the song cut it was arranged that he should sit at the top of the table, close to the back cloth of the scene, behind which a singer was concealed, while Sothern acted and mouthed the song. It was a great success, and Sothern sat down delighted, only to find to his horror that the audience insisted on an encore! He turned his head to the hole cut in the cloth behind him and whispered anxiously: "Are you there?" No answer! He then bowed gracefully to the audience, coughed, put his hand on his throat deprecatingly and sat down. Meantime, the singer had been hurriedly summoned, and just as Sothern was proceeding with the dialogue the first few strains of "Here's to the maiden" floated through the orifice!

GEORGE GROSSMITH was on one occasion, when he visited Sir W. S. Gilbert at Harrow Weald, entrusted with a message to deliver to him

from an actor for whom Sir William had no great affection. The young actor asked Grossmith if he would mind asking Gilbert to give him the first refusal of the leading part in the forthcoming Gilbert and Sullivan opera. Grossmith broached the subject timidly to the brilliant author, as they walked together round his beautiful grounds. He concluded by saying: "He only wants you to give him the first refusal of the part." Gilbert, like a flash of lightning, said: "With the greatest pleasure. *I refuse him at once.*"

CORNEY GRAIN one night when being chaffed because business was none too good at his hall of entertainment turned to his assailant, and said in front of his partner—German Reed: "Dear fellow, what can I do? When the weather is stormy, all I have to lean upon is a German *Reed.*"

FEW people, says Seymour Hicks, could tell a comedy story better than Henry Irving, or see the humour of a situation more quickly than he. It is told of him that for one of his productions he required a horse to ride, and sent to Messrs Hale & Son, who supply actors with horses trained not to take advantage of the performers' steeplechasing qualities. Hale, on receiving his instructions, brought down a white horse, a seasoned veteran. On being shown the animal, Irving said to Hale: "Quiet, is it, eh? No tricks, no jumping into the big drum, or anything of that kind, eh?" "Oh dear, no!"

replied Hale. "Very quiet, sir, and knows his stage business well. He carried Mr Beerbohm Tree all last season." "Ah! did he?" said Irving; "did he?" At that moment the horse opened his mouth and yawned, which Irving noticing said: "*Ah! a bit of a critic, too, I see! Eh?*"

HENRY IRVING once saw Seymour Hicks in a French farce, and when the curtain fell said: "Well, you're at the comedy game, I see, eh? Do you know, you remind me of Charles Mathews; very like him, very." "I'm so glad," replied the proud Hicks. "Yes," he continued; "*you wear the same sort of collars!*"

A GOOD story is told of W. S. Gilbert. Once during a rehearsal Sir William's then *prima donna* was nowhere to be found. The author himself went in search of her, and meeting the fireman at the back of the dress circle asked him if by any chance he had seen the lady. "Oh yes," said the obliging fireman; "*she's round behind.*" "Yes," replied Gilbert, "I know that; but *where is she?*"

ARTHUR PINERO, during his acting days as a member of Henry Irving's company, scored off his chief rather heavily. There used to be a Lyceum tradition that very few of the actors ever found themselves able to get to the centre of the stage, and that many a long speech was reduced to the smallest possible length. Pinero one day was sitting at rehearsals on a piece of profile scenery.

Irving, seeing him, said: "Get up, my boy; get up. You'll cut yourself." "Oh! that will be all right, Mr Irving," said the future great dramatist; "we are accustomed to having *our parts cut in this theatre!*"

JIMMY GLOVER, the musical director of Drury Lane, once adapted a play from the French for three pounds, with a promise of a further ten shillings if it were a success; the purchaser made something like twenty thousand out of it, but, says Glover, "it is only fair to say that when I wrote for the extra ten shillings it was paid without a murmur!"

ELLEN TERRY once had a painful experience when playing Puck at the Theatre Royal, Manchester. She was quite an experienced little actress at that time—Henry Irving, though ten years older, was at that time just making his first appearance. She was playing Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and had come up through a trap at the end of the last act to give the final speech. Up she came—but not quite up, for the man shut the trap-door too soon, and caught her toe. She screamed, her sister Kate rushed to her, and banged her foot on the stage; but the man closed the trap tighter, mistaking the signal. Mrs Kean came rushing on, and made them open the trap, and so her foot was released. "Finish the play, dear," she whispered excitedly, "and I'll double your salary!" There was her sister Kate holding her up on one side,

and Mrs Kean on the other. The fair little Ellen did finish the play—somewhat in this manner:

"If we shadows have offended, (Oh! Katie, Katie)
Think but this, and all is mended, (I hope my poor toe will,)
That you have but slumbered here
While these visions did appear, (I can't; I can't!)
And this weak and idle theme
No more yielding but a dream. (Oh dear! Oh dear! *a big sob.*)
Gentles, do not reprehend;
If you pardon, we will mend (Oh! Mrs Kean!).[12]

GEORGE GROSSMITH, in his amusing little book, "A Society Clown," tells a good story relative to the enthusiasm or otherwise of some country audiences. On one occasion, when his father had concluded the first portion of an entertainment at some little hall in the country, he said to the chairman, who followed him into the ante-room: "The audience seem most enthusiastic." "Do you think so, Mr Grossmith?" replied the chairman. "Why, I thought they were exceptionally apathetic." "Well," retorted Grossmith's father, "I thought they were, if anything, *too* enthusiastic; for they were knocking their umbrellas and sticks without cessation on the ground, all the time." "Oh!" said the chairman languidly, "that wasn't applause. You see our post office is at the other end of the room, and they are simply *stamping the letters for the up-mail.*"

A PERFORMANCE of *Othello*, in which John Coleman was playing Othello, once threatened to come to an abrupt and novel termination in

consequence of the eccentricity of the lady who went on for Emilia. Although a fine strapping creature, she had a voice like a penny whistle, and she made such a lamb-like idiot of Emilia that every line she uttered evoked a guffaw. The remembrance of his small triumph when he was permitted to attempt Othello to the greatest Iago of the age (Macready) added to Coleman's mortification in being associated with this degrading burlesque, and angered him to such an extent that when he rushed at the lady with a drawn scimitar in the last scene she was so alarmed that she turned and *bolted off the stage*, amidst uncontrollable yells of laughter. It was in vain the stage manager urged her to return and finish her part. "What!" she gasped, "go on again to that maniac with a drawn sabre in his hand! No, thank you!" Nothing could induce her to return, and the play had to be finished without her.

VANDENHOFF was such a martyr to nasal catarrh that he always found it absolutely necessary to clear his bronchial tubes at the wings before he came on, and it was by no means unusual for him at the commencement of the oration as Brutus, or at the height of an impassioned scene in *Coriolanus*, to have recourse to his pocket-handkerchief, a process which invariably evoked a sound such as is now emitted by the danger signal of a motor car. Upon the night of his debut in his native city as Earl Osmond (*Castle Spectre*) his brother and a large circle of friends assembled to do honour to the occasion. At the critical moment preceding

his entrance Osmond was heard "clearing the scuppers" at the wings, and there arose, amidst a hush of breathless expectation, a "rootitah" like the blast of a foghorn. At that well-known sound the brother exclaimed: "The Earl! I *know his trumpet*," and on stalked the stately tragedian amidst a roar of laughter which might have been heard on Salisbury Plain!

ON one occasion Coleman was playing Othello to Macready's Iago, and not being able to act with gloves on his hands had removed as he thought all traces of the "pigment" with which he had made up, from the palms of his hands, but as his excitement increased the wretched stuff seemed to ooze out of his very pores. When he came to the famous speech,

"Villain, be sure you prove my love, etc."

he sprang upon Iago and seized him by the throat. He remembered nothing more until he found that he had literally flung him bodily down upon the stage and was standing above him, erect and quivering with wrath. Macready growled like an angry lion. The effect upon the audience was electrical. They got up and cheered, and for some time the progress of the play was interrupted. This gave Coleman time to collect himself, when, to his horror, he saw that in his ungovernable rage he had torn open Iago's vest and, worse still, left the black marks of his fingers on his beautiful white cashmere dress. When they came off the stage Macready glared at Coleman and

growled: "Er—well, sir, what have you to say?" "I'm very sorry, sir!" humbly replied Coleman. "Er—sorry, sir. By gad! you sprang upon me more like a young tiger than a human being." "I was so carried away by the passion of the scene," continued Coleman, "that I forgot myself; I must ask you to remember the novelty of the position in my being permitted to attempt so great a part beside so distinguished an actor as yourself." "Don't humbug me, sir!" said Macready. "I scorn to attempt it; nevertheless the honour you have done me to-night might well have turned an older head than mine. Pray, sir, make some allowance for my excitement," pleaded Coleman. At this appeal Macready relaxed into a grim smile and growled: "Say no more—say no more; only remember, the next time you play this part with me, confine your excitement to your mind, and leave your muscles to take care of themselves."

CHARLES KEAN and his wife Ellen were profoundly attached to each other—she positively idolised him. She used to say with the most perfect *naïveté*: "When my Charlie was a boy he was the ugliest lad I ever met; but I could never see his ugly face for his beautiful gig-lamps of eyes." To which he responded: "And I could *d*ever see yours, *D*elly, because of your beautiful *d*ose." "And you could not see much of that, dear, for I was always falling down and breaking it and coating it with scale armour," replied his wife.

IN the part of Macbeth, Charles Kean had splendid and picturesque moments, more especially in the last act. During the performance of this play, Richards, who afterwards became a popular star at the minors, enacted Seyton. Being "a fellow of infinite jest" he was occupied in telling funny stories in the green-room when he ought to have been on the stage in the fourth act. There was a "dead stick," and Kean was furious. He prowled up and down the stage like a tiger, growling: "Where is the brute? Send him on, that I *b*ay kill him!" After a long delay, Mr O. Seyton appeared. "What's your Grace's will?" he inquired, in great trepidation. "Saw you the weird sisters?" fiercely demanded Kean. To which Seyton ought to reply: "No, my lord," but with a desire to make matters agreeable to the irate tragedian he replied: "*Yes*, my lord!" Quite taken off his balance, Kean gasped: "The devil you did! Where are they then?" Utterly unmanned, the wretched Seyton replied: "I'll show your Majesty if you'll deign to step round the corner!" Of course not another word of the scene could be heard, but when they made their exit Kean let fly and anathematised Seyton, who was however equal to the occasion. "Although I admit I am to blame," said he, "yet the fault was yours, sir." "*B*ine, sir, *b*ine!" said Kean. "Yes, sir; I was standing at the wing looking at the scene, when you *magnetised, dazzled and blinded me by the effulgent light of your eyes.*" "Bless my soul! you don't say so." "Yes, indeed, sir." Kean, whose weak point was vanity,

relaxed into a smile as he replied: "Well, don't do it again, dear boy, because you flummuxed me, and I can't bear to be flummuxed."

A PRETTY little story is told of Mrs Kendal, when she in her early days, as little Madge Robertson, took part in a piece entitled *The Stranger*. Little Madge was very proud of her new costume, and when sent on to the stage to soften the heart of Kotzebue's sorely depressed (and depressing) hero, she caught sight of her nurse in the pit, and forgetful of the footlight barrier that divided them, gleefully called out: "Oh, nursie, look at my new shoes!"

LADY BANCROFT tells a curious anecdote of the first night of *London Assurance* at the Prince of Wales' Theatre. The programme was not over until very late, and greatly accounted for the extraordinary silence on which the curtain finally fell—a silence which had an extraordinary effect on all concerned. Mrs Kendal was amazed; it seemed to take away her breath, and after a long look of surprise, first at one person and then at another, she exclaimed: "*Well!*" Mr Kendal remarked: "What does it mean?" Arthur Cecil observed: "That's funny!" Bancroft replied quietly: "I don't see where the *fun* comes in—it's deuced puzzling!" There they all stood, just as the curtain had closed them in, with an expression of blank wonder on every face, *sans* applause, *sans* call, *sans* everything. However, the play proved a great success.

G. V. BROOKE told Sir Squire Bancroft an anecdote concerning the pronunciation of the word *Coriolanus*. Two theatre-goers were arguing in one of the old coffee-houses whether the hero should be called Cor*i*olanus, or Co-*ri*-olanus. Each failed to convince the other, when someone in the room informed them that he chanced to know the tragedy would be acted at Covent Garden one evening during the following week. The disputants laid a wager, and decided to settle it by going to the theatre the night before its production and accepting as final the pronunciation adopted by the actor who would, as was the custom in those days, "give out" the performance for the following evening. News of the bet somehow reached the ears of John Kemble, and he himself came before the curtain and made the following speech:—"Ladies and Gentlemen, to-morrow evening will be acted by his Majesty's servants, Shakespeare's tragedy, Co-*ri*-olanus, in which your humble servant will have the honour to perform the part of Cor*i*olanus."

ONE night William Terriss came into the Lyceum soaked from head to foot. "Is it raining, Terriss?" asked someone who noticed that he was wet. "Looks like it, doesn't it?" said Terriss carelessly. Later, it came out that he had jumped off a penny steamboat into the Thames, and saved a little girl's life.

DURING the engagement of Ellen Terry and Mrs Kendal in Sir Herbert Tree's Coronation production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* a young

actor who was watching them come in at the stage door at His Majesty's is reported to have said: "Look at Tree between his two 'stars'!" "You mean *Ancient Lights*," wittily remarked the actress to whom the remark was made.

WHEN Irving took *Faust* on tour, he took about six leading witches for the Brocken scene, and recruited the forty others from local talent in the different towns that he visited. Their general direction was to throw up their arms and look fierce at certain music cues. One night Ellen Terry noticed a girl going through the most terrible contortions with her jaw, and thought she must say something. "That's right, dear. Very good, but don't exaggerate." "How," was all the answer that I got in the choicest nasal twang, and the girl continued to make faces as before. I was contemplating a second attempt, when Templeton, the limelight man, who had heard me speak to her, touched me gently on the shoulder. "Beg pardon, miss, she don't mean it. She's only *chewing gum*."

AN amusing instance of Charles Brookfield's powers of personation is given by Ellen Terry in "The Story of my Life." The incident occurred when she was acting at Buxton. Brookfield and Kemble had no parts in one of the plays, so they amused themselves during their "off" night by hiring bath-chairs and pretending to be paralytics! The theatre was a hall, and the most infirm of the invalids visiting the place to take the waters were

wheeled in at the back, and up the centre aisle. In the middle of a very pathetic scene Ellen Terry caught sight of Kemble and Brookfield in their bath-chairs, and so ludicrous was the sight that she could not speak for several minutes.

THE popular conductor at Drury Lane, in "Jimmy Glover—His Book," gives an amusing instance of how a contretemps was turned into a huge success. On the first night of *The Derby Winner* at Drury Lane the wrong animal won. For reality's sake, the real actor jockey, Harry Eversfield, was put up to ride the hero's horse, win the money, and secure the natural love ending of the play. But the "super" jockey who had always done this sort of work, and had made a stage hit on Voluptuary in *The Prodigal Daughter*, was jealous at being only allowed to hold nightly the winner's head until the appointed word "Go." When this signal arrived he did "hold" the arranged-for winner's head, with the result that the villain's horse came in first. This ruined the plot; and the play ended to the derisive cheers of the big first-night audience, but Sir Augustus Harris was before the curtain in a minute: "Ladies and gentlemen—I know what you're laughing at, but as a matter of fact the winning-post is half-a-mile off, further down the course, and although the villain's horse was in front just passing here, I give you my word that Clipstone, at the winning-post, *won by a neck*."

This saved the situation.

MANY good stories are told of A. E. Sothern, amongst which must rank the following, told by Mr Stephen Fiske. One day Fiske was walking with Sothern down Regent Street when the latter said: "You go ahead a little, Fiske, and I'll go back, but we will both take the Atlas omnibus." "I," says Mr Fiske, "followed his instructions, and, entering the omnibus, found Sothern sitting in the diagonally opposite corner. I naturally looked at him with some curiosity to know why he had asked me to go on ahead. Perceiving this, he assumed a very fierce and belligerent expression, and exclaimed: 'Are you staring at me, sir?' The omnibus was filled with several elderly ladies, two quiet gentlemen, who looked like clergymen, and a farmer from the country. I took the cue at once, and replied: 'No; if I wanted to stare at anybody, I would stare at a better-looking man than yourself.' At this, Sothern's indignation apparently became uncontrollable, and it required all the force of the clergymen, seconded by the farmer, to keep him in his seat and prevent him from throwing himself upon me. Finally, he insisted upon stopping the bus, and invited me to step outside, and either apologise then and there for the insult, or fight him on the spot. I pretended to prefer to do the latter, but said I would remain in the omnibus; whereupon, Sothern took off his overcoat, and handed it to the nearest old lady to hold for him while he chastised me for my impertinence. In the course of the desultory remarks in which we then indulged, he said that he would allow nobody except his friend John Robinson

of Philadelphia to speak to him in that way and live; whereupon, I immediately informed him that my name was Robinson, Christian name, John, and that I had just arrived from America. In an instant Sothern's manner changed, and climbing over the old ladies, the clergymen and the farmer, he endeavoured to embrace me like a long-lost friend."

ONE of the best anecdotes of Sothern is that which tells of a visit paid by him to a furnishing undertaker, from whom he ordered, on a most elaborate scale, all that was necessary for a funeral. Before the preparations could have gone far, he reappeared with great solicitude to ask how they were progressing. Again after a brief interval he presented himself, with an anxious face, to inquire when he could count upon possession of the body—a question which naturally amazed the undertaker, who was at a loss to discover his meaning. "Of course you provide the body," said Sothern. "The body!" stammered the bewildered undertaker. "Why, do you not say," exclaimed the actor, exhibiting a card of the shop: "'*All things necessary for funerals promptly supplied*'? Is not a body the very first necessity?"

MRS KEELEY tells an amusing story in reference to Arthur Roberts' ready wit off the stage. She was once made an honorary member of the Bohemian Cycling Club. Arthur Roberts,

who is a great cyclist, took the chair at one of the annual dinners at which Mrs Keeley was present, and naturally had several speeches to make. He was asked in one of them to say something about Mrs Keeley; but when it came to the point he stumbled and stuttered in his dry way, and with his funny look, and at last said: "I really don't know what to say about the lady, except that *she is like an old bicycle with all the latest improvements.*"

H. J. BYRON was responsible for many a witty saying. After a terrible experience of a sleepless night in some lodgings in a country town he complained to the landlady in the morning that he had been attacked by fleas. The woman retorted indignantly: "Fleas, sir! No, sir; I'm sure there's not a single flea in my house!" Byron replied: "I'm sure of it, too! *They are all married and have large families.*"

ONE day Byron received a letter from his coachman, who was at his master's London house, about a sick horse. Byron told a friend of the circumstance in this way: "They won't let me alone, even down here. This morning my fool of a coachman writes to tell me that a horse is ill, and wants to know if he may *give him a ball.* I've answered: 'Oh yes, if you like, give him a ball, but *don't ask too many people.*'"

AT the height of Charles Mathews' troubles, when things were going very badly, the expenses of his theatre, Covent Garden, being ruinous, Mathews one morning saw a ballet-girl in a dark corner of the stage crying bitterly and evidently in pain. The ever-gay comedian at once jauntily approached her (for nothing seemingly could dash his spirits), and said cheerily: "What's the matter, my dear?" The girl sobbed in reply: "Oh! Mr Mathews, I am in such pain! I have got such a dreadful toothache!" "Toothache?" said he. "Poor thing, I am so sorry. I'll let you off rehearsal. Go and have the tooth out." "I can't, Mr Mathews." "Can't? Why not?" said he. "I c-a-n't a-f-ford it," sobbed the girl. "Can't afford it? Nonsense," answered Mathews. "Run round to St Martin's Lane, where you will get rid of it for a shilling." "But I haven't got a shilling, Mr Mathews." "Not got a shilling?" he replied at once. "Neither have I; but come into the green-room, and *I will take your tooth out myself.*"

ELLEN TERRY, in "The Story of my Life," tells a delightful story of one of Sally Holland's little daughters who walked on in *Romeo and Juliet*. Irving always took the greatest interest in children, and was always very kind to them. One night as Ellen Terry and the great actor came down the stairs together from their dressing-rooms to go home—the theatre was quiet and deserted—they found a small child sitting forlornly and patiently on the lowest step. "Well, my dear, what are you doing here?"

asked Irving. "Waiting for mother, sir." "Are you acting in the theatre?" "Yes, sir." "And what part do you take?" "Please, sir, I'm a water carrier, then I'm a little page, and then I'm a virgin."

WILLIAM TERRISS once had reason to regret bitterly a piece of advice he gave to Marion Terry. She was understudying the part of Olivia (a part in which her sister Ellen excelled) to Terriss' Thornhill. At rehearsal one day Terriss said to her: "No one could play this part better than your sister Nell, but, as I always tell her, she does miss one great effect. When Olivia says: 'Devil!' she ought to hit me bang in the face." "Thank you for telling me," said Marion gratefully. "It will be much more effective," said Terriss. It *was*. When the night came for Marion to play the part, she struck out, and Terriss had to play the rest of the scene *with a handkerchief held to his bleeding nose.*

SIR SQUIRE BANCROFT tells an amusing story of one of John Hare's first appearances as ex-Constable Beetles in a play entitled *The Woman in Mauve.* The leading characters were joining in the chorus to a song sung by Sothern, Hare beating time with a telescope, which he used throughout the play, as a kind of memory of his former truncheon. One night the audience roared with laughter louder and louder at each successive verse; the actors doubled their exertions—Hare especially, who attributed part of their enjoyment to the vigorous use of his impromptu baton—when Sothern, who was

next to him, suddenly discovered that various articles of costume, used by Hare as padding, were one by one emerging from beneath his coat, and forming an eccentric-looking heap upon the stage. The audience roared louder than ever; Hare beating time with renewed fierceness, when Sothern whispered: "Never mind, old fellow; don't take any notice; don't look down!" Of course Hare did look down at once and, seeing what had happened, bolted in confusion, leaving the others to finish the scene as best they could without him.

GEORGE WYNNE, while firing a pistol in Douglas Jerrold's drama of *John Overy*, met with a terrible misfortune which wrecked and ruined his whole life—for the barrel burst and shattered his hand, rendering amputation necessary. This calamity so embittered his life that from that time he began to descend, slowly but surely, both socially and artistically. He opened in Iago, and, although he pleased the audience, the management did not take kindly to him. One night, after something had gone wrong in the morning, he turned up considerably more than "half seas over." The play was *Thérèse, the Orphan of Geneva*, and he enacted Fontaine, the pastor. In the last scene, at the moment preceding the fall of the curtain, there is a striking situation The murderer Carwin, shrinking up the stage, is followed by Fontaine, who says: "Beware! beware! there is an eye upon you!" "What eye?" demands the villain. "The eye of heaven!" responds the pastor, pointing aloft. The poor

drunken and demented creature, in pointing upward, *struck off his dummy hand*, disclosing that awful iron stump. The curtain fell amidst a yell of horror, and poor Wynne was there and then dismissed.

THE wife of a leading London manager—herself once a well-known actress—decided to return to the stage. She accordingly wrote the following letter to Sir Herbert Tree :—

"DEAR SIR HERBERT TREE,—I intend returning to the stage. Can you find something for me? Anything will do, from Lady Macbeth down to the Cloak-room. Yours truly,

"*Late of —— Theatre.*"

She received the following reply :—

"DEAR MRS ——,—We have one Lady Macbeth in the theatre already. *She is in the Cloak-room.* Yours truly, HERBERT TREE."

A SINGULAR adventure once happened to Madame Patti when travelling from Boston to Montreal. A special train had been chartered and paid for by Mr Mapleson to carry his company and their effects across the border, but Madame Patti had a special carriage of her own, and the railway company demanded an extra sum of three hundred dollars for allowing Madame Patti's private car to use the rails. The demand was so unexpected that Mr Mapleson was not prepared for it, and in

default of payment the car was seized, with the lady fast asleep in it, and shunted on to a siding, and then into a stable, where car and lady were kept under lock and key while Mr Mapleson proceeded to the theatre, secured the money, and discharged the liability. Happily all this was effected while the lady slept, quite unconscious of the part she was playing. One trembles to think what might have happened had the famous *prima donna* awoke to find herself in pawn.

IN Frith's "Autobiography and Reminiscences" there is a story of Toole which was rather more serious in effect than some for which the great comedian was responsible. On one occasion, when on a railway journey, he stuffed a glove with cotton wool until it assumed the appearance and substance of a human hand. This he arranged in front of his coat to appear as his own hand, and then, having placed his ticket between the fingers, awaited events. On the appearance of the ticket collector, and the demand for "Tickets, please," Toole said: "Take mine." The inspector took the ticket *and the hand too.* "He was a robust person," says the narrative, "but he staggered back in a faint, calling feebly for smelling salts."

A LAUGHABLE incident once occurred during a production of *David Garrick* with Charles Wyndham in the title part. The part of Simon Ingot was being played by a well-known actor who was then well on in years, and liable occasionally to

get his lines mixed. On this occasion when he confronts David Garrick with the remark: "Oh! Mr Garrick, if you were only sober!" he said. "Oh! *Mr Wyndham*, if you were only sober!" The audience sent up a huge shout of laughter which nearly ruined the scene.

BRAM STOKER, in his "Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving," narrates some amusing particulars of the supper-party in *The Corsican Brothers*. The supper-party at Baron Montgiron's house was supposed to be a very "toney" affair, the male guests being the *crème de la crème* of Parisian society, the ladies being of the *demi-monde*; all of both classes being persons to whom a square meal was no rarity. As, however, the majority of the guests were "extras," or "supers," it was hard to curb their zeal in matters of alimentation. When the servants threw open the doors of the supper-room and announced: "*Monsieur est servi*," they made one wild rush, and surrounded the table like hyenas. For their delectation bread and sponge cake and *gâteaux* of alluring aspect were provided. The champagne flowed in profusion—indeed, in such profusion, and of so realistic an appearance, that all over the house the opera-glasses used to be levelled and speculations as to the brand and *cuvée* arose, and a rumour went round the Press that the nightly wine-bill was of colossal dimensions. In reality the champagne provided was lemonade put up specially in champagne bottles, neatly foiled. The orgy grew nightly in violence, and at the end of a couple of

weeks Irving pondered over the matter, and one day gave orders that special food should be provided, wrought partly of plaster of Paris and partly of *papier-mache*. He told the property master to keep the matter secret. There was hardly any need for the admonition. That night when the emaciated *noblesse* of France dashed at their quarry one and all received a sudden check. There were many unintentional ejaculations of surprise and disappointment from the guests, and much suppressed laughter from the stage hands, who had been watching from the wings—having been let into the secret. After that night there was a notable improvement in the table manners of the guests!

AFTER acting in Liverpool, on one occasion, Sothern had a spare week before going on to Ireland, which he passed with a friend in North Wales, where the two put up at a well-known inn near Bangor, greatly resorted to by anglers. Sothern soon found that it was the custom for the oldest resident among the guests for the time being to preside at the little *table d'hôte* over which they discussed that day's sport, and that it was the rule for the chairman to say grace. Having learnt one evening by accident that the visitor who had for some days presided had received a telegram which compelled his departure, Sothern sent a little note in the name of the landlord to all the other guests, some twelve or fifteen, privately and separately, as follows:—"Our esteemed president, I regret to say, will not be at dinner this evening. May I venture to request you to have the kindness

to say grace in his absence ? The signal for the same will be two sharp knocks upon the sideboard." This signal at the proper moment was, of course, given by Sothern, when all the guests rose to a man, as by word of command, each commencing to pronounce his favourite form of grace ; and then, with all sorts of blundering apologies to each other, resumed their seats.

GEORGE ALEXANDER was once subject to an amusing interruption, in getting rid of which he provoked another, which was not so funny. He was playing in the provinces when a cat wandered on to the stage and attracted the attention of the audience by showing what it could do in a musical way. There was a fireplace on the stage, with red tinsel paper representing flames. Alexander handed the cat through this fireplace to a property-man in the wings. Some woman in the gallery, evidently thinking that the flames were real, and sympathising with the cat, expressed her indignation at Alexander's imagined cruelty by hurling a ginger-beer bottle at him—which fortunately missed its mark.

THE public are sometimes difficult to appease when disappointed or angry at the non-appearance of an advertised theatrical favourite ; Thomas Weston succeeded once cleverly in that disagreeable task. The story is as follows. On one occasion, when the famous Ned Shuter was to have appeared, Thomas Weston made his first appearance

at Drury Lane as a substitute for him. The celebrated Mrs Clive had possession of the stage, but when Weston entered in the place of the popular favourite he was met with repeated cries of: "Shuter! Shuter!" When he attempted to speak the pit and gallery renewed the cries of: "Shuter! Shuter!" Shuter had been advertised, and they would have none other. Weston kept quite calm, and when at last a lull occurred he pointed at Mrs Clive and said, as though he quite misunderstood the cause of the interruption: "*Why should I shoot her? She plays her part very well.*" This little pleasantry completely turned the tide in his favour, and secured for him a patient hearing.

AN amusing anecdote of Henry Irving is told by Comyns Carr in his book "Eminent Victorians." Seated one evening at supper after the play Irving found himself opposite to a little old gentleman, who was unable to conceal his remembered enjoyment of the performance he had just witnessed at the theatre. Irving, encouraged by his manifest geniality, inquired where he had been, to which the stranger replied that he had come from the Vaudeville, where he had seen the most delightful play, *The Two Roses*, wherein of course at the time Irving was acting. Nothing could exceed the old gentleman's enthusiasm for the performers as he recalled them one after another. Montague was superb! Thorne was excellent! And so on and so on, in a liberal catalogue of the several performers, his appreciation rising with each added name. Irving,

at last, a little nettled at the exclusion of all reference to himself, ventured to inquire of his neighbour whether there was not in the play a character called Digby Grant. "Ah, yes! Ah, yes!" assented the old gentleman reflectively. "Well, now," said Irving, "what did you think of that performance?" "Very good," returned the old gentleman. "Very good," in tones which seemed to imply that he was only half-willingly conceding a point upon which he was not wholly convinced. "Ah, yes, yes," he added; "very good, but, by heavens," he continued, "*what a part Johnny Hall would have made of it!*"

MADAME MELBA once had an amusing experience in getting to Covent Garden in time for the opera. It appears that one of the tyres of the motor car in which she was coming to town went wrong just outside Richmond. There was no time for alteration and repairs, and, no cab being in sight, the driver of a passing Pickford van was hailed, and consented to give the unknown lady a lift. Madame Melba might have rewarded the man with a song, but she gave him a sovereign instead, and ultimately securing a hansom proceeded to the theatre and related her little adventure for the diversion of her companions in *Rigoletto*.

QUIN during the management of Mr Fleetwood of Drury Lane was to make an apology for Mademoiselle Roland's not being able to perform a favourite dance on account of her having sprained her ankle. The audience were so irate at

her not appearing that it required all the tact of so fine an actor as Quin to gain their attention. He, not much liking the woman, and consequently not relishing having to apologise for her absence, bluntly addressed the audience in the following terms:—"Ladies and gentlemen, Madame a—a—Roland has put her *ankle out*—I wish she had put her *neck out*, and be damned to her." And then retired with a hem!

QUIN once in the character of Cato received a blow in the face by an orange thrown from the upper gallery: such a circumstance would have disconcerted many an actor possessed of less presence of mind; but instead of being disturbed he wiped his face, and taking the orange up observed it was not *a civil orange*.

THE following is one amongst many of the amusing stories told of Toole. One night he and Bram Stoker were walking along the western end of Pall Mall. When they came near Marlborough House, where on either side of the gateway stood a guardsman on sentry, Toole winked at his companion and took from his pocket a letter which he had ready to post. Then, when they came up close to the nearest soldier, he moved cautiously in a semi-blind manner, and peering out tried to put the letter in the breast of the scarlet tunic, as though mistaking the soldier for a postal pillar-box. The soldier remained upright and stolid, and did not move a muscle. Toole was equally surprised and pleased when from the guardsman's moveless lips came the words: "It's all right, Mr Toole! I hope you're well, sir?"

THE art of writing polite letters has apparently not died out, as witness the following correspondence which took place a decade ago between Lennox Pawle and Robert Arthur.

"*6th September* 1900.

"DEAR MR LENNOX PAWLE,—What are your terms for Pantomime? Yours truly,

"ROBERT ARTHUR."

"*7th September* 1900.

"DEAR MR ROBERT ARTHUR,—My terms for Pantomime are £30 per week. Yours most sincerely,

"LENNOX PAWLE."

"*8th September* 1900.

"DEAR MR LENNOX PAWLE,—Before I paid you £30 a week for Pantomime I should like to see you in Pantomime. Yours truly,

"ROBERT ARTHUR."

"*9th September* 1900.

"DEAR MR ROBERT ARTHUR,—If you saw me in Pantomime you wouldn't pay me £30 a week. Yours faithfully, LENNOX PAWLE."

VANDENHOFF played his farewell engagement in Edinburgh, at the Queen's Theatre, in 1858. In *The Merchant of Venice* Irving played Bassanio to his Shylock. This was on Tuesday, 16th February. Irving used to tell of an amusing incident which occurred in Act I., scene 3, where Shylock and

Bassanio enter. "Vandenhoff began," says Irving: "'Three thousand'—there was a sort of odd click of something falling, and the speech dried up. I looked up at him, and saw his mouth moving, but there was no sound. At the moment my eye caught the glitter of something golden on the stage. I stooped to pick it up, and as I did so saw that it was a whole set of false teeth. This I handed to Shylock, keeping my body between him and the audience, so that no one might see the transaction. He turned away for an instant, putting both hands up to his face. As he turned back to the audience his words came out, quite strong and clearly: 'Three thousand ducats—well!'"

MADAME CATALANI would not tolerate criticism of her vocal powers. When she visited Hamburg for the first time in 1819, M. Schevenke, the chief musician of that city, criticised her vocal feats with great severity. Madame Catalani, on being told of this, shrugged her shoulders and called him "an impious man," "for," said she, with a droll *naïveté*, "when God has given to a mortal so extraordinary a talent as I possess, people ought to applaud and honour it, as a miracle; *it is profane to depreciate the gifts of heaven!*"

M. DE VALLEBREQUE, the husband of Madame Catalani, was one morning at rehearsal at the Italian Opera in Paris, when his wife complained of the piano. "I cannot possibly sing to that piano; I shall crack my voice: the

piano is absurdly high." "Do not fret, my dear," said the husband soothingly; "it shall be lowered before evening; I will attend to it myself." Evening came, and the house was crowded; but, to the consternation of the cantatrice, the pianoforte was as high as ever. She sang, but the strain was excessive and painful; and she went behind the scenes in a very bad humour. "Really, my dear," said her husband, "I cannot conceive of the piano being too high: I had the carpenter in with his saw, and made him take *six inches off each leg in my presence.*"

ONE night Mrs Billington came to Drury Lane so hoarse as to render it doubtful as to whether she could possibly appear. As she was going off to dress, in great perplexity, her maid came to tell her that the key of her jewel box was missing, inquiring if she had it with her. "What can I have done with it?" exclaimed the vexed vocalist. "I suppose I must have swallowed it without knowing." "And a lucky thing too," said Wewitzer, always watching for an opportunity of launching a joke. "*It may serve to open your chest.*"

IT is told of Caterina Gabrielli, as an instance of her reckless prodigality, that one day a Florentine nobleman came to pay her a visit, and by some accident one of his fine lace ruffles caught in a pin which fastened some portion of her dress, and was torn. Gabrielli, to make amends for the accident, of which she was partly the cause, sent him the next day six bottles of Spanish wine, and in place of

corks she had them stopped with pieces of the most costly Flanders lace.

MARIETTA PICCOLOMINI was scarcely sixteen when she performed in *Lucrezia Borgia* at Florence. Being naturally of a juvenile aspect, she appeared then a mere child. In the scene where, in the interview with her consort, the Duchess exclaims: "Tremble, Duke Alfonzo! Thou art my fourth husband, and I am a Borgia!" this portentous threat from the lips of a child was so irresistibly droll that the audience were seized with an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

ALBONI was one of the most generous Queens of Song. Once before leaving Paris she had promised to sing at the annual concert of a poor old musician named Filippo Galli; and her name was announced in the bills for Friday, the 23rd of March. In the hurry of her departure she had omitted to warn him that she would not be able to return before the very hour at which the concert was to begin, and the suspense and anxiety of the unfortunate Filippo were to be more easily imagined than described when, asked if Alboni would sing, he could not answer definitely. He sold very few tickets, and the rooms were thinly filled. She, however, had not forgotten her promise: at the very moment when the matinée was commencing she arrived, in time to redeem her word, and reward those who had attended; but too late to be of any service to the veteran. Galli was in despair, when, some minutes after the concert, the

comely face and portly figure of Alboni appeared at the door of his room. "How much are the expenses of your concert?" she kindly inquired. "Mia cara," dolorously responded the *bénificiare*, "cinque centi franci" (500 francs). "Well, then, to repair the loss I may have caused you," said the generous cantatrice, "here is a bank-note for a thousand francs. Do me the favour to accept it."

JOSEPH GRIMALDI, in the pantomime entitled *Hurly Burly*, presented at Drury Lane in 1783, had on the first night a hair-breadth escape. In this piece Grimal*di* was by a slight metamorphosis made to represent Grimal*kin*; but so clumsily contrived was his catskin that the apertures in the mask, which should have given poor puss's representative a view of what was before him, when the dress was fitted on, were found to be on either cheek. The mishap was discovered too late to be remedied, and while running about the stage he fell through a trap a distance of several feet—breaking his collar-bone and receiving many severe contusions in the fall. Medical aid was immediately procured, but so severe were the injuries he had received that he was unable to appear for the rest of the season at Drury Lane.

AN amusing story is told of the elder Grimaldi. He once purchased a small quantity of ground at Lambeth, part of which was laid out as a garden. He entered into possession of it in the very depth of a most inclement winter, but he was so impatient to

ascertain how this garden would look in full bloom that, finding it quite impossible to wait till the coming of spring and summer developed its beauties, he had it at once decorated with an immense quantity of artificial flowers, and the *branches of all the trees bent beneath the weight of the most luxuriant foliage, and the most abundant crops of fruit—all, it is needless to say, artificial.*

JOSEPH GRIMALDI once administered a telling rebuke to a Bath clergyman who had invited him and also Higman, the bass singer, to dine with him and some friends. Grimaldi and Higman went, and met a large party. No sooner was the cloth drawn than Higman was called on for a song. He complied. Scarcely had the applause subsided when the reverend gentleman announced, rather than requested, "a song from Mr Grimaldi." Grimaldi felt hurt; yet rose and, after a short apology, requested to decline for the present. "What!" exclaimed the reverend host; "not sing? Why, I invited you on purpose to hear a song." "Did you, sir?" said Grimaldi. "Then I exceedingly regret you did not make me aware of it when you invited me, in which case I should not have come; and should have been spared the unpleasantness of wishing you, as I am now compelled, an abrupt good-night." Saying which he quitted the room.

DURING the run of *Julius Cæsar* at His Majesty's, Sir Herbert Tree, with his artistic appreciation of detail, insisted on the real body of the murdered Cæsar being present on the stage during

Antony's long speech. Although the body was buried in the robes almost all the time he would not have a dummy. Charles Fulton, who took the part of Julius Cæsar, protested at this somewhat inhuman treatment, saying: "I often have colds in the winter, and the stage is very draughty. What will people say if the corpse sneezes?" Tree was undisturbed. "They will only call you Julius *Cnœsar*!" was the smart reply.

THERE are many good stories told of Tree's absent-mindedness. One day he took a cab and gave the driver the address. Throughout the journey he was reading letters, and when the house was reached he alighted, still reading, and knocked at the door. When the door was opened, Tree looked up abstractedly, and said to the amazed servant: "Come in! Come in!" Still reading, he re-entered the cab and returned to the theatre with his mission all unaccomplished.

WHILST on tour in Manchester, Tree met an eminent ecclesiastic who asked him how he liked the city. Tree answered that he had been round it that morning in his motor car, having first made a bet that he would meet five hundred different smells before he came back—"but," he concluded, "I lost the bet!" The bishop smiled. "You lost the bet?" "Yes. I only met four hundred and ninety-nine." "Oh!" replied the sharp-witted bishop, "I know what you overlooked—it was the *odour of sanctity.*"

DRURY LANE THEATRE was on one occasion in 1735 the scene of a fatal quarrel between an actor named Thomas Hallam and Macklin. They had quarrelled about a theatrical wig, when the impetuous Macklin, raising his stick, thrust with it, in such blind fury that it penetrated through Hallam's eye to the brain, and the unfortunate player died the next day. Macklin was convicted of manslaughter, but as he was acting a few days after he probably received no punishment.

THOMAS ARCHER, in one of the performances of *Virginius*, had to sustain the part of the wicked Appius Claudius, to Macready's Virginius. In the last act, when Virginius, exclaiming :

> "*And have I not a weapon to requite thee ?*
> *Ah ! here are ten !* "

springs upon Appius and chokes him, Macready was so carried away by his own intensity that his tight and prolonged grasp of Archer's throat nearly converted the fictitious catastrophe into a real one. However, Appius bore his trial in meek silence on the night in question ; but he determined to read the great tragedian a lesson. When *Virginius* was next performed, Macready, on entering the green-room in the interval between the fourth and fifth acts, discovered that the throat of Archer was encased in a dark velvet collar, which, with its shining points, was a strange innovation on the costume of a Roman decemvir. The Virginius of the night contemplated Appius awhile in gloomy silence, then slowly ap-

proached him. The shining points were now seen to be small steel spikes which protruded from the collar, and would infallibly give a rude reception to any hands which might grasp the neck it encased. As Macready had, as Virginius, to grasp Appius' neck, it is hardly surprising that he viewed the new feature of Archer's attire with decided disapproval. Breaking at length the absorbed silence which he usually maintained during his rare and brief visits to the green-room, he addressed Archer as follows:—"Are you—are you—aware Mr—Mr Archer, that that—that peculiar ornament round your neck is—is quite inappropriate to your character?" To which Archer replied: "I admit it, sir; but the last time I had the honour of appearing with you in this rather unsympathetic part you seized and held me with such violence that I hardly expected to act again! Acting, after all, in my humble opinion, is but feigning. I am not a gladiator nor a wrestler, sir, and I set some value upon my windpipe." Macready, only too anxious to have the dangerous collar removed, exclaimed: "Archer, if my feelings carried me away the other night, I apologise. I give you my honour I will deal gently with you in future, and that you will have no need of—of that singular appendage by—*by way of armour.*"

IT is not generally known that the famous Mrs Siddons was hissed off the stage on the night of her first appearance in October 1784. The opposition to her arose from some libels published concerning her, accusing her of meanness and

inhumanity. When the curtain drew up, and she appeared as Mrs Beverley in *The Gamester*, she was greeted with violent hissing, and loud cries of "Off! Off!" She attempted to speak, but could not be heard; and Kemble, indignant at the insults offered to her, and conscious of her innocence, led her off the stage. The tumult continued for about an hour, and, silence being obtained, Mrs Siddons declared her innocence of what she was accused of, and the play was then continued.

JOHN KEMBLE once found himself short of money in a small town in Staffordshire, where he was dunned by his landlady for the rent of his apartments, and where the prospects of the piece he was appearing in being financially successful were very remote. Whilst ruminating in his bed on the means of procuring a dinner, he, by the thinness of the floor, heard a doctor prescribing to his landlord (who lay very ill in the room below him), that he must be kept absolutely quiet. Kemble instantly went out and borrowed a top, with which he returned, and began to spin it with great violence in his room. The landlady called on him repeatedly to desist, but he took no notice of her entreaties, until she came upstairs, and explained the necessity for silence, as the doctor had ordered it. Kemble observed that *his* doctor had likewise prescribed that exercise for his rheumatism, and as his health was as precious as that of her husband, he could not discontinue his amusement; he then made the top bounce against the chairs, and caused the dame to insist that he

would either cease the annoyance or leave the house. "What!" rejoined Kemble. "Leave your house when I am so much in your debt? I cannot think of it"—and again he made his top hop along the room, until the landlady was worked into such a passion that she was happy to get him off by forgiving him the whole sum.

EDMUND KEAN is reported as never having disappointed a London audience, save on one occasion. He had gone to dine some ten miles out of town with some other actors; he outstayed his time, got drunk, and lost all recollection of Shakespeare, Shylock and Drury Lane. His friends, frightened at the indiscretion they had caused, despatched Kean's servant with his empty carriage, and a well-concocted story that the horses had been frightened, the carriage upset, and the tragedian's shoulder dislocated. This story was repeated from the stage by the manager; and the rising indignation of the audience was instantly calmed down into commiseration and regret. The following morning Kean was horrified at realising his position, but his embarrassment was increased on learning that many gentlemen had already arrived from town to make anxious inquiries after him. Luckily, his old associates, the actors, had, with great presence of mind, carried on the deception of the previous night. The village apothecary lent himself to it, and with a grave countenance confirmed the report, and Kean was obliged, *nolens volens*, to become a party to the hoax. His room was accordingly darkened, his face whitened and his

shoulder bandaged. No one discovered the fraud, and, to crown it completely, he appeared in an incredibly short time on the boards of old Drury again, the public being carefully informed that *his respect and gratitude towards them urged him to risk the exertion, and to go through his arduous parts with his arm in a sling!*

MACKLIN objected strongly to performers throwing in words of their own into a play. On one occasion Lee Lewes at Covent Garden, at the rehearsal of *Love à la Mode*, in which he played Squire Groom, said something which he thought very smart. "Hoy! hoy!" said Macklin, "what's that?" "Oh," replied Lee Lewis, "'tis only a little of my nonsense." "Ay," replied Macklin severely, "but I think *my* nonsense is rather better than *yours*, so keep to that, if you please, sir."

THE following wager was once suggested by old Charles Macklin to his friend Holland. "Holland," said the old man, "I shall live longer than Garrick, and if he will deposit five hundred pounds in the hands of a banker I will deposit the same sum, and the longest liver shall be entitled to the thousand pounds. You may tell him so from me." "No," replied Holland, "I will not tell him so; but I will take the wager myself." "Not so," rejoined Shylock, "not so. *Sir, I will have the benefit of his fears.*"

ONE of the scene-shifters having annoyed Ralph Wewitzer, the actor raised his foot and kicked him. The man, highly provoked, declared that in all his life he had never been kicked before. "Very possibly," said Wewitzer; "but I daresay you have been kicked *behind*!"

GEORGE F. COOKE, the tragedian, married a Miss Daniells. It is related of him that once, being influenced by jealousy, he locked her up in a garret, and, in a drunken fit forgetting everything, absented himself from home; his lady was in danger of starvation—no one was in the house but herself—her cries at length were heard in the street, and by means of a ladder she was released.

OF the same actor it is said that, in one of his quarrels, a common soldier declined fighting with him because he (Cooke) was rich, and the persons present would, he affirmed, favour him. "Look ye here, sir," said Cooke, "all I possess in the world is here, three hundred and fifty pounds." And he thrust the bank-notes into the fire, and held the poker upon them until they were consumed. "Now I am a beggar, sir; will you fight me now?"

STEPHEN KEMBLE personated Othello one night at a Glasgow theatre, and a circumstance occurred in the last scene which turned the tragedy into a comedy. When the bed of Desdemona was arranged, the property-man, being a new hand, and in eager anxiety to have everything right

and proper, fit for a *chambre accouché*, placed something under the bed which on the stage is always dispensed with. The curtain drew up and Kemble entered, speaking the soliloquy:

"My soul, it is the cause, it is the cause!"

A tittering took place, and then a laugh. Stephen Kemble stopped, looked around, and perceiving the cause of the hilarity rushed off the stage, seized the unlucky property-man by the neck as he would Iago, and roared out: "Villain! Villain!" The terrified wretch cried: "Oh, sir, pardon me! I assure you I *couldn't get the loan of a white one anywhere.*"

AT a rehearsal of the banquet scene in *Macbeth*, the First Murderer, in spite of Macready's adjurations, persisted in walking down to the centre of the stage, and thereby hiding Macbeth from the audience. The tragedian impatiently called for a carpenter, a brass-headed nail, and a hammer. The carpenter came. "Do you see that plank there? Drive the nail into that spot." It was done. "Now, you, sir (this to the Murderer), "look at that nail. Come down to that spot, not an inch farther—and wait there till I come." Night came, and with it the banquet scene. The First Murderer enters, walks down the stage, stops suddenly, then turns round and round, *apparently looking for something he had dropped.* The audience began to titter. Macready stalks to the man's side: "In heaven's name, what are you about?" "Sure," exclaims the Murderer, "*ain't I lookin' for that blessed nail of yours?*"

NED SHUTER was a man of much wit. An acquaintance, observing him look with a sort of vacant stare, asked him if he had *bottled his eyes.* "Yes," answered Shuter, "and the next thing I do will be to *cork my eyebrows.*"

B. C. INCLEDON'S love of profane jokes was notorious. He was conversing once with a Scotsman who traced his ancestors back to a period anterior to the Christian era. "By the holy Paul," said Charles, "you'll tell me next that your ancestors were in the ark with Noah!" "I've no preceese eveedence o' the fac," replied the Scotsman, "but I've a shrewd conjecture that they were." Incledon, who was never at a loss, replied: "They were in the ark with Noah, were they? Now, sir, to show you the superiority of *my* family at that time—by God, *they had a boat of their own*!"

OLD HIPPISLEY, who, from a candle-snuffer on the stage became a favourite low comedian, owed much of his power of exciting mirth to a queer expression in his distorted face caused by a scar from a severe burn. Intending to put his son on the stage, he asked Quin's advice as to the preparatory measures. "Hippy," said Quin, "you had better begin by *burning* him."

THE elder Colman could be severe on occasion, as the following anecdote proves. An actor of no less consequence than size having been engaged at the Haymarket Theatre during Colman's

managership, had the part of one of the scholars in *The Padlock* sent him. "Sir," said he, addressing Colman, "I am astonished at getting this part, so much beneath me; besides, how can a man of my size and figure look like a scholar?" "Indeed," replied Colman, "*you seem better fed than taught.*"

IT is related of Adelina Patti that once, on her arrival in Paris, she was besought by several journalists to help in a benefit to be given in aid of the then obscure actress, Sarah Bernhardt, who had lost all her small possessions in a fire. Her husband, the Marquis de Caux, did not at first like the idea of his wife singing for an actress of no renown, but at last he gave his consent. On the 5th of November 1869 Adelina Patti sang in the Odéon Theatre for the benefit of Sarah Bernhardt. After the concert, the latter, clad in a black woollen gown, timidly approached the great singer, and, being too shy to utter a word of thanks, she kissed her hand. Who could have anticipated that so insignificant a girl would develop into the famous Sarah Bernhardt?

GARRICK, after an absence of two years, returned to the management of Drury Lane Theatre, and had prepared an address to the audience, to be delivered previously to the play. As soon as the applause at his reappearance had subsided, and all was as silent as the grave, in eager expectation of hearing the address, old Cervetto—better known by the name of *Nosey*—the musician, who sat in the orchestra, anticipated the first line by a tremendous

yawn—*Aw!* Convulsive laughter was the consequence, and it was some minutes before silence could again be restored; that, however, obtained, Garrick delivered his address and retired. The moment he came off the stage, he flew like lightning to the music-room, where, collaring the astonished *Nosey*, he began to abuse him most vociferously: "What—why—you old scoundrel—you must be the most infernal——" At length poor Cervetto said: "Oh, Mr Garrick! vat is de matter—vat I have do? O God, vat is it?" "The matter?" replied Garrick. "Why, you old damned bass-viol, just at the instant, the very moment, I had played with the audience—tickled them like a trout, and brought them to the most accommodating silence—so pat to my purpose—so perfect—that it was, one may say, a comparison for Milton's visible darkness——" "Indeed, Mr Garrick, it vas no darkness." "Darkness! stupid fool—— But how should a man of my reading make himself understood by—a—— Answer me, sir, was not the whole house—pit, box, and gallery—perfectly still?" "Yes, sir, indeed—still as one mouse." "Well, then, just at that very moment did you not, with your damned jaws extended wide enough to swallow a sixpenny loaf, yawn? Oh, I wish you had never shut your abominable mouth again." "Sare, Mr Garrick, only, if you please, hear me von vord—it be alvay de vay—it is indeed, Mr Garrick, and alvay de vay I go *ven I haf de great rapture*, Mr Garrick." The little great man's anger instantly cooled, and he declared that *Nosey* ought to be forgiven for the wit of the defence.

ANDREW CHERRY, having been offered an engagement by a manager who had on a former occasion treated him very shabbily, wrote the following laconic answer to the manager's letter:

"SIR,—You have bit me once, and I am resolved you shall not *make two bites of* A CHERRY."

A PHYSICIAN, seeing old Bannister about to drink a glass of brandy, said: "Don't drink that poisonous stuff! Brandy is the worst enemy you have." "I know that," replied Charles, "but we are commanded *to love our enemies.*"

IN the early days of Garrick at Drury Lane a tragedy was produced in which he sustained the character of an aged king. Though there was nothing remarkably brilliant in the play it proceeded without opposition till the fifth act, when the dying monarch bequeathed his kingdom to his two sons in these words:

"And now between you I bequeath my *crown.*"

A wicked wit in the pit exclaimed: "Ye gods! he's given them *half-a-crown* apiece!" The house laughed so much that not another word of the piece could be uttered.

AN eminent special pleader one evening graced a box at Drury Lane Theatre to see *Macbeth.* When the hero questions the witches as to what they are doing they answer: "A deed without a name." The barrister, whose attention was at that moment

directed more to Coke upon Littleton than Shakespeare, catching however the actor's words, repeated: "A *deed* without *a name*! Why, 'tis *void*!"

THE great peculiarity of John Liston's manner, both on and off the stage, was its gravity. *What* he said was less remarkable than the way in which he said it. A fellow-actor, who added to the defect of stuttering a love of telling long and tedious stories, was speaking of some person who had gone abroad, and endeavouring to recollect the place: "He has gone to—to—to—to—let's see; it wasn't Pen—Pen—Pen—Pennsylvania—no—no——" "Perhaps, sir," said Liston, without moving a muscle, "perhaps it was *Pentonville*."

LISTON seemed privileged to take whatever liberties he liked with his audience. Once in conjunction with Theodore Hook he played the following trick on some country friends of his. A young gentleman—a son of a baronet—wished to take his fiancée to a London theatre. Hook procured them two dress-circle seats. When the curtain rose, Liston (who had been primed by Hook) appeared. His first words were greeted with laughter; he paused, looked round him with an offended air and, approaching the footlights, exclaimed melodramatically: "I don't understand this conduct, ladies and gentlemen. I am not accustomed to be laughed at. I can't imagine what you can see ridiculous in me. Why, I declare, *there's Harry B——ton and his cousin, Martha J——*," pointing full

at the country couple ; " what business have they to come here and laugh at me, I should like to know. I'll go and tell his father, and hear what *he* thinks of it ! " The audience to a man turned and stared at the unfortunate pair, who fled from the theatre amidst peals of laughter.

LISTON was a great punster. Once, whilst at Plymouth, a youthful midshipman swaggered into the theatre flourishing his dirk. " Why don't you attend to the announcement at the bottom of the bills," said Liston to the doorkeeper. " Can't you read ?—' *Children in arms not admitted.*' " He once asked Mathews to play for his benefit. Mathews, having to act elsewhere, excused himself by saying : " I would if I could, but I can't split myself in halves." " I don't know that," replied Liston : " I have often seen you play in *two pieces.*"

MISS BIFFIN was a most accomplished person, who, having been born without legs or arms, contrived to paint miniatures with her nose. On one occasion she was taken to Covent Garden Theatre early in the evening before the performance began by the gentleman whom she afterwards married. He, having some other engagement, deposited his fair charge in the corner of the back seat of one of the upper front boxes, whereupon, aided by long drapery, such as children in arms wear, and a large shawl, she sat unmoved as immovable. The engagement of her beau proved longer than the performance at the theatre. The audience retired, the lights were

extinguished, and still Miss Biffin remained. The box-keeper ventured to suggest that as all the company were out, and most of the lights were out too, it was necessary she should retire. Unwilling to make known her misfortune, and not at all knowing how far she might trust the box-keeper, she expressed great uneasiness that her friend had not arrived as promised. "We can't wait here for your friend, miss —you really must go," was the only reply she obtained. At length Mr Brandon, then housekeeper, hearing the discussion, came to the spot, and insinuated the absolute necessity of Miss Biffin's departure, hinting something extremely ungallant about a constable. "Sir," said Miss Biffin, "I would give the world to go, but I cannot go without my friend." "You can't have any friend here to-night, ma'am," said Brandon, "for the doors are shut." "What shall I do, sir?" asked the lady. "If you will give me your arm, ma'am," said Brandon, "I'll see you safe down to the stage door, where you can send for a coach" "Arm, sir!" said the lady, "I wish I could, but I've got no arms." "Dear me!" said the housekeeper; "how very odd! However, ma'am, if you will get on your legs——" "But I haven't got any legs, sir!" Brandon grew deadly pale; however, just at that moment Miss Biffin's friend arrived, and lifting her from her seat carried her off upon his shoulders!

ANDREW CHERRY once entertained an idea of taking a company to Calcutta. The terms talked of were in keeping with the land of silver

fountains and golden sands. A lac of rupees was offered to the "walking gentlemen." "What is a lac of rupees?" asked the actor to whom Cherry made the proposal. "Do you know what a lack of money is?" asked Munden. "Yes." "Well, a lac of rupees means *exactly the same thing.*"

A GOOD story is told of an actor at Paris, who was so extremely ugly that, instead of being applauded on his entrance, he was met with hisses. One evening, when the hostile demonstration was rather stronger than usual, he advanced to the footlights and said: "Gentlemen, it is much easier for you to accustom yourselves to my appearance *than for me to change it.*"

MACREADY, in his Reminiscences, gives the retort of a country actor, of the name of Knipe, to the famous Barry, who was, like Macready, impatient of the incompetency of the players of the company. "Do not speak your speech, sir, in that drawling way," said Barry, in his energetic manner. "Look at me, sir. Speak it in this way: '*To ransom home, revolted Mortimer!*' That's the way to speak it, sir." To which the actor immediately replied: "I know that, sir, is the way, but you'll please to remember *you* get your one hundred pounds a week for speaking it in *your* way, and I only get thirty shillings for mine! Give me one hundred pounds and I'll speak it your way, *but I'm not going to do for thirty shillings what you get paid a hundred pounds for.*"

SAMUEL ROGERS, in his "Table Talk," narrates how Mrs Siddons told him that, one night, as she stepped into her carriage to return home from the theatre, Sheridan suddenly jumped in after her. "Mr Sheridan," she said, "I trust that you will behave with all propriety; if you do not, I shall immediately let down the glass, and desire the servant to show you out." Sheridan *did* behave with all propriety, "but," continued Mrs Siddons, "as soon as we had reached my house in Marlborough Street, and the footman had opened the door, only think, the provoking wretch *bolted out in the greatest haste, and slunk away, as if anxious to escape unseen.*"

QUIN on one occasion, when acting Judge Balance in *The Recruiting Officer*, thus addressed Mrs Woffington: "Sylvia, what age were you when your dear mother married?" The actress remained silent, when Quin proceeded: "I ask what age you were when your mother was born." "I regret," replied Sylvia, "I cannot tell you how old I was when my mother died."

IT is told of Gabrielli, a celebrated singer, that in the year 1770 she demanded a fee of five thousand ducats for her services at St Petersburg. "Five thousand ducats!" said the Empress Catherine II. "I do not pay that sum to any of my field-marshals." "If that is so," responded the cantatrice, "your Majesty has nothing to do but to make these field-marshals sing." This bold reply had the

anticipated effect on Catherine, and she yielded to the exorbitant demands of the singer.

AT one time it was reported that John Harley, the actor, was about to be married to a Mrs Quin, who during her early dramatic career had represented the graceful Columbine. "What a pantomime alliance!" remarked a wit—"*Mrs Harley-Quin!*"

A GOOD story is told of an actor named Hatton, who was a great favourite at the Haymarket Theatre, especially in the part of Jack Junk. One night when performing the part of Barbarossa at Gosport, in the scene where the tyrant makes love to Zopphira, and reminds her of his services against the enemies of her kingdom, he was at a loss for a word, and appealed to the prompter in vain. Another moment, and that sibilation so unpleasant to the actor's ear would have driven him from the stage, when, seeing the gallery crowded with sailors, and regardless of the anachronism, he exclaimed with tragic energy:

> *"Did not I*
> *By that brave knight, Sir Sidney Smith, assisted,*
> *And in conjunction with the gallant Nelson,*
> *Drive Bonaparte and his fierce marauders*
> *From Egypt's shores?*[11]

Three cheers from the jolly tars rewarded this impromptu interpolation.

JOHN HENDERSON was responsible on one occasion for a very smart retort. The first time that he, then a young actor, was rehearsing a part at Drury Lane, George Garrick came into the boxes, saying as he entered: "I only come as a *spectator*." Soon after he made some objections to Henderson's playing, when the new actor retorted: "Sir, I thought you were only to be a *spectator*: you are turning *Tattler*." "Never mind him, sir," said David Garrick, "never mind him; let him be what he will, I will be the *Guardian*."

JOHN BANNISTER, more familiarly known as Jack Bannister, was much addicted to "gagging." In one of the scenes of a play he was acting in he assumed the character of a hairdresser, and, apologising for not being punctual to his appointment, tells the old lady that in his hurry he unfortunately fell over the banister, to which she replies: "Oh! those dreadful *banisters*! I wish there were no such things." "In that case, madam," responded the actor, "I should not have the honour of waiting upon your ladyship."

PHILLIPS was a very clever singer, and a great favourite with the public. A good story is told of him when acting before a Dublin audience. Phillips was acting the character of a naval officer, and appeared in the dress of that day—blue coat, ornamented with gold lace, cocked hat, sword and white duck trousers. The trousers, which were not of the whitest hue, attracted the attention of a boy

seated in the front row of the gallery. "Mr Pheelips," he shouted, with the true Irish brogue, "bedad, I think you had better give your *ducks* a swim!" A shout of laughter followed this effusion. Poor Phillips looked crestfallen, when his tormentor exclaimed: "Send 'em to my washerwoman, old Bridget O'Shaughnessy; she'll dip 'em in the Liffey, dry 'em on the gridiron, and then they'll be fit nether garments for sich a gentleman and foine singer as Mr Pheelips!"

IT is told of Macready that on the morning before he played Antony for his benefit (in April 1813) an anonymous paper was affixed to the box-office door, accusing him of having "shamefully misused and even kicked" the young lady who was to act Cleopatra. The house was nevertheless crowded, for Macready was very popular. At the first entrance of Antony and Cleopatra he led the lady down to the footlights and asked: "Have I ever been guilty of any injustice of any kind to you, since you have been in the theatre?" "No, sir," she replied. "Have I ever behaved to you in an ungentlemanlike manner?" "No, sir." "Have I ever kicked you?" "Oh no, sir!" This little dialogue was received by the audience with laughter and loud applause.

JAMES MURDOCH gives an amusing account of Macready's struggle with an American utility actor who, in announcing the approach of Birnam Wood, insisted on saying: "Within these three miles may you see it *a*-coming." "Good heavens,

sir!" cried Macready, "have you no ears? You are not speaking common language: it is *blank verse*, sir, and a single misplaced syllable destroys the metre. You know how to spell *coming*, which begins with a *c*—no preceding sound of *a*; therefore you should say: "*Within these three miles may you see it a—a—coming.*" The actor tried it over and over again, but could not eliminate the *a*. Goaded to despair at last, he turned upon the tragedian and said: "Mr Macready, I don't see the difference between my way of doing it and yours, unless it is that I put only *one a* before 'coming' and you put half-a-dozen little ones." As Macready was in the habit of inserting an *a* or *er* at the end of certain words, the criticism was unpleasantly true.

JOHN FORSTER, a close friend of Macready, once wrote the following stinging paragraph on Edwin Forrest's performance of Macbeth; it ran as follows:—

"Our old friend, Mr Forrest, afforded great amusement to the public by his performance of Macbeth on Friday evening at the Princess's. Indeed, our best comic actors do not often excite so great a quantity of mirth. The change from an inaudible murmur to a thunder of sound was enormous; but the grand feature was the combat, in which he stood scraping his sword against that of Macduff. We were at a loss to know what this gesture meant, till an enlightened critic in the gallery shouted out: 'That's right! *Sharpen it*!'"

QUIN and Macklin were not only rivals, but hated each other not a little. Quin, with his sharp tongue, had given Macklin plenty of cause for offence. When he was playing Antonio to Macklin's Shylock he had said of his brother actor: "If God Almighty writes a legible hand, that man must be a villain." And when someone observed that Macklin might make a good actor, having such *strong lines* in his face, Quin replied: "Lines, sir! I see nothing in the fellow's face but a damned deal of cordage!"

AN amusing proof of the terrific effect of Macklin's interpretation of Shylock upon the average mind of the day is recorded in the following story as told by Bernard. When Macklin had established his fame in that character, George II. went to see him, and the impression he received was so powerful that it deprived him of rest throughout the night. In the morning the Premier, Sir Robert Walpole, waited on the King, to express his fears that the Commons would oppose a certain measure then in contemplation. "I wish, your Majesty," said Sir Robert, "it was possible to find a recipe for frightening a House of Commons." "What do you think," said the King, "*of sending them to the theatre to see that Irishman play Shylock*?"

DR BARROWBY, a great supporter of Macklin in his struggle with Garrick and the manager of Drury Lane, was a remarkable man, and his patients were almost entirely the performers

of the theatres round and about Covent Garden. A Jew acquaintance once asked him "how he could eat pork with such a *goût*?" "Because I like it!" he replied; "and all I'm sorry for is that I was not born a Jew, for then I should have the pleasure of eating pork chops and *sinning* at the same time!"

HOLMAN was once acting Chamont at Cheltenham, where the theatre is very small, and the stage sloping. In the great passage with Monimia—

"So may this arm
Throw him to th'earth, like a dead dog despised,"

—he carried out the stage direction—*starts from the sofa and rushes forward*—so impetuously that, chiefly owing to the steepness of the little stage, he lost his balance, and plunged headlong into the orchestra, smashing a violoncello, and drawing blood from the nose of its player. The confusion was immense; but the actor found that he was unhurt, and able to resume his part.

QUICK entered the kitchen of an inn at Sheffield, and walked up to the fire where a goose was roasting. When he was gone, a countryman who had been eyeing him intently asked the landlord who that "comical little chap" was. The landlord told him. On which the countryman, slapping his thigh with great knowingness, said to a companion:

"Dom it, I thought he was a player. *Didn't ye see how he eyed the goose?*"

ONCE when payments were much in arrear at Smock Alley, Mossop, as Lear, was being supported in the arms of his faithful Kent, who suddenly whispered that he would let him drop on the stage if he did not promise on his honour that he would pay him that night. Much alarmed Mossop whispered: "Don't talk to me now." "I'll do it," said the other, and the tragedian actually had to give the promise demanded of him.

CHARLES KEAN and Ellen Tree, after a long attachment, were married in Dublin, and performed on the same evening in *The Honey-Moon*. The choice of this play was purely accidental, but it was at least a curious coincidence.

GARRICK used to tell a good story of the days of his early triumphs. He had been brought by a friend to the house of Speaker Onslow, before whom it was desired he should exhibit his powers. The Speaker did not care much for plays; and when he was told that the famous new actor had been induced "to stand up and favour the company with his great dagger scene in *Macbeth*," he merely bowed assent. Suddenly, during one of the grand pauses, the old man's voice was heard: "*Pray, sir, was you at the turnpike meeting at Epsom on Thursday?*"

J. R. PLANCHÉ, in his Autobiography, mentions an amusing criticism he heard at the Coburg Theatre before it passed into the hands of a Mr Osbaldiston. It was the rebuke of an indignant "deity" who, during the performance of a wretchedly written melodrama, most carelessly represented, exclaimed: "We don't want no grammar, *but you might jine the flats*!"

A STORY is told of an actor who, personating Ratcliff in *Richard III.*, in reply to the King's question: "Who's there?" had to answer:

> "Ratcliff, my lord; 'tis I. The early village cock
> Hath twice done salutation to the morn,"

but making a full stop at the end of the first line instead of continuing the sentence, astounded the monarch, and amused the audience, by announcing himself as the early bird in *propria persona.*

AN amusing anecdote relates to Elliston at the time when he was proprietor of the Olympic Pavilion, as it was then called, in Wych Street. At his suggestion Planché wrote a speaking harlequinade, with songs for the columbine, the subject being *Little Red Riding Hood.* On the first night of its representation (21st December 1818) every trick failed, not a scene could be induced to close or to open properly, and the curtain fell amidst a storm of disapprobation. Planché was with Elliston and his family in a private box. Elliston sent round an order to the prompter that not one of the carpenters,

scene-shifters, or property-men were to leave the theatre till he had spoken to them. As soon as the house was cleared, the curtain was raised, and all the culprits assembled on the stage in the piece representing the interior of a cottage, having a door in one half and a latticed window in the other. Elliston led Planché forward, and standing in the centre, with his back to the footlights, harangued them in the most grandiloquent language—expatiated on the enormity of their offence—their ingratitude to the man whose bread they were eating, the disgrace they had brought upon the theatre, the cruel injury they had inflicted on the young and promising author by his side; then pointing in the most tragical attitude to his wife and daughters, who remained in the box, bade them look upon the family they had ruined, and burying his face in his handkerchief to stifle his sobs passed slowly through the door in the scene, leaving his auditors silent, abashed, and somewhat affected, yet rather relieved at being let off with a lecture. The next minute the casement in the other flat was thrown violently open, and thrusting in his head, his face scarlet with fury, Elliston roared out: "*I discharge you all!*"

LABLACHE was able to give the most wonderful representation of a thunderstorm simply by facial expression. The gloom that gradually overspread his countenance appeared to deepen into actual darkness, and the terrific frown indicated the angry lowering of the tempest. The lightning commenced by winks of the eyes, and twitchings of the

muscles of the face, succeeded by rapid sidelong movements of the mouth, which wonderfully recalled to one the forked flashes that seem to rend the sky; the notion of thunder being conveyed by the shaking of his head. By degrees the lightning became less vivid, the frown relaxed, the gloom departed, and a broad smile illuminating his expansive face assured you that the sun had broken through the clouds, and the storm was over.

PLANCHÉ relates an amusing story of Mrs Nisbett, a famous Katharine in her day. One evening, during the performance of *The Taming of the Shrew*, Planché and Mrs Nisbett were sitting in the green-room, she having a book in her hand which she had to take on the stage with her in the next scene, when an actor, named Brindal—not particularly remarkable for wit or humour, came to the door and, leaning against it, in a sentimental manner drawled out:

"If to her share some trivial errors fall,
Look in her face——"

He paused. She raised her beautiful eyes to him, and consciously smiled—*her* smile—in anticipation of the well-known complimentary termination of the couplet, when, with a deep sigh, he gravely added:

"——and you *believe* them all!"

The rapid change of that radiant countenance—first to blank surprise, and then to fury, as, suiting the action to the look, she hurled the volume in her hand

at the culprit's head—was one of the most amusing sights imaginable. Concentrating the verbal expression of her indignation in the word "*Wretch!*" she burst into one of her glorious laughs, too infectious to be resisted even by the contrite offender, who certainly was never guilty of anything so good, either before or after.

MISS LENA ASHWELL, a delightful and charming actress, is not noted for the trick of making her words clearly heard by playgoers in the more remote parts of the theatre. One night during the first interval of a play, in which she had rattled along her speeches in a more than ordinarily indistinct fashion, an attendant walked up one of the gangways on the stalls floor crying: "Opera-glasses? Opera-glasses, please? Opera-glasses?" "Opera-glasses be hanged," shouted a man from the back of the pit; "*bring us some ear trumpets!*"

GEORGE GRAVES, the well-known comedian, is a good hand at "gagging." On one occasion, during the run of *The Belle of Brittany* at the Queen's Theatre, a showily dressed party of six, evidently very pleased with themselves, made their way with a good deal of unnecessary noise into the first row of stalls whilst Graves was singing a song. Stopping in his song, Graves regarded the late-comers with scorn, and then turning to the house informed them in a stentorian aside: "*The Tooting Express has just arrived!*"

TREE, on one occasion, when playing Fagin in *Oliver Twist*, came on in his usual rags, but adorned with a brand new pair of patent-leather boots, which he explained, in an aside, were quite in keeping with the character, *as he had stolen them.*

ONCE when Sir Herbert Tree was playing Richard in Dublin he was invited to lunch with a famous judge, who was a great Shakespearean scholar. The talk turned on the play of the previous night, *Richard II.*, and a lady exclaimed: "Oh! Mr Tree, why did you appear in such a dishevelled state, and look so woebegone, when you arrived on the coast of Wales?" "Ah," said Tree's host, with a remarkable display of tact, "you see Richard had just come back *from governing Ireland.*"

WHEN Lionel Brough was a young man, he had friends in Fulham who lived in one of a small row of houses near Cremorne Gardens. His friends were giving a children's party, and Brough, who loved kiddies, and often joined in their games, had a surprise for them. Borrowing a fur-lined coat from an actor more wealthy than himself, he went to the house on the evening of the party, and, turning the coat inside out and putting it on at the gate, knocked at the door for entrance. As the servant opened the door the comedian whispered: "Hush! Don't say a word, or you'll spoil the game! I don't want to be announced. Just you leave this to me." The astonished girl retired to the back of the hall, evidently thinking Brough was mad; and Brough,

going down on all-fours, pushed the drawing-room door open with his head, and went gambolling in, with his nose to the ground, growling all the while: "I'm a big, big bear! I'm a big, big bear!" He had expected sounds of screams and laughter and hurrying feet; instead of which there was a dead silence. He looked up and, to his horror, found that he had entered the wrong house, and that the only occupants were a couple of old ladies, who were so paralysed with fear that they were speechless. The comedian did not stop to explain or apologise, but rushed out of the house and down the street and round all the corners he could find.

SHERIDAN KNOWLES was a decidedly eccentric individual; seeing O. Smith, a popular melodramatic actor, on the opposite side of the Strand, Knowles rushed across the road, seized him by the hand, and inquired eagerly after his health. Smith, who only knew him by sight, said: "I think, Mr Knowles, you are mistaken; I am O. Smith." "My dear fellow," replied Knowles, "I beg you ten thousand pardons—I took you for your *namesake*, T. P. Cooke."

MARIA MALIBRAN was idolised everywhere, and a characteristic story is told of her in Arthur Pougin's "Marie Malibran." One night, during a performance of *Otello* at the King's Theatre, Madame Malibran and Donzelli were on the stage together, when an enormous bouquet was thrown at her feet; she picked it up and out of the flowers

there fluttered down to the floor a piece of paper. Donzelli stooped down to pick it up, and was about to hand it to his colleague when the entire house began shouting to have the message read out. Madame Malibran, who had seen and understood the whole purport of it, nudged Donzelli, who stepped forward to the prompter's box, and read out aloud :

" Bank of England

" Promises to pay the Bearer the sum of One Thousand Pounds, etc."

Then, to the amazement, and amid the laughter, of the audience, Donzelli, after a whispered consultation with Madame Malibran, asked for silence, so that he could speak, and said : " Ladies and gentlemen, we are sorry we may not read out the whole of this letter, which has only reached us by mistake, and is addressed to the poor of the metropolis." These words were greeted with thunders of applause, save by the rich banker who had endeavoured to obtain Madame Malibran's favours in such a manner.

A CURIOUS example of the recklessness of Malibran, and her suffering nothing to hinder her will, is given by Countess Merlin : " She did not always get off scot-free from her pranks, and atoned for them sometimes in her health, but then she used to do marvels. Thus, once after being at a ball the night before she was to perform, she got up at noon, went out riding without taking any food, and returned home at six o'clock. As soon as dinner was

over she was due at the theatre. She dressed quickly to take up the part of Arsace, but this poor Arsace, despite his brave helmet and his curly hair, was nervous and tired, after a hurried meal, and slipped and fainted just when she was to appear. Maria was brought back to her room, and everyone vied in proffering service. The manager was nonplussed and quite lost his head; a score of bottles were opened with which to revive the patient; and, unluckily, amongst these last was a cup with a mixture of oil and alkali, which Maria used to use for skin-friction to cure a sore throat. An over-zealous friend brought this near her lips, and she applied it —and, instantaneously, huge blisters seared themselves on that smooth mouth. What was one to do? She could not appear on the stage. Alter the programme? Too late. Well, then? 'Wait a bit,' said Maria, who had come to her senses; 'just wait; I'll manage it.' She took a pair of scissors which lay at hand, stood up in front of her mirror, and swiftly and dauntlessly cut the puffed-up skin on her lips right through. Her lips were left in an undescribable condition: but Maria played her part as Arsace, and sung splendidly against Mademoiselle Sontag as Semiramis."

C. H. WORKMAN during the run of *Iolanthe* at the Savoy having to sing in the character of the Lord Chancellor at "theatricals" at Bridgewater House, "dressed up" at the theatre, and drove off in his brougham in state. Being pressed for time, his coachman made for the Horse Guards

gateway. The sentry stepped forward and barred their progress—but only for a brief moment. Suddenly catching sight of the Lord Chancellor's wig and robes, the sentry fell back with a salute, and allowed the carriage to pass.

SIR GEORGE ALEXANDER at one time was playing in the country, in a melodrama called *Current Cash.* One of the properties essential to the piece was a light rowing scull, with which the hero had to push himself off into the stream, which, in turn, was a big spectacular feature of the production. When the company reached Oldham the oar was missing, but the property-man promised to have one in time for the evening performance. That afternoon, with evident pride, he produced from the sacred recesses of his room a real human skull, and when it was pointed out to him that it was hardly what was wanted he declared loftily: "If it is good enough for *Hamlet,* it ought to be good enough for *Current Cash.*"

DAVID BELASCO tells a story of a playwright who sat in the front row on the first night of a new piece of his own. The piece failed: failed dreadfully. As the author sat sad amid the hisses, a woman behind him leaned forward, and said: "Excuse me, sir, but, knowing you to be the author of this play, I took the liberty at the beginning of this performance of snipping off a lock of your hair. *Allow me now to return it to you!*"

SIR HERBERT TREE, while walking down the Haymarket one day, was accosted by a perfect stranger. "Begging your pardon, sir," said the latter, "but aren't you Beerbohm Tree, the actor?" "No, certainly not," replied Sir Herbert unblushingly. "I'm very sorry," said the stranger, "but I thought you were. You look so much like the pictures I have seen of him." "I can assure you that you are mistaken," persisted Tree. "*Well, I didn't mean to insult you, sir,*" observed the stranger, "but I did think you looked like him."

AMONGST the many good stories of Sir Herbert Tree, the following is worth recording. When Miss Constance Collier was playing Roma, in *The Eternal City*, Mr Hall Caine, the author, was anxious to get a powerful effect in a certain scene she was taking with Robert Taber. "I once saw," said Hall Caine, "a very striking bit of business. The man picked up the woman, and threw her over his shoulder." Miss Collier looked at him in consternation, for she would be rather a heavy person to throw about. However, they did their best, but their futile efforts were interrupted by Tree. "That reminds me," said the actor-manager, "I saw a play in Italy once, in which the hero caught hold of the heroine by the legs, and banged her head on the floor." "Splendid! A magnificent idea!" interpolated the enthusiastic author. "What was the play?" "*Punch and Judy*," replied Tree.

COUNTESS MERLIN tells a story which illustrates well the unhappy home life led by Maria Malibran before her marriage, and the terror in which she held her father—Manuel Garcia. The story runs as follows. "Home life had become stormy. Madame Garcia was mild in disposition and, like a good angel, tried to allay her husband's temper; but the tempest brewed more and more strongly every day. One night they were playing *Othello*. Violent scenes had taken place that morning. Maria was taking the part of Desdemona, and her father that of the Moor. Just when the latter, his muscles standing out, his eyes all a-sparkle, was approaching his mistress to kill her, Maria noticed that the dagger which was glistening in her father's hand was real. She recognised the weapon; the blade was sharp; her father had purchased it of a Turk, and, a few days before, examined it in her presence. Maria already was feeling the cold steel entering her breast. She was frightened out of her wits and exclaimed: '*Papá, papá*, por Diós, no me mates!'[1] There was nothing in it, as may be imagined; the property poniard had been smashed, and Garcia had merely substituted his own."

FORBES ROBERTSON was once playing with Madame Modjeska in *Romeo and Juliet*, and one evening had an awkward contretemps in the "tomb" scene. The "tomb" was built on steps. He ascended, sat down on the tomb, and was apostrophising the dead Juliet, when, to his horror,

[1] "For God's sake, do not kill me!"

the steps, which were on rollers to facilitate moving the erection, began to move away towards the footlights. Robertson gave a horrified exclamation under his breath, to which Modjeska responded under her veil: "Vat has happened?" "*The steps have rolled away,*" the actor gasped. "You vill have to jump," she replied calmly; and jump he did.

A GOOD story is told of Dr Richter. On one occasion, at a rehearsal, a trombonist, who was a German, played a single note, during a pause of the brass instruments. Richter, who was conducting, tapped his desk with his baton, and glared at the offender, as though he would wither him up. "What's that?" he growled. "It's in de music," replied the trombonist. "Let me see," said Richter, with an incredulous frown. As the trombonist moved the music to hand it to his chief he made a strange discovery. "Vy!" he exclaimed, in astonishment, "it vas a fly!" Then he added triumphantly: "*But I blayed him!*"

F. R. BENSON'S love of athletics once led to an amusing little mistake. While he was on tour he sent a telegram to a certain young actor in London whom he wanted to play the part of Rugby in *The Merry Wives of Windsor.* Accordingly, he wired as follows:—"Can you play *Rugby*? If so come at once." Before long the reply came back: "Arrive at 4 P.M. Played half-back for Stratford."

CHARLES FROHMAN once organised a company of coloured artists to play *Othello.* In the scene between the Moor and Desdemona wherein Othello demands the handkerchief, the actor who was playing the title-rôle confused vociferousness with impressiveness. "Desdemona," he cried, "give me dat han'kerchief." But the doomed lady only babbled of Cassio, and her liege shouted again: "I ast you fo' de second time to git me dat han'kerchief." Still the fair one parried the issue with talk of Cassio, and the lordly Othello, now thoroughly incensed, bellowed: "Woman, for de third an' las' time I tell you to fetch me dat han'kerchief. Away!" As he was just about to open his mouth again, a big leather-lunged patron in the top gallery shouted down at him: "Fo' heaven's sake, nigger, *why doan yo' wipe yo' nose on yo' sleeve an let de show go on!*"

CHARLES FROHMAN tells of a funny incident which happened during a performance of *Ben Hur* in one of the American cities. The actor who played the part of Balthazar was a man of impressive carriage and height. In the scene where Mersala's reckless driving comes near to causing a serious accident to Balthazar's train, the old man with his sweeping beard stands beside a camel while Ben Hur extricates the prancing horses from the confusion. One night during this scene the camel reached slyly sideways, and seized the end of Balthazar's beard in its teeth. The animal had got a fair hold before the actor realised his predicament,

and the hungry camel began to gather in the beard as though it were a nourishing wisp of hay. For a moment it was pull camel, pull actor. Then with a grunt of disappointment the camel was made to disgorge, and Balthazar played the rest of the scene with a set of half-masticated whiskers, much to the amusement of the audience.

CECIL RALEIGH and Arthur Collins were one day, shortly after the installation of a new heating apparatus, directing a rehearsal from the stalls of Drury Lane Theatre. The small-pox epidemic had recently broken out, and the dramatist had just been vaccinated. Presently Raleigh noticed that his neighbour seemed a trifle restless, and asked if anything was the matter. "I'm feeling a bit feverish," was the reply. "Small-pox, old chap?" suggested Raleigh. "Oh! please don't joke about it like that," protested Collins. "Perhaps I shall feel better shortly." Then Cecil Raleigh began to mop his brow. "I don't feel at all well myself," he volunteered. "I'm getting feverish too." A few moments later things grew serious all round, and beads of perspiration rolled down their cheeks. "Let's get away and see a doctor," gasped Collins. As they were about to leave, one of the workmen approached, with the remark, "Beg pardon, sir; *'eating apparatus seem satisfactory?*" The pair had been sitting over a heating valve.

G. P. HUNTLEY tells an amusing experience he once had when playing in a provincial pantomime. The stage hands organised a draw for

a turkey, and all the members of the company bought tickets. The turkey was won by a limelight man, but as his wife did not know how to cook it she asked him to put it up again. This was done, and the next time it was won by a scene-shifter who did not like turkeys. So he followed the limelight man's example, and organised another raffle. These draws went on for several weeks, and they were always being won by the stage hands, and financially supported by the actors and actresses. At last, on the concluding night of the pantomime, Huntley won the bird—by that time it had cost him over a couple of pounds. He took the unfortunate turkey out of the theatre, but did not venture to carry it home. He thought it advisable to leave it on the doorstep of a local sanitary inspector!

IRVING could never be angry with William Terriss, even when he came to rehearsal full of absurd excuses. Ellen Terry tells of one occasion when he was so late that Irving could stand it no longer, and spoke to him sharply. "I think you'll be sorry you've spoken to me like this, guv'nor," said Terriss, casting down his eyes. "Now, no hanky-panky tricks," replied Irving. "Tricks, guv'nor! I think you'll regret having said that when you hear that my poor mother passed away early this morning." And Terriss wept. Irving promptly gave him the day off. A few weeks later when Terriss and Ellen Terry were looking through the curtain at the audience, just before the play began, he said to the latter gaily: "Do you see that

dear old woman sitting in the fourth row of the stalls ? *That's my dear old mother !* "

DR RICHTER was once conducting at the opera in Paris, and owing to the hot weather he led the orchestra wearing the regulation dress coat, and a pair of white cricketing trousers. Of course from his place in the conductor's chair his discrepancy in costume could not be seen by the audience. At the end of the performance, however, the applause was so clamorous that Dr Richter was obliged to appear before the footlights, to the intense amusement of the huge audience.

ON several occasions Ben Webster had his acting spoilt by the interruption of would-be humorists. Once when playing in *The Dead Heart* he had reached the thrilling passage—" My heart is dead—is dead," and as soon as the words left his lips he was greeted with a catch-phrase common at that time in the streets of London : " *And how's your poor feet?* "

FALSTAFF'S dress has perhaps occasioned as much amusement to theatrical audiences as the adventures of the fat and love-sick knight himself. When Sir Herbert Tree was playing the part on one occasion he arrived late at the theatre and had to dress hurriedly. Scarcely had he appeared on the stage when a shout of merriment went up from the audience. Not knowing whether it was laughing with him or at him, he glanced down at his

"make-up," and observed to his horror that the padding was slipping away from one leg, leaving him with a lean shank altogether disproportionate to the rest of his unwieldy bulk. Worse was to follow. In stooping to readjust the leg, one of his puffy cheeks fell off, and in a hasty effort to save it he knocked away a lump of the paste used to increase the size and shape of his nasal organ. Mr Tree's self-possession forsook him. To this day he does not remember how his exit from the stage was accomplished.

GEORGE F. COOKE, the great tragedian, had a hatred of republican institutions, and never lost an opportunity of displaying it. A gentleman mentioning that his family were amongst the first settlers in Maryland, Cooke asked him if he had kept the family jewels: "I mean *the chains and handcuffs*," he added.

ELLISTON, while manager of the Worcester Theatre, once announced a grand display of fireworks for his benefit. The theatre was a mere band-box, and such an exhibition was totally impracticable. This he well knew, and began to adroitly work upon the fears of the landlord by hints of the great danger of such an exhibition; the latter immediately took the alarm, and, as Elliston had foreseen, forbade it. The announcements, however, were not withdrawn, and the public swallowed the hoax and crowded the theatre. Without any reference being made to the great attraction of the

night, the performance proceeded, until there gradually arose a cry, which soon swelled into clamour, for the fireworks. Then Elliston came forward with a stately air; he had made the most elaborate preparations, he said, for a grand pyrotechnic display, nothing had been left undone, but at the last moment came the reflection—what of the danger? Of the number of young, tender girls, of respectable matrons, all collected to do him honour? What if the theatre should take fire, and be burned to the ground, the property too, of one of the best and worthiest of men? Here he appealed to the landlord—a most nervous person, who was sitting in the stage box, and who shrank back into a corner—to publicly state if he had not for the safety of his property forbidden the display. The audience, thankful for the great "danger" they had escaped, applauded him heartily. "But, ladies and gentlemen," he said in conclusion, "I am happy to say I have made arrangements that will in some way make up for your disappointment—*THE BAND* [it consisted of three vile fiddlers] will strike up 'God save the King.'"

WHEN Charles Mathews was playing at Brighton, on his very last tour, his absence from the stage proper during rehearsals was most alarming to the members of his company, who were unacquainted with his "funny little ways." He sat in the prompt wings with an enormous cigar in his mouth; and when the cue came for his entrance he pointed with his stick, in an off-hand sort of way,

to a certain spot on the stage, and said: "All right. Don't bother about me. I shall be over there." And on one occasion, when an anxious young recruit asked him: "Where would you like me to be, sir, when you come on?" he answered coolly: "Never you mind about me. I shall be able to find you, when I want you"!

W. S. GILBERT'S want of toleration for slovenly English is well known. Standing outside his club one afternoon he was approached by a stranger with the inquiry: "I beg your pardon, sir, but do you happen to know a gentleman, a member of this club, a man with one eye called 'Mathews'?" "No, I don't think I do," replied Gilbert; a pause; then quickly: "What's the name of his other eye?"

A CERTAIN French singer with a tremendous voice could not decide upon the artistic career for which he was best fitted. One day he mentioned this to Cherubini, who begged him to sing. He opened his mouth, and the foundations well-nigh trembled with his bellowing. "What shall I become?" he asked in anxious tones when he had finished. "*An auctioneer*," snapped Cherubini.

MADAME FODOR was once singing at the Hamburg Opera House when the city was besieged. She was not afraid of the bombardment, and the opera went on as usual, to the great delight of the soldiers and officers of the garrison. The

proceedings were occasionally enlivened by the appearance of a cannon-ball through the roof of the theatre. The thing which troubled her most was the failure of the milk supply, for without it she was scarcely able to sing. The last cow had been killed to supply the garrison with food. When the soldiers heard of her difficulty they made a gallant sortie and brought back a cow, which was driven triumphantly to the theatre and presented to the *prima donna* as a slight token of the esteem in which they held her.

LOUIE FREEAR once met with a humiliating experience when at a provincial theatre she was about to appear in the character of a beggar boy. In the early part of the rehearsals some street urchins, taking advantage of the temporary absence of the stage-doorkeeper from his post, had got into the theatre, and secreted themselves behind certain "props," which offered them the advantage of being able to see without being seen—for a time at any rate. But they were eventually discovered and thrown out; and then it came to Louie Freear's turn. In the artistic rags of the typical street arab, with her face and hands besmirched with "macadam" and her own hair hidden in a matted and tangled wig, Louie Freear slouched along from her dressing-room to the stage, and stood watching the players from the wings. This was her first appearance in the "get-up" she was to wear on the following night, and no one but herself and her dresser knew what it was to be like. It was not long before her stage manager, catching sight of her loafing about the wings, called

to one of the scene-shifters "to shift the young rascal into the street." This, the scene-shifter, assisted by the stage manager, promptly did; at least, Miss Freear allowed herself, for the joke of the thing, to be hustled and boxed almost as far as the stage door; but here, not caring to be put in the cold air in her somewhat draughty rags, she told the manager that she was Miss Louie Freear, and that she was very glad her make-up was so successful.

WILLIE EDOUIN once had a piece written for him which had for one of its features the entire papering of a room "in sight of the audience." Willie Edouin, with trestles, board, paste and the paper, went through the whole business in a wonderfully expert fashion; and there was tremendous applause when the room, which a few minutes before had looked so cold and white and naked, all at once stood completely robed, from ceiling to floor, in its new and gorgeous covering. That was a time when the Strand Theatre was hardly "spick and span," and a friend wrote to Edouin suggesting that he might with advantage do the same for his theatre. "My dear boy," the popular comedian replied, "I have been *papering* the house regularly every night for the last six weeks, but it hasn't made a bit of difference!"

CORNEY GRAIN used to tell a story of an occasion when he was engaged to give an entertainment at a private dinner-party, and found on arrival that he was expected to take his meal in

the servants' hall. Grasping the humorous side of the situation, he sat down with the butler and domestics, dined heartily, and proceeded to give them his entertainment, after which he left, without inflicting any interruption upon the superior beings upstairs.

MRS KENDAL once played Desdemona to a real black man's Othello. His name was Ira Aldridge, and it was said he was the dresser of some great actor whom he used to imitate. But he had his own ideas as to the character of Othello. He thought him a brute, and played him as such. His great notion was to get the fairest possible woman for Desdemona, and as Mrs Kendal's hair at that time was quite golden, she was selected for the part. In one part of the play he would cry out: "Give me thy hand, Desdemona!" and the effect of her little hand in his huge grasp was decidedly impressive. In the last act he would pull her from the couch by the hair of her head—which was too realistic even for this great actress!

THE following extract from a theatrical work published in 1815 contains a notice of the first appearance of Madame Vestris, who made a debut when she was eighteen years of age:

"KING'S THEATRE

"Madame Vestris, wife of the celebrated ballet master, on Thursday appeared for the first time on

any stage, in the character of Prosperina; and seldom have the votaries of Apollo experienced a greater treat. This lady possesses a richness of tone and correctness of delivery, without that affectation of execution which at best can but astonish, without finding the way to the heart; added to a melodious voice, nature has given her an elegant person and a lovely countenance. Since her infancy she has received instruction from the first masters, and from her successful debut we may congratulate the frequenters of the opera upon having so valuable an acquisition added to that establishment. Upon her entrance she was greeted with the applause of *encouragement*, which, during the performance, increased, and called forth that of *general satisfaction*. It would be difficult to select any particular part, without being guilty of an injustice to the rest—the whole being uniformly excellent. The ballet went off with *éclat*. The house was excessively crowded."
—Saturday, 22nd July 1815.

THE following incident happened to Mrs Barry at the town of North Wadsham, in Norfolk, in 1788, whilst representing the character of Calista, in *The Fair Penitent*, in a barn. In the last act of the tragedy, where Calista lays her hand on the skull, Mrs Barry, who played the part, was suddenly seized with an involuntary shuddering. She fell on the stage, and was instantly conveyed to her lodgings, and during the night her illness continued, but the following day, when sufficiently

recovered to be able to converse, she sent for the stage manager, and anxiously inquired if he could tell her from whom or whence he procured the skull used the preceding night. He replied that he "procured it from the sexton, who informed him it was the skull of one Norris—a player—who twelve years before was buried in an obscure corner of the churchyard. That same Norris was Mrs Barry's first husband; the poor woman never recovered the shock: she died in six weeks.

WHEN Edmund Kean was at Portsmouth he was invited by the manager, and two or three more, after one morning's rehearsal, to accompany them and take a share of a bottle of Madeira. Kean objected at first, but at length consented, and away they went to one of the leading inns in Portsmouth. The landlord, when told that Kean was of the party, ushered them into one of the best rooms, thanked the actor for the honour that he did him, and for ten minutes overwhelmed him with obsequious civility. Kean bore it well for some time, but at length, knitting his brow, and fixing his eye upon the landlord with that tremendous expression so often witnessed, said: "Mr ——, I came into this house at the request of these gentlemen to partake of some refreshment, and not to be pestered with your civilities, which to me are so many insults. Look at me, sir, well; you do not recollect me, I see; but you know that I am *Mr Kean*. EDMUND KEAN, sir; the same Edmund Kean that I was fifteen years ago, when you kept a very small inn in Portsmouth. At

that time, sir, I was a member of a strolling company of players, and came with the troupe to your fair, where I acted. I remember well that I went one day to the bar of your house, and called for half-a-pint of porter, which, after I had waited your pleasure patiently, was given to me by you with one hand, as the other was extended to receive the money. Never, sir, shall I forget your insolent demeanour, and the acuteness of my feelings. Now, Mr ——, things are altered: you are in a fine hotel, and I am—— But never mind; you are still plain H, and I am Edmund Kean, the same *Edmund Kean* that I was fifteen years ago when you insulted me. Look at me again, sir! What alteration beyond that of dress do you discover in me? Am I a better man than I was then? What is there in me now that you should overwhelm me with your compliments? Go to, Mr H., I am ashamed of you. Keep your wine in your cellar. I will have none of it!" Having said this, the indignant actor turned his back upon the mortified landlord, and with the whole of his companions immediately left his house, to get their refreshment elsewhere.

QUIN was once drinking a bottle of wine with Mallet, the poet, and having given his opinion rather too freely upon some of the bard's productions, Mallet was so out of temper that Quin could not please him in anything he said during the remainder of the evening. At length Quin offered to wager a dozen of claret that Mallet did not contradict the next thing he said. "What's that?"

asked Mallet. "Why," replied Quin, "that you are *the greatest poet* in England."

A MAD actor of the name of Man, residing near a private madhouse, met one of its poor inhabitants who had broken from his keeper. The maniac suddenly stopped, and resting upon a large stick exclaimed: "Who are you, sir?" The actor was rather alarmed, but thinking to divert his attention by a pun replied: "I am a *double* man—I am a man by name, and man by nature." "Are you so?" rejoined the madman; "why, I am a man *beside* myself, so *we* two will fight *you* two." He then knocked the actor down and ran away.

THE following "cutting" criticism appeared in an old review of a tragedy called *The Regent*, performed 29th March 1781, at Drury Lane Theatre: "Mrs Siddons, who was formerly lady's maid to the author's mother, could not show a more grateful acknowledgment for the former favours of the family than by her exertions as Dionora. She spoke the epilogue, written by Mrs Thrale, but in attempting what nature never designed her for, gained no credit."

MADAME MARA, the great singer, once during the performance of one of Handel's grand choruses in Westminster Abbey kept her seat, while the Royal Family, with all who were present besides, stood up. This became known at Oxford, when she was engaged there for the Grand Music

Meeting, and they resolved to teach her better manners. As soon, therefore, as she appeared in the theatre, she was called upon from all sides to state whether she meant to practise the same there. Upon this, a worthy professor, Dr Hayes, who was fond of speechifying, came forward to assure the audience that Madame Mara would stand up during the performance of the chorus in question; but in his eagerness to allay the storm which he saw arising, instead of this—the first words of the chorus running in his head—he told them that Madame Mara would rise when "*the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.*" This laughable blunder put everyone in a good humour, which, however, did not last long. A performer in the orchestra, who was accompanying her in one of her songs, happening to play a little out of tune, so upset the lady's feelings that she turned round and flung the book she was singing from at his head. Upon this the Vice-Chancellor rose, and in a tone of authority indignantly exclaimed: "Madame Mara has conducted herself too ill to be suffered to sing any more before this audience." Immediately the cry arose: "A riot by permission of the Vice-Chancellor!" The confusion at once became universal, and the lady was handed out, amid the hisses of an indignant audience.

HANDEL in his government of singers was somewhat of a despot, for upon Cuzzoni refusing to sing his beautiful air, "False Imogene," in *Otho*, he told her that he always knew she was one great devil; but that he should now let her

know that he was Beelzebub, the Prince of the Devils; and then, taking her round the waist, he swore if she did not immediately obey his orders he would throw her out of the window!

A CURIOUS incident occurred during the performance of *El Hyder* at the Liverpool Amphitheatre, where Edward Stirling, playing the part of Tom, single-handed engaged seven Frenchmen in a rocky defile, and a desperate fight ensued. Excited at the unequal fight, a sailor climbed down from the gallery, and taking his place by the side of Edward Stirling knocked down his unhappy supers, saying: "I'll stand by you, messmate. Seven to one ain't fair nowadays!"

IN the "Life of John Kemble" it is stated that the daughter of a nobleman once entertained a strong passion for him, which induced her father to inform the actor that he had taken effectual means to prevent any such union, but that if Mr Kemble would relieve him of the duty of acting sentinel over his daughter by marrying some other lady, within a fortnight, he would present him with four thousand pounds. Kemble accepted the terms and married Mrs Brereton, *but the money was never paid.*

SUPERS are an endless source of amusement. In a piece called *The Woodman's Hut*, an amusing situation was brought about by the dropping of the letter *H* by a First Robber on his first night.

FIRST ROBBER. "'Ush! I see a *nouse.*"

SECOND ROBBER. "No, Blunderbug, it's a *nut.*"
THIRD ROBBER. "No, fool, it's a *nabitation.*"

HENDERSON inviting a friend to dine with him on New Year's Day, the latter before he would give an answer consulted his pocket-book, to see whether he was engaged, and discovered that New Year's Day was the first of the month; he therefore made the following curious apology:—"I perceive, sir, that New Year's Day unfortunately falls on *the first day of January*, on which day I am engaged. I was in hopes it would not happen until towards the end of the month, and then I would certainly have waited on you."

RICHARD BURBAGE was the most celebrated actor in the time of Shakespeare. He was the original Romeo, Richard, Lear, Macbeth, Othello, etc. Richard was his greatest part. One evening when he was to represent that character, and while behind the scenes, Shakespeare overheard him making an assignation with a lady of considerable beauty. Burbage was to knock at her chamber door; she was to say: "Who comes there?" and on receiving for answer: "'Tis I, Richard the Third," the favourite tragedian was to be admitted. Shakespeare instantly determined to keep the appointment himself; and while Burbage was giving due effect to the tyranny of Richard on the stage, Shakespeare hurried to the lady's house. Tapping at her door, he made the expected response to her interrogatory, and gained admittance. The poet's

cloquence soon converted the fair one's anger into satisfaction; but very soon Burbage was heard rapping at the door, and to the expected query replied: "'Tis I, Richard the Third." "Then," quoth Shakespeare, "go thy ways, knave, for thou knowest *that William the Conqueror reigned before Richard the Third.*"

AN actor, who it was said had married a second "Katherine," once bet some of his companions five pounds that the *first* words she would salute him with when he got home would be "My dear." Accordingly his wager was accepted, and one of them was sent home with him to see the result. When he arrived home—after midnight—he knocked at the door. "Who's there?" cried his wife. "It's only me, my dear," said the actor. "*My dear, and be damned to you!*" was the quick retort. So the actor won his wager.

A CELEBRATED comedian, dining near Covent Garden, after asking the waiter several times for a glass of water without obtaining it, rang the bell violently and swore he "would knock his eye out if he did not immediately bring some." A gentleman present remonstrated, and said: "You would be less likely to get it, if you did so." "Oh dear, no," replied the comedian, "if you take 'i' from waiter, you get water directly."

WHEN Kemble retired from the stage he distributed his costume of Coriolanus amongst his brethren. To Mathews he gave his

sandals, upon which the comedian exclaimed: "I'm glad I've got his sandals, for I am sure I could never *tread in his shoes.*"

A POOR comedian who had often acted at Salisbury but had never been successful on his benefit night, watched in the church porch until the rector had dismissed his congregation. He then began to cover the tombstones in the cemetery with his bills. In reply to an inquiry as to why he did so he said: "I cannot get the *living* to come to my benefit, so I am trying what influence I have with the *dead.*"

AT the conclusion of the performance of *The Burning Bridge* at the Surrey Theatre a female spectre had to rise from a lake surrounded by mist, an effect in those days produced by lamps placed behind gorgons, and surrounding the figure. When the machine had nearly mounted to the flies, one of the gorgons took fire, and the spectre's dress was presently in a blaze. The spectre, a man, strove hard to get rid of his gear, and in doing so discovered to the audience that he was *a Scotsman with a kilt on,* being cast for the part of Waverley which was to follow. The humour of the situation obscured the serious nature of the predicament, to extricate himself from which the terrified actor jumped from a great height to the stage, and seriously injured himself.

ON one occasion during the performance of Verdi's opera *Macbeth*, Madame Viardot was playing the part of Lady Macbeth, and when the performance reached the sleep-walking scene, and the Doctor entered to go through the well-known dialogue, a voice from the gallery was heard inquiring: "Well, doctor, which is it—*a boy or a girl?*"

EDWARD STIRLING, in his "Old Drury Lane," tells a story of Harry Webb, comedian, and lessee of the Queen's Theatre, Dublin, who at one time produced *Macbeth* with new scenic effects. In the third scene, clouds descended to conceal the exit of the three witches; and Webb, who himself played the part of a witch, anxious to ascertain the effect produced, went round to the front of the theatre to see. Observing only two witches meeting, "in thunder, lightning and in rain," Webb rushed behind the scenes, exclaiming: "Where's the other witch?" and telling the prompter to "Fine him, sir—fine him a week's salary." "Please, sir, it's yourself that missed the scene." "Bless me, so it was! Dear me! give me a cloak. I'll go on in the next scene; and *fine yourself, Jenkins, five shillings, for allowing me to neglect my business.*" "Sir?" "Yes, five shillings; it ought to be ten, but I'll take five."

COLONEL MAPLESON once had an operatic company in America, playing at the Globe Theatre, and on the second night *La Traviata* was to be performed. According to the terms of the

contract, Madame Patti's fee of five thousand dollars was due at two o'clock on the day of the performance, and at the appointed time her agent called upon Mapleson for the money for the evening performance. It happened that at this time funds were rather low, and all that Mapleson could offer Signor Franchi, who acted for Madame Patti, was eight hundred pounds. This was declined, and the impresario was informed that his contract with Madame Patti was at an end. There was nothing to do but to accept the inevitable, which at least involved the consolation that the management had at least eight hundred pounds to the good to go on with. However, some two hours later, the astute agent made a second appearance, and with flattering congratulation informed Mr Mapleson that Madame Patti did not want to break the engagement with him, as she certainly would have done had it been anyone else, so she would accept the eight hundred pounds and would make all preparations for appearing in her part. She would be at the theatre in good time ready dressed for the rôle of Violetta, save her shoes, which she would put on after receiving the balance of her fee. The eight hundred pounds was paid with this understanding and the doors were opened. Signor Franchi again appeared, and one hundred and sixty pounds having been taken at the doors it was handed over to him for the inexorable *prima donna.* Shortly after Signor Franchi again appeared, with beaming countenance and suavity of manner, and informed Mr Mapleson that Madame Patti had put one shoe on, and that on receipt of the remaining forty pounds

would immediately don the other. In due course the balance was forthcoming, the shoe was put on, the play was played—and the *prima donna* received her "bond"!

MAPLESON tells an amusing story of some trouble he had on his production of *Rigoletto* with Mongini as the Duke. After a very tiring day Mapleson left the theatre, towards the close of the third act, and in something less than an hour he was called back by an excited message to save the situation and a great deal more. The curtain had not yet risen for the last act, and Mongini was raging up and down behind the scenes, waving a drawn sword, and seeking whom he might devour. Madame Mongini met Mapleson at the stage door and entreated him not to venture into the irate tenor's infuriated presence, she herself, though usually able to control him, having failed to pacify him on this occasion. Of course Mapleson had the responsibility, and could not shirk the risk, and so, buttoning his overcoat across his chest, he went immediately to Mongini's room. On entering the room, where the great tenor was walking up and down with only a shirt on, and still brandishing his drawn sword, the diplomatic impresario protested that he knew Mongini was in the right, and so gradually drew him into conversation, and finally got from him the particulars of his trouble. It appeared that the tailor who had been instructed to increase the breadth of his coat by two inches had misunderstood the order, and reduced its width by that measure, and Mongini,

not being able to get into it, had torn it to pieces and thrown it upon the floor. Mapleson sympathised with the singer in his difficulty, and promised that the tailor should be treated with suitable cruelty on the following day, indeed that he and his family should be driven into the streets to starve early the next morning. As the great tenor calmed down, Mapleson told him everyone was talking of his splendid performance that evening, and Mongini suggested that he would like to finish the opera. Of course a costume had to be improvised, but Mapleson's resources were equal to that, and the last act started with the hope in the manager's heart that "La donna e Mobile" would compensate a now irate audience for the unexplained delay.

At noon the next day the tailor was put on his trial, after having been rehearsed in the part he was to play. He was a *single* man, so he was quite prepared to allow his wife and children to starve, and so received his sentence in a becoming manner. On this, Mongini interceded for him. If the man's wife and children perished in the gutter it would not improve his (Mongini's) relations with the public, and so he begged Mapleson to retain the tailor on his staff, and promised to sing for him an extra night without a fee.

CHARLES BANNISTER was one evening in company with a young man who, being in liquor, began to moralise on the folly of his past conduct. "I have been a damned fool," said he;

"my late father kept a tripe shop in Clare Market, and got a decent fortune by it, which he left to me; and I like an idiot have lost my last shilling in horse-racing." "Well," said Bannister, "never mind that; he *got* his money by *trotters*, and you *lost* it by *gallopers*."

IRVING was fond of telling a story of his early days, although it was at his own expense. He was playing Hamlet one evening when he observed, in the front row of the pit, an old lady dissolved in tears. Highly flattered, he sent an attendant to say that he would like to see her after the performance. When they met, Irving was graciousness itself. "Madam," he said, "I perceive that my acting moved you." "It did that, sir," said the old woman. "You see, sir, I've got a young son myself play-acting somewhere up in the north, and it broke me all up to think that maybe *he was no better at it than you*."

A STORY is told of a well-known actor who invited a friend home to dine with him without giving adequate notice to his wife. At dinner the one bottle of wine the lady happened to have in the house was quickly consumed, and still the husband continued to press his guest to let him open another bottle. The guest, however, firmly refused. After "good-night" had been said, the lady reproached her husband: "How could you urge him so? We were entirely out of wine, and yet

the more I kicked you under the table, the more you pressed him?" "But you *didn't* kick me!" he replied.

ROBERT GANTHONY relates how, when he was playing in *Black-eyed Susan*, an actor came from Manchester to play a sailor's part. Instead of giving Ganthony his cues, he said in a very loud voice when he saw him: "Avast there, and belay, you lubber! Haul in your spanniker, and bring to or, shiver my timbers! I'll bust you on the water mark with the butt end of a deck mop, you son of a sea-cook, etc." On being asked why he did not say what was in his part he replied: "Oh! *I always play sailors that way*," and dismissed the matter as one unworthy of discussion.

IN his "Random Recollections" the same actor gives an amusing incident which happened when a star actress of the third magnitude appeared as Juliet at a small seaport town. "I cannot do justice to myself," she said to the manager, who combined theatrical enterprise with the conduct of a row of bathing machines, "if I do not have a lime" (limelight) "thrown on me when I appear on the balcony." "We ain't got no lime-light, miss, but I think we could get you a ship's blue-light," replied the obliging manager, and to this the lady agreed. The lad who went to the shop to buy the blue-light brought back a signal rocket, which was given him by mistake. The prompter

was her own man, and in his ignorance took the rocket in good faith.

"ROMEO. He jests at scars who never felt a wound.
(*Juliet appears, prompter lights a match.*)
But soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
(*This was the match lighting the fuse.*)
Arise, fair sun!"

The sun, or rather the rocket, *did* rise, with a hiss that sounded far louder in a theatre than it does in the open air. Juliet was knocked off the balcony, the fly-borders were set on fire, and the theatre was filled with sulphurous smoke, while the audience, which was fortunately a small one, made a stampede for the doors. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that the introduction of the rocket brought the play to an end. Since then *Romeo and Juliet* has always been looked upon in that town as a dramatic work that could not be witnessed without considerable personal danger.

A CAPITAL story is told of J. L. Toole and Mr Justice Hawkins, who was trying a *cause celébrè* at the Liverpool Assizes while Mr Toole was playing nightly at one of the Liverpool theatres. The judge sent across to say he was sitting late, and would Mr Toole come over after the performance and have supper with him. Toole accepted the invitation. During supper, talking over the events of the day, Mr Justice Hawkins said he should next day "give his man fifteen years—he deserved it." "Oh," said Toole, on leaving, "would you mind me calling at the

different morning newspaper offices, and telling them what the sentence will be? It will be a tip for them, and do me no end of good with the Press, giving them exclusive information?" "Good God! no, sir," thundered the judge, who took the precaution of walking with Toole to his hotel, and waiting till he was fast asleep and free from temptation.

WHEN Madame Melba sang before King Oscar of Sweden he, at the close of the performance, sent one of the officers of his suite to thank her, and request her attendance at the palace on the following morning. On arrival, the King complimented her, and formally conferred on her the Order of Literature and Art. King Oscar found himself without a pin to fasten the decoration on her breast, and in the emergency was obliged to borrow one from her. Then, remembering the ancient superstition, the gallant old ruler said with a smile: "But this pin may cut our friendship, unless I give you something in exchange." Leaning forward he kissed Melba on both cheeks, adding: "Now we shall always be friends."

ON arriving at the stage door in Boston one day Melba found that the crowds of early comers who were waiting for the doors to be opened had completely shut her off from the possibility of entry. She asked permission to pass through, but was firmly refused. "I merely want to reach the door," she explained. "That's just it," they said, "so do *we*, and we are not going to budge: we were here first and

we are due the best place to hear." "Well, you *must* let me pass, or you will not hear anything, for I am Madame Melba," she told them; and then the whole queue became demoralised in the endeavour to get near, and yet not impede her way.

ON the night of Edmund Kean's first appearance as Richard a group of idle actors in the green-room were discussing his merits in anything but a liberal spirit. "I understand," said one, with an elaborate sneer, "that he is an admirable *harlequin*." Bannister entered at that moment, and retorted *impromptu*: "I am certain of that, for he has jumped over all our heads." Truly a delightful compliment, and one which Kean remembered for the rest of his life.

EDMUND KEAN'S performance as Luke in the *City Madam* was considered magnificent. It is said that an old lady admired his acting in *Othello* so much that she made no secret of her intention to bequeath him a large sum of money, but she was so appalled by the cold-blooded villainy of Luke that, attributing the skill of the actor to the inherent possession of the fiendish attributes he so consummately embodied, her regard gave place to suspicion and distrust, and upon her death, which took place shortly afterwards, it was found that the sum originally intended for the actor had been left to a distant relation, of whom she knew nothing but by name!

AUGUSTE VAN BIENE was fond of a practical joke, and it was perhaps only poetic justice that he came into the orbit of that great practical joker—J. L. Toole. The actor had apparently conceived an extraordinary craze for distributing safety razors broadcast among his friends, and, meeting the 'cellist one day, promptly begged his acceptance of one. Van Biene acknowledged the gift with thanks, but when he next met Toole the lacerated condition of his chin was poor testimony to the "safety" of the razor. Toole gravely asked to see the razor. "Dear me," he said, "and you actually tried to shave yourself with that! Why, *I forgot to send you the blades.*"

ELLEN TERRY did not possess a good reputation for punctuality when acting at the Lyceum Theatre. It is said that, as her cue approached, the whole staff began to get into a state of excitement, and the air became full of cries for Miss Terry. But she was always there in time for the public, and if she was a moment late the public forgave her directly she walked on the stage. Sometimes in the *Merchant of Venice* it looked as though Antonio would be unrepresented by counsel. The following comments could be heard at the back: "*That there young barrister's late.*" "*Them canals blocked again, I suppose, and the bloomin' gondola couldn't pass.*"

ONE night Mr Isaac Cohen, of the Pavilion Theatre, Mile End, suddenly discovered that his watch had been stolen, but didn't know when or

where it disappeared. So he told the "galleryites" at the Pavilion of his loss. They seemed sympathetic about it, and all, talking at once, shouted: "It wasn't *us*, sir. We know nothing about it." One individual, who seemed most concerned, said: "It couldn't be Smith's or Worten's gang, because they was up west, looking after the toffs." Another shouted: "Excuse me, Mr Cohen, you was in the 'Free' on Saturday, wasn't you? You was? Well then, I know who had it. It was those country boys from Bow. You shall get your watch back all right, sir, don't you fear. All right, guv'nor!" It was a presentation watch which Mr Cohen highly valued; and, sure enough, it was returned to him a few days later *without comment*!

A WELL-KNOWN dramatist, smarting under the influence of adverse criticism, met a certain well-known critic in the flesh and proceeded to twit him with the fact that, though extremely fond of finding fault, he could not write a play himself, to save his life. "That may be," replied the journalist; "neither can I lay an egg; *but I'm a better judge of an omelette than any hen in England.*"

IN his "Random Recollections" Robert Ganthony tells of an amusing incident which happened when Charles Calvert (the elder) was playing in *Henry the Fifth*. A row of supers in shining armour stood in a line facing the audience, back to a sloping piece which gave a sloping exit down under the stage. After the King's entrance one of the

supers overbalanced himself backwards, and of course put out his arms to catch hold of his comrades; they in their turn followed his example, the consequence being that the whole row fell backwards, and disappeared below the stage with a noise that only tin armour can make. Such a command had Calvert over his audience that this contretemps would have passed almost unnoticed had the men piled up in a heap together below kept quiet and not attempted to get up. First one and then the other began moving, till the clatter, and the enjoyment of the audience, who understood what was happening, necessitated the lowering of the curtain.

PRACTICAL jokes on the stage are hardly fair to those on whom they are practised, and J. H. Barnes (handsome Jack) certainly had reason to complain of one played upon him by Ellen Terry. One night at the Lyceum, Ellen Terry, who has to give Barnes (Bassanio) a ring, which he apostrophises as he shows it to the audience, gave him one with an india-rubber ball attached, by means of which scent could be squirted in the face of anyone near. She had had all the amusement, that lasted as long as the scent held out, and then she put it lovingly on Bassanio's finger, whose "business" was naturally spoilt by having to conceal the rubber ball from the audience, which, with the ring, at the first opportunity he flung heavenward, when it hit the painted sky, and, falling, was scrambled for by the stage carpenters below.

"THORMANBY," in his "The Spice of Life," tells of an amusing performance which he himself witnessed at the Globe Theatre. A member of the aristocracy had taken the theatre for his *chère amie*, a very fine-looking handsome woman, who wrongly imagined that she was an actress. Her protector, not only took the theatre, but wrote the play in which she was to act the leading part. It was a terrible fiasco. The piece was utter trash, and the leading lady made it worse by her atrocious acting. When the gallery "guyed" her, she lost her temper, and answered them back, which did not tend to improve the prospects of the piece. One of the scenes represented a woodland glade. She appeared, carrying a small dog in her arms, which she presently set down. Her pet wandered to one of the painted tree trunks—and—well, a veil must be drawn over what followed! Suffice it to say that there was a roar of laughter from pit and gallery, and even the stalls could not refrain from joining in the laughter. When the curtain at last fell, amid a storm of hoots and jeers, there arose loud derisive calls for the "leetle dawg," "the most nat'ral actor in the whole company!" The play was withdrawn after a run of two nights!

G. F. COOKE, who was rather too fond of the bottle, was playing Macbeth one night at a Scottish theatre when the manager, seeing he was greatly exhausted when the fifth act came on, offered him some whisky in a very small thistle glass, saying at the same time, by way of encouragement:

"Take that, Mr Cooke; take that, sir; it is the real mountain dew; that will never hurt you, sir." "*Not if it were vitriol,*" replied Cooke significantly, as he swallowed it.

JOHN CLARKE, of Haymarket fame, used to tell a good story of Douglas Jerrold. One evening Clarke and Jerrold were in a restaurant after the theatre when another celebrity, who was rather careless of his personal appearance, came in. "Ah," said Clarke, "here's Sterling Coyne." Jerrold took a long look at the new-comer. "Indeed," he drawled, "I thought it was *filthy lucre*!"

AUGUSTE VAN BIENE, of "The Broken Melody" fame, at the beginning of his professional career, when he was notoriously "hard up," played at an "At Home" at St John's Wood. The hostess paid him two guineas, by far his biggest fee up to date. Putting the two sovereigns in one pocket, and the two shillings in another, and delighted with the possession of so much money, he treated himself to a cab home to South London. Paying cabby in the dark, he went on his light-hearted way. Imagine his disgust when he came to count over his money in his bedroom and he found that he had parted with the two golden sovereigns to the jehu, and kept the two shillings for himself!

FRANÇOIS CELLIER for many years personally tested all the voices at the Savoy Theatre, not only the candidates for principal rôles,

but also for the chorus. One day Mr Michael Gunn, an old business associate of Mr D'Oyly Carte, was lunching at Romano's, when he sent a waiter to the Savoy Theatre to learn whether Mr Carte was in. The waiter was a long time gone. It appears Mr Carte had pounced upon him, and, knowing the loquacity of the average choral candidate, sternly commanded the waiter to sit down and not to talk. After a short time the man was ushered into Cellier's room, and again told not to talk, but to sing up and down the scale, while Mr Cellier played the piano. This the astounded waiter did. He was then told to start any song he knew, and a few minutes later found himself outside the theatre, never having had a chance of delivering Mr Gunn's message, but the proud possessor of a certificate declaring that he was qualified as a baritone in the chorus of No. 1 Company in the provinces.

CHARLES INCLEDON possessed perhaps the finest tenor voice ever heard in this country. He must have been a marvellous ballad-singer. When Ranzzini heard him at Bath, rolling his voice grandly up like a surge of the sea till, touching the top note, it died away in sweetness, he exclaimed in rapture: "*Corpo di Dio*! it was very lucky there was some roof above, or you would be heard by the angels in heaven, and make them jealous." Truly a fine compliment.

A REMARKABLE story is told of Sims Reeves, a great tenor, in connection with *King Arthur*. During the rehearsals, Tom Cooke, the

musical director of Drury Lane, was in despair of being able to find anyone who could do justice to the solos in "Come, if you dare!" James Anderson, who had noticed the fine voice of a young chorus singer named Sims Reeves, suggested him as a solution of the difficulty, and was laughed at by Cooke for the proposal. Macready, however, impressed by Anderson's persistency, desired Cooke to try the young man alone. In less than twenty minutes Cooke returned in raptures of delight. Rushing up to Anderson he embraced him again and again, swearing in his odd way that they must change places—Anderson must conduct the orchestra, and *he* take Anderson's place on the stage. The result was delightful; Sims Reeves made a great hit, and was nightly encored in his magnificent solos.

A VERY remarkable farewell was witnessed at Covent Garden on 7th May 1789, when Macklin, at the age of ninety-nine, took leave of the stage in his great part of Shylock, which he had recreated fifty-seven years previously at Drury Lane. Memory had long been failing the wonderful old man, and his dazed look when he entered the green-room, together with his strange questions, prepared everyone for a breakdown. He delivered his first two or three speeches correctly, but evidently without any understanding; then he stopped, tried to go on again, but all was blank, and coming forward to the footlights he begged the audience, in a broken voice, to pardon him, and allow his substitute, who had been kept ready dressed at the wings, to finish the

performance. Macklin lived to his hundred and eighth year, but never again set foot upon the stage.

IT is related of Caffarelli, a famous male soprano, that during the five years he was a pupil under the great Porpora the master made him sing only scales. At the end of that time Caffarelli asked him when he was to be taught to sing. "You have nothing more to learn," answered Porpora, "you are now the greatest singer in the world." And so he proved himself to be.

AMBROGETTI was a great artist; being cast for the part of the father in an operatic version of Mrs Opie's *Father and Daughter*, called *Agnese*, he studied in Bedlam every form of madness, and gave so terribly realistic a performance that ladies swooned, the whole house was struck with horror, and *the opera failed* from the very greatness of his acting!

GUISEPPE GRIMALDI, who was a veritable tyrant as a father, once feigned death in order to test the affection of his two sons. One day he instructed the servant to tell the boys as soon as they came home from rehearsal that he had suddenly expired; but first of all they were to be brought into the darkened room where he lay stretched out beneath a sheet, so that he might hear how they would take the news. Joe, the future great clown, suspecting a trick, roared lustily, but his brother danced and sang with delight at the prospect of being

released from their tormentor. Up sprang the sham and infuriated corpse, and thrashed that unhappy junior for his want of filial affection, while the more artful Joseph was caressed and rewarded!

FRED BELTON, in his "Random Recollections of an Old Actor," tells an amusing story of Macready. Playing Macbeth, in the dagger scene, it was his custom to have a table behind the scenes, and on it a cup of rose-pink to imitate blood, a powder puff to make him look pale, and other things appertaining to his "make-up." It was also the custom for his valet to stand behind a large looking-glass with a candle in each hand, that Macready might have plenty of light. One night the valet discovered to his horror that he had forgotten the powder-puff. Seizing one of the carpenters, and placing the candles in his hands, he said: "I've forgotten something; stoop down behind the glass, hold the candles out on each side, and he won't see you. I'll be back in a minute. Away goes the valet, and off comes Macready with his daggers to murder the King. Not seeing the puff, he bawled out: "Puff, sir, puff!" The carpenter blew out a candle. "Are you deaf?" screamed Macready. "Puff, sir, puff." And the man blew out the other. Left in the dark, one can imagine Macready's disgust. Bloodless and powderless he rushed on the stage, and both valet and carpenter were particularly careful to make themselves scarce that night, well knowing Macready's temper.

OFFENBACH'S delicacy of ear was well known; it is said of him that he dismissed an excellent valet from his service, and on being asked the reason for parting with such a good servant said: "Well, you see, sir, he always used to beat my clothes outside my door, and I never could get him to do it *in time*."

SIR GEORGE J. ELVEY possessed plenty of ready wit and humour. Whilst staying with some friends in the country, he, with a large party, went for a picnic, taking his violin with him. When luncheon was all ready on the grass, several friends of the name of Lamb were nowhere to be found. At this Dr Elvey whipped out his violin and played, to the intense amusement of all, "Little Bo-peep, she lost her sheep."

MALIBRAN used to say that the greatest compliment she ever received was when, upon one occasion, she was riding through a green lane near Highgate, humming an air from *The Maid of Artois*, two drovers stopped, listened and exclaimed: "Well, she *can* sing!"

AN amusing story is told of Richard Suett, the comedian. It appears that Suett had mortally offended a local shopkeeper by alluding to him in some play in most uncomplimentary terms through the medium of "gagging." This so offended the tradesman that he determined to give Suett a lesson which he would be hardly likely to forget. He

accordingly ascertained the whereabouts of the stage door at which Suett was in the habit of entering, and determined to lie in wait for him with a horsewhip. At the proper time he hid himself behind a wall close to the stage door, awaiting the arrival of the actor. The night was very dark, added to which it was raining in torrents. Presently Suett appeared upon the scene, looking as wet and miserable as a man without an umbrella would be in such a downpour, the water literally pouring off his cape. His enemy thought he recognised the object of his vengeance, but, wishing to make quite sure that he had got the right man, called out: "Are you Suett?" "No," replied the actor, "I'm *dripping*." The reply so amused the would-be assailant that he burst out laughing, shook hands with the actor, and from thenceforth the two became the best of friends.

ONE night Sims Reeves was playing the squire in the pantomime of *Old Mother Goose*, and at the very moment when he was walking off the stage singing:

> "*My wife's dead, there let her lie.*
> *She's at rest, and so am I.*"

—a man tapped him hurriedly on the shoulder, and whispered: "You must come home directly: Mrs Reeves is dead!" He hurried home, and found it only too true. This was his first wife, who was much older than himself.

MADAME CALVÉ, the famous Carmen, tells an amusing story of a visit she once paid to her birthplace. Strolling one day through the forest, singing gaily as she went, she was stopped by one of the village girls, who was evidently struck by the beauty of her voice. "You ought to sing at our fair," quoth the simple maiden, "as you would certainly get *as much as five francs each time.*"

MALIBRAN, it is said, was responsible for Bunn's (the manager) nickname of "Good Friday." Bunn was not of the most amiable disposition, and one day he was seen at rehearsal holding a wretched super by the collar, and scolding him fiercely. The poor fellow's fright and distress attracted Malibran's attention, whereupon she crossed over to the manager and said: "Do you know, I shall call you *Good Friday.*" "Why?" he asked. "Because," said Malibran, "you are such a *Hot Cross Bun!*"

CHOPIN, though one of the most courteous of men, knew how to resent insult, and give a dignified rebuke when necessary. On one occasion, when he had just left the dining-room, an indiscreet host who had been foolish enough to promise his guests some piece executed by him as a rare dessert, directed Chopin's attention to an open piano. Chopin quietly refused, but, on being pressed, said, with a languid and sneering drawl: "Ah! sir, I have just dined; your hospitality, I see, demands payment!"

DONZELLI, the fine tenor, could never get on with Malibran, who always declined to be a party to any preconceived plans and arrangements in regard to the part she was playing. Thus in acting Desdemona, with Donzelli as Otello, Malibran would not determine beforehand when he was to seize her. This greatly annoyed Donzelli, as Malibran's imagination carried her away to such an extent that she often gave Donzelli a long chase before she would give in. This sort of thing on a hot night was somewhat disagreeable, but it became serious when, one evening in his long pursuit after her, Donzelli stumbled, and slightly cut himself with his unsheathed dagger. It put the usually good-natured tenor in a towering passion, and he vowed he would never play the part again with Malibran, if she continued such a course.

AN extraordinary instance of absence of mind once occurred at one of the "Antient Concerts." The orchestra had assembled, time pressed and everything was ready for the expected arrival of royalty, when it was suddenly discovered that the organ would not speak. Additional power was given to the bellows, and the organist put down the keys with increased vigour, but not a sound could be obtained. The organ-builder was sent for in furious haste. He came, and after minutely inspecting the interior of the instrument, and finding nothing wrong, at length went round to the keyboard, when he found that the organist—Joah Bates—the Stainer of the time, *had forgotten to pull out any of the stops!*

MADEMOISELLE RACHEL had a curious way of making presents. Whenever she gave a present, it was always with the mental reservation that the gift was in reality a loan, which might be called in at any time. Thus, when Beauvallet, the actor, received a gift from her, he announced his intention of chaining it to the wall of his apartment, in order that it might be impossible for her to resume possession of it; and when, in a moment of effusion, she presented Dumas *fils* with a ring, he instantly replaced it on her finger, saying: "That is the better way, madame. You will now be saved the trouble of asking for it!"

MARIO used to tell a good story of Rubini. During one of Mario's appearances in London, Rubini was singing in Rossini's oratorio the *Stabat Mater*. "On hearing this," said Mario, "I hastened to the theatre, and the impresario, on receipt of my card, placed me in the front row of the stalls. Rubini could not fail to see me, and, looking at me steadily, instead of singing the Latin line he gravely sang: '*Dum flebat et non paqabit.*' No one of course amongst the audience saw the humorous allusion to the friend who had not paid for his seat, but I could not help smiling, thereby scandalising my neighbours, who appeared astonished that the sublimity of Rossini's sacred music, and the passionate tones of Rubini's voice, should move me to hilarity."

NICOLO PAGANINI used to play a piece entitled *The Vagaries of a Farmyard*, which contained a wonderful series of imitations of farm-

yard sounds. In this connection the following anecdote, illustrating Paganini's extraordinary power of portraying curious sounds on his violin is of interest. One fine night, when staying at a little inn just outside Frankfort, he was sitting at his window lost in the contemplation of the glorious heavens. The striking of a clock broke through his reverie, and reminded him of an occurrence of which he had but recently been an ear-witness. He seized his violin, and there arose on the stillness of the night the moans and cries of a mother, and her new-born babe. The landlord of the inn, awakened by the unusual sounds, and wondering how such visitors had found their way into his house without his knowledge, called his son and hastened to the room whence the plaintive cries proceeded ; and he found Paganini, too deep in thought to perceive his entrance, making his violin bring forth these human sounds !

MADEMOISELLE RACHEL was very clever in extorting gifts from the reluctant. At a dinner-party given by Comte Duchâtel she danced round a silver centre-piece until the host felt that he had no choice but to lay it at her feet. He had hoped, being a married man, and aware that his wife valued the ornament, that Rachel would have forgotten all about his offer by the morrow ; but she did not even wait for the morrow. Her host having proposed to send her home in his carriage, she accepted the suggestion, saying : " Thanks ; then there will be no fear of my being robbed of your present, which I will take in the carriage with me."

Whereupon Comte Duchâtel replied: "By all means, mademoiselle; but I trust that it is not too much to ask you *to return the carriage.*"

WHEN Garibaldi paid his visit to England, a sword and address were presented to him at a great gathering at the Crystal Palace, and Signor Arditi's national song, "La Garibaldina," was sung, amidst a scene of indescribable enthusiasm. Almost all the great singers, including Mario and Grisi, took part. Speaking of the great gathering in his Reminiscences, Arditi mentions a funny incident which occurred. He was always much excited when conducting, and turning quickly to the chorus he brought his baton down rather sharply on Mario's head. "Mario," says Arditi, "behaved most admirably, and without even uttering a murmur laughed the matter off as if nothing had happened."

CURIOUS vicissitudes sometimes befall great singers. Arditi tells a curious story in his Reminiscences. The first time Mario and Grisi were in America, it was a terribly hard winter. The theatre at Washington was bitterly cold, and, part of the roof having given way under the weight of a heavy fall of snow, the heat of the gas melted the frozen snow, and it streamed down through the aperture upon the unfortunate singers. The opera was *Norma*, and Grisi, instead of appearing in her traditional flowing white robe with heavy folds, was compelled to come upon the stage huddled up almost to her eyes in a great fur cloak, but the audience only perceived

that something was wrong when Mario entered *holding a coachman's umbrella over her head.* The house burst into roars of laughter as Palleo and Norma had their tragic meeting under this prosaic safeguard. Mario held the umbrella over both of them while they sang the great duet!

DANIEL FROHMAN, in his "Memories of a Manager," tells the following story of Kubelik and the late William C. Whitney, the millionaire. Two days before Kubelik's first appearance in New York Frohman was called to the telephone by a message from Mr Whitney. "I want Kubelik to play at my house about eleven o'clock Tuesday night," he 'phoned. "That is the evening of his American debut," replied Frohman. "I know that. What are your terms?" "Fifteen hundred dollars," said Frohman, who heard him give a long whistle at the other end of the 'phone. "That's pretty steep," he said. "I pay him nearly that amount myself," said Frohman, adding that he was not anxious he should play again that evening, as he had to leave for Boston early the following morning, to rest there and rehearse. However Mr Whitney paid the money, and Kubelik's own personal share of his first night's work was nearly three thousand dollars!

RACHEL and Ristori were great rivals in their day. The question was continually being asked: "Which is the greater, Rachel or Ristori?" Partisanship ran high, and those who for one reason or another considered that they had grievances

against Rachel made the rise of Ristori an occasion for humiliating, and even for insulting, her. Clésinger, the sculptor, became such a strong partisan of Madame Ristori that he destroyed his statue of Rachel, and made a statue of Ristori in place of it, declaring that the revelation of Ristori's acting had taught him that his statue of Rachel *was not the image of Drama, but only of Melodrama.*

A CURIOUS story is told of Paganini's debut before a Dublin audience in 1831. He arrived at the stage door of the Theatre Royal on the evening of the first concert, and immediately ordered an apartment to be got ready, and the room to be perfectly darkened. There he paced up and down, playing snatches of music, until the time for his appearance should arrive. The theatre was crammed to suffocation. The Lord Lieutenant and his suite attended in state, and all the élite of Dublin were in the dress tier. When the conductor, Sir George Smart, led Paganini to the centre of the stage there was a terrific outburst of applause, followed by breathless silence, as the great artist went through his deliberate process of adjusting his violin, raising his bow, and letting it rest upon the strings before commencing. This was too trying to the mercurial temperament of the occupants of the gallery, and before many seconds there was a stentorian shout: "*Well, we're all ready!*" The house was convulsed with laughter, peal after peal rang through the theatre. Paganini, stamping with rage, turned to Sir George Smart and cried: "*Qu'est ce que c'est?*"

The explanation seemed to make matters worse, and Paganini left the stage. Some time elapsed before he could be induced to return, but when he did so, and started to play, he enthralled his audience.

AN actor having been engaged by J. M. Barrie, and the terms agreed upon, the actor suddenly added: "Of course, Mr Barrie, I am to be featured, am I not?" "Featured?" asked Mr Barrie. "I do not understand." "Why, I assumed you knew," replied the actor. "On the programmes all of the names of the cast are printed in the usual way, and at the end of the list my name is printed in larger type with the word 'and' just before it."

To which Mr Barrie replied: "Why not '*But*'?"

WHEN Sir George Alexander first went on the stage his old Scottish nurse thought he was going headlong to the devil. Some years after he met her. She was still prejudiced, and said: "I think it is an awful way to get a living, but I do hear that you have made a deal of money at it, and I hope you'll soon retire, so that you may have time to repent, and make peace with your Maker."

EDMUND KEAN was always head over ears in debt, despite an enormous salary, and was always busy devising schemes by which he could raise money. One evening, an hour before the curtain was to rise upon a new play, a pawnbroker entered the private office of the manager of the theatre. "Here is a pawnticket for you, sir." "For

me?" exclaimed the astonished manager. "Yes, sir; it is for one hundred and fifty pounds, and I hold your leading man for security. He cannot leave my place until I have been paid." The manager had to pay this amount before he could get his star. Subsequently, Kean and the pawnbroker divided the spoils.

COLEMAN on one occasion played Hamlet under difficulties. The audience was small, and a seafaring man who had a prominent seat in the fourth row was not very much interested. After he had left ostentatiously three or four times, returning in a merrier frame of mind, Coleman stopped the play, walked to the footlights and said: "If my friend would stay in his seat, and keep his eye on me, I think I could interest him." *Hamlet* was then proceeded with, and the seafaring man drew from his pocket a telescope, which he drew out to its full length, and placed to his right eye, fixing it on Coleman when he appeared in the play, and following him as he paced the stage. As soon as Hamlet completed his speech the telescope was audibly shut up, and then reopened as Hamlet began again to speak. Coleman's Hamlet that night was not a success.

CLEMENT SCOTT, in "The Drama of Yesterday and To-day," tells a curious story about George Rignold, the actor-manager. John Oxenford, the critic of *The Times*, had been seriously ill, but hearing of Rignold's anxiety for his opinion of the performance, good-naturedly got up from his sick-bed,

"accompanied," says Mr Scott, "by one of the most distressing and hacking coughs I have ever heard within the walls of a theatre. When the cough started it was barely possible to distinguish one word spoken on the stage." The cough grew louder and louder, and Rignold at last came forward and said he could not go on acting "unless the old gentleman in the private box can suppress his distressing but evidently depressing cough."

Oxenford at once left the theatre, and, after the curtain fell, someone said to Rignold: "You have sent away John Oxenford of *The Times*, who *came out of his sick-bed to help you at your own special request.*"

WHEN the inimitable Rachel first appeared at the Théâtre Français, M. Prévost, secretary of the theatre and well known for his good taste and judgment in all theatrical matters, was asked by the young debutante to give her a few lessons in declamation. Prévost, surprised at this request, replied: "Ma pauvre fille, allez vendredes bouquets." Soon after this Rachel appeared for the first time in *Hermione*. Her acting electrified the audience, and on the fall of the curtain bouquets were thrown to her from nearly every box in the theatre. She modestly curtsied, and picked them up; then taking them to Prévost she said: "I have followed your advice, and bring you the bouquets for sale." Upon which the secretary apologised to the great tragedienne, acknowledged his haste and rudeness and expressed regret for having wounded the feelings of the debutante.

MADEMOISELLE JUDITH, the clever and accomplished actress of the Théâtre Français, was one day abusing, in no measured terms, her fellow tragedienne, Mademoiselle Rachel, to a mutual friend. After expatiating upon her many faults, and, above all, her grasping rapacity, she wound up by saying: "C'est une vraie Juive." Her friend, somewhat surprised, said: "Surely, my dear Judith, that ought not to be a fault in your eyes, as you likewise belong to the same religious persuasion." "True," replied the witty actress; "but the difference is that I am a Jewess, and she is a *Jew*."

JOHN KEMBLE had the honour of giving the Prince of Wales some lessons in elocution. According to the affected pronunciation of the day, the Prince, instead of saying "oblige," would say "obleege," upon which Kemble, with much disgust depicted upon his countenance, said: "Sir, may I beseech your Royal Highness to open your royal jaws, and say 'oblige'?"

HUMMEL, the German pianist and musical composer, was in the habit of wearing a small velvet cap when in his study composing, also when he attended rehearsals in large concert-rooms. An amateur called on him to inquire his terms for teaching composition; after being satisfied on that point, he asked Hummel why he wore his cap so constantly; the latter (being a bit of a wag) said he could not compose a bar without it, for he never felt inspired but when he donned his cap. The gentleman left

Hummel with a promise that he would attend the next morning to take his first lesson; he did so, but before commencing he pulled out of his pocket a handsome velvet cap with a gold tassel to it, which he placed on his head saying: "Now for it." Hummel smiled, but allowed his pupil to enjoy his imaginary inspiration.

CHARLES DIBDIN used to relate an amusing story of some Cornishmen, whom he met as he was travelling to Land's End, carrying music books and instruments. "Where are you going?" asked Dibdin. "To church, to practise our music for Sunday," was the reply. "Whose music do you sing?" asked the poet. "Oh, Handel, Handel," answered the men. "Don't you find Handel's music rather difficult?" said Dibdin. "Yees, it war, at first, but we *alter'd un* and so we does very well with un now." This was conclusive; Dibdin threw them a crown piece, and bade them drink the health of the author of *Poor Jack*.

SALVINI, being one evening among a party of friends, was asked to recite the last monologue of Othello. He rose, meditated for a few moments, and began in his magnificent resonant voice. Then, suddenly stopping in the middle of a line, he exclaimed with an impatient gesture: "No, it is impossible. I am not in the situation. I am not prepared for this supreme anguish. In order to render the frantic despair of Othello I need to have passed through all his tortures, I need to have played

the whole part. But to enter thus the soul of a character, without having gradually penetrated into it—I cannot—it is impossible!" All this was said without any affectation, with the air of a man who reveals the secret of his power. Salvini ceased to be Salvini when he came upon the stage.

NAPOLEON once paid a fine compliment to Haydn. When the French entered Vienna after the battle of Esling, Haydn was lying on his death-bed. By an express order from the Emperor, a double sentry was placed at the door of the venerable and dying musician, to protect him from the chance of annoyance in his last moments.

AN amusing anecdote is told of Paganini. During his residence at Marseilles he had been much surprised and disturbed, when he retired to his room of an evening for the purpose of study, by a rustling noise in the chimney, produced as he supposed by a bird or cat who had taken possession of it. By way of dislodging the intruder, he ordered a fire to be lighted; and great was his astonishment when he saw something approaching the human form divine emerge from the chimney, and, with many apologies, explain that he was a poor musician, of the name of Abasti, whose reverence for Paganini, and anxiety to learn all that he could from him, had led him to clamber down the chimney. Paganini was so touched with this neck-breaking enthusiasm that he not only offered to give him instruction, but actually took him to America with him.

JOSEPH GUARNERIUS, the celebrated violin maker, and pupil of the renowned Straduarius, died early. His great reputation did not begin to blossom till he was in the grave. Thrown into prison when very young, and for reasons which have not transpired, he languished there many years. It was with the utmost difficulty that he could procure a few wretched implements to enable him to proceed in the manufacture of his violins. Those he made during the long term of his imprisonment are distinguished under the name of "maiden violins," the following being the anecdote which gave rise to that designation. The gaoler's daughter had fallen in love with Guarnerius, and she secretly supplied the unhappy artist with the necessary materials for his labour. She would go round to the violin makers of the city, and request as for charity the refuse of their varnish. With this mixture of various descriptions of varnish were covered those instruments which are now known as the "maiden violins," and they may be easily recognised by the peculiar granulation in the layers of the varnishing. The violins were then sold for the smallest sums by the gaoler's daughter to mitigate the misery of a celebrated artist—those very instruments which now fetch their weight in gold.

A FEMALE singer, who was in high favour with a German prince, had to sing one of Haydn's compositions. At the rehearsal she and the conductor differed as to the time in which it should be sung. It was agreed that the composer should be

referred to; who, when the conductor waited on him, asked if the lady was handsome. "Very," was the reply, "and a special favourite with the Duke." "*Then she is right,*" said Haydn, with a significant look at the disconcerted conductor, who in all probability, had he gained his point, would have lost his place. This Haydn well knew.

THE following charming story is told of Madame Malibran. A young English singer, in the chorus of the Italian opera in Paris, not having the means to follow the company to London, resolved upon getting up a benefit concert; Malibran having promised to sing for her. By chance, on the evening fixed for her concert, Madame Malibran was summoned to a party given by the Duke of Orleans. The *bénéficiare*, uneasy and alarmed, requested the audience to be patient. Eleven o'clock had struck, and Malibran arrived. After singing several romances, she took the lady aside, and said: "I promised you my evening, you know; well, I have contrived to make a double harvest of it. Before I came here I sang for you at the Duke of Orleans', and here are the hundred crowns he has sent you."

ANSANI, who was the *primo tenore* at the opera before Pacchierotti, in 1780, was not only a most irritable man, but was married to a wife, Signora Maccherini, who was a most desperate virago. These worthies have been known, if one happened to be applauded more than the other, *mutually* to employ persons to hiss the successful rival!

WHILE Handel was directing the rehearsal of one of his oratorios he heard a gruff and unknown instrument among the basses. "What are those abominable sounds," he roared out, "which split my ears?" "A serpent," someone replied. "A serpent!" growled the composer; "it does not seem to be that by which Eve was seduced!"

BANNISTER, sauntering through the Strand one day, entered one of those cheap auctioneer shops which are so numerous in the metropolis, and where the eloquence of the auctioneer covers the inferiority of his wares. "You see," said the auctioneer, "that I am not selling these articles —I am actually giving them away!" "Then," gravely rejoined Bannister, "I will thank you for that tea-urn you have in your hand."

"PRAY, sir," said a green-room lounger to John Kemble during the run of *The Elephant* at Covent Garden Theatre, "is not the man very nervous who rides upon the real elephant?" "Nervous, sir?" replied Kemble, in that deep hollow tone which was the particular characteristic of his voice, "what must *I* have been, when, riding on the sham elephant, I heard the hind legs say to the forelegs: 'Get on, or, damn your eyes, *I shall be down*'!"

AT a county festival where the *Messiah* was performed, the singer to whom the aria, "O Thou that tellest," had been assigned, anticipat-

ing a favourable appreciation of his talents, wrote at the end of the solo (the chorus following immediately) the words: "*Wait for the applause.*" This he wrote not only in the conductor's copy, but in every one in the orchestra. At the end of his solo the conductor stopped, and there was a dead stop. "Why don't you go on?" said the singer, in an agony of disappointed vanity. "I am *waiting for the applause,*" was the calm and sarcastic reply of the conductor.

THE following story is told of Edmund Kean. In olden days at Drury Lane there used to be two green-rooms. The first was for actors drawing ten pounds a week or over, the other for those under five pounds a week. Kean was fulfilling an important engagement at Drury Lane, that of Richard III., and of course was in the first green-room. He happened to see an old friend of his, a strolling player called Hughes, and he called him into his room. Hughes, as a three-pounder, was not permitted to enter the first green-room. Kean sent for Rae, the stage manager, and insisted that his old friend should enter. The stage manager hesitated: it was a rule and could not be broken. "Well, then," said Kean, "you'll play *Richard* to-night without Gloster." This settled the vexed question once and for all.

A BET was once made with Edmund Kean that he could be "put out" on the stage. Kean asserted that his friends or strangers might do what they pleased to disconcert him, but their attempts

would be ineffectual. Yarnold, one of the actors in his company, undertook to do it. The play was *Richard III.*, and, as most of us know, when Catesby comes on and informs Richard that the Duke of Buckingham is captured, Richard replies: "Off with his head! So much for Buckingham!" It appears that this line was one of Kean's best; in it he used to literally electrify his audience. Yarnold was playing Catesby, and in due course came on and said: "My lord, the Duke of Buckingham is taken, *and we have chopped off his head*!" Kean gave one convulsive gasp, then, turning on Catesby, he in his finest tragedy voice thundered forth: "Then bury him—so much for Buckingham!"

SHORTLY before his death Corney Grain dined with Leslie Ward ("Spy") and another friend at the Beefsteak Club. He had recently grown considerably stouter, a fact which worried him very much, and the friend, unmindful that he was treading on dangerous ground, suddenly remarked: "I say, Dick, why don't you bike?" Corney Grain frowned. "I hate cycling," he said, adding somewhat bitterly after a brief pause: "Did it not occur to you, when recommending a bicycle, that it would take rather a strong machine to carry me?" "Spy" could not resist this opportunity. With a hopeful expression he remarked: "I was at Sanger's the other night, Dick, and saw an elephant riding." In a few moments there was dead silence. Then Corney Grain spoke: "Well, Leslie," he said, "you are the only person from whom I would stand THAT!"

A CURIOUS incident, which might have ended seriously, once occurred in the last act of Meyerbeer's *Huguenots*, with Mario as Raoul, and Grisi as Valentine. In order to make the scene more realistic, some guardsmen were engaged to take the part of Charles IX.'s troopers. Their orders were, after marching on to the stage, to stop as their commander called out: "Who goes there?" (the men had been taught to understand the equivalent of the command in Italian), and when they heard Raoul's answer, "Huguenots," to point their guns at him and fire. This they did with such exact obedience that, instead of aiming above the heads of Raoul and Valentine, they took a deliberate and steady aim at the two unfortunate singers, who were in consequence covered with gunpowder. In spite of the fact that Mario was standing in front of Grisi, her muslin gown was nearly set on fire. "My goodness! what you do?" cried Mario in his broken English as he fell, but the clash of the orchestra, and the cheering of the audience drowned his exclamation. When the curtain was down, both singers rushed to the men, saying: "*It all be fun: why blow guns at us?*" The soldiers were greatly surprised, and said they had only obeyed orders when told to fire.

MARIO, as Jean in the *Prophète*, tried to look as like the pictures of our Lord as possible, and having naturally a high forehead he had marked it with grease-paint, so as to suggest that the parting of his hair came much lower. On one occasion he was acting with Madame Viardot, who created the

part of the Prophet's mother, Fides, and was a great actress. After her famous song, "Oh, my son!" she took his head in her two hands, and pressed a kiss upon his forehead. Mario, looking up, to his horror saw two large moustaches on Madame Viardot's upper lip. In kissing him, she had taken a most lifelike impression of his parting of grease-paint! Scarcely able to control his laughter, Mario, *sotto voce*, told her not to turn round, and she had to get off the stage as best she could with her back to the audience.

MARIO once made a vow that he would never sing in his native country, and nothing would induce him to break it. On one occasion his fellow-citizens sent a deputation to beg him to sing at the theatre for the benefit of a charitable institution which was in great need of money. The deputation appealed to Mario's "goodness of heart," begging him to sing "just this once" for so deserving an object. Mario, in reply, asked them what was the largest sum of money they expected to take at the doors, if he were to sing. A good round sum was mentioned, and, taking out his cheque-book, Mario filled in a cheque for double the amount, and handing it to the head of the deputation said: "Here, gentlemen, is the sum wanted; please accept it as my subscription, but never trouble me again about singing either in public or private."

MADAME ALBANI tells of an amusing incident that happened once in a provincial theatre. The opera *Don Giovanni* was being performed, and

this requires a man on horseback for the statue scene, the man being a live one, but the horse a "property" one. There was nothing in the theatre but a very small horse of wood and canvas, about the size of a donkey, but as this was the only thing available it had to be used. At night, the man was set astride the horse, and strictly adjured to remain motionless, except when he had to bow his head at the right moment. The man was very long in the legs, and his heels rested on the ground when he was on the horse. This made things so ridiculous that everyone was inclined to laugh. But worse was to come, for in the midst of the scene when he should have been as still as death he gave vent to a loud sneeze, completely upsetting the situation and the gravity of the audience, who roared with laughter.

A CURIOUS incident, showing the fascination Mario exercised over his listeners, occurred once at a concert. He was singing Alary's charming romance "La Chanson de l'Amoureux," which in those days was very popular. As he sang the second verse with passionate feeling:

> *"Ah, viens au bois, folle maitresse*
> *Au bois sombre et mystérieux,*
> *Ah, viens au bois.*[21]

—a young girl rose from her seat, and in a dreamy ecstatic voice exclaimed: "*Je viens, Je viens.*"

ON one occasion when Madame Albani sang before Queen Victoria at Balmoral she sat down at the piano to accompany herself. One of the legs of

the stool broke, and the *prima donna* rolled upon the ground at the Queen's feet. The Queen was much concerned lest Madame Albani had hurt herself; but being assured that no damage had been done the Queen laughed heartily, and a fresh stool was sent for.

MARIO and Grisi, like many other singers, were somewhat superstitious, disliking to begin any undertaking on a Friday, and the number thirteen. If they came upon any supposed unlucky omen, they crossed themselves to avert its evil influence. Under one of these supposed bad influences, Mario witnessed an accident that occurred at a dress rehearsal of *Masaniello* at Paris in 1862, and in consequence had the strongest dislike for the opera ever after. During the rehearsal, Mademoiselle Livy, who performed the part of Fenella, went too near the footlights, and her dress caught fire. In an instant she became a mass of flames, and rushed frantically round the stage, to the horror of the spectators, who seemed paralysed with fear. Mario alone retained sufficient presence of mind to seize the unhappy girl and try to crush out the flames, though without avail; he himself was severely burnt, and the injuries poor Mademoiselle Livy received were fatal. This catastrophe was inseparably associated in his mind with *Masaniello*, and he never took part in the opera with any ease in his mind, although the principal character was one of his most picturesque and effective impersonations.

WHEN Sir Henry Irving was entertained at dinner at one of the Oxford colleges he was asked by a don: "Are you a University man, Sir Henry?" "Oh no," replied Irving; "but I keep a secretary who was."

CHARLES KEAN on one occasion took a dramatic enough revenge on a critic who had written in disparaging terms of his wife's acting, describing it as "vulgar." Kean wrote to the critic, requesting the favour of an early interview. The critic duly arrived early the following morning, and Kean asked him if he had written the notice in question, which he at once admitted. He then charged the unhappy critic with having insulted Mrs Kean by calling her vulgar. The critic replied that he had a perfect right to call her acting vulgar if he thought it so. "No, no," said Kean; "no man has a right to call my wife vulgar either on or off the stage. I shall give you a lesson against insulting my wife in future." He then left the room, locked the door from the outside, told the servants, and directed them not to go near the door. After some hours Kean returned and ordered his release. Kean said to a friend: "Depend upon it, the position was too absurd for him to make it public." The critic remarked to one of his own friends: "Oh yes, I took it quietly. One does not provoke a madman, but amuses oneself with his antics."

JOHN PHILIP KEMBLE, like Mrs Siddons, in private life, could not always forget that he was off the stage. He, too, had the trick of talking

in blank verse, and the story is told of him entering an umbrella shop, selecting a walking-stick, and saying to the shopman: "This likes me well. The cost? The cost?"

SCHUMANN benefited much from his friendship with Mendelssohn, and, without rivalry, they freely criticised each other. A story is told that on one occasion Schumann refused to take a walk with Mendelssohn, as he did not wish to interrupt his flow of inspiration when composing. Some days later Mendelssohn asked to be allowed to look at the new composition, and, turning to Schumann's wife, remarked: "Oh, he would have done better to take a walk with me the other day."

A GOOD story used to be told concerning Madame Titiens. Owing to his intimate acquaintance with the oratorios, Sir Joseph Barnby's professional assistance was much sought by vocalists who wished to make themselves conversant with the correct *tempi* and renderings of the various arie. Among others whom he coached was Titiens, Sir Joseph attending her house for the purpose. On one occasion the hour fixed for the rehearsal was somewhat early. On his arrival the musician was shown into the drawing-room. There he was left to his own devices for about twenty minutes. Eventually his pupil appeared, and at once proceeded without delay to the business in hand. Suddenly, in the midst of the air, she caught sight of herself

in the glass. With an agonised cry she rushed from the spot, and when the unhappy woman raised her eyes once again to the mirror she realised that her hair was still *done up in curl-papers.* Sir Joseph had observed this immediately she had entered the room, but consideration for her feelings prompted him to ignore the situation.

ONE of Lady Tree's most humorous remarks concerned a lady "with a past," or to be more accurate, with several pasts. She had recently married a second time. Her name coming up in the course of conversation, someone asked who her first husband had been, and finished by saying, "I can't remember for the life of me. I know it began with an L." It was taken up by Lady Tree in a moment: "I should think it was—Legion!"

AN interesting account is given in Mr S. MacKinlay's "Antoinette Sterling and Other Celebrities," of Malibran's first appearance at Milan. At that time, Madame Pasta was a great favourite in that city, her most effective part being Norma. Such enormous success did she make in this rôle that the Milanese always alluded to her as "Norma," instead of Pasta. Upon her arrival Malibran was asked by the director of the Opera House in what part she would like to make her first appearance. She at once replied: "As 'Norma,' signor." "But, madame, do you forget Pasta?" "Eh bien?" replied she, "I am not afraid of Pasta. I will live or die as Norma." Bellini's opera was therefore

announced. At the opening night Pasta came to hear the new-comer, and took up her position in the middle box of the grand tier, amidst loud applause from the populace. Malibran made her first entrance without any sound of encouragement, and the aria was received in deliberate stony silence. Her next number was the terzetto. After one of the passages which she had to render the audience suddenly forgot themselves and shouted out: "Bravo!" This was instantly followed by cries of: "Hush!" "Silence!" The trio came to an end. Not a hand! Instead were heard sounds of dispute from all parts of the house: "She is great!" "She is nothing of the kind!" "She is better than Pasta!" "She is not!" And these remarks went on for the rest of the evening. Upon the second night Pasta did not come to hear her new rival. This time when Malibran came on and sang her aria, her rendering was greeted with immense applause, which continued throughout the evening in ever-increasing enthusiasm. At the close she was called before the curtain again and again, and when she left the Opera House to drive home the populace took out the horses and themselves dragged her to the hotel. From that moment Malibran was the pet of the Milanese public. Pasta's reign was over.

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE was once asked by a girl for his opinion on her voice. After hearing two verses of a song he stopped her. "Tell me," he said, "are you fond of singing?" "Oh yes, immensely," she replied, in a voice brim-

ming over with enthusiasm. Sir Alexander raised his eyebrows, looked intensely puzzled, and answered: "*That's very curious.*"

A STRANGE incident happened to Antoinette Sterling in connection with the death of Madame Patey. It will be remembered that the latter's life came to an end under dramatic circumstances at a concert in Sheffield, after she had sung "The Banks of Allan Water," which finished—

"There a corpse lay she."

Not long after this, Antoinette Sterling was engaged to sing at the same hall. On being taken up to the room at the hotel which had been reserved for her she took an instinctive dislike to it the moment she entered. Thinking no more about it, however, she dressed and set out for the concert. On coming back she went upstairs to her room, and had the same feeling as before. In vain she tried to shake it off. There was a restlessness which refused to be overcome. At last she could stand it no longer, and rang for the maid. "Tell the proprietress that I am sorry to put her to trouble at this time of night; but I don't like the room, and I wish to be moved to another." The girl went off, and returned almost at once to say that a fresh one was ready for her. When the contralto met the manageress in the morning she explained her reason for wanting to move. A look half of surprise, half of terror came into the woman's face. At first she would give no reason for this, but finally the fact was dragged out of her that

the body of Madame Patey had been taken to that very room after her death.

HAYDN was one day called upon by a butcher, who stated that one of his daughters was shortly going to be married, and, being particularly fond of Haydn's music, she was extremely anxious that he should compose a piece specially for this interesting event. Haydn, good hearted as ever, complied with the request, and on the following day the butcher received a minuet. Here Haydn naturally thought the matter ended, but much to his surprise, a few days after, he heard the music of the minuet being played outside his house. He hastened to the window and, looking down, saw a huge ox, with gilded horns and wonderfully decorated, surrounded by a street orchestra. The butcher gained admission to the house, and finally stood before Haydn. "Dear sir," said he, "I thought that a butcher could not express his gratitude for your kindness in a more becoming manner than by offering you the finest ox in his possession." Haydn very naturally wished to decline the animal, but the grateful butcher could not agree. Finally, the ox was left with Haydn. History does not relate what the result was to the composer's pocket, but the outcome of the incident was the title of "The Ox Minuet."

WHEN Strauss visited America, the "Blue Danube" waltzes were as well known in the States as "Yankee Doodle," consequently when the composer was found to be a handsome man, with

lovely eyes, and a mass of wavy black hair almost as long as Paderewski's, the musical women went almost wild over him. The musician at the time was a great dog-fancier, and was accompanied by a magnificent black retriever. Towards the end of the concert season, a young lady conceived the idea of securing a lock of Strauss's hair for her locket. The fad became the fashion, and Strauss promised every fair applicant a memento; and in due course the locks were distributed—many hundreds of them, each one being accompanied with the compliments of the composer. Sufficient hair had been cut off and distributed to make Strauss look as though he had been sand-papered; yet when he left the States his locks were as abundant as before—but, when the beautiful black-haired retriever took its departure, it was observed that the poor animal *looked like a shorn poodle*!

VAN BIENE one night, when playing in *The Broken Melody*, had a curious experience. Just as he was about to make his first entrance, his manager brought him twenty-five pounds in gold, and he, not caring to leave it in his dressing-room, slipped the money into his pocket. He happened to speak the line, "I am penniless," with unusual earnestness that night, pulled out his handkerchief to press it to his eyes, and the gold coins flew out of his pocket all over the stage, much to the amusement of his audience.

CAFFARELLI on the invitation of the Dauphine went to Paris in 1750, where he sang at several concerts and pleased as much as he

astonished the critics. Louis XV. sent him a present of a snuff-box; but Caffarelli, observing that it was plain, showed the messenger who brought it, one of the gentlemen of the Court, a drawer full of splendid boxes, and remarked that the worst of them was finer than the gift of the King of France. "If," said he, "he had sent me his portrait in it!" "That," replied the gentleman, "is given only to ambassadors." "Well," was the reply, "and all the ambassadors of the world would not make one Caffarelli!" This, when repeated, made the King laugh heartily; but the Dauphine sent for the singer, and giving him a passport said: "It is signed by the King himself—for *you*, a great honour, *but lose no time in using it, for it is only good for ten days!*"

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