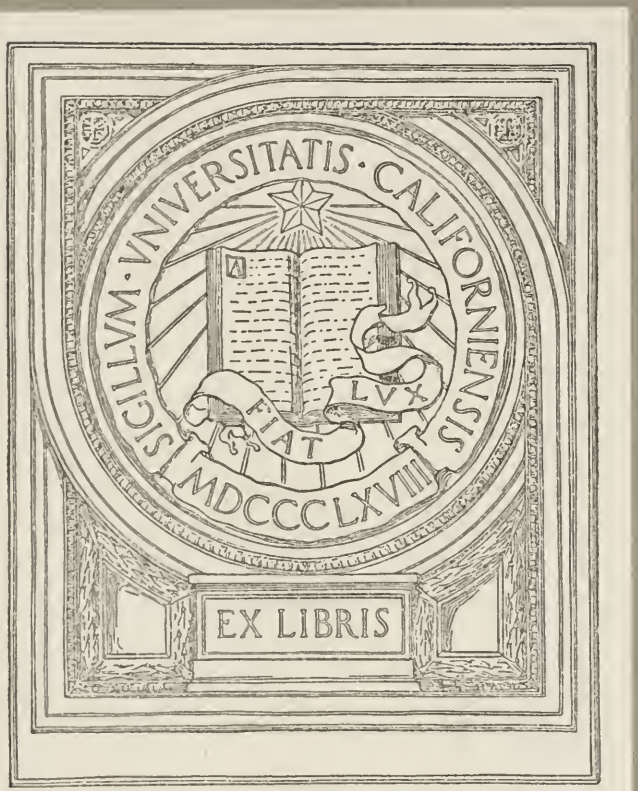
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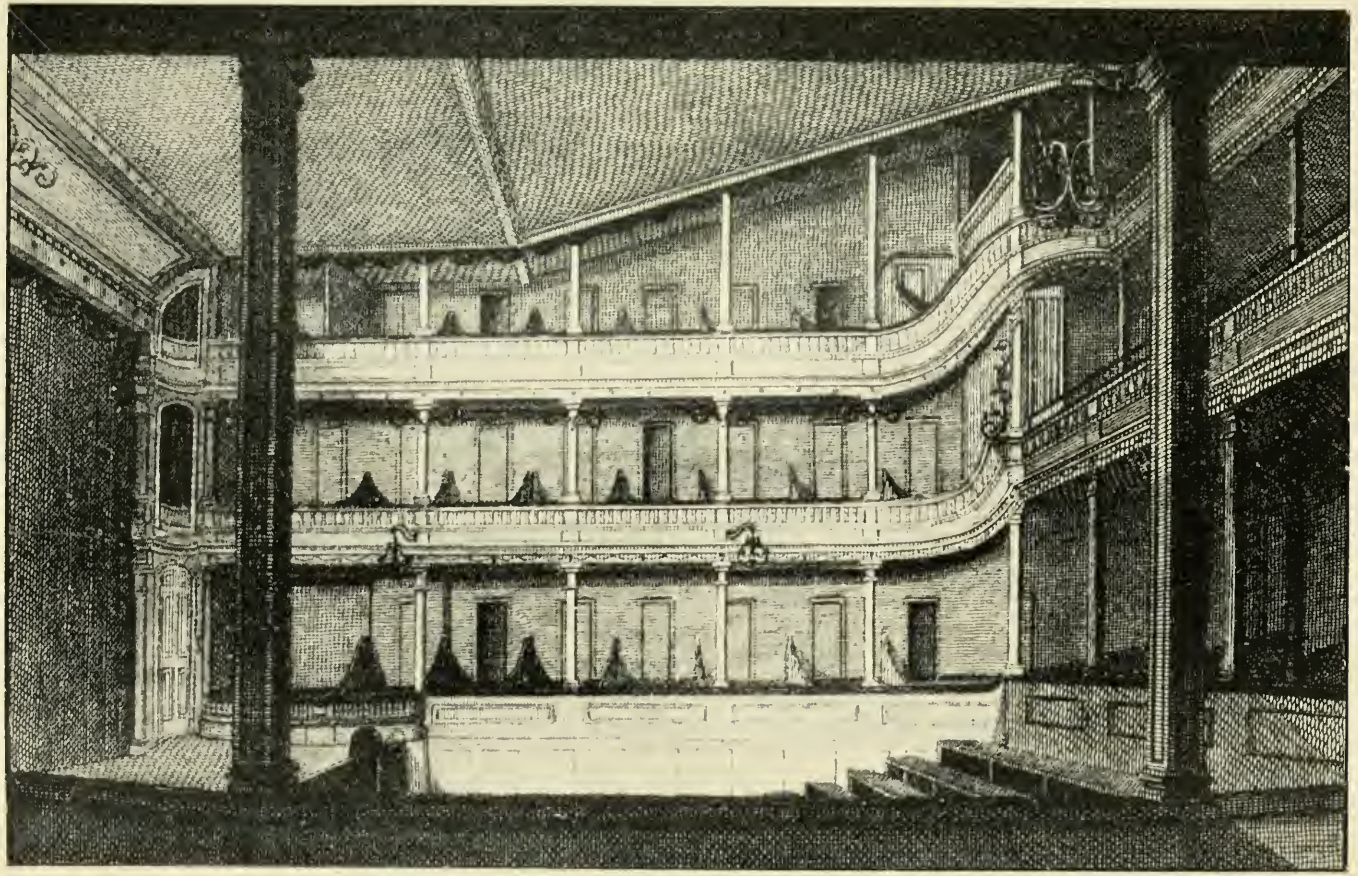

INTERIOR OF THE HAYMARKET IN 1807. [*To face p.* 143.

THE ELIZABETHAN PLAYHOUSE AND OTHER STUDIES

SECOND SERIES

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THE ELIZABETHAN PLAYHOUSE AND OTHER STUDIES

SECOND SERIES

BY

W. J. LAWRENCE

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To
The Memory
of
JOSEPH KNIGHT

PREFACE

The genial reception given to my earlier book on the *Elizabethan Playhouse* has encouraged me to issue this *Second Series* of studies. My chief aim has been, as before, to throw additional light on the obscurities of the Elizabethan Stage, and to emphasize the remarkable vitality of its conventions by demonstrating how many of them contrived to wind their tendrils round the trunk of early picture-stage dramaturgy. We sometimes forget that if there have been growth and decadence since Shakespeare's time, there has also been a certain measure of continuity.

No apology need, I hope, be expressed for the inclusion of one or two papers at the end which lie outside the scope of the main inquiry. They are the result of patient delving, and their existence is justified by the new facts they present. I have also thought it advisable to reprint in amended form in an appendix the chronological list of Elizabethan and quasi-Elizabethan theatres originally published at the end of my first paper in the earlier volume. Corrected by the light of the recent discoveries of Monsieur Feuillerat and Professor C. W. Wallace, this embodies the chief facts known to modern learning about the early playhouses.

Of these studies it also requires to be noted that the third, fifth, sixth and eighth are now published for the first time. For permission to reprint the others I have to thank the editors of the various periodicals in which they

originally appeared. The first is taken from *Englische Studien* (1912), the second and fourth from *Anglia* (1912), the seventh from the *Dublin Saturday Herald* (1913), the ninth from *The Gentleman's Magazine* (1896), and the tenth from *Irish Life* (1913). All have been thoroughly revised, and one—the paper on "Early Systems of Admission"—considerably extended. Owing to the fact that the illustrations have been carefully selected with the view of helping to a clear understanding of many moot points, one or two of them happen to be familiar almost unto triteness; but on the other hand the great majority are of a highly uncommon order and will prove new even to theatrical specialists.

To Sir Harry C. W. Verney, Bart., my thanks are due for his kindness in causing a second search to be made in the Verney archives at Steeple Claydon for the missing seventeenth-century playbills, and for his generous permission, on their discovery, to have them photographed for reproduction. Although relegated by unfortunate necessity to the comparative obscurity of an appendix the facsimiles of these rare old bills form one of the most interesting features of this book. Mr. William Martin, LL.D., and the Editor of *The Selborne Magazine and Nature Notes* (with the courteous sanction of the Society of Antiquaries) have kindly lent to me the block of the broadsheet of *England's Joy*—the first block ever made from it. Indebtedness must also be acknowledged to Mr. Walter H. Godfrey for permission to reproduce two of his designs for a conjectural reconstruction of the first Fortune theatre. Lastly, it is once more my agreeable

duty to thank my friend and publisher, Mr. A. H. Bullen, for his careful reading of the proofs.

May I venture to say, in conclusion, how much I appreciate the honour that has fallen to my lot of having two books printed and published in Shakespeare's own town and in a venerable old house with whose lineaments the Master from youth upward must have been thoroughly familiar? If it should be conceded by the few competent to judge that I have added, however slightly, to the sum-total of existing knowledge regarding the Elizabethan Stage, I shall deem myself fully rewarded for many years of ungrudging research and painful excogitation.

W. J. Lawrence.

Dublin, *March*, 1913.

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Light and Darkness in the Elizabethan Theatre

Light and Darkness in the Elizabethan Theatre

Writing of the characteristics of the rear stage in a recent paper on "The Evolution and Influence of the Elizabethan Playhouse,"[1] I stated that "its employment was, to some extent, restricted by the remoteness and obscurity of its position, an inconvenience which almost invariably demanded the bringing-in of lights at the commencement of all inner scenes." Further study of this point, on the lines indicated to me in a private communication by my generous fellow-worker, Professor G. F. Reynolds, has convinced me that the latter half of the cited statement, despite the qualifying "almost", conveys an erroneous impression. I think now it may be taken as an axiom that lights were never brought in during the performance in either the public or the private theatre with the prime aim of assisting the vision or suiting the convenience of the spectator. The conclusion to be arrived at when one has collected and scrutinized a considerable number of stage-directions dealing with the bringing-in of lights (whether on the rear stage or elsewhere) is that they were brought in not as a matter of necessity but of illusion. Almost invariably the presence of temporary lights on the stage indicated that the concurrent action was taking place at night. The obscurity of the rear stage, I have recently found reason to believe, was considerably relieved by a window at the back admitting reflected light.[2]

Besides this symbolization of night by the help of lights, the convention may have had its degrees of illusiveness and signification in exterior scenes in accordance with the nature of the light employed. One gathers this from the reference made in *Westward Ho!* ii. 2, to the various types of night-

[1] For which see *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies*. First Series. 1912.
[2] See under "Lower Stage Windows" in my succeeding paper.

walkers, "the cobbler with his lantern, the merchant or lawyer with his link, and the courtier with his torch". But as an ounce of practical demonstration is more to the purpose than a ton of theory, I shall abandon speculation and proceed at once to cite examples from both public-theatre and private-theatre plays showing that as a rule this introduction of lights was simply emblematical of the lateness of the hour. And first as to the vital point, the question of rear-stage scenes. To prove that lights were brought on behind as a matter of expediency, not of art, one would have to cite a goodly number of instances where the practice was followed in ordinary daylight interiors, or, in other words, in ordinary domestic scenes. This, I take leave to think, could not be done. So far as my experience goes, all artificially-lighted rear-stage scenes, with one exception, are either night-scenes, scenes in churches before candle-adorned altars or scenes laid in obscure places such as tombs and dungeons. Even the exception, which occurs in *Satiromastix* (a Globe and Paul's play), can be explained away. Act i. 2 opens with the direction, "Horrace sitting in a study behinde a Curtaine, a candle by him burning, bookes lying confusedly." The time is clearly early morning, for the poet says his brains have given assault to the Epithalamium for Sir Walter Terrel's wedding "but this morning"; and a little later, when Crispinus and Demetrius Fannius knock at the door and get no reply, they express surprise that the poet is not yet up. It seems to me that the candle was made a factor of the scene to assist in conveying the impression that Horace had been in the throes of composition all night. The truth is the Elizabethans paid a good deal more attention to the science of stage illusion than we give them credit for. In this case the conventional method of representing study scenes would not apply, despite the fact that literary labours, like the practice of the black art, were associated in the popular imagination with the burning of the midnight oil. A typical example of the conventional method occurs in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, Act iv, where we find the direction, "Enter Friar Bacon, drawing the curtains with a

white stick, a book in his hand, and a lamp lighted by him; and the Brazen Head and Miles, with weapon, by him."[1]

To admit that lights could have been used indiscriminately on the rear stage, wholly without relation to their appropriateness, would be to disallow the realism which accompanied their bringing-in in bed-chamber scenes by one of the principal characters and not, as in the generality of other scenes, by attendants. The force of this realism has been wholly lost upon some of our recent Shakespearean commentators, one or two of whom have contrived in editing *Othello*[2] to weaken the potency of the Moor's opening soliloquy in v. 2. Nothing could militate more stubbornly against a clear understanding of this speech than the placing at the head of the scene some such description as "Desdemona's apartment: a light burning in the bed-chamber". The direction in Quarto 2, "Enter Othello with a light, and Desdemona in bed", plainly shows in what manner the soliloquy was, and should be, spoken. Half the cogency of the passage beginning, "Put out the light, and then put out the light", is lost unless we conceive that the Moor is addressing the torch ("thou *flaming* minister") he holds in his hand.

We have a bed-chamber scene of similar illusiveness in *Love's Sacrifice*, a late Cockpit play in which frequent employment was made of lights. In Act ii. 4, Bianca comes in her night-mantle, bearing a candle which she sets down, to Fernando's bedside. In passing it may be noted that the previous scene, with its game of chess played by the light of tapers, clearly shows that, when necessary, artificially lighted interior scenes of ordinary domesticity could be given on the outer stage.[3] This is an important point, as one is apt to associate all such scenes with the rear stage. It affords still another proof that realism was the only purpose fulfilled in

[1] Mr. T. H. Dickenson, in his recension of this play in the Mermaid edition of Greene's *Works*, interprets this direction to imply that Friar Bacon was discovered in bed, surely an unwarranted deduction even although the Friar subsequently falls asleep. The curtains drawn here can have been none other than the curtains of the rear stage.

[2] e.g. the recension of the tragedy in the *Arden Shakespeare* series.

[3] Cf. *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, iii. 2 (as divided in Verity's recension of Thomas Heywood in the Mermaid edition).

the bringing-in of lights. Bed-chamber scenes, we know, were not always rear-stage scenes. Not infrequently the beds were thrust out so that their occupants might be the better seen and heard. Expediency could not have demanded the use of lights in such cases and yet we find them occasionally employed. Take, for example, that curious scene in the fourth act of Heywood's Red Bull play, *The Golden Age*, where the four Beldams enter "drawing out Danae's bed, she in it," and then "place foure tapers at the foure corners." That the purpose here was one of sheer illusion is indicated by the subsequent direction, "Jupiter puts out the lights and makes unready."

When we come to discuss the methods employed in presenting scenes of obscurity, not necessarily night scenes, on the rear stage, we shall find obeyance to a certain conventionalism.[1] Paradoxically enough, darkness was indicated by an increase of light. We note this in prison scenes, as in *The Martyr'd Souldier*, iii. 2 (a late Cockpit play), where Eugenius is "discovered sitting loaden with many Irons, a lampe burning by him." Tomb scenes, which were invariably rear-stage scenes, were commonly signalized, although some apparent exception can be traced, by the bringing-in of torches, or by the presence of lights. Notable examples are to be found in *Love's Sacrifice*, v. 3; *The Lost Lady*, i. 2; and *The Tragedy of Hoffmann*, iv. 1. Church or Temple scenes might, in a sense, be denominated scenes of obscurity, but the lights used in these were illusive altar-lights.[2]

We come now to a vital phase of this inquiry, the question as to whether actual darkness was ever realized on the Pre-Restoration Stage, and under what conditions. In this connexion one must bear in mind that, although there was a certain standardization of effects in both classes of theatres, distinctions in convention might have arisen owing to structural differences and the individual methods of house (as

[1] Just as in Masque scenes on the outer stage torches were almost invariably brought in at the beginning. Cf. *The Cardinal*, iii. 2; *The Lover's Melancholy*, iii. 2; *A Woman is a Weathercock*, v. 1.

[2] Cf. *The Two Italian Gentlemen*, Act ii; *The Broken Heart*, v. 3. In the latter "two lights of virgin wax" were stationed on the altar.

contrasted with theatrical) lighting these gave rise to. It is obvious that actual darkness was by no means so easy to realize in an unroofed public theatre, depending upon natural light, as in a covered private theatre where artificial light was employed. For this reason we must be careful to consider the question, not broadly, but in its relationship to each particular class of theatre. In connexion with both, however, it may be admitted at the outset that one specific kind of darkness or obscurity, but not a kind, it is to be noted, associated with night, was certainly made manifest. Effects of heavy mist were illusively procured by the emission of smoke through a trap or traps.[1] The method employed is purely conjectural, but it is apparently indicated in Robert Wilson's comedy, *The Cobler's Prophecy* (1594), in the direction, "from one part let a smoke arise." That the device was utilized for other purposes besides mist effects is seen in the details of the dumb-show preceding the opening act of *The Divil's Charter*. A magician draws a circle on the stage with his wand, and from this arises a devil, amid "exhalations of lightning and sulphurous smoke". In the public theatres the offence, even to the stage stool-holders, could only have been temporary, but one wonders how the smoke was got rid of in the covered-in private theatres.[2] Probably in the more select houses the objectionableness was minimized after the manner indicated in Ben Jonson's entertainment of *The Barriers*, as given at court in 1606 on the night after *The Masque of Hymen*. At the beginning "there appeared at the lower end of the hall, a mist made of delicate perfumes; out of which (a battle being sounded under the stage) did seem to break forth two ladies, the one representing Truth, the other Opinion."[3] How grateful

[1] According to Schelling (*Elizabethan Drama*, ii. 106) the device was of a very respectable antiquity. He traces it to the Roman stage, giving as reference *Pliny*, xxxi. 17.

[2] For evidence of mist effects in the private theatre, see the masque-scene in *The Maid's Tragedy* (1622), as acted at the Blackfriars. For other mist scenes see *Jupiter and Io*, in *The Pleasant Dialogues* of Thomas Heywood; *The Prophetess*, Act v, dumb show; *Histriomastix*, opening of Act iii; *The Raigne of King Edward III*, Act iv. 5, Philip's reference to "this sodain fog".

[3] Henry Morley, *Masques and Entertainments by Ben Jonson* (Carisbrooke Library Series, 1890), p. 80.

on occasion was this mist effect can be seen by an intelligent study of *Arden of Feversham*, iv. 2-3, where the illusion was useful in showing how Arden escaped for the second time from his would-be assassins. It is noteworthy that this pseudo-Shakespearean piece is a public-theatre play of circa 1590, a point on which I desire to lay stress, as it seems to afford evidence in an earlier scene that in the public theatres the darkness of night was never illusively realized. In Act iii. 2, Shakebag's opening speech,

> Blacke night hath hid the pleasurs of ye day,
> And sheting darknesse overhangs the earth
> And with the black folde of his cloudy robe
> Obscures us from the eiesight of the worlde,

would be mere verbiage if the darkness had been otherwise indicated. That any attempt was made in such scenes to deprive the public theatres of their normal light, none too satisfying at the best, I unreservedly doubt. In this I am wholly at variance with Mr. John Corbin, whose belief in the manifestation of actual darkness has led him to theorize far beyond the limits of common-sense.[1] He would have us believe that the public theatres boasted a velarium, or cloud of canvas, that could be thrown out from the surmounting hut and extended over the theatre, when required. If such were employed, it is remarkable that no clue to its presence is to be traced in prompters' marginalia or elsewhere. In assuming the "shadowe or cover" mentioned in the Fortune contract to be a velarium of the movable nature he demonstrates, Corbin has clearly blundered. The shadow or cover was only another and less technical name for "the Heavens", otherwise the half-roof, which plainly rears itself above the stage in the well-known Dutch sketch of the Swan. Here are the proofs. Heywood, in dealing with the Roman Theatre in his *Apology for Actors* (1612), writes: "The coverings of the stage (which we call the heavens) were geometrically supported". If we want to make sure what Heywood implies by "the heavens" we have only to

[1] See his article, "Shakespeare his own Stage Manager" in *The Century Magazine* for December, 1911, p. 267.

turn to the Hope contract of 1613, wherein it was stipulated that Katherens should "builde the Heavens over the saide stage, to be borne or carried without any postes or supporters to be fixed or sett uppon the saide stage".[1] This stipulation was made because the Swan, upon which the new theatre was to be largely modelled, had (as shown in van Buchell's sketch) these undesired supports. Finally I take the Fortune contract to which Corbin pins his faith, and after first finding mention of "a shadowe or cover over the saide stadge", I note later on the stipulation "and the saide frame, stadge and stearecases to be covered with tyle, and to have sufficient gutter of lead, to carrie and convey the water from the coverings of the saide stadge to fall backwardes".[2] Now, does Mr. Corbin really mean to tell us this gutter of lead was attached to his "cloud of canvas"?

Elizabethan-stage night scenes can readily be divided into three classes:—(1) scenes where the lateness of the hour was indicated by some slight textual allusion, accompanied by the bringing-in of lights; (2) scenes of wholly unrelieved darkness, whether real or imaginary; (3) scenes where the poignancy or humour of the action depended upon a suggested darkness, deftly accentuated by the momentary use of lights. Class 1 is readily differentiated from the others inasmuch as it deals with scenes of mere casual illusion. An apt illustration is to be found in *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, Act ii (a Paul's play), where a torch is brought on in a street scene to show the lateness of the hour, the text indicating that day is about to break.[3] Symbolic effects of this kind were common to both the public and the private theatres. Of Class 2 two typical examples may be cited. In *The Dutchess of Malfi*, v. 4 (as at the Blackfriars and Globe), the prevailing darkness leads Bosola to stab Antonio by mistake.

[1] Given *in extenso* by Prof. G. P. Baker in *The Development of Shakespeare as a Dramatist*, appendix, pp. 320–5.

[2] J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare* (ninth edit., 1890), i. 304.

[3] For other examples see *The Jew of Malta*, ii. 1 (as at the Rose and Cockpit); *Much ado About Nothing*, Act v; *The Picture*, iii. 4 (Globe and Blackfriars); *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, i. 1 (Blackfriars); *King Henry VIII*, v. 1 (folio); *Lust's Dominion*, iii. 1 and 4.

Whether any diminution of light was effected in such scenes in the private theatres, it is at least certain that no alteration in the normal lighting of the stage took place in the public theatres. My second example clearly proves this. It is taken from *The Iron Age*, Part II, a Red Bull play. Act ii. opens at night outside the walls of Troy. "Enter Agamemnon, Menelaus, Ulisses, with souldiers in a soft march without noise." In accordance with the arrangement for a signal, Sinon enters on the walls and waves a torch. Then Ulysses and his followers enter by the breach and immediately come on again through another door. They are now inside Troy. Sinon appears on the rear stage and unlocks the Horse. Then comes a direction showing that the darkness of the scene was not realized. "Pyrhus, Diomed and the rest, leape from out the Horse, and, *as if groping in the darke*, meete with Agamemnon and the rest."

With that point settled we may proceed to consider the possibility of the actual manifestation of darkness in scenes of this order in the private theatres. It will doubtless suggest itself to the reader that the end might have been gained by extinguishing the regular stage-lights, but on second thoughts the clumsiness of such an expedient will become apparent. There would not only be the delay in putting out the lights but the delay in restoring them; and all this frequently in the middle of an act. On the other hand, there is some reason to believe that, without any diminution of the normal stage-lighting, the house was slightly darkened at particular junctures. The evidence for this is the curious simile in Dekker's *Seven Deadly Sins of London* (1606): "all the city looked like a private playhouse, when the windows are clapped down, as if some nocturnal or dismal tragedy were presently to be acted." Here the impression to be gained is that in the private theatres light was procured as far as possible — one must remember that they were only winter houses—by means of windows, and that in occasional dark scenes these were somehow shuttered. To clap down a window as we now conceive it would not be to obscure the light; and one feels inclined to think that the windows

referred to must have been some sort of wooden contrivances like the stall-windows in the old London streets. A temporary window of this kind was used in *Arden of Feversham*, ii. 2, and the accompanying stage-direction recalls Dekker's phrase: "Then lettes he downe his window, and it breaks Black Wils head."[1] As to the conclusion derivable from the allusion in the *Seven Deadly Sins of London*, viz., that natural light was as far as possible pressed into service at private theatre performances, one is the more disposed to hold on to it tenaciously from the fact that its plausibility gains force from an equally curious, if somewhat later, allusion in Wither. In *Fair Virtue*, published in 1622, we read:

> When she takes her tires about her
> (Never half so rich without her)
> At the putting on of them,
> You may liken every gem
> To those lamps which at a play
> Are set up to light the day;
> For their lustre adds no more
> To what Titan gave before,
> Neither do their pretty beamings
> Hinder ought his greater gleamings.[2]

If I should be asked, "why limit the somewhat vague reference to lamps at a play to one particular kind of theatre?" my reply would be that proof of the employment of artificial lights in the public theatres otherwise than episodically, as a factor of the scene, is not yet forthcoming. Wright's statement, made in 1699 in his *Historia Histrionica*, still holds the field. He plainly tells us that while the private theatres "had pits for the gentry and acted by candlelight," the Globe, Fortune and Bull "lay partly open to the weather, and they alwaies acted by daylight." One can readily divine that this darkening of the private-theatre auditorium in

[1] In his account of the first Blackfriars, Prof. C. W. Wallace argues that when More complained of "the wyndows [being] spoyled" by Farrant in transforming the rooms into a theatre he meant that they had been bricked up. (See *The Evolution of the English Drama up to Shakespeare*, p. 146.) My interpretation would be that in adapting them for theatrical purposes Farrant had destroyed their utility as normal windows (i.e. for subsequent use when the place was turned again into a private dwelling).

[2] George Wither's *Works* (edit. Sidgwick, 1902), ii. 71.

association with night scenes of our third order considerably intensified the dramatic appeal of the action. Here is an example taken from a later Blackfriars play, *The Guardian*. Act iii. 6 opens in a room in Severino's house. Iölante is seated on the rear stage beside a banqueting table adorned with tapers and is discovered by the drawing of the traverses. Severino, after indulging in violent threats, binds her and, taking up the lights, goes out. In the darkness Calipso gropes her way in, unbinds Iölante, and sending her away, takes her place: Severino returns, and, not knowing of the substitution that has been accomplished, cuts and slashes at Calipso with his knife. On his departure Iölante comes back and resumes her old position. The consequence is that when Severino returns (this time with a taper), he is convinced that a miracle has been performed. Not the most ingenious of modern melodramatists could have contrived a neater piece of theatrical trick-and-shuffle-board. But effects of this order, where much depended on the bringing in and carrying off of lights, were not confined to the private theatres. In the fifth act of Porter's *Two Angry Women of Abington*, as performed at the Rose in 1599, a good deal of the pungency of the action hung upon judicious employment of the lights.[1] It may be, however, that in the public theatres lighting effects were symbolical rather than realistic.

When we come to consider what was the method employed in lighting the private theatres nothing but disappointment ensues. Search as one will, no material evidence on the point can be found. Serious doubt may be expressed as to how far we are safe in arguing *a posteriori* from the misdescribed "Red Bull" frontispiece to *The Wits, or Sport upon Sport*, as issued in 1663. It must be borne in mind that this plate merely depicts a performance of Cox's Drolls during the interregnum and after the general dismantling of the theatres. It may be that the lighting arrangements therein shown followed the system that had formerly obtained in the private theatres. But proof is lacking. Suspended by wires over the stage are to be noted two chandeliers, similar

[1] Cf. *Greene's Tu Quoque* lanthorn scene; *Tis Pity She's a Whore*, iii. 7.

to those formerly used in churches, and each holding eight candles. Along the front of the platform is ranged a row of foot-lights, consisting of half a dozen oil-lamps with double burners.[1] Now, although there is some reason to believe that stage chandeliers had been employed in the private theatres, nothing points to the use of foot-lights. Had the latter been a characteristic of the Blackfriars or the Cockpit they would surely have been utilized again with the renewal of acting at the Restoration period, and made a permanent feature of the new picture-stage. But we have no evidence of the regular employment of foot-lights in the English theatre until the third or fourth decade of the eighteenth century.

The possibilities are that the lighting arrangements of the private theatres were based to some extent on the system followed at court when performances were given there, especially as the first house of that order, Farrant's Blackfriars, was in the beginning a mere rehearsal-theatre for court plays. Happily, through the details preserved in the *Revels Accounts*, we know something about the lighting arrangements at Whitehall and Hampton Court during holiday periods. When we come to draw an analogy we shall have to bear in mind the difference in size between the commodious banqueting halls and the small private theatres, and that, moreover, the players were not likely to emulate the grandeur of the court. At Whitehall and elsewhere, circa 1573 (or about the period when the first private theatre was built), it was customary to light the halls during the Christmas festivities with wax-torches or candles, commonly known as "white lights," placed in flamboyantly decorated wooden branches of varying sizes, provided with broad metal plates to safeguard the spectator from melted grease, and suspended on wires.[2] These chandeliers were richly

[1] These are similar in appearance to the boat-shaped lamps used in the Italian court theatres of a slightly earlier period. Cf. Nicolo Sabbattini, *Pratica di fabricar Scene e Macbine ne' Teatri* (Ravenna, 1638), Chap. xxxviii. *Quære*, were the lamps referred to by Wither of this order and disposition?

[2] For the method of suspension and of lighting up, which generally took place after the spectators had assembled, see Sabbattini, op. cit. Bk. i. p. 61, section on "Come si deffano accomodare i Lumi fuori della Scena."

decorated with orsidue, a kind of thick gold leaf, and when lit up, must have had a very imposing effect. They varied slightly in number, according probably to the size of the hall, but they generally consisted of about three large and twenty-four small branches, or an average total of a hundred and twenty lights,[1] and the candles were usually perfumed.

From this lavish, highly ornate system only a slight hint could, at best, be taken. But, whatever may have been the method followed at a later period, it seems not unlikely that, in minor degree, the court method ruled at the first Blackfriars, the only private theatre whose seating arrangements approximated to the conventional disposition followed alike at Whitehall and Greenwich and the Italian courts.[2] In the lofty Elizabethan banqueting halls the spectators were mostly accommodated on a comparatively low amphitheatre ranged along the three sides. On the other hand, the accepted type of private theatre, beginning with the second Blackfriars, had three galleries, an arrangement which would have rendered any considerable number of central hanging lights a serious obstruction to the view. But it must be clearly borne in mind that the first Blackfriars was not a theatre at all in the Elizabethan sense of the term but merely what it affected to be in accordance with the crisis which created it—"a private house." The phrase clung and we find it afterwards applied, with less appositeness, to nearly all the private theatres. One must also bear in mind that the first Blackfriars, although situated in the same old building as the second, occupied a different part of that building, was smaller and less lofty. The essential difference between the two is that Farrant's Blackfriars was a second-floor house and Burbage's a first-floor house.[3] In the former, therefore, the audience must have been mostly accommodated on the level.

[1] Cf. Cunningham's *Revels Accounts*, pp. 162, 169, &c.

[2] Cf. Sabbattini, op. cit. Bk. I. p. 55, section on "Come si deffano fare li scaloni per gli Spettatori."

[3] Cf. C. W. Wallace, *The Evolution of the English Drama up to Shakespeare*, p. 196. I offer this in correction of my mis-statement at p. 233 of the First Series of these Studies.

It follows from all this that a new system of illumination, a system accommodated to the arrangement of the auditorium, must have come in with the second Blackfriars, which ranks as the first organized private theatre. So far one may safely proceed and that despite the fact that of the precise disposition of the lights in the maturer private theatres nothing is really known. All that can be gleaned with any certainty is that candles of wax and tallow, torches, lamps and cressets were employed. The evidence for the use of cressets is slender but satisfactory. Cotgrave, in his *French-English Dictionary*, published in 1611, defines *Falot* as "a cresset light (such as they use in playhouses) made of ropes wreathed, pitched and put into small and open cages of iron." Originally a beacon light, and so called from the *croisette*, or little cross, by which it was surmounted, the cresset was distinguished by its efficacy in withstanding the elements. For this reason cressets were used in the poops of vessels; and in the mid-sixteenth century watchmen carried them on their nightly rounds, raised on poles.[1] Since they formed the most satisfactory of open-air lights one is disposed to throw caution to the winds and jump to the conclusion that their employment in the theatres was restricted to dark days in the Bankside houses. If this could be established Wither's allusion might bear a new interpretation. But it happens that we have some slight evidence of the employment of cressets in indoor entertainments of more than passing note. A description in Latin is extant of an academic performance given at Oxford before the Queen in Christ Church College Hall in 1566, from which I cite the following in Professor Schelling's translation:[2]

> Cressets, lamps, and burning candles made a brilliant light there. With so many lights arranged on branches and circles, and with so many torches here and there, giving forth a flickering gleam of varying power, the place was resplendent, so that the lights seemed to shine like the day and to aid the splendour of the plays by their great brightness.

[1] For an illustration of a seventeenth-century cresset, see J. R. Green's *Short History of the English People* (1893), iii. p. 992.

[2] F. E. Schelling, *Elizabethan Drama*, i. 107.

But this apart, one searches in vain for any evidence in support of Cotgrave's statement. Indeed, the few allusions to be found to the broad characteristics of private-theatre lighting puzzle by their disparity. Wither conjures up for us a charming picture of the "pretty beamings" of the lamps, but it is at best but a dissolving view and quickly gives place to Lenton's vivid description[1] of the town rake's

> . . . Spangled, rare perfum'd attires
> Which once so glister'd at the torchy Friars,

and which must now to the broker's. On further probing one is inclined to doubt whether either lamps or cressets or torches ever formed the dominant characteristic of the lighting scheme in the organized private theatres. Pause is given because in Beaumont's lines to Fletcher on the failure of *The Faithful Shepherdess* at Blackfriars in 1609 we read:

> Nor want there those, who, as the Boy doth dance
> Between the acts, will censure the whole Play;
> Some like, if the wax-lights be new that day.

It may be, of course, that the lights here referred to were strictly stage lights, but the point cannot be determined. Beaumont's last lines gives the impression that wax lighting was not the normal mode, and that it was reserved for special occasions, probably the first run of a new play, when advanced rates of admission were charged. We know definitely that at Salisbury Court in 1639 wax and tallow were both employed.[2] Wax was the more expensive but it had the advantage over tallow that it neither guttered nor gave off an offensive odour. Hence one reason why a certain type of fastidious, feminine-minded playgoer would be more disposed to like the piece if the waxlights were "new that day."

It will be interesting, perhaps suggestive, to recall what was the method of stage lighting in Paris at the Hôtel de Bourgogne at this period. Here is what Perrault says on the subject:

[1] In *The Young Gallant's Whirligig* (1629).
[2] Cf. *Shakespeare Society Papers*, IV (1849), p. 100.

Toute la lumière consistait d'abord en quelques chandelles dans des plaques de fer-blanc attachées aux tapisseries; mais comme elles n'eclairaient les acteurs que par derrière et un peu par les côtés, ce qui les rendait presque tous noirs, on s'avisa de faire des chandeliers avec deux lattes mises en croix, portant chacun quatre chandelles, poure mettre au-devant du théâtre. Ces chandeliers, suspendus grossièrement avec des cordes et des poulies apparentes, se houssaient et se baissaient sans artifice et par main d'homme pour les allumer et les moucher.[1]

Here, one hardly knows whether it would be safe to draw analogies, but one thing at least the English comedians of the private theatres and the French players of the Hôtel de Bourgogne had in common, viz., a constant and increasing desire to economize with regard to the expense of wax and tallow.[2] Although playgoers had to assemble considerably before the hour of commencing, so as to secure good places or any places, little or no light was vouchsafed them until shortly before the play began. Proof of this is afforded in the induction to Marston's *What You Will*, as acted by the Paul's boys in 1601. Here we see the audience assembling before the performance, and taking seats upon the stage. A sequence of stage-directions shows that it was the tireman's business to look after the stage-lights and that delay usually occurred in bringing them in. "Enter Atticus, Doricus, and Phylomuse, they sit a good while on the stage before the Candles are lighted, etc., etc. . . Enter Tier-man with lights." This waiting until the last moment before lighting up is also indicated in the induction to Middleton's *Michaelmas Term*, as acted at the same house in 1607. "I spread myself open to you", says a player; "in cheaper terms I salute you; for ours have but sixpenny fees all the year long, yet we dispatch you in two hours without demur: your suits hang not long after candles be lighted." Here we have adroit use of legal metaphor, in keeping with the title of the play.

[1] Perrault, *Parallèle des anciens et des modernes en ce qui regarde la poesie* (1682), iii. p. 192.

[2] The parsimony of the French players in this respect grew so intolerable that, in November, 1609, Henri Quatre issued an edict, directing that lanthorns be put up in the pit, balcony and corridors under pain of exemplary punishment. Cf. Alfred Bouchard, *La Langue Théâtrale* (1878), p. 304.

Besides attending to the stage-lights, it was the business of the tireman or tiremen (for in some theatres more than one was employed) to look after the wardrobe,[1] make the properties and place them in position,[2] and, when necessity demanded, come on the stage as supernumeraries.[3] If at Paul's, on Marston's showing, there was only one, the Blackfriars of a later period must have had at least a couple. In the induction to *The Staple of News*, as acted at the latter house in 1626, the Prologue is surprised that the ladies should desire to sit on the stage. Mirth asks him for stools, but he calls for a form, and a bench is brought in. Then the book-holder within cries, "Mend your lights, gentlemen—Master Prologue begin." Agreeable to command, the tiremen come in, carrying (as an allusion by the Prologue shows) torches. Already the candle-snuffer, that important stage functionary whose expertness in the eighteenth century was generally rewarded with a round of applause,[4] had sprung into being. In the Pre-Restoration playhouse his duties were doubtless performed by the tireman. Thrift, in the Præludium to *The Careless Shepherdesse*, as acted at Salisbury Court circa 1629, makes allusion to the proverbial poverty of poets, and says:

> I do not think but I shall shortly see
> One poet sue to keep the door, another
> To be prompter, a third to snuff the candles.

In connexion with the players' desire for economy in the matter of wax and tallow and the consequent delay in lighting up, one interesting point demands discussion. We know that at the second Blackfriars a concert of vocal and instrumental music, lasting an hour, was given before the play.[5] Are we to assume that the audience sat in darkness during that period? It hardly seems likely. Probably some light was vouchsafed, but only a tithe of what was demanded by the exigencies of theatrical performance.

[1] See the reference in *The Actors' Remonstrance; or Complaint for the Silencing of their Profession*, 1643; also T. F. Ordish's *Early London Theatres*, pp. 172–3.

[2] Gifford's *Ben Jonson*, v. p. 116, "An Expostulation with Inigo Jones" (1631).

[3] W. W. Greg, *Henslowe Papers*, Appendix ii. p. 134, margin.

[4] Cf. Dutton Cook's *A Book of the Play*, Chap. on "Footlights".

[5] C. W. Wallace, *The Children of the Chapel at Blackfriars*, pp. 106–7.

If a passage in Pepys' *Diary* can be taken as referring to the Pre-Restoration stage, we have some evidence to hand that tallow-lighting was the rule in the private theatres and wax-lighting the exception. Chronicling a conversation with Killigrew, the manager of the Theatre Royal, Bridges Street, Pepys writes on 12 February, 1667: "He tells me that the stage is now, by his pains, a thousand times better and more glorious than heretofore. Now, wax candles and many of them; then, not above 3 lb. of tallow. Now all things civil: no rudeness anywhere; then, as in a bear-garden," &c. Here it all depends upon what the diarist meant by "then," whether the term applied only to the period since the renewal of acting or comprehended a wider retrospect. But, after all, if wax had been commonly employed in the closing years of the platform-stage era, Killigrew would hardly have indulged in his boast.

Sources from which hints for special lighting effects of a spectacular order might have been obtained were apparently not drawn upon. In 1611 Serlio's great work on Architecture, originally issued at Paris in 1545, was translated into English and published in folio. One of the sections on Perspective treats "Of Artificial Lights of the Scenes," discussing simple methods that recall those vast bottles of coloured water through which hidden lights shine resplendent in chemists' windows. But, except by Inigo Jones in mounting the Court masques, it cannot be found that any knowledge was derived from this source. It is noteworthy, however, that Serlio's methods of procuring the illusion of thunder and lightning were largely the methods employed in the English playhouse from its inception. (Students of the Elizabethan drama will not need to be reminded of the frequency with which thunder and lightning were resorted to for heightening the tragic impressiveness of the action.) For the rumbling of thunder he advocates the rolling of a cannon-ball in an upper chamber,[1] in part the method alluded to by Ben Jonson, in the prologue to

[1] Sabbattini discusses the *modus operandi* and gives an elucidative illustration. op. cit. Book II. Chap. 53.

Every Man in his Humour, when he speaks of "roll'd bullet" and "tempestuous drum". The rapid drum-tapping was a grateful auxiliary to the Italian method, and sometimes in the English theatres wholly superseded it. Thus, in a mordant passage in John Melton's *Astrologaster, or the Figure Caster* (1620), we read:

> Another will foretell lightning and thunder that shall happen such a day, when there are no such inflammations seene except a man goe to the Fortune in Golding lane to see the tragedie of *Doctor Faustus*. There indeed a man may behold shagge-hayr'd devills runne roaring over the stage with squibs in their mouths, while drummers make thunder in the tyring-house, and the twelve penny hirelings make artificial lightning in their heavens.

Serlio's method of simulating lightning is again largely the Elizabethan method. He writes:

> There must be a man placed behind the Scene or Scaffold in a high place with a bore in his hand, the cover whereof must be full with holes, and in the middle of that place there shall be a burning candle placed, the bore must be filled with powder of vernis or sulphire, and casting his hand with the bore upwards, the powder flying in the candle will shew as if it were lightning.[1] But touching the beames of the lightning, you must draw a piece of wire over the scene, which must hang downewards, whereon you must put a squib covered over with pure gold or shining lattin, which you will; and while the Bullet is rowling, you must Shoote of some piece of Ordinance, and with the same giving fire to the squibs, it will work the effect which is desired.

The earlier part of this instruction recalls a passage in the Induction to *A Warning for Faire Women* (1599), in which sarcastic reference is made to the stage-lightning of the period:

> . . . Then of a filthy whining ghost
> Lapt in some foul sheet or a leather pilch,
> Comes screaming like a pig half stick'd, and cries
> Vindicta! revenge, revenge.
> With that a little rosin flasheth forth
> Like smoke out of a tabacco pipe or a boy's squib . . .

[1] Cf. Sabbattini, op. cit. Bk. II. Chap. 23 ("altro modo come si possa mostrare un' inferno"), where the device, considerably improved upon, is used for another purpose.

If the effect was as trivial as the writer would have us believe, it is curious that in the course of half a century no effort was made to improve upon it. In the epilogue to Lovelace's comedy of *The Scholar*[1], as delivered at Salisbury Court circa 1636, allusion is made to "the rosin-lightning flash", as a feature that delighted the gallery.[2]

Serlio's device for what he (or his translator) calls "the beames of the lightning" is equated by Ben Jonson's "nimble squib", in the prologue already referred to. This effect was not, I think, a common accompaniment of storm scenes on the early English stage but was kept for occasions when thunderbolts had to be represented.[3] A notable example is to be found in *The Brazen Age*, a Red Bull play of the period of 1613. Jupiter appears above and strikes Hercules with a thunderbolt, causing him to sink through the earth. A cloud descends over the spot, bearing a hand, and on re-ascending the hand holds a star which it eventually fixes in the heavens.[4]

A few other spectacular lighting effects, mostly procured by the employment of fireworks, remain to be referred to. The comet which Stowe[5] records as having been seen for a week or ten days in October, 1580, apparently gave rise to the convention of "the blazing star". My first trace of this occurs in *The Battel of Alcazar*, as acted circa 1588. In the Dumb show given between Acts iv and v, Fame enters in the guise of "an angel and hangs the crowns upon a tree". Then a blazing star and fireworks are seen, and the crowns fall down. But the most remarkable example of the device occurs in *The Birth of Merlin*, a play

[1] The play was never printed, but the prologue and epilogue are preserved in Lovelace's *Poems*.

[2] In 1572 John Izarde, a wax chandler, was paid 22*s*., partly "for his device in counter-feting Thunder and Lightning in the play of Narcisses", when given at court by the Chapel Children.

[3] The latterday stage thunderbolt bears a vivid family resemblance to its Italian prototype. A squib descends obliquely along a wire and falls into an adroitly disguised tin bucket, to the inside of which the wire is soldered. When one adds that the bucket contains water one has said all.

[4] For a simpler example, see the last act of *The Martyr'd Souldier*.

[5] *Annals* (edit. 1615), p. 687.

conjectured by Fleay to belong to circa 1622.[1] In Act iv. 5, at opening, after the direction "Blazing star appears", we read:

> *Prince.* Look, Edol; still this fiery exhalation shoots
> His frightful horrors on th' amazed world;
> See, in the beam that's 'bout his flaming ring,
> A dragon's head appears, from out whose mouth
> Two flaming flakes of fire stretch east and west.
> *Edol.* And see, from forth the body of the star
> Seven smaller blazing streams directly point
> On this affrighted Kingdom.

Later in the same scene Merlin expounds the symbolism of the star, reiterating all the details. Obviously it was not left to the imagination of the audience to conjure up visions of the nine streams of fire, and the whole effect must have been carefully visualized.[2] As a matter of fact there had been constant use of fireworks in the Elizabethan theatres from their very inception, and practice had made perfect. London even boasted specialists in the science of pyrotechnics, one of the most notable being Humphrey Nichols, who officiated in connexion with Munday's City pageant in 1613. There was much catering for the tastes of the unthinking, and in *Doctor Faustus* the mob was more taken with the devils with crackers at their tails than with the sublimity of the poet. The Red Bull audience especially delighted in effects of this order, and one finds much mention of "fireworkes" and "fireworkes on lines"[3] in *If It Be not a good Play, the Devil is in it*, as acted there in 1612.[4]

Marlowe had a keen eye for spectacular effect as betokened by the conflagration in *Tamburlaine the Great*, Part II, Act ii,

[1] See also *If You know not me, you know nobody*, Pt. II. (Heywood's *Works*, edit. Pearson, i. 292, margin); and *The Revenger's Tragedy*, Act v.

[2] Of a similar but less striking order was the effect in *The Troublesome Reign of King John* (c. 1588), where, on the crowning of the King, five moons shone out of a cloud, by way of ill-omen.

[3] For a quaint allusion to "fireworks on lines", see the Page's simile in Marston's *Parasitaster, or the Fawne* (1606), i. 2. In J. White's *A Rich Cabinet with Variety of Inventions*, &c. (1651), instructions are given "how to make your fireworks to run upon a line backward and forward".

[4] See also *The Brazen Age*, passim. In one scene a Fury appeared covered with fireworks and in another Medea with similar trappings.

as well as by the curious scene in the succeeding act where the bodies are burnt in sight of the audience. In the amplified version of *Doctor Faustus* published in 1616[1] there is a remarkable Hell scene which was probably not of his ordering but to which attention may at anyrate be directed. In Scene xvi, after the Good Angel has given Faustus a glimpse of Heaven, "Hell is discovered"[2] and its horrors described by the Bad Angel:

> Now, Faustus, let thine eyes with horror stare
> Into that vast perpetual torture-house.
> There are the furies tossing damnèd souls
> On burning forks; there bodies boil in lead;
> There are live quarters broiling on the coals
> That ne'er can die; this ever-burning chair
> Is for o'er-tortured souls to rest them in;
> These that are fed with sops of flaming fire
> Were gluttons, and lov'd only delicates,
> And laugh'd to see the poor starve at their gates.

Viewing the frequency with which fire effects were employed on the Pre-Restoration stage, it is surprising that so few of the theatres were burnt down—only two in a period of sixty years. But probably many of these effects were not as realistic as they read. In *The Rump*, as acted at Salisbury Court in 1660 (one of the last of the quasi-Elizabethan houses) we have the direction in Act v: "A piece of wood is set forth painted like a pile of Faggots and Fire, and Faggots lying by to supply it." This was used to represent a bonfire. But illusions of this sort could not always be made. Many fire scenes had to be of the first order of realism. Flames were often seen to belch forth from the rear stage[3] or to rise through a trap.[4] Dragons came on spitting fire.[5] In *The Silver Age*, iv (as

[1] Bullen's *Marlowe*, i. 323.

[2] An inventory in Henslowe's *Diary* makes mention of a property of "Hell Mouth", but the above scene seems to have been acted on the rear stage.

[3] *Alphonsus, King of Aragon*, Act iv; *The Virgin Martir*, v; *The Old Wives' Tale*.

[4] *A Looking Glasse for London and England; The Two Noble Ladies* v. 2; *The Silver Age*, v; Chapman's *Caesar and Pompey*, ii. 1.

[5] *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. This type of monster was generally spoken of as "a fire drake". Cf. Henslowe's *Diary*.

acted at the Red Bull circa 1613) occurs an unexampled and unexplainable effect. After Semele is drawn out in her bed, Jupiter descends amidst thunder and lightning, with his thunderbolt burning. "As he toucheth the bed it fires, and all flyes up." Perhaps in some cases where flames flashed forth the rosin-lightning effect was the means employed. In conflagration scenes, such as that in *The Fatal Contract*, iii. 1 (where we have the prompter's marginal note, "The bed chamb. on fire"), it would be difficult to say how illusion was procured, but possibly the primitive Italian method was followed, and, to some extent improved upon. "Sometimes it may chance," writes Serlio in his section on "Artificial Lights of the Scenes," "that you must make something or other which should seem to burne, which you must wet thoroughly with excellent good aqua vitae; and setting it on fire with a candle, it will burne all over; and though I could speak more of these fires, yet this shall suffice for this time." Sabbattini, writing ninety years later, can tell of no other way to represent a conflagration.[1] It is important to note that we have clear evidence of the employment of this method in the Elizabethan Court performances. According to the *Revels Accounts*[2] there was provided for *The Knight of the Burning Rock*, as acted by the Earl of Warwick's men on Shrove Sunday, 1578-9, "Aquavite to burne in the same Rock" and "Rosewater to alay the smell thereof." Subsequently the effect of the flaming rock developed into a mild stage convention. One finds it recurring in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Four Plays in One*, as given at the Whitefriars circa 1608.

If this inquiry should help to dissipate the popular fallacy that theatrical appeal in the days of the platform stage was almost wholly to the imagination it will have served a useful purpose. Not only was realism steadily aimed at, but in the public theatres there was frequent gratification of the mob in its taste for spectacular effect and "those gilt-gauds men children run to see".

[1] op. cit. Bk. II. Chap. 2. "Come si possa dimostrare, che tutti la Scena arda."
[2] edit. Cunningham, p. 146.

Windows on the Pre-Restoration Stage

Windows on the Pre-Restoration Stage

Satisfactory in the main as has been the measure of our newly ascertained knowledge of the physical conditions and conventionalities of the Elizabethan playhouse during the past decade, there are still many knotty problems awaiting solution. To take a case in point: even among skilled workers in this particular field ideas remain painfully nebulous as to the precise arrangement of the upper stage. My own opinion is that this uncertainty is largely due to the contradictory evidence presented by the four authentic views of Pre-Restoration playhouses (the Swan, "Messalina", "Roxana" and so-called Red Bull prints) on the one hand, and the textual indications of a host of old plays on the other. The truth is that, in the tantalizing absence of definite data on many points, we have placed too much dependence on these contemporary views, and that, too, despite the fact that three of the number cannot be satisfactorily associated with any particular theatre. Of the fallaciousness of their testimony I hope later on to afford convincing proof. It needs first to say that the present inquiry has been undertaken with the view of dissipating existing haziness of idea regarding the prime characteristics of the upper stage, and that it concerns itself for the most part with a minute consideration of the employment of windows on the Pre-Restoration stage. Owing to the curious complexity of the subject I find it requisite to discuss it under the following heads: (a) The upper stage generally, (b) casements, (c) bay-windows, (d) windows with curtains, (e) grated windows, (f) conjunctive windows, (g) upper back windows, (h) lower stage windows.

(a) The Upper Stage generally

In all scientific reconstuctions of the Elizabethan playhouse care must be taken not to argue too far from the particular to the general. While it is assured that from first

to last there must have been a certain broad standardization in stage arrangement, due allowances must be made for natural progression and for the elemental distinctions between the public and the private type of theatre. But I take it that certain features were fundamental and ineradicable, that they were common alike to all theatres of the platform-stage order; and paramount among these I rank the tiring-house balcony and its accompanying window or windows. The conventional employment of both these adjuncts in the inn-yard stage of English theatrical history can readily be predicated. One has only to scrutinize the well-known view of the old Tabard Inn in Southwark,[1] so typical of its class, to see how the surrounding architectural disposition of the inn-yards must have suggested to both player and dramatist the employment of divers situations and stirring stage effects (afterwards so popular in the Elizabethan theatres), most of which were fated to disappear from the expansile scheme of English dramaturgy at the close of the seventeenth century. To the presence of the substantial gallery which circulated around at least two sides of the inn-yard and of the associated upper windows was doubtless due the origin of those wall-storming scenes in histories, and those serenading and rope-ladder scenes in tragedy and comedy, so frequent of occurrence towards the end of the previous century. What we require to recognize in dealing with the prototype, and what I hope to prove, is that the windows used for the most part in all the theatres of the platform-stage era were real windows, and not conventional make-believes. On this point some slight evidence is afforded us by the building contract and specification for the first Fortune Theatre in 1600, wherein it is agreed that "the saide stadge to be in all other proporcions contryved and fashioned like unto the stadge of the saide plaiehouse called the Globe; with convenient windowes and lightes glazed to the saide tyreinge-house."[2]

[1] Reproduced in T. Fairman Ordish's *Early London Theatres*, p. 119.

[2] Cf. *The Architectural Review*, April, 1908, xxiii., No. 137, p. 240, Walter H. Godfrey's article, "An Elizabethan Playhouse," for complete text of the contract. Not

At this period the tiring-house window was so well known to playgoers and so generally employed that Middleton in *The Black Book* (1604), in a passage of sustained theatrical metaphor, could make allusion to it:

> And marching forward to the third garden-house, there we knocked up the ghost of mistress Silverpin, who suddenly risse out of two white sheets, and acted out of her tiring-house window.[1]

The only sort of Elizabethan window out of which Mistress Silverpin could have spoken down was a casement; and the casement was in all probability the normal type of early stage window.

When we come to look for proof of the existence of the balcony, or balustraded gallery, and the associated window in the four old views of Pre-Restoration stages nothing but disappointment ensues. Not the slightest indication of either can be found. One result of this misleading negative evidence has been that all reconstructors of the Elizabethan playhouse have boggled or bungled in the matter of stage windows.[2] In the majority of the old views the upper storey of the tiring-house is shown divided up into equal-sized rooms in which spectators sit. This too is surely fallacious. One feels confident that the upper storey was utilized outwardly for a variety of other purposes besides providing seclusion for certain favoured spectators. There can be little doubt that the remarkable width of the stage in the public theatres was largely conditioned by the composite arrangement of the upper storey of the tiring-house façade and the number of services for which it was utilized.[3] Some of these characteristics can only be laboriously deduced by collating all the old directions dealing with the upper stage.

all these windows and skylights were required, of course, for stage purposes. Some were in the outer wall and some in the hutch at the top of the building.

[1] Middleton's *Works* (edit. Bullen), viii. 24.

[2] Brodmeier and Wegener evade the issue altogether. Albright's two windows are mere curtained apertures over the entering doors. Godfrey shows real windows in the tiring-house but at an elevation above the "Heavens" where they could have been of no utility (see "The Scale Model of the Fortune Theatre" in *The Architectural Review* for January, 1912).

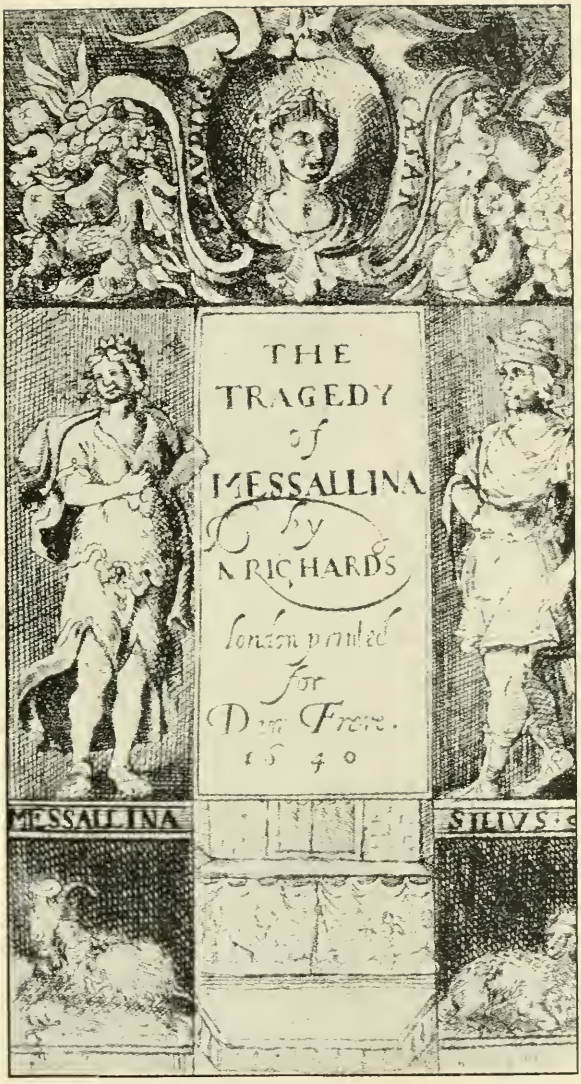
[3] The stage of the first Fortune was 43 feet across, considerably wider than the proscenium opening of all latter-day theatres save two or three of the very largest.

It still remains to be demonstrated that the Pre-Restoration theatres had two entering doors giving on to the gallery.[1] Consideration of this point must be left for another time as the problem is too intricate to be discussed in a paragraph. One other important feature of the second floor of the tiring-house is clearly indicated in the "Messalina" and so-called "Red Bull" prints. I refer to the upper inner stage, corresponding in position and utility to the lower inner stage, and, like it, fronted by double curtains. Albright,[2] in basing his typical Shakespearean stage largely on the "Messalina" view, erroneously assumes the curtains covering the upper inner stage to represent curtains obscuring a back window in the outer wall of the tiring-house. Luckily, in proceeding on these wrong lines he has, as we shall see later, stumbled on a discovery. One is not disposed therefore to deal severely with his blunder while recognizing the necessity for its exposure. That the brick wall in which the supposed window is set is not the back wall of the tiring-house but a portion of the front is shown by the fact that it slants off backwards at either end, as if forming part of a projection. The curtains shown would therefore correspond with the upper curtains in the so-called "Red Bull" print. It remains for those who persist in maintaining that the curtains in the "Messalina" view cover a back window to show what utility such curtains could have possessed. One can only concede the presence of a back window on the upper inner stage by the necessity for lightening its darkness, a necessity that would be ever pressing. Night scenes were never indicated in the Elizabethan playhouse by darkening the stage but either by simple pretence or by the bringing on of lights. It might be argued, of course, very reasonably, that the back window of the upper inner stage was not in the outer wall of the tiring-house but in a partition in front of a back corridor for the players.[3] The

[1] Cf. G. P. Baker, *The Development of Shakespeare as a Dramatist*, p. 82.

[2] *The Shakespearean Stage*, p. 66.

[3] Basing to some extent on Albright, Mr. A. Forestier takes this view in his reconstruction of the Fortune Theatre in *The Illustrated London News* of August 12, 1911. For evidence favouring this assumption, see my section (c).



FRONTISPIECE TO [*To face p.* 28.
THE TRAGEDY OF MESSALLINA, 1640.

assumption then would be that the back curtain was drawn to hide this passage while action was going forward on the upper inner stage. But that would completely negative the back window as a source of light. Moreover, if such a partition existed (and I think it did), it is more likely to have been of wood than of brick, and the "Messalina" print clearly indicates a brick wall.

In association with the fact that the employment of the upper inner stage for theatrical purposes was only occasional, I have striven elsewhere to show that in some theatres it was utilized as a common dressing-room.[1] We know positively that at the Red Bull in its later history "the tiring-room" was upstairs,[2] and it is reasonable to suppose that in no house could it have occupied any very remote position. Actors frequently doubled parts, and now and again rapid changes of costume had to be made.[3] Another fact pointing to the commodiousness and accessibility of the tiring-room is that it was customary (as indicated by Ben Jonson in *Bartholomew Fair*) for the gallants who occupied stools on the stage to resort thither between the acts to drink and hob-nob with the players. Here one anticipates an argument that might be speciously employed against the theory that the upper inner stage was in some houses utilized as a tiring-room. In the "Messalina" print its width is comparatively narrow, less than half the width of the lower inner stage. But one has grave reasons to doubt the accuracy of these proportions. If the upper inner stage were no larger than one of the tiring-house boxes for spectators, it could have had no *raison d'être* because it would have possessed no differentiating utility. It needs therefore to demonstrate that scenes were acted there that could not well have been acted in any other part of the upper storey, and that for reason of the employment of a considerable number of

[1] See *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), pp. 93–6.

[2] Cf. Pepys' *Diary*, under 23 March, 1661.

[3] See the list of characters prefixed to Heywood's *The Fair Maid of the Exchange* (c. 1607), where it is said "elevean may easily act this comedy", although the total number of parts comprise twenty. These were unequally allotted, some players sustaining as many as four.

characters. A typical case occurs in *The Goblins* as given at the Blackfriars, circa 1640. In Act v we have the direction, "A curtain, drawn Prince Philatell, with others appear above." Again, in *The Emperor of the East*, i. 2, as acted at the Globe and the Blackfriars, we have "the curtains drawn above, Theodosius and his eunuchs discovered." One must recall that the essential difference between the inner upper stage and the adjoining tiring-house boxes for spectators was that the former gave upon the gallery while the latter were enclosed and approachable only from the back. It is vital to bear this in mind in connexion with the scene in Act iv of *The Miseries of Enforced Marriage* (1605), as at the Globe, where the Butler and Ilford "enter above", doubtless through one of those gallery doors to which reference has already been made. The one says to the other, "stay you here on this upper chamber, and I'll stay beneath with her." Subsequently reference is made to "the lower chamber" by which, of course, is meant the inner stage below.

Employment of the upper inner stage is also indicated in the first act of *Titus Andronicus*. "Enter the Tribunes and Senatores aloft" means either that they first emerged on to the gallery and proceeded to the upper inner stage or that they were discovered in session by the drawing of the upper curtains. That they did not remain standing on the gallery is shown by the subsequent direction, indicating that the two Princes "goe vp into the Senate house". The term "senate house" practically connotes a room with front curtains. One notes this in reading of the performance of Roman plays at Elizabeth's court in the *Revels Accounts*. Thus, when "A storie of Pompey" was given at Whitehall on Twelfth night, 1580-1 by the Children of Paul's, the new appurtenances provided included "one great citty, a senate howse, and eight ells of dobble sarcenet for curtens".[1]

One other illustration of the employment of the upper inner stage is important because it shows the contiguity of

[1] Cunningham, *Revels Accounts*, pp. 167–8. See also p. 56, John Rosse's bill "for poles and shyvers for draft of the Curtins before the Senate howse."

the stairs which led to ordinary stage level. In *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, Scene 5, as acted at the Globe circa 1606, the action takes places in an upper room. A maid is nursing a child while the mother sleeps. The infuriated father enters carrying his wounded son, and throws the maid downstairs in saying, "I'll break your clamour with your neck: down staires! Tumble, tumble, headlong!—so!" He then injures the awakened mother, whose cries bring a servant on the scene, only to be overthrown by the madman. Instruction for the closing of the curtains at the end is lacking but it is implied by the culminating situation. In the absence of an upper inner stage it would be difficult to see how this scene could be visualized. The same remark applies to Act iii. 5 of Cockain's *Ovid's Tragedy*, a play that was seemingly not acted, although the printed copy has a prologue and an epilogue. As the author was, however, well acquainted with Pre-Restoration stage conventionalities his piece may be admitted as evidence. First Clorina enters "above as in her chamber", into which she has been locked by her husband. Then Phylocles comes on *below* and, finding a wooden ladder, climbs to the balcony, where he sees a "window open" and through it Clorina lying on a bed. It cannot really be a window, as, after gaining the balcony, he is seen to kiss the sleeping woman and to court her on her awakening. That the action takes place on the upper inner stage is shown by the circumstance that while the two are in converse Bassanus suddenly unlocks the door, causing Clorina to exclaim, "my husband's come".

(B) Casements

Before proceeding to a minute consideration of the employment of windows on the Pre-Restoration stage it is vital that something should be said regarding the slovenliness and lack of definition that often accompanied the writing down of old stage-directions. Sometimes to take them literally is to blunder, and sometimes their obscurity is such that a wise discretion has to be exercised. Thus the instruction

"enter above" conveys no definite impression. It might mean (1) that the character, or characters, appeared on the gallery, (2) or at a window, (3) or were discovered on the inner upper stage. A few examples may be cited where "above" implies "at a window". In *The Lost Lady*, iii. 1, Hermione and Acanthe appear "above", listening. Their exact position is not made clear until we read in a subsequent direction, "Whilst he [Phormio] kneels, Hermione and the Moor look down from the window." Again, in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, ii. 1, Palamon and Arcite appear "above" as in prison, but the Daughter's remark shows they are looking out of a window, the one above the other.[1] Sometimes it is only by collation of varying texts that one can arrive at the truth. Shakespeare affords two notable examples. In the Folio we read in the opening scene of *Othello*, "Brabantio above", but the Quarto of 1622 says, "Brabantio at a window". Similarly in *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 5, Quarto 2 merely notifies that the ill-starred lovers appear "aloft", but Quarto 1 has the definite instruction, "enter Romeo and Juliet at the window". Reference to this tragedy recalls the fact that now and again the use of windows is only textually indicated, no direction, for example, accompanying the line in Act ii. 2, "But, soft, what light through yonder window breaks!"[2] Take again *The Antiquary*, ii. 1, as acted at the Cockpit. Aurelio, on the lower stage says, "this is the window," and bids the musicians play. A song is heard above, and then "enter Lucretia". Where she really is can only be determined by Aurelio's bald re-echo of Romeo's rapturous exclamation, "What more than earthly light breaks through that window."

Coming now to the question of the employment of casements on the Pre-Restoration stage, I desire to iterate the statement that the casement was the normal stage window of that epoch, and (what is important to grasp, with so much ambiguity confronting us) the kind of "window"

[1] So too in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, iv. 5, Falstaff seemingly opens a casement before speaking down to mine host.

[2] Cf. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iv. 2, folio. After the song Silvia appears, evidently above at a window, but no instruction is given.

most commonly employed. "Casement" in this connexion must be interpreted to mean a light iron or wooden sash for small panes of glass, as constituting a window or part of a window, and made to open outwards by swinging on hinges attached to a vertical side of the aperture into which it is fitted. When opened, the casement was usually held in position by a long hook. It is noteworthy that on the stage of to-day doors in room scenes are invariably made to open outwards because of the better stage effect (especially in the matter of striking exits) thereby attained. One desires to lay emphasis on the fact that the old English casement always opened outwards, because the French casement (of two hinged leaves), so well known on the Continent, opens inwards. The latter would have proved very clumsy and ineffective on the old platform stage.[1] The supreme gratefulness of the casement as a permanent stage adjunct lay in the degree of illusion its employment lent to scenes of gallantry and intrigue. This is evidenced by the remarkable number of upper-window scenes in the Elizabethan drama. For purposes of reference a comprehensive list of these may be given.

The serenade scenes comprise *The Insatiate Countess*, iii. 1; *The Distresses*, Act i; *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iv. 2; *The Antiquary*, ii. 1; *Monsieur Thomas*, iii. 3; *Mother Bombie*, v. 3; *The Ordinary*, iv. 5; *The Duke of Milan*, ii. 1. Among rope-ladder scenes may be mentioned *Blurt, Master Constable*, iv. 3; *The Partiall Law*, ii. 5; *The Hog hath lost his Pearle*, Act i; *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 5. Many ordinary upper-window scenes do not belong to either of these categories. These include *The Two Italian Gentlemen*, iv. 6; *Two Angry Women of Abington*, iii. 2; *The Taming of the Shrew*, Act v; *The Spanish Tragedy*, Act iii; *Volpone*, ii. 1; *Two Tragedies in One*, ii. 1; *The Lost Lady*, iii. 1; *The Captain*, ii. 2; *The Widow*, i. 1; *The Roman Actor*, Act ii; *Every Man Out of his Humour*, ii. 1; *The Tale of a Tub*, i. 1.

Here we have a goodly list of plays known to have been

[1] Cf. *The Roxburghe Ballads*, I (edit. Chappell, 1888), p. 151, for an old woodcut showing an upper double casement partly open.

acted at the Rose, Globe, Paul's, Blackfriars, Cockpit, and Whitefriars, as well as of plays acted elsewhere; and the inference deducible is that the casement was common to all theatres of the Pre-Restoration period. To some extent this may be confirmed by advancing positive evidence of its employment. In Munday and Chettle's *Death of Robert Earl of Huntington*,[1] v. 2 (as acted at the Rose circa 1598), Bruce enters upon the walls of Windsor Castle, and addressing the King below, says, "See my dead mother and her famish'd son!" Suiting the action to the word he then "opens a casement showing the dead bodies within." This casement is supposed to represent the wide breach which Bruce had made in the wall. Subsequently he has a long scene on the battlements and finishes by saying, "now will I shut my shambles in again," to which we have the accompanying direction, "closes the casement". Here we have a curious, almost unique, employment of the casement, for exposures of this order were generally made by drawing the upper or lower traverses. Can it be that Henslowe's "little Rose" had no upper inner stage?

In a still earlier play, *The Two Italian Gentlemen* (1584), we have in Act i. 2, the direction, "Victoria setteth open the Casement of her windowe and with her lute in her hand, playeth and singeth," etc., etc.[2] In *Jack Drum's Entertainment, or The Pleasant Comedy of Pasquil and Katharine*,[3] ii. 1, we read, "the Casement opens and Katharine appears", to talk down to Puffe. Again, in *The Distresses* (otherwise *The Spanish Lovers* of 1639) musicians come on in the first act with a party of serenaders. By way of warning one of the former says:

> Stand all close beneath
> The penthouse! there's a certain chamber-maid
> From yond casement will dash us else.

[1] A scarce play only readily accessible in Hazlitt's recension of Dodsley's Old Plays, vol. viii.

[2] In Act iv. 6, we have the prompter's marginal note, "Victoria out at her windowe."

[3] 4to 1601 as acted at Paul's. I quote from the reprint in Simpson's *School of Shakespeare*.

In *Greene's Tu Quoque, or The City Gallant*, as acted at the Red Bull circa 1611, we have pointed allusion to the realism of the stage casement.[1] Apostrophising the sun, Geraldine says:

> I call thee up, and task thee for thy slowness.
> *Point all thy beams through yonder flaring glass,*
> And raise a beauty brighter than thyself.

Then "enter Gertrude aloft". She speaks down to Geraldine, thanks him for his music, and makes reference to the fact that she is standing at a window.

In several other window scenes, where specific mention of the casement does not occur, its use is implied. In the amplified edition of *Doctor Faustus*, published in 1616 (probably representing the version of the play given at the Fortune in 1602), Frederick, in Scene ix, cries, "See, see, his window's ope! we'll call to him." The accompanying direction is "enter Benvolio above, at a window in his night-cap: buttoning". Occasionally one finds the instruction to close the casement at the end of a window scene included by the author in his text, as if it were vital the matter should not be overlooked. An instance of this occurs in *The Captain*, ii. 2 (as at the Blackfriars circa 1613), where Frank in departing bids Clora "shut the window".

Of the exact position occupied by the casement—if it had any stereotyped position (which I very much doubt)—it would be impossible to speak in our present imperfect state of knowledge. But at least something can be determined regarding its relative height. Obviously, it cannot have been placed in the surmounting hut, or, indeed, in any part of the tiring-house above "the Heavens". The frequent interplay of characters at upper windows with characters on the lower stage negatives the possibility of any considerable altitude. One may put the matter concretely by instancing the scene in the third act of *The Insatiate Countess* (1603), where Mendosa serenades the Lady Lentulus, who appears at an upper window. Later on we have the direction, "he throws

[1] Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, xi. p. 225.

up a ladder of cords, which she makes fast to some part of the window; he ascends, and at top fals." This does not mean that he fell on to the balcony. The subsequent dialogue between the two shows that Mendosa is supposed to have fallen into the street and injured himself so badly that the lady is afraid the watch will find him there before he is able to get away. It is plain to be seen, both from the circumstance of the throwing up of the ladder and of the fall, that the casement can have been of no great height from the lower stage. One takes leave to think that the gallery must have been within easy range, else Arthur's leap in *King John* would have been a death-leap indeed.[1] Many other situations might be instanced to show that upper windows were of ready accessibility from below. A couple will suffice. In *Volpone*, ii. 1 (as acted at the Globe), a mountebank's stage is erected under a window, and Volpone ascends it. Celia, from the window, throws her handkerchief to him, and he catches and kisses it. Again, in *The Partiall Law*,[2] ii. 1, occurs the direction, "Trumpets sound, the Challenger passeth by, his Page bearing his shield and his squire his lance. The King and Ladyes are above in the window. The page passing by presents ye King with his Maister's Scutchion."[3]

(c) Bay-Windows

Arising out of (b) comes the question, was the casement invariably an independent opening or could it have formed part, now and again, of a bay-window? There is probably some significance in the fact that the only evidence of the employment of bay-windows on the Pre-Restoration stage occurs in two plays originally produced at the First Globe. In *The Miseries of Enforced Marriage*, as acted there about 1605, one notes in the fourth act that while Ilford is above, Wentloe and Bartley come on below. Bartley says, "Hereabout is the house sure," and Wentloe replies, "we cannot

[1] Cf. *Fortune by Land and Sea*, iii. 1, "Forrest leaps down". This was a Red Bull play.

[2] First published by Bertram Dobell in 1909.

[3] Cf. *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, v. 1 (a Cockpit play), where Annabella from an upper window throws a letter down to the Friar.

mistake it; for here's the sign of the Wolf and the bay-window." In *The Merry Devill of Edmonton* (a play which belongs to much about the same period), the second scene of Act v. passes outside the George Inn. In it the host asks, "D'yee see yon bay window?"

In the absence of evidence for other theatres we must be careful here to avoid arguing from the particular to the general. Since there is a certain type of over-zealous investigator who, in furtherance of a theory, grasps any straw, it is requisite to point out that the allusions to bay-windows in *Women Beware Women*, iii. 1, and *A Chaste Maid at Cheapside*, v. 1, so far from indicating their common employment in the theatres, merely point to their popularity among the womenfolk of the early seventeenth century. "'Tis a sweet recreation", we read in *Women Beware Women*, "for a gentlewoman to stand in a bay-window and see gallants." How popular the bay-window was with the thriving middle classes is demonstrated in an extant view of Goswell Street in Shakespeare's time,[1] wherein we see a row of bay-windows surmounting the projecting shops and with their bases resting on the stall-roofs.

On the strength of the two references cited we may safely concede that the upper stage of the first Globe was adorned with a bay-window. As the first Fortune was modelled on the Globe it may be that it too was similarly provided. Having gone so far one loses firm foothold and runs the risk of immersion in the quagmires of speculation. As an argument in favour of the employment of bay-windows in the later public and private theatres of the platform-stage order, it may at least be pointed out that projections of the sort, if provided with goodly casements, would have been well adapted for upper-stage scenes, and, through permitting of a better view, would have been eminently grateful to the public. Moreover, even as a coign of vantage for favoured spectators, the bay-window would not have been without its merits. Its most likely position

[1] Given in J. P. Malcolm's *Anecdotes of the Manners and Customs of London* (1808), among the plates at p. 454.

would have been over one or both of the two normal entering doors. One looks for some such arrangement to account for the fact[1] that when the time-honoured entering doors were transferred at the Restoration to the proscenium arch of the newly arrived picture-stage they were surmounted by balconies with windows. Of the perpetuation of Elizabethan conventionalities in this particular connexion from that period until the dawn of the eighteenth century I shall say something at the close.

(D) Windows with Curtains

Unless we can assume the general employment of draped bay-windows (on the whole a difficult proposition), it seems to me that references to windows with curtains cannot be taken as referring to actual windows but to small curtained rooms on the second floor of the tiring-house. Here are a few of the examples to which I refer:

In *King Henry VIII*, v. 2 (folio), we read, "Enter the King and Buts, at a Windowe above." Some conversation passes regarding what is going on below, and the King says, "Let 'em alone, and drawe the curtaine close; we shall hear more anon."

In *The Jewes Tragedy, or their Fatal and final Overthrow by Vespasian and Titus, his son*, Act iv (as performed circa 1633), we have the directions, "Musick and the Lady Miriam sings in her chamber . . . . . She drawes her window curten".

In *Monsieur D'Olive*, Act i, as given at the Blackfriars circa 1606, Vandome comes on in the street outside the house and says:

> And see, methinks through the encurtain'd windows,
> (In this high time of day) I see light tapers.
> This is exceeding strange!

Here windows were not actually required to lend illusion to the scene. A glimmer of candlelight emerging from

[1] See the paper entitled "Proscenium Doors: an Elizabethan Heritage," in the First Series of these Studies.

between the upper and lower traverses or other stage curtains would suffice. Apart from this, it will not be difficult to prove that upper-stage boxes (sometimes with curtains) were pressed into service for the due representation of what might be considered as window scenes. Thus in *Lady Alimony*, iv. 6, we have the direction, "The favourites appear to their half-bodies in their shirts, in rooms above." Subsequently, "they come down, buttoning themselves." In that curious play, *The Parson's Wedding*, which I have discussed at length elsewhere,[1] in Act i. 3, the Widow and Pleasant enter "above". They are evidently in a room looking out on the street, but no mention is made of any window. After talking to her companion, the Widow addresses Jolly below, and later on "shuts the curtain".

There are sound reasons for believing that in many scenes of this order the music room was pressed into service. From a stage-direction and a prompter's note in *The Thracian Wonder* we know that in some theatres the music room was situated on the second floor of the tiring-house, that it was provided with curtains, and that it was used occasionally for dramatic purposes. In association with the present subject it is also vital for us to note that, when songs were sung off the stage, they were almost invariably rendered by boys in the music room. By a curious coincidence, we have to hand an instance where the music room is spoken of as a window. In *The Bondman*, iii. 3 (as acted at the Cockpit on 3 December, 1623), the scene is a room in Cleon's house and a dance is proposed. Gracculo asks, "where's the music?" and Poliphron replies, "I have placed it in yon window." Then the fiddlers play and the dance is given. But what I want to emphasize is that in the Elizabethan drama (using the term in its broadest sense) songs were often heard above as if coming from my lady's chamber before the lady appeared at her window. An instance of this has already been quoted from *The Jewes Tragedy*. Another occurs in *The Roman Actor*, as acted at the Blackfriars circa 1626. In Act ii, while Cæsar stands below in the hall of the

[1] See *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), p. 94.

Palace, "Domitia appears at the window." Then music is played above and she sings. We may safely take it, I think, that all such upper scenes were either played in the music room or at a window adjoining. If one could be certain that the upper action in the Blackfriars comedy of *The Captain* took place at a certain juncture at a casement, proof would be to hand that the casement was close to the music room. In Act ii. 2, Frederick enters below in the street and hears an accompanied duet sung in his sister's chamber. Afterwards, "enter at the window Frank and Clora." Taken literally, Frank's subsequent instruction to Clora to "shut the window" could only refer to a casement, but if we could assume that, after a certain custom, the scene was acted in the music room, then the instruction would really mean "close the curtains."

(e) Grated Windows

There is some reason to believe that on this sub-divided second floor of the tiring-house one or two grated boxes were provided for the benefit of those better-class spectators who desired to see without being seen. In an epigram of the period of 1596 Davies writes:

> Rufus the Courtier at the theatre,
> Leauing the best and most conspicuous place,
> Doth either to the stage himselfe transferre,
> Or through a grate doth shew his doubtful face:
> For that the clamorous frie of Innes of court,
> Filles up the priuate roomes of greater prise;
> And such a place where all may haue resort,
> He in his singularite doth despise.[1]

It is a puzzle to determine how far stage-boxes to which spectators made resort were utilized for theatrical purposes, but it seems fairly well assured that under pressure of the moment these stage-box occupants could be temporarily displaced by the actors.[2] In this way grated boxes could be

[1] Cf. *Modern Philology*, viii. No. 4, April, 1911, article by C. R. Baskervill on "The Custom of Sitting on the Elizabethan Stage."

[2] See my discussion of this point in *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), pp. 32–3.

made to serve a double duty. So seldom, however, were they pressed into service during the traffic of the scene that one thinks they would hardly have been provided at all but for the appeal they made to playgoers of the Rufus type. Extensive as has been my examination of the Elizabethan drama I know of scarcely half a dozen instances in which grated boxes were utilized for stage purposes. The earliest occurs in *King Henry VI*, Pt. 1, Act i. 4, a scene elaborately discussed (but not with complete satisfaction) by Brodmeier. Here the lower stage represents the besieged city of Orleans and the upper the suburbs where the English are encamped. "Enter the Master Gunner of Orleance, and his Boy." Says the crossbowman to his son :

> Sirrha, thou know'st how Orleance is beseig'd,
> . . . . . .
> The English, in the suburbs close entrencht,
> Wont through a secret Grate of iron barres,
> In Yonder Tower to over-peere the citie.

He bids the boy keep a sharp look out for the English and let him know when they appear. When he has gone the Boy says, "Ile never trouble you if I may spye them." Then Salisbury and Talbot enter above and proceed to examine the besieged city from their sheltered nook. The boy with his linstock fires as soon as he perceives them, and "Salisbury falls downe". The whole scene is difficult to visualize, and one can easily blunder in its interpretation. Notwithstanding the crossbowman's reference to the "secret Grate" in the speech quoted, it is quite possible that Salisbury was not standing in a grated box when the shot was fired. The direction simply says, "enter Salisbury and Talbot with others on the Turrets." This is really too indefinite to admit of interpretation.

To some extent a similar puzzle is presented in the second act of that notable Blackfriars play, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Scene 1 evidently opens in the courtyard of the prison. Towards its close "enter Palamon and Arcite, above." The Jailor's exclamation, "Looke, yonder they

are! that's Arcite lookes out," shows that they appear at a window, and the reply of his daughter, "No, Sir, no, that's Palamon: Arcite is the lower of the twaine; you may perceive a part of him," indicates that they are looking through a grate. Scene 2 opens with "Enter Palamon, and Arcite in prison." They are now on the upper inner stage, representing a cell looking out on a garden, where they behold Emilia and her attendant. Palamon's threat

> Put but thy head out of this window more,
> And as I have a soule, Ile naile thy life to't,

would at first lead us to believe that the two were either at a casement or in an ordinary stage-box. But to accept this theory is to negative the possibility of visualizing what follows. While Palamon and Arcite are quarrelling, the Keeper enters on the upper gallery, and is seen by Palamon before he approaches. Since the Keeper takes Arcite away with him, he must have been able to enter the prison from the gallery, and this he could not have done had the two kinsmen been at a casement or in an enclosed box. But at the close of the scene we are faced with a contradiction, for when the keeper returns to remove Palamon to another cell, the latter says:

> Farewell, kinde window.
> May rude winde never hurt thee—

This certainly sounds as if addressed to a grate or casement, not to the broad aperture of the upper inner stage. Without full knowledge of the physical disposition of the Blackfriars stage the problem is insoluble.

Turn we now to two definite instances of the use of grates. The first is to be found in *The Picture*, iv. 2, as acted at the Globe circa 1629. Ubaldo appears above, seen to the middle only, in his shirt. He looks down and says, "Ha! the windows grated with iron, I cannot force 'em, and if I leap down here, I break my neck." Shortly afterwards Ricardo enters "with a great noise above as fallen" through a trap-door, and calls to Ubaldo. They see each other, and Ubaldo asks Ricardo to throw him a cloak to cover him.

In Rowley's *A New Wonder, a Woman Never Vext*, Act iv, old Foster is in jail for debt at Ludgate. Being the newest comer, he is told by the Keeper it is requisite, according to custom, that he should beg for alms for the general relief of the prisoners "at the iron grate above." Subsequently we have the direction, "Old Foster appears above at the grate; a box hanging down." Robert, his son, comes on outside the jail on the lower stage, and, in response to his father's pleas, puts money in the box. It is a pathetic situation, for the old man cannot see him.

(f) Conjunctive Windows

If the employment of grated boxes to represent windows was comparatively rare, the conjunctive employment of two windows (whether actual or merely nominal) was rarer still. One searches the entire Elizabethan drama in vain for a repetition of that ingenious scene in Act ii. 2 of *The Devil is an Ass*, where Wittipol courts Mrs. Fitzdottrell. It will be as well, therefore, for us to bear in mind that, whatever deductions can be legitimately made from it, they are only applicable to the Blackfriars at the period of 1616. Unfortunately, the marginal instruction in the folio—"This scene is acted at two windows as out of two contiguous buildings" — affords no definite clue to method of staging. Most of the Elizabethan investigators who have discussed the scene have been disposed to place the windows at an obtuse angle, and to arrange the lower stage accordingly. Professor Reynolds, on the other hand, sees no reason why this particular scene could not have been presented in adjacent sections of any balcony like that pictured in the Swan sketch.[1] Personally I know of only one objection to this arrangement and that may be more imaginary than real. It calls, however, for some consideration. At the beginning of the courtship Pug comes on below to take stock of what is going on and, after indulging in a brief comment, departs. The important point is that he is standing in a position

[1] *Modern Philology*, vol. ix., No. 1, July, 1911, p. 17, article "What we know of the Elizabethan Stage," where the matter is slightly discussed.

where he could not see Wittipol and Mrs. Fitzdottrell unless the windows were situated well to the front of the stage on one of the sides. Possibly this affords some clue to the physical disposition of the Blackfriars stage, and shows where it differed essentially from the arrangement in the early public theatres. I base all this on the significant instruction "enter Pug behind". Directions of this particular phrasing are very common in old plays, and I was for long puzzled to know what they conveyed, seeing that all entries on the platform-stage were made behind. But after an examination of a considerable number of directions of the sort in connexion with the scenes where they occur, it dawned on me that "enter behind" meant "enter on the inner stage" and that wherever it cropped up a scene of eavesdropping followed. Characters that entered behind remained on the lower inner stage (seen of the audience but unsuspected by the other characters) until the exigencies of the action desired them to come forward and reveal their presence.[1]

The question here suggests itself, have we any clue to the staging of the scene in the suggestion which Mrs. Fitzdottrell obliquely conveys to her lover, in Act ii. 1, by using Pug as an intermediary? She sends word asking him to forbear what he has not yet done—

> To forbear his acting to me,
> At the gentleman's chamber-window in Lincoln's
> inn there,
> That opens to my gallery; else I swear
> To acquaint my husband with his folly.

Might it not be that the solution to the problem is presented in this reference to the gallery? When the scene opens Wittipol is in his friend Manly's chamber and Manly sings. The rendering of the song half indicates that the chamber was represented by the music room, which was

[1] For other examples of the direction in Ben Jonson, see *The Silent Woman*, iii. 1 and iv. 1, and *Volpone*, Act iii. Massinger employs it in *A New Way to Pay old Debts*, iii. 2 (twice), *The Bondman*, iii. 3, and *The Fatal Dowry*, iii. 1. I could cite at least fifty other clear examples.

fronted by curtains and opened on to the gallery. Even if Mrs. Fitzdottrell was in the adjoining box, Wittipol may have emerged on the gallery and proceeded to her "window". It really looks as if some such course was adopted, otherwise it is difficult to see how Wittipol could have struck Fitzdottrell from the window at the close, according to the text. The deduction from all this would be that the gallery at the Blackfriars circulated round at least two sides of the stage, that the music room there was not at the back and that the whole scene was acted sideways and somewhat to the front. In part this conclusion runs counter to my own ideas, but in matters of Elizabethan research the truth has an ugly habit of mocking at one's preconceptions.

Beyond this puzzling scene I know of only two other instances on the Pre-Restoration stage[1] where two windows of any kind were used conjunctively. One, in *The Picture*, has already been referred to under "grated windows". The other, which I shall not attempt to elucidate, occurs in *The Parson's Wedding*, ii. 7, where a direction runs, "Enter (at the windows) the Widow and Master Careless, Mistress Pleasant and Master Wild, Captain, Master Sad, Constant, Jolly, Secret, a table and knives ready for oysters."

(G) Upper Back Windows

Some reference to the possibility of a back window forming part of the upper inner stage has already been made in section (b). That important, long-obscured truths may be accidentally stumbled upon is revealed by the circumstance that Dr. Albright, in seeking to establish an erroneous conclusion with regard to one of the features of the "Messallina" print, has vitally increased our knowledge of the architectural disposition of the tiring-house. Unless we can concede this upper back window, certain scenes and situations in a few old plays are utterly incomprehensible. One takes it that, like the casement, this back

[1] For an early picture-stage example, see *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), p. 174.

window was really a window and not a make-believe. But there all resemblance ends, for while the casement was simply and solely provided for dramatic purposes, the upper back window owed its origin to the pressing necessity for light.

Not to rob Dr. Albright of any of his laurels, I shall first cite the examples he gives in proof of what he somewhat ambiguously styles "the gallery window".[1] They are three in number, but one of them (from *The Picture*, iv. 2) I have had to discard, because, as demonstrated in section (e), it is irrelevant. The others occur in *The Great Duke of Florence*, v. 1, and *If You know not me, You know Nobody*, Act v, both Cockpit plays. In the former, Sanazarro is seen imprisoned in an upper chamber in Charamonte's house. Hearing the clatter of horses, "he looks back" (i.e. out of the window) and says:

> A goodly troop! this back part of my prison
> Allows me liberty to see and know them.

With Sanazarro's recognition of three of the equestrians Dr. Albright ends his summary of the scene, but the subsequent action requires to be noted. In order to communicate with the Duchess, Sanazarro slips a diamond ring from his finger, and taking a pane of glass (from the window?) writes upon it. Curiously enough, he does not throw it out behind as one would expect, and here, textually, we lose sight of him. The "goodly troop" enter below on foot, as outside the house, and then "the pane falls down" at Fiorinda's feet. Evidently Sanazarro has thrown it from the gallery. But she sees nothing of him, and only says, "What's that? a pane thrown from the window, no wind stirring." Doubtless this clumsy expedient was adopted because the falling and receipt of the glass missive could not be shown behind. But the whole is infantile.

In *If You know not me*, etc., we have the direction, "Enter Elizabeth, Gage, and Clarentia above." In response to Elizabeth's command, "Good Master Gage, looke to the

[1] *The Shaksperian Stage*, p. 66.

pathway that doth come from the Court," Gage goes to the window and tells of three horsemen that he sees riding towards them at break-neck speed.

In both these cases the testimony as to the existence of an actual back window—of a casement that could be opened—is very slender. The sceptic who should pooh-pooh them could not be answered, were it not for my discovery of a much more potent example. This occurs in *The Captain*, v. 2, a Blackfriars play of circa 1613. Although the scene is not directly indicated as taking place on the upper stage, one can safely draw the inference that it was acted there. Note that Fabricio says of Jacomo, "he walks below for me, under the window." It is arranged to play a trick upon the tarrier by emptying the contents of a chamber-pot on his head. Then

Enter WENCH.

Clor. Art thou there, wench?

Wench. I.

Fab. Look out then if you canst see him.

Wench. Yes I see him, and by my troth he stands so fair I could not hold were he my father; his hat's off too, and he's scratching his head.

Fab. O wash that hand I prithee.

Wench. Send thee good luck, this the second time I have thrown thee out to day: ha, ha, ha, just on's head.

Fran. Alas!

Fab. What does he now?

Wench. He gathers stones, God's light, he breaks all the street windows.

Jacomo.[1] Whores, Bawds, your windows, your windows.

Wench. Now he is breaking all the low windows with his sword. Excellent sport, now he's beating a fellow that laugh'd at him. Truly the man takes it patiently; now he goes down the street. Gravely looking on each side, there's not one more dare laugh.

[1] He is not on the stage, and as no entry is marked, he doubtless calls out behind.

Seeing that it was impossible to visualize Jacomo's action after his offensive baptism,[1] the whole of the scene must have been positively suggested to the dramatist by the presence of the upper back window.

In *The Devil's Law Case* (a Globe or Blackfriars play of circa 1620), there is a situation that on superficial reading promises proof of this upper back casement, but on minute examination disappoints. In Act v. 5, Romelio induces Leonora and the Capuchin to enter a closet on the lower stage, and then locks them in. In the next scene the friar and the lady appear at a turret window (spoken of as a casement) which looks out to the sea. Both are very anxious to escape. After threatening to "leap these battlements" (in allusion probably to the balustraded gallery), Leonora asks the Capuchin to "ope the other casement that looks into the city." The Capuchin replies, "Madam, I shall," but no direction follows implying that he does so. Both immediately exeunt, and shortly afterwards they appear below. Are we to assume that escape was made in sight of the audience through the back window? Surely the lady's farthingale would have rendered this acrobatic feat a matter of some difficulty.

Exits of this order could only be conceded on the ground that the inner casement was in a partition opening out on to a corridor, and not in the outer wall. Although inferior in usefulness to an outer window, a window of this kind would have its utility in admitting reflected natural light to the upper inner stage. But, apart from the question of casements, some reasonable grounds for belief in this corridor-hiding partition can be educed from a number of stage-directions proving the existence of a door leading on to the upper inner stage, a door so solid and illusive that it could, when necessary, be locked.[2] One cannot well conceive any other position for such a door except at the back.

The inexorable sway of logic compels me, in despite of

[1] The mere drenching could have been, and, as a matter of fact, had been shown. See *The Two Italian Gentlemen*, iv. 6.

[2] Cf. *The Guardian* (Blackfriars), iii. 6; *Ovid's Tragedy*, iii. 5; *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, iv. 3.

certain obstinate preconceptions, to admit the feasibility of exits, on occasion, by this back window. I feel assured that the reader will have vivid personal experience of the astonishment that accompanied my discovery of the fact that a well-known scene in *Romeo and Juliet* goes far towards demonstrating this feasibility. In Act iii. 5, of the archetypal love-tragedy, we must begin by asking ourselves where, theatrically speaking, did the scene open? At first it would appear that "Juliet and her Romeo" are communing at an upper window, but maturer reflection reveals the "if" in the matter. While the surreptitious quarto of 1597 clearly says, "enter Romeo and Juliet at the window," Smethwick's undated quarto, on the other hand, merely has "enter Romeo and Juliet aloft." If we could assume that "aloft" really meant "the upper inner stage", a textual difficulty that arises a little later could readily be explained away. Juliet's line, "then window let day in and let life out," evidently implies the simultaneous opening of a casement, but that casement could not have been in the tiring-house façade, for the window at which the lovers stood, or the aperture which did duty for a window, was already open. The only logical conclusion is that Juliet suited the action to the word by opening the back casement. But here another difficulty crops up. After the line "Farewell, my love, one kisse and I'll descend," is to be found in Quarto 1 (but not elsewhere), the indication "he goeth downe"; and the rest of the scene is given with Romeo on the lower stage. How, then, did he go down? If, illusively, by a rope-ladder he must have descended at the front of the tiring-house. But it is to be noted that it is nowhere clearly stated that he so descends. Assuming that Juliet, at the line quoted, opened the back casement, Romeo could have gone through it, as if on to a rope-ladder, and, running downstairs, quickly emerged through one of the entering doors on to the lower stage. Vainly one asks oneself what was the justification for this clumsy arrangement. The necessity is not apparent. But clumsy as it is, it has its analogue in the scene already cited from *The Great Duke of Florence*.

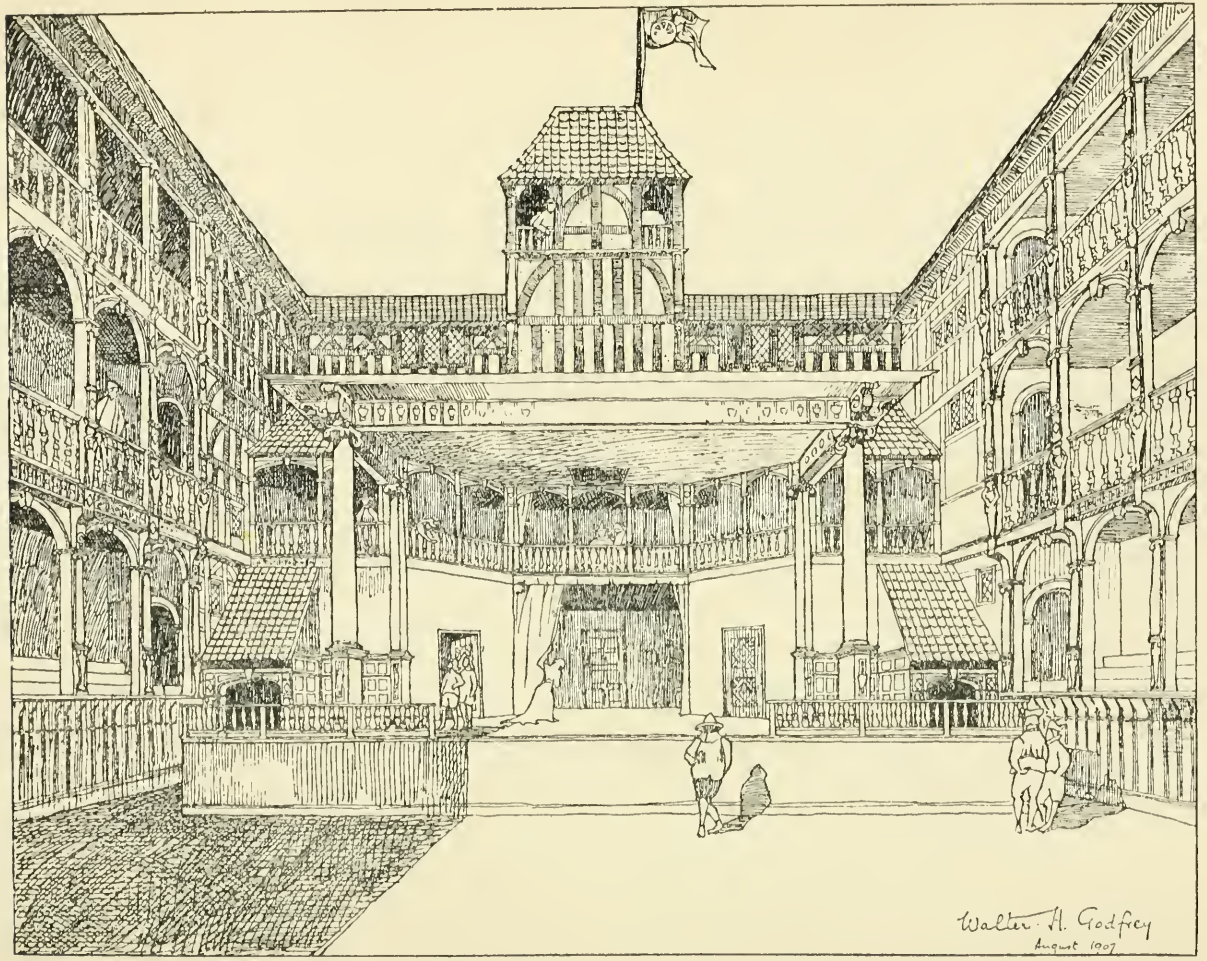
Unless we can press into evidence the scene from *Romeo and Juliet*, proof is lacking to show that the upper back window was a characteristic of the public theatre. All the other examples cited are from private-theatre plays. But it seems to me that the presence of the window having been satisfactorily demonstrated in the one type of house, may be rationally inferred in the other. The necessity which called it into being was equally pressing in both.

(H) Lower-Stage Windows

Very few old plays exist in which reference can be found to the presence of windows below, and even in these it is matter for speculation whether the references can always be taken literally. The ample provision of casements, grates and curtained rooms on the upper stage answered most purposes and precluded the necessity for placing windows in the lower part of the tiring-house façade. Indeed I know of only two plays which indicate the presence of windows on the lower outer stage.[1] In the last scene of Field's *Amends for Ladies* (a Blackfriars play of circa 1615), four characters are standing outside a bedroom, evidently represented by the lower inner stage with closed traverses. Suddenly they all say, "How now?" in unison, the accompanying direction being "looking in at the window".[2] Lord Feesimple describes what is going on in the bedroom, and subsequently "a curtain is drawn and a bed discovered". Here the action must certainly have taken place on the lower stage, not only because it was usual to act bedroom scenes there, but for the reason that plays never ended with all the characters above. Seemingly, then, the play is evidence for a window on lower stage level close by the traverses. It may be that some corroboration of this is afforded in *Sir Clyomon and Sir Clamydes*, a public-theatre play of circa

[1] The practicable stall window in *Arden of Faversham*, ii. 2 (which the Prentice lets down, thus breaking Black Will's head), was, of course, a temporary wooden contrivance, and to be reckoned among properties.

[2] I have not been able to see the original quarto and can only quote the play as given in Dodsley's collection.



MR. WALTER H. GODFREY'S RECONSTRUCTION OF THE FORTUNE THEATRE.
(General view from the yard). [*To face p.* 50.

1592. Scene 9 opens in the Forest of Marvels. Subtle Shift enters on his way to Sir Clamydes in prison, talking as he performs his journey. When he reaches his destination, he hears the knight lamenting, and asks him "to look out of the window". The door of the prison is subsequently opened, and Clamydes "enters out".[1]

No argument could be advanced for the presence of a back window on the upper inner stage that would not apply equally as well to a back window on the corresponding inner stage below. In each there was a pressing necessity for light. The difficulty could be met in night scenes by the bringing in of candles, but there were many other scenes in which this could not be done. Admit the provision of the lower back window as a requisite architectural feature and its ultimate employment by the dramatist may be inferred.

Four scenes may be cited as tending to establish the existence of this lower back window. In Marlowe's *The Massacre at Paris*, Scene 9, Talaeus enters to Ramus in his study[2] and tells him the Guisians are hard at his door. He is in a state of panic and offers to leap out of the window but is stayed by Ramus.

In *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (an early Globe play), the fourth scene of Act 1 in the distinctive folio version passes in a room in Dr. Caius's house. The scene opens with Mrs. Quickly calling, "What, John Rugby, I pray thee goe to the casement, and see if you can see my Master, Master Docter Caius comming." Rugby replies, "I'll goe watch." Immediately afterwards Mrs. Quickly talks about him to the others, and most modern editors of the play, assuming his departure, insert "exit Rugby" in the middle of the Dame's second speech. I take this to be as widely astray as is the interpolated note of his entry when he exclaims, "Out alas; here comes my Master." Clearly Rugby

[1] Not all early textual allusions can be taken literally. I doubt if any inference can be drawn from the Horse Courser's threat in *Doctor Faustus*, Scene 11, "I will speak with him now, or I'll break his glass windows about his ears."

[2] In Pre-Restoration stage-directions the term "study" generally connotes the lower inner stage. Cf. *Histriomastix*, Act i; *The Divil's Charter*, i. 4 and iv. 1; *The Novella*, Act 1; *Satiromastix*, i. 2; *The Woman Hater*, v. 1; *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, ii. 1 and iii. 6.

has never left the sight of the audience. He has simply been watching at the back casement on the lower inner stage.

In *The Alchemist* (a Globe and Blackfriars play of circa 1608), the fourth scene of Act iv is laid in a room in Lovewit's house. Dol comes in hurriedly with the intelligence that the master has suddenly returned. To convince Subtle and Face, she bids them "look out and see". Forty of the neighbours, she says, are standing around him, talking. Face evidently looks out of the back window, for he recognizes Lovewit, who is not seen till the opening of the following act.

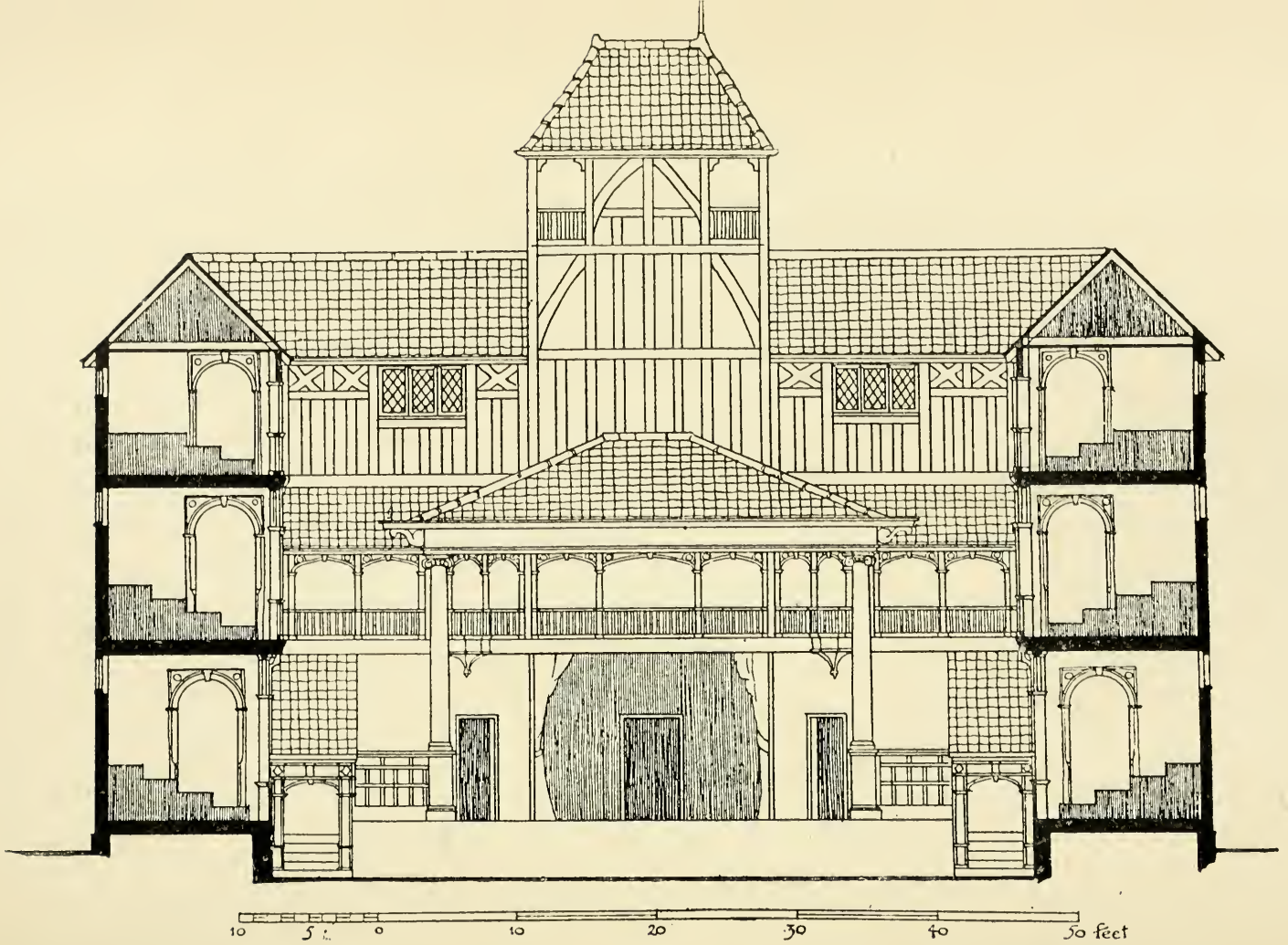
In Middleton and Rowley's *The Spanish Gypsie* (a Cockpit and Salisbury Court play), Act i. 3 opens with a discovery on the lower inner stage. The scene is a darkened bedroom in Fernando's house. Left alone after the rape, Clara looks about her in hopes of being able to identify the place. "Help me", she says—

> Help me my quicken'd senses! tis a garden
> To which this window guides the covetous prospect,
> A large and fair one; in the midst
> A curious alablaster fountain stands.

All this she is supposed to see by aid of the moonlight streaming through the window. As in the case of the upper back casement, this window must have been situated in a back partition, and not in the outer wall of the theatre. At the beginning of the scene Roderigo departs through a door which he locks after him, and this door must certainly have been situated at the back of the stage. It formed the third mode of entrance to which reference is occasionally made in old stage-directions.[1]

Elsewhere I have shown how, at the Restoration period, the prime characteristics of the obsolescent platform-stage were amalgamated with the essentials of the new picture-

[1] Cf. *The Maydes Metamorphosis*, ii. 2 and iii. 2; *The Fairy Pastorall* (1600), "They entrd at severall doores Learchus at the Midde doore." For probable position of door, see Mr. Walter H. Godfrey's conjectural designs of the interior of the Fortune Theatre, now reproduced. Its use is indicated in *Volpone, or the Fox*, iii. 5.



MR. WALTER H. GODFREY'S RECONSTRUCTION OF THE FORTUNE.
(Sectional view).

[*To face p.* 52.

stage.[1] To this amalgamation were due the differential qualities which distinguished the English picture-stage of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries from the picture-stages of the rest of Europe. Thanks to it the window-scene conventionalities of the non-scenic epoch were perpetuated for at least another fifty years. In placing the two normal entering doors of the old tiring-house façade in the proscenium arch at the front of the stage, the Restoration theatre-builders topped them with practicable windows surrounded by balconies. Whether this arrangement was strictly after the old system or a mere fusion of its manifold characteristics I cannot say, but at least it had the advantage of permitting a ready realization of many old stage effects. One calls it an advantage for the reason that for some years after the advent of the picture-stage the Elizabethan plays constituted the staple repertory of the players. Not only that, but new pieces were written now and again to some slight extent on old principles. Thus a recurrence of the popular wall-storming effect of the Elizabethan period is to be noted in the opening scene of D'Urfey's tragedy, *The Siege of Memphis*, as acted at the Theatre Royal in 1676. At that late date this effect would not have been procured without the use of the proscenium balconies. New window scenes on the old principles were also conceived by the Restoration dramatist. We have a notable example of this in the anonymous comedy of *The Mock Duellist; or the French Valet*, as produced at the Theatre Royal, Bridges Street, in 1675. In Act ii. 3, the exterior of the school-house, Kitty Noble appears at a window above, probably a casement, as she closes it at the end of the scene. In Act v. 1, scene Covent Garden, Kitty lowers a rope ladder and Airy climbs up to the window. Years pass, the great century wanes and dies, and still we find the old effects being steadily repeated. In Shadwell's comedy of *The Scowrers*, as produced at Drury Lane in 1691, excellent use was made of the proscenium balconies in the last act, at a juncture where

[1] See the paper on "Proscenium Doors; an Elizabethan Heritage," in the First Series of these Studies.

the action takes place at opposite windows. Later examples, from the *The Lying Lovers* of Sir Richard Steele and other plays of the Augustan era, could readily be cited. But sufficient has been set forward to show how far-reaching was the influence of at least one or two of the Elizabethan conventionalities.

The Origin of the Theatre Programme

The Origin of the Theatre Programme

In the popular misuse of a term one often gains a clue to the ramifications of its history. Up to a period within living memory the word *playbill* was commonly employed in the vernacular in the sense of programme, although, strictly considered, it signifies nothing more than a theatrical advertisement. In this perversion, reaching back a couple of hundred years, we have clear indication that the theatre programme was a belated offshoot of the archetypal playbill, or poster, just as the poster itself was a development of the oral announcement. In matters dealing with the history of words one generally turns to the *New English Dictionary* as the final arbiter, but in this particular case the great authority is to be found wanting. It ignores the longevous corruption of the term, despite notable examples of its use in the *Essays of Elia*, and fails deplorably in the attempted definition of it in its original sense. We are told that a playbill is "a bill or placard announcing a play and giving the names of the actors to whom the various parts are assigned." Here we have a distinct begging of the question, seeing that no proof has ever been advanced that the poster in the first century of its history bore the names of the players. For a thoroughly scientific definition of the term we have to turn to the *Century Dictionary*, where the difficulty is surmounted by the qualifying clause, "with or without cast and alternatively a programme."

In the earliest days of the English drama the necessity for advertisement was as vital as it is to-day. About the year 1483, when a company of actors went about the country giving performances of a moral play called *The Castle of Perseverance*, they employed two advance agents, called Vexillators, whose duty it was to go a week beforehand to the places to be visited, and after much blowing of trumpets to announce the coming performance and its characteristics

in a well-conned, rhymed address.[1] A similar course was followed in connexion with the *Ludus Coventriæ*. Probably the Vexillators were not unknown in fifteenth-century London, but on that score evidence is lacking. What we do know is that, in slightly altered form, the custom introduced by them obtained in many country towns until the middle of the eighteenth century, and, for a time, existed cheek by jowl with the employment of playbills. Indicating the period of 1740, in his account of the early Birmingham stage, Gilliland[2] writes:

> The first regular theatre was erected ten years afterwards in Moor-street, which gave another spring to the proceedings: in the day-time a drummer paraded the town, who beat his rounds, delivered his bills, and roared out encomiums on the entertainments of the evening, which, however, had not always the desired effect. We have been informed that the celebrated Yates had sustained this office; and when we reflect that both himself and Shuter exercised their talents in a booth in Bartholomew fair, astonishment ceases. . . .
>
> In 1751 a handsome Theatre was built in King-street, and opened in 1752 by a company announcing themselves "His Majesty's Servants" from the Theatres Royal, London. These persons expressed a wish that the townsmen would excuse the ceremony of the drum, alleging as a reason—*the dignity of a London company*. The novelty had a surprising effect; the performers pleased, and the house was continually crowded: the general conversation turned upon theatricals; and the town seemed to exhibit one vast theatre.

Curiously enough, old Tate Wilkinson[3] tells a story to the exact contrary. Writing in 1790 of his country experiences of thirty years or so earlier, he says:

> Another strange custom they had at Norwich, and if abolished it has not been many years, which was for a drummer and a trumpeter (not the King's) in every street to proclaim in an audible

[1] For fuller details, see Collier's *Hist. Eng. Dram. Poetry* (1831), ii. 279–80. In France the progression from oral advertisement to playbills and thence to programmes affords a striking parallelism. For details of the announcement of a Mystery at Paris in 1540, see Hone's *Ancient Mysteries Described* (1823), pp. 177–9.

[2] *The Dramatic Mirror* (1808), i. p. 203.

[3] *Memoirs of His Own Life* (Dublin, 1791), ii. 250–2.

voice, having been assisted by his shrill notes to summons each garreteer, without which ceremony the gods would not submit to descend from their heights into the streets to inquire what play was to be acted, nor ascend into the gallery.

A custom of this kind prevailed so far with a Mr. Herbert's Lincolnshire company in the time of our revered, well-remembered, and beloved Marquis of Granby, that when at Grantham the players determined to omit the usual ceremony of the drum, wishing to grow more polite; and by obstinate perseverance, Lady Jane Grey, Mary Queen of Scots, King Henry the Eighth, the King of France, nay even Cardinal Wolsey had no command, attraction, or power over the populace when they lost their accustomed and so much loved sound of the drum and trumpet. . . . The Marquis of Granby sent for the manager of the troop, and said to him, "Mr. Manager, I like a play; I like a player; and *shall* be *glad* to *serve you*:—but my good friend, why are you so suddenly offended at and averse to the noble sound of a drum?—I like it," said the Marquis, "and all the inhabitants like it. Put my name on your playbill, provided you drum, *but not otherwise*. Try the effect on tomorrow night; if then you are as thinly attended as you have lately been, shut up your playhouse at once; but if it succeeds, *drum away*." The manager communicated this edict to the princes, princesses, *peers* and *peeresses*; and not only they, but even the *ambitious stepmother*, gave up all self-consideration for the public weal; and it was after some debate voted *nem con* in favour of the drum: they deigned to try Lord Granby's suggestion and to their pleasing astonishment their little theatre was brim-full on the sound of the drum and Lord Granby's name; after which night they row-didi-dow'd away, had a very successful season and drank flowing bowls to the health of the noble Marquis.

One notes from both Gilliland and Tate Wilkinson that London had never taken kindly to the itinerant drummer-cum-crier. Doubtless any attempts that were made in the mid-sixteenth century to introduce the practice there met with stern disapproval from the Common Council.[1] Even in the distinctively inn-yard era it was not a question of one company but several; and a multiplicity of drummers would mean the distraction of prentices and the ready gathering of

[1] The drummer and crier (two individuals working together) were institutions in Paris early in the seventeenth century. Cf. Eugène Rigal, *Le Théâtre Français avant la Période Classique*, p. 197 note 5.

riotous, stall-looting mobs. Hence the origin, in or about 1560,[1] of the playbill as poster. Possibly only a few bills would be required for each performance in the beginning, not more than half a dozen, and the necessity for going to the expense of printing would therefore be obviated. Seeing that the announcement would be of the briefest, merely the date, hour and place of performance and the title of the play, it would not be a severely irksome task for the Book-holder to execute them by hand. One surmises that the primitive playbill was in manuscript from the fact that at the close of the century, when the excessive rivalry of the numerous theatres on both sides of the river led to the printing of bills through a vastly increased issue, the MS. bill is found persisting side by side with the printed bill.[2] The monopoly which John Charlewood enjoyed from the Stationers' Company of printing playbills did not hinder any person from writing his own. In the induction to *A Warning for Faire Women* (1599), Tragedy, after a dispute, lays her whip about the shoulders of Comedy and History in saying:

> 'Tis you have kept the Theatres so long,
> Painted in playbills upon every post,
> That I am scorned of the multitude.

Here "painted" seems to imply resort to the brush rather than the printing press in the execution of bills. At best, however, no great stress can be laid on the evidence, considering that MS. bills in 1599 must have been the exception, not the rule. On the other hand it can be clearly shown that at a slightly later period MS. bills of various kinds were still posted. Preserved among the Alleyn Papers at Dulwich is a Bear-Garden poster[3] of the time of James I (before 1614), written in a large coarse hand, after the manner doubtless followed in all manuscript bills. The wording runs:

[1] Cf. Collier, op. cit. iii. 382, extracts from Strype's *Life of Grindall*. The *affiche* was utilized in France at least as early as 1556. See Eugène Rigal, op. cit. p. 197 note 2.

[2] In the country strollers had no option but to resort to manuscript bills. In 1592 the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge wrote to the Privy Council complaining that the Queen's Players had set up "writings about our College gates" (Collier, op. cit. i. 289–90).

[3] Warner's Dulwich Catalogue, p. 83.

Tomorrowe beinge Thursdaie shalbe seen at the Bear-gardin on the banckside a greate mach plaid by the gamsters of Essex, who hath chalenged all comers whatsoever to plaie V dogges at the single beare for V pounds, and also to wearie a bull dead at the stake; and for your better content shall have plasent sport with the horse and ape and whiping of the blind beare. Vivat Rex!

The loyal flourish at the end not only helps to date the bill but serves opportunely to refute a hitherto uncontroverted conjecture of Steevens' upon which Malone has put his endorsement.[1] Steevens' idea was that the custom of placing "Vivat Rex" at the foot of a playbill originated by way of substitute for the older system of praying for the King and Queen at the end of the play. But the prayer was woven into the epilogue of *Locrine* in 1595, before which time the conventional flourish had certainly been added to the bills. It cannot be pretended that prayers for the reigning monarch were ever offered up after a bullfight or a bear-baiting, and yet we find the "Vivat Rex" at the end of a Bear-Garden poster. The truth is that, time out of mind, the loyal flourish was a feature of all proclamations, and that the playbill, being purely an outgrowth of the oral announcement, was to all intents and purposes a proclamation. In dismissing the subject one may point out that what had originally been a characteristic of the poster eventually became the inheritance of the programme. With necessary variants, and sometimes rendered into English, "Vivat Rex" held its place at the foot of the bills to the close of the reign of William IV.

By complex reasoning one arrives at the conclusion that the normal playbill of the Elizabethan era was characterized by its brevity. To be stuck on a street-post it had to be small, and to attract the passer-by it had to be bold. Displayed matter on a moderate-sized bill could not be very verbose. One recalls that when Belch, in the fifth act of *Histriomastix* (1598), is asked by the Captain what he is setting up, he replies, "Text-bills for plays." This either means bills written in a large round hand or bills printed in prominent

[1] Malone's *Shakespeare* (Dublin, 1794), ii. p. 105.

capitals. At the foot of his list of properties in *The Fairy Pastorall or Forrest of Elves* (circa 1600), Percy notifies the players:

> Now if it be so that the Properties of any of These, that be outward, will not serve the turne by reason of concurse of the People on the Stage, Then you may omitt the sayd Properties which be outward and supplye their Places with their Nuncupations onely in Text Letters.

While there is good reason to believe, as I shall presently show, that the title of the play stood out prominently on the poster, Collier's theory that "the names of tragedies, for greater distinction, were ordinarily printed in red ink"[1] must be scouted. His evidence is the prologue to *The Cardinal*, a Blackfriars play of 1641. My quotation from this must be more liberal than his:

> *The Cardinal!* 'Cause we express no scene,
> We do believe most of you, gentlemen,
> Are at this hour in France, and busy there,
> Though you vouchsafe to lend your bodies here;
> But keep your fancy active, till you know,
> By the progress of our play, 'tis nothing so.
> A poet's art is to lead on your thought
> Through subtle paths and workings of a plot;
> And when your expectation does not thrive,
> If things fall better, yet you may forgive.
> I will say nothing positive; you may
> Think what you please; we call it but a Play:
> Whether the comic Muse, or ladies' love,
> Romance, or direful tragedy it prove,
> The bill determines not; and would you be
> Persuaded I would have 't a Comedy,
> For all the purple in the name, and state
> Of him that owns it.

Dutton Cook's mild protest, "but this may be a reference to the colour of a cardinal's robes,"[2] sufficing as it is by way of rejoinder, hardly expresses one's irritation over Collier's

[1] op. cit. iii. 386. Obviously basing on this, J. Churton Collins, in his imaginative picture of the Elizabethan Theatres (*Posthumous Essays*, p. 16), conjures up visions of posters in red!

[2] *A Book of the Play* (3rd edit., 1881), p. 55.

momentary stupidity. There was doubtless a spice of truth in Tragedy's plaint in *A Warning for Faire Women* that History and Comedy had beaten her out of the field, and that being so, the players were not likely to set up invidious distinctions in their bills. *Quære*, was it the ill vogue of tragedy or mere affectation that urged Shirley to bill *The Cardinal* vaguely as "a play"?

The point is altogether new and may fail to win acceptance simply because of its novelty, but it seems to me that many of the insignificant titles of old comedies were mere catch-titles designed to arrest the attention of—perhaps even momentarily to deceive—the wayfarer. What other purpose could be served in giving plays such titles as *Look About You; Come, See a Wonder; News from Plymouth; As You Like It; If You know not me, You know Nobody; A Mad World, my Masters?* The list might be multiplied indefinitely. To my mind, these catch-titles indicate that in the bills the name of the play was given excessive prominence, so that they might possess attraction even at a distance. Showmanship did not begin with Barnum!

The chances are there were two sorts of Elizabethan play-bills or posters, the mysterious and the elucidative. The mysterious would be the Comedy bills, in which the catch-titles were left in the vague. The elucidative would be the Tragedy or History bills in which a straightforward title would be explained to the vulgar. In the first edition of his *Historical Account of the English Stage*, Malone inclined to the opinion that the long and whimsical titles of the Shakesperean quartos were transcribed from the playbills of the period. Subsequently he changed his mind on finding that the booksellers were prone to disfigure other books and pamphlets with "long-tailed titles". He points out that Nashe, in the second edition of his *Supplication to the Devil* (1592), commands the printer to delete the discursive title page which had appeared in the first issue, "and let mee not in the fore-front of my booke make a tedious mountebanks oration to the reader."[1] But, despite Malone's conclusions,

[1] Malone's *Shakespeare* (Dublin, 1794), ii. pp. 114–5.

there is some reason to believe that discursive sub-titles were not altogether foreign to the Tragedy and History (and sometimes even the Comedy) bills. I base here on the persistence of theatrical custom, that great mainstay of the deductive historian. In the first half of the eighteenth century, when the playbill and the programme were identical, one occasionally finds Shakespearean bills with long-tailed titles. These bear some resemblance in structure to the title pages of the old quartos, and seem otherwise to imply the dying struggles of a hoary convention. By way of example let us take the early title page of *The Tragedy of King Richard the Third*, which runs on "Containing, His treacherous Plots against his brother Clarence: the pittieful murther of his innocent nephewes: his tyrannicall vsurpation: with the whole course of his detested life, and most deserued death." In early eighteenth-century playbills dealing with the tragedy this wording is departed from, for the very good reason that Colley Cibber's version had ousted the genuine play from the field. But, if a trifle more diffuse, the structure is much the same. Thus, in a Dublin playbill of the Theatre Royal, Smock Alley, for 22 March, 1730-1, one finds it announced that there

> Will be acted the True and Ancient History of King Richard the Third, Written by the famous Shakespear. Containing the distresses and death of King Henry the Sixth; The artful acquisition of the crown by King Richard, The cruel murder of young King Edward the Fifth, and his brother the Duke of York, in the tower, The fall of the Duke of Buckingham, The landing of the Duke of York at Milford Haven, The death of King Richard in the memorable battle of Bosworth-field, being the last that was fought between the contending Houses of York and Lancaster, With many other historical passages.[1]

As indicative of the persistence of playhouse formulæ, and the inter-relationship of the old London and Dublin theatres, it may be pointed out that in the bill of Garrick's

[1] Robert Hitchcock, *An Historical View of the Irish Stage* (1788), i. 53, where a corrupt and incomplete copy of the bill is given. In the above excerpt I have followed the wording in the advertisement published in *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* for 20 March, 1730–1.

first appearance on the London Stage,[1] an event that occurred at Goodman's Fields on 19 October, 1741, the long-tailed title of Cibber's play is almost word for word with the above. It may be, however, that in seeing in all this the long-sustained influence of an unproved convention I am speaking beyond my brief. Evidence might be advanced to show that the discursive bill dated no further back than the dawn of the eighteenth century. Lowe points out that

> In the *Key to the Rehearsal*, published in 1704, the publisher states that his author declaimed against the practice of the English stage, saying that he believed that the regular theatres were in a confederacy to ruin the Fair of Smithfield, "by outdoing them in their bombastic bills, and ridiculous representing their plays."[2]

In this connexion it is noteworthy that Cibber's showy perversion of *King Richard III* had first seen the light at Drury Lane only two or three years previously. If Colley really introduced the bombastic bill, then my idea of the persistence of an old convention must fall to the ground.

In his valuable work on *Shakespeare in Germany*, Albert Cohn gives in an appendix an interesting playbill, issued in German by a troupe of English players who were acting on the Continent in or about 1613. Making due allowance for the fact that it is the opening bill of a travelling company, this bill probably preserves something of the form and phraseology of the early Jacobean posters. Cohn's appended translation reads:

> Know all men, that a new Company of Comedians have arrived here, who have never been seen before in this country with a right merry Clown, who will act every day fine Comedies, Tragedies, Pastorals, and Histories, intermixed with lovely and merry Interludes, and today Wednesday the 21st of April[3] they will present a right merry Comedy called Love's Sweetness turned into Death's Bitterness. After the Comedy will be presented a fine Ballet and

[1] Reproduced in Joseph Knight's *David Garrick*, p. 22.
[2] R. W. Lowe, *Thomas Betterton*, p. 13.
[3] This date fell upon a Wednesday in 1613 and 1619.

laughable Droll.[1] The Lovers of such plays must make their appearance at the Fencing-house in the afternoon at 2 o'clock, where the play will begin at the appointed hour precisely.

To some extent this bill apparently justifies the impression that the phraseology of the old play-titles in quarto was adopted from the playbills. In reading it one's mind instinctively reverts to "A Most pleasaunt and excellent conceited Comedie, of Syr *Iohn Falstaffe*, and the merrie Wiues of *Windsor*. Entermixed with sundrie variable and pleasing humors, of Syr *Hugh*" etc.[2] It may be, as argued by Mantzius,[3] that Shakespeare girds mockingly at the playbill formula in making Philostrate read out about "a tedious brief scene of young Pyramus, And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth."

Erroneous inferences have been drawn from the entry in the books of the Stationers' Company recording the license granted to Charlewood for the printing of playbills. It runs thus:

October, 1587, John Charlewood. Lycensed to him by the whole consent of the Assistants the onlye ymprinting of all manner of billes for players. Provided that if any trouble arise herebye, then Charlewood to beare the charges.[4]

"All manner of billes for players" has been widely interpreted by latter-day inquirers. Some think it refers to different sizes of playbills[5], and some that it points to the existence of programmes.[6] All, to my mind, are wrong. On close examination it would appear that the word "players" was here used in a very loose sense, and that the passage is elucidated by another in the abstract of the Letters Patent granted in 1620 to Roger Wood and Thomas Symcocks,

[1] Read "some excellent dancing and a laughable Jig."

[2] Quarto of 1602.

[3] *History of Theatrical Art*, iii. p. 108.

[4] Collier, op. cit. iii. 382 note.

[5] Cf. *Gent's Mag.*, June, 1900, p. 532, Percy Fitzgerald's article on "The Playbill; Its Growth and Evolution." Mr. Fitzgerald confuses the issue by speaking of "all manner of bills for *plays*."

[6] Cf. Sir Sidney Lee, *Life of Shakespeare*, 1899, p. 303, where James Roberts, Charlewood's successor, is spoken of as having the right to print "the players' bills or programmes."

"for the sole printing of paper and parchment on the one side." Among other things they were granted a monopoly of the printing of "all Billes for Playes, Pastimes, Showes, Challenges, Prizes or Sportes whatsoever."[1] Some of these challenges and sports, such as fencing matches and cock-fights, were often given in the early public theatres. On 11 February, 1602-3, we find Chamberlain writing to Dudley Carleton:

> On Monday last here was a great prise and challenge performed at the Swan betweene two fencers Dun and Turner, wherein Dun had so ill lucke that the other ran him into the eye with a foile, and so far into the head that he fell downe starke dead, and never spake word nor once moved.

Bearing the principle of the post in mind, it is unthinkable that playbills of widely varying sizes should have been issued; and for other reasons equally unthinkable that two different kinds of bills (say a placard and a programme) should have been printed for the one performance. *A posteriori* argument is here legitimate, for the principle of the maintenance of theatrical custom again asserts itself. It will be shown later that when the programme or playbill with cast of characters came into existence it had for long no separate identity, being merely an improved placard made to do double duty.

To maintain this idea of "one performance one playbill" it will have to be conceded that about the middle of the reign of James I the conventional poster was put to more extended use. It seems to have been delivered to well-to-do patrons of the play, and may, perhaps, have been put up in certain kinds of shops. Later on we shall find evidence in the Post-Restoration period of the delivery of the bill (while still devoid of any suspicion of cast) to private people of good standing. So far as Jacobean times are concerned the custom seems to be indicated in *The Devil is An Ass* (1616), i. 2, where Engine hands Fitzdottrell the playbill for the day.

[1] Collier, op. cit. iii. 383.

Only one approximation to a programme is known of in Pre-Restoration times, and that appears to be the exception proving the rule. It fails to present a cast of characters, with the names of the players, and is wholly taken up with an elaborate synopsis of a proposed performance. I refer to a broadsheet (of which I give a reduced facsimile) preserved in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries of London, and bearing title, "The Plot of the Play called England's Joy. To be Played at the Swan this 6 of November, 1602."[1] Neatly printed within an ornamental border and headed by the royal arms, this measures 12¾ inches by 7¾ inches. Whether or not it was intended for use as a programme, it certainly was designed for distribution as a lure. From the extent of the matter and the comparative smallness of the type one can readily divine it was not intended for a poster, a conclusion confirmable by other evidence (shortly to be advanced), which shows that a separate poster must also have been issued. Exactly a hundred years have elapsed since this remarkably interesting broadside was first reprinted in *The Harleian Miscellany*[2], and, strange to say, it has only once been reproduced since.[3]

The sequel to the distribution of this enticing broadsheet is told in a gossippy letter from Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, written 19 November, 1602:

> And now we are in mirth, I must not forget to tell you of a cousening prancke of one Venner, of Lincoln's Inne, that gave out bills of a famous play on Satterday was sevenight on the Bancke-side, to be acted only by certain gentlemen and gentlewomen of account. The price at cumming in was two shillings or eighteen-pence at least; and when he had gotten most part of the mony into his hands he wold have shewed them a faire paire of heeles, but he was not so nimble to get up on horsebacke, but that he was faine to forsake that course and betake himselfe to the water, where he was pursued and taken, and brought before the Lord Chiefe Justice, who wold make nothing of it but a jest and a merriment, and bounde him over in five pounds to appeare at the sessions. In

[1] No. 98 in Lemon's Catalogue of 1866. [2] Vol. x. 198.

[3] See Dr. Wm. Martin's article "An Elizabethan Theatre Programme," in *The Selborne Magazine and Nature Notes*, xxiv, No. 277, January, 1913, pp. 16–20.

THE PLOT OF THE PLAY, CALLED *ENGLANDS JOY.*

To be Playd at the Swan this 6. of Nouember. 1602.

FIRST, there is induct by shew and in Action, the ciuill warres of England from *Edward* the third, to the end of Queene *Maries* raigne, with the ouerthrow of Vsurpation.

2 Secondly then the entrance of Englands Ioy by the Coronation of our Soueraigne Lady *Elizabeth*, her Throne attended with peace, Plenty, and ciuill Pollicy: A sacred Prelate standing at her right hand, betokening the Serenity of the Gospell: At her left hand Iustice: And at her feete Warre, with a Scarlet Roabe of peace vpon his Armour: A wreath of Bayes about his temples, and a braunch of Palme in his hand.

3 Thirdly is dragd in three Furies, presenting Dissention, Famine, and Bloudshed, which are throwne downe into hell.

4 Fourthly is expresst vnder the person of a Tyrant, the enuy of *Spayne*, who to shew his cruelty causeth his Souldiers dragge in a beautifull Lady, whome they mangle and wound, tearing her garments and iewels from off her: And to leaue her bloody, with her hayre about her shoulders, lying vpon the ground. To her come certaine Gentlemen, who seeing her pitious dispoylment, turne to the Throne of England, from whence one descendeth, taketh vp the Lady, wipeth her eyes, bindeth vp her woundes, giueth her treasure, and bringeth forth a band of Souldiers, who attend her forth: This Lady presenteth *Belgia*.

5 Fifthly, the Tyrant more enraged, taketh counsell, sends forth letters, priuie Spies, and secret vnderminers, taking their othes, and giuing them bagges of treasure. These signifie *Iapan*, and certaine Iesuites, who afterward, when the Tyrant lookes for an answere from them, are shewed to him in a glasse with halters about their neckes, which makes him mad with fury.

6 Sixtly, the Tyrant seeing all secret meanes to fayle him, intendeth open violence and inuasion by the hand of Warre, whereupon is set forth the battle at Sea in 88. with Englands victory.

7 Seuenthly, hee complotteth with the Irish rebelles, wherein is layd open the base ingratitude of *Tyrone*, the landing there of *Don Iohn de Aguila*, and their dissipation by the wisedome and valour of the Lord *Mountioy*.

8 Eighthly, a great triumph is made with fighting of twelue Gentlemen at Barriers, and sundrie rewards sent from the Throne of England, to all sortes of well deseruers.

9 Lastly, the Nine Worthyes, with seuerall Coronets, present themselues before the Throne, which are put backe by certaine in the habite of Angels, who set vpon the Ladies head, which represents her Maiestie, an Imperiall Crowne, garnished with the *Sunne*, *Moone* and *starres*; And so with Musicke both with voyce and Instruments shee is taken vp into Heauen, when presently appeares, a Throne of blessed Soules, and beneath vnder the Stage set forth with strange fireworkes, diuers blacke and damned Soules, wonderfully discribed in their seuerall torments.

THE PLOT OF *ENGLAND'S JOY.* [*To face p.* 68.

(Reduced facsimile of the broad-sheet preserved in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries).

the meantime the common people, when they saw themselves deluded, revenged themselves upon the hangings, curtains, chairs, stooles, walles, and whatsoever came in their way, very outragiously, and made great spoile; there was great store of good companie, and many noblemen.[1]

In this account we have clear evidence that a poster announcing the performance was also issued. The broadside holds out no lure that the play was "to be acted only by certain gentlemen and gentlewomen of account." Chamberlain's information could only have been derived from some other bill. It was substantially correct, for we find Slug in Ben Jonson's *Masque of Augurs* (1622), referring to the distressed ladies who were about to appear as "three of those gentlewomen that should have acted in that famous matter of England's Joy in 'six hundred and three." (One can pardon the blunder in the dating after an interval of twenty years.)

Whether or not the whole affair was an elaborate swindle —and, as we shall see, there was a decided "if" in the matter—contemporary literature abounds with references to *England's Joy* as "a gulling toy".[2] Irritated beyond endurance by these goadings, Richard Vennar issued in 1614 an *Apology* for his life, in which he denied all intent to defraud, and explained that he was arrested by bailiffs immediately before the performance. But if the project was really genuine why did he collect all the money at the door instead of following the regular practice of interior gathering during the performance? Doubts as to his good faith are deepened when one finds him arrested in 1606 on suspicion of having attempted to defraud Sir John Spencer of £500, in connexion with a mythical masque he alleged to have in preparation for production under the patronage of Sir John Watts, the Lord Mayor.[3] Moreover, he was always desperately pressed for money, and died at last in a debtor's prison. The case against

[1] Camden Society, Vol. lxxix. 1861, *Letters of John Chamberlain*, p. 163.

[2] Cf. Jonson's *Love Restored* (Henry Morley's *Masques and Entertainments* by Ben Jonson, p. 167); Collier, op. cit. iii. 406; Ordish's *Early London Theatres*, p. 273. The prologue to D'Avenant's opera, *The Siege of Rhodes*, Part II, seems also to make reference to *England's Joy*.

[3] *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, *sub nomine*.

him undoubtedly looks black, but something may be said for the defence. It would appear that the "book" of *England's Joy* really existed, and that William Fennar, the extemporal rhymster (whose identity has occasionally been confounded with Vennar's[1]), appropriated it while Vennar was in prison, and palmed the production on the public as his own. We learn these details from "My Defence against thy Offence," some lines written by John Taylor, the water-poet, replying to an attack of Fennar's, and published in *A Cast over Water* in 1615:

> Thou bragst what fame thou got 'st upon the stage.
> Indeed, thou set'st the people in a rage
> In playing *England's Joy*, that every man
> Did judge it worse then that was done at Swan
> . . . . . .
> Upon S. Georges day last, sir, you gave
> To eight Knights of the Garter (like a knave),
> Eight manuscripts (or Books) all fairelie writ,
> Informing them, they were your mother wit:
> And you compil'd them; then were you regarded,
> And for another's wit was well rewarded.
> All this is true, and this I dare maintaine,
> The matter came from out a learned braine:
> And poor old *Vennor* that plaine dealing man,
> Who acted England's Joy first at the Swan,
> Paid eight crowns for the writing of these things,
> Besides the covers, and the silken strings.

If we assume for the nonce that Vennar's broadside was issued in good faith, then it may be taken, from the tenor of the synopsis as well as from the fact that ladies and gentlemen were to be the exponents, that the projected device was not a play but a masque. Here we have a clue to the unexampled issue of a programme. In the court masques it was customary to present the King, and probably one or two other notable people, with a "pasteboard" or scenario of the performance. Evidence on this point is indirect but none the less satisfactory. It is derived from certain plays presenting introduced

[1] Cf. Collier, op. cit. iii. 406, for Gifford; Ordish's *Early London Theatres*, p. 272.

masques, in which the custom is punctiliously followed.[1] Hence, were it not that Vennar's innovation proved abortive, one might be disposed to say that the modern theatre programme originated at Court.

In connexion with the early playbill, or poster, a moot point suggests itself. When did the practice of publishing the author's name begin? The evidence is very contradictory. Dryden, whose memory went back to the dawn of the Restoration, told Mrs. Stewart in a letter that the first occasion, "at least in England", on which a dramatist's name was given on the bill was in March, 1699, when Congreve's *The Double Dealer* was revived at Lincoln's Inn Fields.[2] In France the practice had begun at least as early as 1629.[3] Judging from Dryden's testimony, and on the basis of the persistence of theatrical custom, one would be disposed to conclude that it was unknown in England in Pre-Restoration times. Some scanty evidence, however, exists to the contrary. In *Histriomastix* (a private-theatre play of circa 1599) a scene[4] occurs in which the characters are shown reading a prologue which concludes with "Our Prologue Peaceth." "Peaceth!" exclaims Gulch, "what peaking Pageanter penned that?" To which Belch responds, "who but Master Post-haste?" Remark Gulch's biting comment: "It is as dangerous to read his name at a play-door, as a printed bill on a plague door."

This seems to settle the point, but if it was usual to set up a bill at the playhouse door, wherein lies the saliency of the epigram?—

> Magus would needs, forsooth, the other day,
> Upon an idle humour, see a play,
> When asking him at door, who held the box
> What might you call the play? Quoth he *The Fox*, etc.[5]

[1] Cf. Shirley's *The Constant Maid*, iv. 3; Ford's *The Lover's Melancholy*, iii. 3; and Middleton's *No Wit Like a Woman's*, introduced Masque of the Elements.

[2] Cf. R. W. Lowe, *Thomas Betterton*, p. 13 note.

[3] See Arthur Pougin, *Le Théâtre à l'Exposition Universelle de* 1889, p. 17, for facsimile *affiche*. Cf. Rigal, *Le Théâtre Français avant la Période Classique*, p. 198.

[4] Cf. Simpson's *School of Shakspere*, ii. p. 62.

[5] *The Mouse-Trap*, "Epigrams by H. P." London, 1606.

It may be, however, that the one item of evidence does not nullify the other. *The Fox* was a Globe and Blackfriars play, and, assuming the house visited by Magus to be the Blackfriars, it might be plausibly argued that playbills were not posted outside the early private theatres. There is, indeed, some reason to believe, that in accordance with its establishment as a virtual (not merely technical) "private house", so as to evade the repressions of the Common Council, the first Blackfriars issued no bills whatsoever.[1] In that case we may assume that the giving out of the next play at the close[2], so long followed on the English theatres, was called into being by this severe restriction and at this particular house. At a subsequent period, when the practice had been generally adopted, it might very well have been utilized when a new play by a popular author was about to be produced, to whet the public appetite by revealing the author's name. Be that as it may, indications exist to show that occasionally there was deviation from routine. We have, for example, Henry Moody's lines on Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, a Cockpit play of 1633 :—

> The thronged audience that was thither brought
> Invited by your fame and to be taught.

Again, the prologue to William Habington's tragi-comedy, *The Queen of Aragon*, as spoken at the Blackfriars early in 1640, seems to imply that the author's name was then given on the bill :—

> First, for the plot, it's no way intricate
> By cross deceits in love, nor so high in state,
> That we might have given out in our playbill
> This day 's *The Prince*, writ by Nick Machiavil.

The playbill formula of the early Restoration period seems indicated in the Prologue to *The Adventures of Five Hours*, in which, as given at Lincoln's Inn Fields, the speaker read out from a bill in his hands, "This day, the 15th of December, shall be acted a new play, never played before,

[1] See my discussion of this point in *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), pp. 231–2.

[2] Vide ibid., p. 13 note 2.

called 'The Adventures of Five Hours.'"[1] In our present state of knowledge the evidence is inconclusive, but if the author's name was really given on the bill in the time of Charles I, it is impossible to divine why anonymity should have been preserved at the Restoration. Such a remarkable divergence from theatrical custom is against all precedent. One cannot plead the interregnum, for other theatrical customs survived it.

Coming now more directly to the question of the origin of the programme, with cast of characters, one knows of only one item of evidence which could be twisted to imply that this may be traced to Jacobean times. Discussing the alleged sinfulness of boys masquerading in women's attire, Heywood writes in his *Apologie for Actors:*

> But to see our youths attired in the habit of women, who knows not what their intents be? Who cannot distinguish them by their names, assuredly knowing they are but to represent such a lady at such a time appoynted?

Three years, however, before this was published Dekker had written in his *Guls Hornebooke:*

> By sitting on the stage, you may (with small cost) purchase the deere acquaintance of the boys: have a good stoole for sixpence; *at any time know what particular part any of the infants present:* get your match lighted, examine the play-suits lace, and perhaps win wagers upon laying 'tis copper, &c.

Happily there is no need to labour the point, for if there be one thing more assured than another about the routine of the Elizabethan playhouses it is the entire absence of programmes. The persistence of the title-board convention[2] would, of itself, warrant us in arriving at this conclusion, even if all other proof were lacking. As a matter of fact the programme, as differentiated from the placard, had not yet sprung into existence anywhere. France was very belated

[1] This would apparently date the production at 15 December, 1662, although the impression to be gained from Pepys and Evelyn is that the first performance took place on 8 January, 1662–3.

[2] See the First Series of these Studies, pp. 50–1.

in adopting it, and, when it came, England pioneered the way. It sounds audacious to say so, but it is none the less true that in point of expediency, as well as from an artistic standpoint, the absence of the programme in early days was a blessing in disguise. When necessity demanded it the play could be changed at the eleventh hour. The exposure of the title-board gave the spectator fair notice of what he was going to see, and if it liked him not he could have his money back and take his departure. There were favourite actors in Shakespeare's time as there have been in all times, but the Elizabethan playgoer went to see a play, not a particular actor in a particular part, for no cast was guaranteed. In the event of illness a secondary actor could be substituted for Burbage or Alleyn in one of their popular characters, and that without apology.

However the applause might be distributed in the theatre, the actors were on a plane of equality, fraternal members of a commonwealth. The inartistic principle of the star performer with the fancy salary came into being in the early eighteenth century. Dutton Cook[1] gave it as his opinion that Garrick was the first actor to receive the invidious distinction of having his name printed in the bills in capital letters of extra size. He cites a humorous passage from *The Connoisseur* of 1754 to the effect that

> The writer of the play bills deals out his capitals in so just a proportion that you may tell the salary of each actor by the size of the letter in which his name is printed. When the present manager of Drury Lane first came on the stage, a new set of types, two inches long, were cast on purpose to do honour to his extraordinary merit.

We come now to Collier's attempt to controvert Malone's statement that the playbill with cast of characters dated no farther back than the beginning of the eighteenth century.[2] In support of his contention Collier had nothing better to offer than the following suppositious bill:—

[1] *A Book of the Play*, Chap. v (on playbills).
[2] Collier, op. cit. iii. p. 384 note; Malone's *Shakespeare* (Dublin, 1794), ii. 113.

By his Majesty's Company of Comedians,
At the new Theatre in Drury-lane,
This day being Thursday, April 8th, 1663, will be acted,
A Comedy, called

THE HUMOUROUS LIEUTENANT.

The King	Mr Wintershal
Demetrius	Mr Hart
Selevers	Mr Burt
Leontius	Major Mohun
Lieutenant	Mr Clun
Celiae	Mrs Marshall

The play will begin at three o'clock exactly.
Boxes 4s; Pit 2s. 6d; Middle Gallery 1s. 6d; Upper Gallery 1s.

For practically a quarter of a century no suspicion was entertained as to the genuineness of this bill[1], but in 1854 a correspondent signing himself "F. L.," wrote to *Notes and Queries*[2] pointing out certain flaws which justified the belief that the whole was a forgery. These were as follows:

(1) The bill is fully dated. It was not customary to put the year on the bills until 1767.
(2) 8 April, 1663, fell on a Wednesday, not a Thursday.
(3) On 8 May, 1663, Pepys took his wife to the "Theatre Royal, being the second day of its being opened."
(4) In the same entry Pepys also states that by the King's command Lacy was now acting the part of the Lieutenant, formerly acted by Clun.

Some consideration of these items may be entered upon with the sole view of strengthening "F. L.'s" argument.

(1) This is substantially correct, assuming the reference to be entirely to London bills. But in Dublin bills began to be dated considerably earlier in the century. It seems necessary also to point out that there is extant, in the collection of Mr. J. Eliot Hodgson, a bill of a Fencing Match at the Red Bull Theatre bearing date, "Whitson

[1] Unwary writers still continue to fall into the trap. See *The Keynote* for 10 July, 1886, p. 4, H. Barton Baker's article, "England's National Theatre," where the bill is given as an item of historical evidence.

[2] *Notes and Queries*, First Series, x. 99.

Munday, 30 May, 1664."[1] This is surmounted by a large woodcut of the Royal Arms, and is printed on a sheet of coarse paper measuring $5\frac{5}{8}$ inches by $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches. In 1664 the old Red Bull was no longer in use as an ordinary playhouse, having been superseded by the picture-stage theatres, but it is difficult to understand why fencing bills should have been dated and playbills not.

(2) This of itself would not suffice to condemn the bill, although as evidence it is contributory. In the Reeves collection in the Royal Irish Academy one finds a genuine Dublin bill of 1798 presenting a similar blunder.

(3) The argument here has been considerably strengthened by Lowe[2], who points out that Pepys had been at the King's House on 22 April, obviously the old theatre in Vere Street, for he makes no comment on the house while he elaborately describes it (the new theatre) on 8 May.

(4) In case it should be argued that Lacy had been substituted for Clun after the first performance at the new theatre, it may be pointed out that *The Humorous Lieutenant* had been previously acted at Vere Street by the King's company on 1 March, 1661-2, and, possibly, approximate dates.[3]

Mr. Percy Fitzgerald has also pointed out that the date of the bill fell in Lent, a period most inopportune for the opening of a new theatre.[4] My own contribution to the ammunition of the insurgents must consist of the ugly fact that the new Theatre Royal of 1663, although spoken of for convenience sake by latter-day historians as the first Drury Lane theatre, was never known as such during the decade of its existence. And for very good reason: it stood in Bridges Street and Russell Street. One finds it called alternatively the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden, from the parish, and, mostly in legal documents, the Theatre Royal in Bridges Street. The term "Drury Lane" as applied to a theatre dates from about 1690. In 1682 we find the

[1] Reproduced in *Rariora*, Vol. iii. p. 53.

[2] *Thomas Betterton*, pp. 100–1.

[3] Sir Henry Herbert's list, as cited by Malone, *Shakespeare* (Dublin, 1794), ii. 223.

[4] *Gent's Magazine*, June, 1900, p. 532, article on "The Playbill: Its Growth and Evolution."

second Theatre Royal described in a legal document as "in or neare Covent Garden commonly called the King's Playhouse."[1]

The truth is that the clever forger of the bill overreached himself in taking most of his details from Downes' *Roscius Anglicanus*. As it happened, Downes obtained his information about the opening of the new Theatre Royal at second hand and blundered badly in reproducing it. He begins by saying, "The Company being thus Compleat, they opened the New Theatre in Drury Lane, on Thursday in Easter Week, being the 8th Day of *April*, 1663 with the Humorous Lieutenant"; and he then proceeds to detail the cast, putting Clun's name opposite the part of the Lieutenant. But as he prints the names of Seleucus and Celia correctly one can only account for the discrepancy in the forged bill by surmizing that the variants were purposely introduced by the forger to disarm suspicion. Downes blundered sadly in his dating, because 8 April, 1663, did not fall in Easter week and was not a Thursday. If we look for a probable Thursday we shall find it on 7 May, the day before Pepys paid his first visit to the new theatre.

Collier, in reproducing the bill in 1831, stated that it was extant, and had been, he believed, "sold among the books of the late Mr Bindley."[2] Also that "it was subsequently separately reprinted." It is a curious fact that from that day to this nobody has ever seen the supposed original or the separate reprints. Collier has been hinted at as the forger, which seems not unlikely, and that, too, despite the forgotten circumstance that the bill had been published eleven years before the appearance of his *Annals* in a miscellaneous collection of theatrical ana, issued by Simpkin and Marshall, called *The Actor's Budget*. It might very well have been contributed by him, as in 1820 he was already a diligent scholar and had just published his *Poetical Decameron*. Might it not have been his first essay in the art of forgery?

[1] Percy Fitzgerald, *New History of the English Stage*, i. 154.

[2] James Bindley (1737–1818), for whom see the *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

While the existence of a playbill, with cast, before the dawn of the eighteenth century must be strenuously denied, proof of the provision of an occasional programme more or less approximating in nature to Vennar's old broadsheet can readily be educed. In the Malone collection (Bodleian Library) is an eighteen page pamphlet in French and English, issued by Robert Crofts, of Chancery Lane, in 1661, and bearing title, "The Description of the Great Machines, of the Descent of Orpheus into Hell, Presented by the French Commedians at the Cockpit in *Drury-lane*." It is difficult to arrive at any other conclusion than that this was printed to be sold in or about the theatre.[1] At a slightly later period we find handbills occasionally being distributed in the theatre. So far as this practice was concerned, Dryden seems to have been the innovator. When *The Indian Emperor* was produced at the Theatre Royal circa March, 1665, a bill had been distributed to the audience, headed, "Connexion of the Indian Emperor to the Indian Queen," and explaining that the new piece was the sequel to Sir Robert Howard's play. Although *The Rehearsal* was not produced until December, 1671, it is generally understood that Mr. Bayes' reference to his having printed "above a hundred sheets of paper to insinuate the plot into the boxes" is a sly dig at Dryden's innovation. In this connexion one must bear in mind that *The Rehearsal* was on the verge of production in 1665, when the plague caused the closing of the theatres. It might be argued, of course, that the satire was not very pat in 1671, but in the meantime the practice had been occasionally repeated. One curious variant is to be noted. If we turn to the invaluable Pepys, we shall find that on 19 October, 1667, the audience at the Duke's Theatre yawned over the reading of a long and tedious letter in Lord Orrery's brand new tragedy, *The Black Prince*. Four days later, when Pepys again saw the play, the letter had been cut out, but as it seems to have been necessary to an understanding of the plot, the noble author got out of the

[1] For date and details of the production, see *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), p. 139.

difficulty by printing it as a broadside and distributing it to the house! This was indeed a heroic remedy.

On 10 February, 1668-9, we find Mrs. Evelyn, the diarist's wife, writing to her friend Mr. Terryll:

> The censure of our plays comes to me at second hand. There has not been any new lately revived and reformed, as *Cataline*, well set out with clothes and scenes; *Horace*, with a farce and dances between every act composed by Lacy, and played by him and Nell, which takes; one of my Lord of Newcastle's for which printed apologies are scattered in the assembly by Briden's [? Dryden's] order, either for himself who had some hand in it, or for the author most; I think both had right to them.[1]

The play last referred to was undoubtedly *The Heiress*, produced at the Theatre Royal on 30 January previously, and attributed by Pepys to the Duke of Newcastle. As Kynaston was beaten by hired hooligans for his mimicry of Sir Charles Sedley in this piece, it is probable the "printed apologies" repudiated the insinuation of personal satire on the part of the authors.

About this period, or possibly a little earlier (one cannot say exactly when the practice began), it became customary to issue the prologues and epilogues of new plays, as well as addresses of this kind written for special occasions, as broadsides for sale in the street.[2] The persistence of this practice, which lasted to the middle of the eighteenth century, and quickly spread to Ireland, might possibly have suggested the eventual development of the playbill into a programme. This would account for the fact that programmes were at first sold outside the theatres, a custom long maintained—long, indeed, after they began to be vended inside.

Not much can be gleaned as to the methods of issuing playbills in the latter half of the seventeenth century, but there is at least a sufficiency of evidence to show that no list of characters was as yet provided. In Chamberlayne's tragi-comedy, *Wits Led by the Nose, or a Poet's Revenge*, as

[1] Evelyn's *Diary* (edited by Wm. Bray, 1852), iv. p. 14.

[2] A broadside of the epilogue to *Mithridates*, as spoken at the Theatre Royal, circa October, 1681, is preserved in the British Museum (press-mark "644–1–20–9").

acted at the Theatre Royal in 1677, the Prologue-speaker comes on before the curtain in the guise of a country gentleman and proceeds to read a playbill attached to the proscenium entering door, as if posted in the street. He sees there the name of the play, and notes that it was "never acted before".[1] Early in 1672 a troupe of French players, acting somewhere in London, attracted some attention by using red posters, and of a size somewhat larger than usual. From Dryden's reference[2] to this circumstance it is plain that coloured bills were then a novelty in England. The innovation does not seem to have borne immediate fruit.

Of recent years some valuable evidence has come to light showing that the playbill of the later seventeenth century still maintained its pristine brevity. According to the *Historical Manuscripts Commission Report* on the Verney Papers,[3] there are preserved at Claydon House, Co. Bucks, three old undated playbills all, apparently, belonging to this period. One sees no reason why these bills (not being actual programmes) should have been so preserved unless, as seems highly probable, it was customary to deliver day-bills at the houses of distinguished patrons of the play. If the *Report* is to be credited[4] the three bills are only about 6 inches by 3: surely too small a size for use as posters. And yet it is difficult to believe that two kinds of day-bills were issued at the period.[5] None of the three bills now being available, it is unfortunate that only one of them was reproduced in the *Historical Manuscripts Commission*

[1] For other evidence testifying to the posting of bills in Restoration times, see *The Wild Gallant* (1669), ii. 1, where Failer's name is said to have been on more posts than playbills were; also *The Rehearsal* (1671), end of last act.

[2] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), p. 142.

[3] *Report* vii, p. 509.

[4] About eight years ago I made formal application for permission to inspect and photograph these bills, but was informed by Lady Verney in a courteous reply that they had unaccountably disappeared.

[5] In the third decade of the eighteenth century we find large and small bills being issued in connexion with the one performance, the large as posters, the small as programmes. See the article on "The Present State of the Theatrical War in the British Dominions," quoted in *The London Magazine*, March, 1734, p. 105, wherein it is whimsically said of "Duke Giffard", the manager of Goodman's Fields, that "he has likewise exerted himself in an extraordinary manner, as appears by his printed manifesto, which is duly posted up on the Gates, and other noted places of this Metropolis, being at least four feet in length."

Report. Although undated, it is fairly certain that two at least belong to the period of 1692-3. One deals with *The Indian Emperor*, another with *Henry II, King of England*, and a third with *All for Love* and *Theodosius*.[1] A clue to the dating of the bills is afforded by the fact that Bancroft and Mountford's tragedy of *Henry II, King of England* was first brought out at Drury Lane on 9 November, 1692, and published a few weeks later. *The Indian Emperor* had been revived at the same house, with new music by Henry Purcell, late in the December previous.[2] The bill for this play, as reproduced in the *Historical Manuscripts Commission Report*, runs as follows:

At the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane this present Wednesday, being the last day of November will be presented

a Play called

THE INDIAN EMPEROR, OR

THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO BY THE SPANIARDS.

No money to be return'd after the Curtain is drawn.

By Their Majesties servants.

Vivant Rex et Regina.

As *The Indian Emperor* was originally produced in 1665, and frequently revived, it is vital to note that the "Vivant Rex et Regina" at the end of the bill limits it to the reign of William and Mary, or between 1689 and 1694. The only year within that period in which 30 November fell on a Wednesday was 1692, the probable date of the bill.

That bills in 1695 had not yet been furnished with casts is shown by a story told of the theatrical rivalries of that year by Colley Cibber in his *Apology*. On a certain Monday morning the Drury Lane company resolved suddenly to change their bill for the evening, and, for strategical purposes, to play *The Old Bachelor*, a popular comedy at the opposition theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

[1] It is somewhat remarkable to find two tragedies being played on the one night. But Malone writes, "I have seen a playbill printed in the year 1697, which expressed only the titles of the two pieces that were to be exhibited, and the time when they were to be represented." Malone's *Shakespeare* (Dublin, 1794), ii. p. 114 note.

[2] Cf. *Quart. Mag. International Musical Society*, Year v, Pt. IV, 1904, p. 528, W. Barclay Squire's article, "Purcell's Dramatic Music."

This motion was agreed to, *nemine contradicente;* but upon inquiry it was found that there were not two persons among them who had ever acted in that play. But that objection, it seems (though all the parts were to be studied in six hours) was soon got over; Powell had an equivalent *in petto* that would balance any deficiency on that score, which was, that he would play the Old Bachelor himself, and mimic Betterton throughout the whole part. This happy thought was approved with delight and applause, as whatever can be supposed to ridicule merit generally gives joy to those that want it. Accordingly the bills were changed, and at the bottom inserted "The part of the Old Bachelor to be performed in imitation of the original." Printed books of the play were sent for in haste, and every actor had one, to pick out of it the part he had chosen. Thus, while they were each of them chewing the morsel they had most mind to, some one, happening to cast his eye over the *dramatis personae*, found that the main matter was still forgot, that nobody had yet been thought of for the part of alderman Fondlewife. Here they were all aground again; nor was it to be conceived who could make the least tolerable shift with it. This character had been so admirably acted by Dogget, that though it is only seen in the fourth act, it may be no dispraise to the play to say it probably owed the greatest part of its success to his performance. But as the case was now desperate, any resource was better than none. Somebody must swallow the bitter pill, or the play must die.[1]

At length it was agreed that Cibber should be cast for Fondlewife, and between eleven and twelve that morning the part was put into his hands. Since the oversight regarding the character was not observed until after the bills were printed, it is evident that bills then did not present any details of the cast. But their brevity was an advantage, as it admitted of their being readily changed. In this connexion it is worthy of note that another four years were to elapse before the name of the author of the play was to be regularly announced. Curiously enough, this change was mainly due to Jeremy Collier's attack on the profanity and indecency of the stage. When *The Double Dealer* came to be revived on 4 March, 1699, some alterations had to be made in deference to the prevailing tone of

[1] Cibber's *Apology* (edit. 1826), Chap. vi. pp. 119–20.

thought, and the play was accordingly announced as "written by Mr Congreve; with several expressions omitted." This marks the hour of innovation but not the period of regular usage. Lowe, in his monograph on *Thomas Betterton*,[1] cites a bill for 27 February, 1700, which goes to show that at the dawn of the new century the old terseness and sobriety still ruled, if soon to be broken in upon:

W. R.
At the Desire of several Persons of Quality.
At the
NEW THEATRE
in Little Lincoln's-Inn Fields, this present TUESDAY being the 27th of February, will be presented,
a Tragedy call'd
THE MOURNING BRIDE
[The Moorish] Entry perform'd by
[The Littl]e Boy.
Vivat Rex.[2]

From the time when Jeremy Collier had put a spoke into the Thespian cart, those "dressed in a little brief authority" had been unceasing in their harassments of the players. On Tuesday, 21 May, 1700, Luttrell[3] records:

The Grand Jury of this Citty last week presented to the court at the old Baily, that for any person to goe to play houses was a publick nusance: and that the putting up bills in and about this citty for playes was an encouragement to vice and prophanesse; and prayed that none be suffered for the future.

Within the next two or three weeks, the Mayor and Aldermen, acting on this instruction, issued an order forbidding the playhouse bills to be affixed in any part

[1] p. 14.
[2] The bill as cited by Lowe is slightly defective, and the bracketed portions have been added by me from a contemporary newspaper advertisement. Note that from 1698 onwards it had been customary to mention the French dancers engaged, at the bottom of the Lincoln's Inn Fields bills. Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), p. 152, under "Wright".
[3] *A Brief Relation of State Affairs*, &c. (1857), iv. 647.

of the city or liberties thereof.[1] Although this embargo continued to operate for some time, it did not wholly prevent the printing of playbills, which continued to be exposed in coffee houses and taverns, and probably to be delivered to leading patrons of the play. In *The London Post* for Friday, 28 June, to Monday, 1 July, 1700, we find a paragraph setting forth that:

It being put on the Playhouse bills[2] on Friday last, that each company were to act that day, and the whole profits to go to'ards the Redemption of the English now in Slavery at Machanisso in Barbary, we are credibly informed that pursuant thereunto, the Treasurers of the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane did on Saturday last pay into the hands of the Churchwardens of St. Martin's the sum of 20l. out of the receipts of the play acted by that company towards the Relief of those our natives from slavery, which good example 'tis hoped may move others to be speedy and generous in the Charity for the same purpose. What the other Company gave I do not hear.

Three years later the interdict against playbill-posting was still in force, although attempts were being made to evade it. In 1703, when a proposal was on foot to refit the disused theatre in Dorset Gardens, the Grand Jury of Middlesex made a presentment for

The having some effectual course taken, if possible, to prevent the youth of this city from resorting to the playhouses, which we rather mention because the playhouse bills are again posted up throughout the city, in contempt of a former presentment and a positive order of the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen to the contrary, dated June, 1700; as also because we are informed that a playhouse within the liberties of this city, which has been of late disused and neglected, is at this time refitting in order to be used as formerly. We do not presume to prescribe to this honourable court, but we cannot question but that, if they shall think fit

[1] *The Post Man*, of 25 June, 1700, as cited in *The Gent's Magazine*, July, 1814, p. 9. The prohibition is referred to in the epilogue to Mrs. Centlivre's tragedy, *The Perjur'd Husband; or the Adventures of Venice*, as delivered shortly afterwards at Drury Lane.

[2] The regular phraseology of the period. So Pope:—

"Shakspeare, whom you and every playhouse bill
Style the divine, the matchless, what you will—."

humbly to address Her Majesty in this case, she will be graciously pleased to prevent it.[1]

One result of the sustained prohibition against bill-posting was that brief theatrical advertisements began to appear in the newspapers with greater frequency. During the last two or three years of the old century occasional puffs preliminary and advertisements of special performances had been inserted in *The Post Boy* and *The Post Man*, but these were of a naïve, wholly primitive order. For example, in *The Post Boy*, of 8 July, 1700, we read:

This Day at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane will be presented a play called Sophonisba or Hannibal's Overthrow, not performed by the Publick Actors, but by all young gentlemen and ladies for their own Diversion. The Benefit for the Young People of the House.

Since the prohibition of bill-posting lasted at least a couple of years, it may be that the players in drafting their privately distributed handbills sought to gain by floridity what they had lost by the old embargo. This would account for the charge levelled against them in 1704, of having entered into a confederacy to ruin the mummers of Bartlemy Fair "by outdoing them in their bombastick bills, and ridiculous representing their plays." Some evidence, however, exists to show that the outbreak of verbiage was but transient, and that to it cannot be ascribed the introduction of the programme, or bill with cast. Preserved in the British Museum, in Smith's voluminous compilation for a History of the English Stage,[2] is a small playbill of the Queen's Theatre, Haymarket, for 6 November, 1705. Brief announcement is made of *The Confederacy*, but no cast is given.

Within the succeeding six or seven years the theatre programme sprang into existence. A statement of Malone's

[1] Quoted from Percy Fitzgerald's *New History of the English Stage*, i. 315, where, however, no reference is cited and the date only given obliquely. But the prohibition certainly lasted some time, as Farquhar, in his *Discourse Upon Comedy*, published in *Love and Business* (1702), replying to the parrot-cry of the degeneracy of the times, says, "true downright sense was never more universal than at this very day; . . . 'tis neither abdicated the court with the late Reigns, nor expell'd the City with the Play-house bills."

[2] Press-mark "11826 r", Vol. iv, near middle (no pagination). This is the oldest playbill in the British Museum.

enables us to approximate the period. "Notices of plays", he writes, "to be performed on a future day, similar to those now daily published, first appeared in the original edition of the *Spectator* in 1711."[1] Theatrical advertisements in the newspapers at the time this was written generally included a full cast of the performance. Hence the reference. The evidence presented by the appended advertisements from the original edition of *The Spectator* seems to imply that the programme was gradually arrived at, first by giving on the bills the names of the principal players, and afterwards by specifying what particular parts they were to play. One assumes that most of these advertisements were fairly full reproductions of the bills of the time. Two examples may be cited in support of this contention. The first is from *The Spectator*, of 11 August, 1711, No. 141:—[2]

By her Majesty's Company of Comedians.

At the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, on Tuesday next, being the 14th Day of August, will be presented, A comedy call'd The Lancashire Witches. Written by the Ingenious Mr Shadwell, late Poet Laureat. Carefully Revis'd. With all the Original Decorations of Scenes, Witche's Songs and Dances, proper to the Dramma. The Principal Parts to be perform'd by Mr Mills, Mr Booth, Mr Johnson, Mr Bullock, Sen, Mr Norris, Mr Pack, Mr Bullock, Jun:, Mrs Elrington, Mrs Powel, Mrs Bradshaw, Mrs Cox. And the Witches by Mr Buckhead, Mr Ryan, Mrs Mills, and Mrs Willis. It being the last time of acting it this season.

The second, showing progression towards a full cast, is cited from *The Spectator*, of 5 May, 1712, No. 370:—

For the Benefit of Mr Penkethman. At the Desire of Several Ladies of Quality. By Her Majesty's Company of Comedians. At the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, this present Monday being the 5th of May, will be presented a Comedy called Love makes a Man, or The Fop's Fortune. The Part of Don Lewis, *alias* Don Choleric Snap Shorto de Testy, by Mr Penkethman; Carlos, Mr Wilks; Clodio, *alias* Don Dismallo Thick-Scullo de Half Witto, Mr Cibber; and all the other Parts to the best advantage. With a new Epilogue, Spoken by Mr Penkethman, riding on an

[1] Malone's *Shakespeare* (Dublin, 1794), ii. 114.

[2] Cited from Henry Morley's recension as issued by Routledge, without date.

Ass. By her Majesty's Command no Persons are to be admitted behind the Scenes, And To-Morrow, being Tuesday, will be presented, A Comedy call'd The Constant Couple, or A Trip to the Jubilee. *For the Benefit of Mrs Bicknell.*

From this to a bill with a full cast of characters (a bill answering indifferently as placard or programme) was but a step, and it was very quickly taken. Once the programme was reached, very little alteration or extension of its characteristics took place for over a century. It told the spectator what pieces were to be played and who were the players; and it also comprised a list of whatever dances, songs and addresses were to be given between the acts or between the pieces. There it stopped. The whole was in bold type, suitable for reading in a dimly lit theatre, and unburdened with advertisements. It was not until the latter half of the nineteenth century that the practice of giving a synopsis of the scenery and details of the inter-act music came into vogue. But even at an early period its defectiveness as a guide became felt, and had to be repaired in other ways. Thus when Colley Cibber's new musical masque of *Venus and Adonis* was produced at Drury Lane, on 12 March, 1714, it was announced that "A Printed book will be given to each person who pay to the Pit or Boxes." The non-provision of a programme of the inter-act music led to the prolongation of an old Elizabethan custom, the calling for tunes on the part of the audience, a demand long conceded, and occasionally the source of riot and disorder through the calling for party tunes.

Bills in the old days were drafted by the prompter, and the task was one of considerable difficulty and delicacy. In discussing the period of 1714, Chetwood, who had been twenty years prompter at Drury Lane, writes:

Distinguished Characters in Bills were not in Fashion, at the Time these Plays were perform'd; they were printed in Order according to the Drama as they stood, not regarding the Merit of the Actor. As for Example, in *Macbeth*, Duncan King of Scotland appear'd first on the Bill, tho' acted by an insignificant Person; and so every other Actor appear'd according to his Dramatic

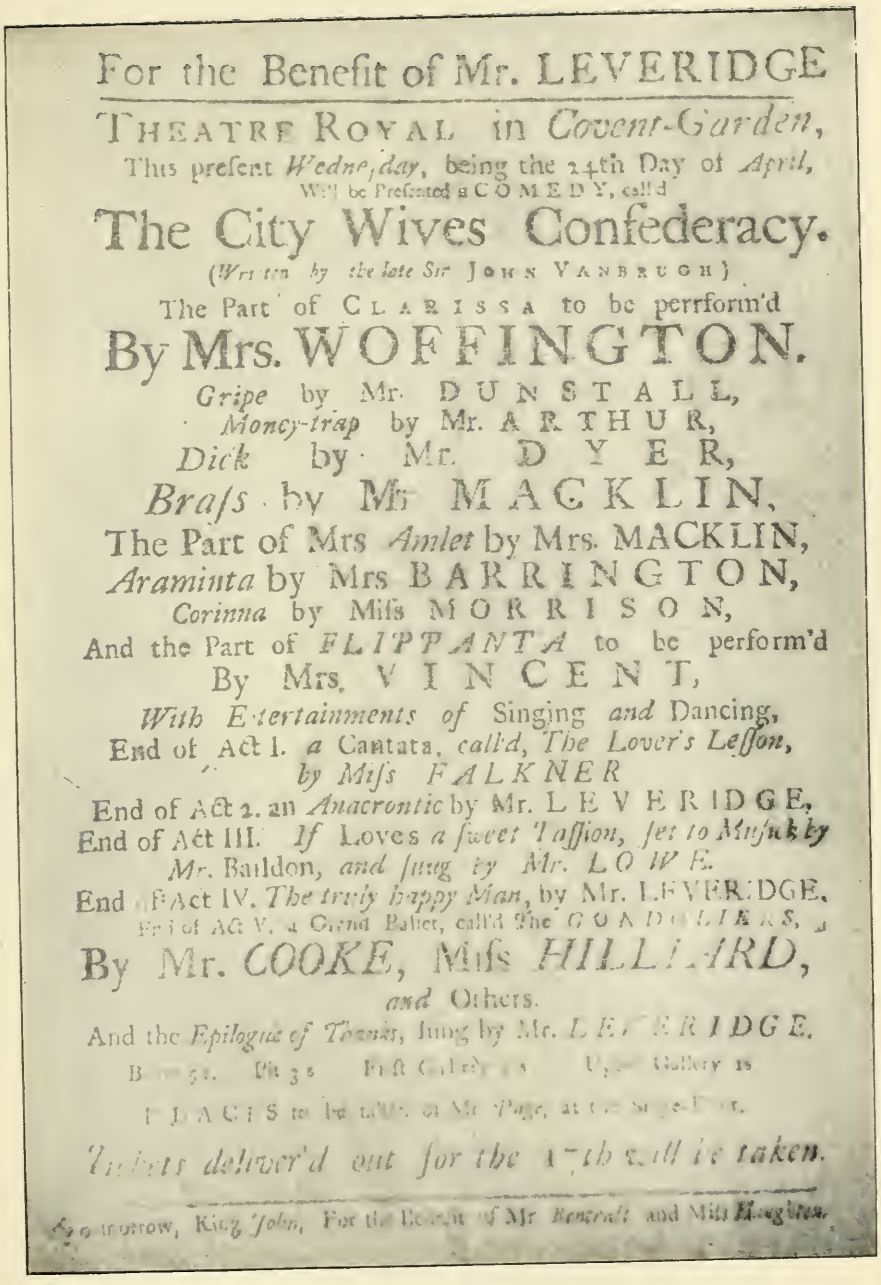
Dignity, all of the same-siz'd Letter. But latterly, I can assure my Readers, I have found it a difficult Task to please some *Ladies*, as well as *Gentlemen*, because I could not find Letters large enough to please them; and some were so very fond of Elbow-room, that they would have shoved everybody out but themselves, as if one Person was to do all, and have the Merit of all, like Generals of an Army; such a Victory was gained by such a King, and such a Prince, while the other Officers and Soldiers were forgot.[1]

Very different was the attitude of the French comedians. In 1789 (when the principle of the programme had not yet come into vogue in Paris) we find them petitioning monsieur le maire not to permit their names to be put on the *affiche*, an innovation deemed by them very contrary to their interests. They were, however, but kicking against the pricks, and in less than two years the principle had been generally adopted.[2]

In 1788, when John Kemble was appointed manager of Drury Lane, he sought to abolish all playbill distinctions, either in matter of type or in priority of place. But his praiseworthy example was not followed, and at Covent Garden at the end of the century the players' names were printed according to their rank in the theatre, and in new pieces, according to salary.[3] At a later period Kean and Macready were avid for big type, and ever ready to fight "for an hour by Shrewsbury clock" for the maintenance of the star's prerogative. The play was no longer the thing. No player, save Dowton, rose superior to his surroundings. "I am sorry you have done this," he wrote to Elliston, when his name had been announced in a riot of capitals. "You know well what I mean. This cursed quackery. These big letters. There is a want of respectability about it, or rather a notoriety, which gives one the feeling of an absconded felon, against whom a hue and cry is made public."[4]

Although the eighteenth-century French player, as we have seen, was by no means amorous of playbill notoriety, it is none the less true that "display" advertisements were

[1] W. R. Chetwood, *A General History of the Stage* (London, 1749), p. 59.
[2] V. Fournel, *Curiosités Théâtrales*, p. 127.
[3] Cf. *The Monthly Mirror* (1799), Vol. vii. p. 178 note [a].
[4] Dutton Cook, *A Book of the Play* (1881), p. 57.



For the Benefit of Mr. LEVERIDGE

THEATRE ROYAL in *Covent-Garden*,

This preſent *Wedneſday*, being the 24th Day of *April*,

Will be Preſented a COMEDY, call'd

The City Wives Confederacy.

(*Written by the late Sir* JOHN VANBRUGH)

The Part of CLARISSA to be perrform'd

By Mrs. WOFFINGTON.

Gripe by Mr. DUNSTALL,

Money-trap by Mr. ARTHUR,

Dick by Mr. DYER,

Braſs by Mr MACKLIN,

The Part of Mrs *Amlet* by Mrs. MACKLIN,

Araminta by Mrs BARRINGTON,

Corinna by Miſs MORRISON,

And the Part of *FLIPPANTA* to be perform'd

By Mrs. VINCENT,

With Entertainments of Singing *and* Dancing,

End of Act I. *a* Cantata, *call'd, The Lover's Leſſon, by Miſs FALKNER*

End of Act 2. an *Anacrontic* by Mr. LEVERIDGE,

End of Act III. *If* Loves *a ſweet Paſſion, ſet to Muſick by Mr.* Baildon, *and ſung by Mr. LOWE.*

End of Act IV. *The truly happy Man*, by Mr. LEVERIDGE.

For the laſt of Act V. a Grand Ballet, call'd The GONDOLIERS,

By Mr. *COOKE*, Miſs *HILLIARD*,

and Others.

And the *Epilogue of Townly*, ſung by Mr. LEVERIDGE.

Boxes 5s. Pit 3s. First Gallery 2s. Upper Gallery 1s.

PLACES to be taken of Mr. Page, at the Stage-Door.

Tickets deliver'd out for the 17th will be taken.

To-morrow, King *John*, For the Benefit of Mr *Bencraft* and Miſs *Haughton*.

THE BILL OF INVIDIOUS DISTINCTIONS.
(Covent Garden, 1745). [*To face p.* 88.

first introduced into England from France. In an undated satirical paraphrase of Horace's *Ars Poetica*, entitled *An Essay on Theatres*, written, from internal evidence, about the year 1740, and first published in *The Harleian Miscellany*[1], one finds the following curious passage :—

> So have I seen large-letter'd bills proclaim
> (In red lines[2] France was mark'd, in black the name)
> The celebrated H—n[3] was to dance,
> His first performance since arriv'd from France.
> The house was crowded ; the third act was done ;
> A chorus-figur'd entry brought him on.
> He came ; he conjur'd once ; & off he run—
> The pomp so solemn, ended in a joke
> For ah, the strings that ty'd his breeches broke.

The point is not well assured, but it would seem that in the beginning the vending of programmes was no concern of the theatrical managers but simply a printer's perquisite, given to him as a partial set-off against his bill for printing and delivering a certain number of the bills for use as posters.[4] One notes, by the way, that at Covent Garden, in 1757, the daily expense for the printing of bills was 27*s.*, and the daily payments to "bill-setters", 11*s.* 6*d.*[5] This impression regarding the initial arrangement is gained from the practice then established of selling bills outside the theatres before the opening of the doors as well as inside afterwards. The vendors were the orange-women, and, unless we can assume that they were regularly employed by the theatre managers, it must be concluded that the bills were delivered to them by the printer at a discount, much as papers are sold to-day to newsboys. That the orange-girl was a playhouse institu-

[1] Vol. v. p. 580.

[2] Rubricated lines were common in French bills as early as 1671. See V. Fournel, op. cit. p. 127.

[3] *Quaere*, M. Hardouin, *maitre à danser*, for whom see Emile Dacier, *Mademoiselle Sallé*, p. 78.

[4] Even within living memory a somewhat similar arrangement was effected in connexion with a number of fashionable London theatres. In or about 1876 the right of printing and vending programmes was granted for a consideration to Eugène Rimmel, the perfumer, who utilized them as an advertising medium, and scented them heavily.

[5] Account Books of the T. R., Covent Garden, in Egerton MSS., 2267–72.

tion from Restoration days is shown by the well-grounded tradition concerning Nell Gwyn:

> But first the basket her fair arm did suit,
> Laden with pippins and Hesperian fruit;
> This first step raised, to the wondering pit she sold
> The lovely fruit smiling with streaks of gold.

In the curious scene of the playhouse in Shadwell's comedy, *A True Widow*, as produced at Dorset Gardens in 1678, we see the audience trooping in and hear the orange-woman cry, "Oranges! will you have any oranges." She has, however, no bill of the play to sell, and when the First Bully enters, he proceeds to ask her, "what play do they play?"

Search as one will, one can nowhere discover that the managers paid the orange-women a wage and took the profits of their sales. Even proof that they were the original vendors of bills is lacking unless we can argue *a posteriori* and fall back once more on the longevity of theatrical custom. Hogarth shows us the orange-women plying their trade in the pit in his sketch of *The Laughing Audience*, but he affords us no glimpse of their sheaf of bills. The earliest reference to the vending of programmes is associated with February, 1748, when Foote gave his entertainment at Covent Garden and imitated Peg Woffington, in the suppositious rôle of "an Orange Woman to the Playhouse," calling out "Would you have some oranges,—have some orange chips, ladies and gentlemen,—would you have some nonpariels,—would you have a bill of the play?"[1] This, of course, only testifies to the custom within doors, but, three-quarters of a century later, we find Charles Lamb making sympathetic revealment of the custom without. Writing of Old Drury in 1782 in "My First Play", he says:

> In those days were pit orders,—Beshrew the uncomfortable manager who abolished them—with one of these we went. I remember the waiting at the door—not that which is left—but between that and an inner door in shelter. O when shall I be such an expectant again!—with the cry of nonpareils, an indispensable playhouse accompaniment in those days. As near as I can

[1] Tate Wilkinson, *Memoirs of his own Life* (Dublin, 1791), i. p. 22.

recollect, the fashionable pronunciation of the theatrical fruiteresses then was, 'Chase some oranges, chase some numparls, chase a bill of the play;—chase *pro* chuse. But when we got in, and I beheld the green curtain that veiled a heaven to my imagination, which was soon to be disclosed—the breathless anticipations I endured!

One old woman sold bills outside Sadlers Wells for fifty-five years.[1] As a matter of fact, the practice lasted till well within living memory; and many old London playgoers must still recall how, when driving to the theatre thirty odd years ago, their vehicles were vigorously pursued, as they neared their destination, by rival playbill vendors. A little before that, about the year 1870, managers had discountenanced this selling outside, through finding that bills were being falsified. But the custom had wonderful vitality, and recurred for a brief period as a sort of epilogue to its history.

Confused from its inception with the daybill, the programme had no separate identity, or at least none of any permanence, until it came to be looked upon as "an excellent medium for advertising". The transition, however, was not abrupt. In the London theatres of forty years ago, two kinds of programmes were simultaneously provided. In the cheaper parts of the house a replica of the ordinary folio daybill was on sale, thin in texture, and pungent to the nostrils with its heavy burden of undried printer's ink. This was the last relic of the old "bill of the play". No one could apply the term to the delicately-perfumed programme of octavo size supplied at the same time to the occupants of the boxes. This was an invidious distinction to be set up in so democratic an institution as the playhouse. But, perhaps, on the whole, the advantage was with the man in the pit. He got what he paid for and nothing more. The kid-gloved lounger in the boxes, seeking distraction from actuality, had all its grey grimness thrust upon him by the matter-of-fact advertisements. The era of rank commercialism—a commercialism which blighted as it progressed—had dawned in the theatre.

[1] For her portrait "in character", see *The New York Mirror* for 30 March, 1889, W. Marston's article on "The Oldest Theatre."

Early Systems of Admission

Early Systems of Admission

Much of what was distinctive about Elizabethan playgoing arose from the circumstance that the builders of the first London theatres, instead of charging a fixed annual rental for the use of their houses, received payment by results. The system of taking a proportion of the receipts was the fairest possible. It made all interests identical; the proprietors only prospered when the players prospered. No arrears of rent accrued during those frequent visitations of plague when the theatres had to be closed. Curiously enough, this proportional division of the receipts between the actors and the proprietors conditioned some of the architectural peculiarities of the early theatre. Separate entrances were not provided for every section of the house as now. Even in the largest theatres there were only two doors, the one leading into the auditorium proper, and the other into the tiring-house at the back of the stage.[1] It was by the latter that the gallant, who came "to publish a handsome man and a new suit," by occupying a stool on the rush-strewn boards, made his entry. The first Globe theatre on the Bankside was no better provided. It was destroyed by fire on 29 June, 1613, and nine days later John Chamberlain wrote to a friend in the country, describing the occurrence. According to him the misadventure "fell out by a peal of chambers (that I know not on what occasion were to be used in the play), the tampin or stopple of one of them lighting in the thatch that covered the house, burn'd it down to the ground in less than two hours, with a dwelling house adjoining, and it was a great marvaile and fair grace of God, that the people had so little harm, having but two narrow doors to get out."[2]

[1] Cf. J. D. Wilson, *Life in Shakespeare's England*, p. 92, contemporary record of a riot in Moore-fields, in 1584. Mention is made of people standing near "Theater door", as if only one door. See also T. F. Ordish's *Early London Theatres*, p. 227, for Taylor's lines dealing with the Hope in 1614, "Some runne to the door to get againe their coyne."

[2] Winwood's *Memorials*, iii. 469.

Unless the Elizabethan playgoer were content to remain standing throughout the performance in the seat-less pit, jostled by stinkards and pickpockets, it was impossible for him on going to the public theatre to settle finally for his admission at the door. In 1596 we find Lambard writing in his *Perambulation of Kent*, "those who go to Paris Garden, the Bell-Savage, or Theater, to behold bear-baiting, interludes or fence-play, must not account of any pleasant spectacle, unless first they pay one penny at the gate, another at the entry of the Scaffold, and a third for quiet standing." As each theatre was a law unto itself in the matter of prices of admission, and as the tariff fluctuated at different periods, no hard and fast deduction can be made from this passage; but, broadly speaking, the curious system of iterated payment[1] held good until the Restoration.

The question naturally arises, how chanced it that the playgoer in Shakespeare's day was unable to pay for his box or gallery seat at the door and have done with the matter? To arrive at the answer one has to delve into the documents published by Halliwell-Phillipps in his *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*, dealing with the dispute between the sharing and non-sharing actors at the Globe and Blackfriars in 1635. Going back to a period of more than half a century previously, Cuthbert Burbage, in his defence, states that his father, James Burbage, borrowed the large sum of money at interest with which he built the first playhouse, known as "The Theater". Writes Burbage: "The players that lived in those first times had only the profitts arising from the dores, but now the players receave all the commings in at the dores to themselves and half the galleries from the housekepers." In other words, the players in 1576 and thereabouts shared among them the moneys taken by way of preliminary admission to the auditorium. The second payments made by the occupants of the boxes and galleries accrued to Burbage as rent. Sixty years later the players

[1] A somewhat similar arrangement is still pursued in some parts of Southern Europe. For a modern Spanish analogue, see Henry Lyonnet's *Théâtre en Espagne* (1897), p. 17.

also received half the takings in the galleries, but out of this they had to pay "all expenses for hirelings, apparel, poets[1], light and all other expenses of the playhouses."[2]

Let us look for a moment more closely into the system of collecting payment at the Bankside houses three hundred years ago. With the exception of the few who occupied stools on the rush-strewn boards or boxes at the rear of the stage, and who therefore went in by the tiring-house entrance, peer and pauper, gentle and simple, all made their way into the house by a common door. In the vestibule stood an attendant with a box into whose narrow orifice the playgoer, no matter of what degree, slipped his penny or twopence, giving preliminary admission to the pit. (The reader will kindly remember that money in those days had fully seven times its present purchasing power.) In the section on the "Price of admission to Theatres," in his *History of English Dramatic Poetry*,[3] Payne Collier clearly shows, by contemporary citation, that all payments, whether at the door or inside the house, were made not to the gatherer himself but to his box. This arrangement was seemingly designed with the view of preventing theft, and apparently did not permit of change being given. But pilfering was a common occurrence, and Dekker in dedicating his play, *If it be not good, the Devil is in it* (1612), to his cronies, the Queen's players, wishes them "a full audience and one honest door-keeper."

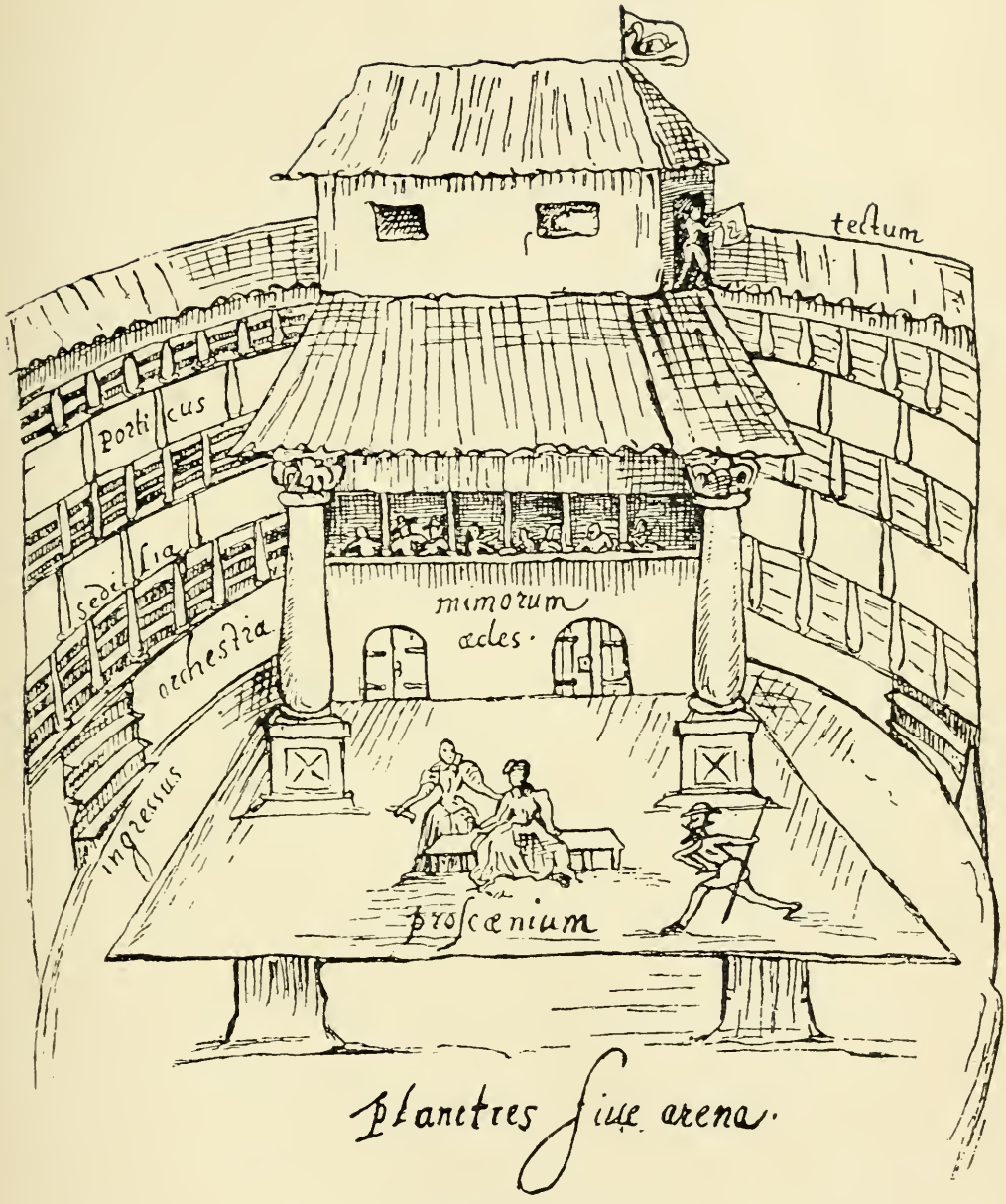
[1] "Expense of poets" probably meant that the players had to pay the earnest money handed over to the dramatist to secure the rights of a commissioned, or partly written play, as well as money for the altering of old plays. In 1614, the Princess Elizabeth's Servants complained that Henslowe had received from them £200 or thereabouts in payment of playbooks, and yet had refused to give up the copies of any of them (Collier, *Annals*, iii. 419). It would appear that the first method of remunerating authors was by a modest lump sum before the production, and that this developed into the payment of earnest money plus a benefit. Lines 16–25 of Dekker's prologue to *If It be not Good, the Devil is in it*, apparently indicate that at the period of delivery (according to Fleay, c. Xmas, 1610) authors' benefits were a recent innovation.

[2] *Outlines* (3rd edit., 1883), p. 549. For the arrangements at the Swan, c. 1597, see Prof. C. W. Wallace's paper on "The Swan Theatre and the Earl of Pembroke's Servants," in *Englische Studien*, Band 43, pp. 340 ff. The interpretation at p. 360 of the Stowe-Langley documents is, however, disputable. For the rules and monetary allocations at Salisbury Court in 1639, see the puzzling details in *Shakespeare Society Publications*, Vol. iv. p. 99.

[3] Edit. 1831, iii. 341.

Dives and Lazarus, having made common entry by the auditorium door and duly paid their pennies to the box, went along the single passage and found themselves in the pit or "yard". There Lazarus remained; he had no more to pay. But Dives desired to make his way to the boxes, or may-hap to the middle or upper gallery—how did he manage it? Scrutinize the old Dutch sketch of the interior of the Swan theatre, and by careful exercise of your intelligence you will solve the puzzle. Remark that on either side of the stage is a flight of steps leading from the pit to the boxes and inscribed "ingressus". Up these steps had to go all intending occupants of the boxes or galleries; there were doubtless connecting staircases behind. No arrangement could have been clumsier. Attendants must have been placed at frequent intervals to keep each portion of the audience in its place during the performance, otherwise the groundlings would have been unceasing in their invasion of the higher regions.[1] One marvels that in the primitive theatres the utility of separate doors and stairways to each part did not so far suggest itself as to render the arrangement an imperative necessity. But the fact is that, beyond permanency of structure and increased accommodation, they presented little that could be called an improvement on the temporary playing places in the old inn-yards. To such an extent, indeed, did the Globe and the Swan and the Fortune perpetuate the elementary physical conditions of the inn-yard stages, one shrewdly suspects that many early theatrical customs—such as the hoisting of flags and blowing of trumpets—were mere survivals of the older routine. In the inn-yards payment must in some instances have been difficult to enforce. Doubtless a fee was exacted of those who entered the yard by the public gateway, but the better class people who occupied rooms at the back of the surrounding gallery were answerable to the inn-keeper, and not to the players. One takes leave to think

[1] Hence the reference in the second Prologue to *The New Inn* (unspoken, but intended for the Globe or Blackfriars in 1629), "We mean the court above the stairs and past the guard."



THE SWAN THEATRE. [*To face p.* 98.

that their generosity was appealed to, and that the box was borne round the gallery during the inter-acts precisely in the manner that buskers send round the hat after a street performance.[1] The practice would survive like other customs of the inn-yards, and thus lead to the quaint system of iterated payments and interior gathering.

Judging by what dregs of the old habitude existed at the Restoration, it would appear that the extra charge for admission to the boxes and galleries was not collected until the termination of the first act, and that those who chose to go out before the gatherer came round had nothing further to pay. Karl Mantzius, who has probed deeply into the subject,[2] arrives at the conclusion that the gatherers did duty on the stage as supernumeraries. There may be some inclined to doubt this, owing to the paucity of evidence advanced, but the matter can be placed beyond the regions of conjecture. The supernumeraries and the gatherers were not always identical—men adapted to the one task were not always adapted to the other; but that both offices were occasionally fulfilled by the one person is clearly apparent. Steevens in striving to elucidate "The Plott of Frederick and Basilea" (1597) was mystified to find the word "gatherers" placed opposite "the guard", and gave it as his opinion that "without assistance from the play, of which this is the plot, the denomination *gatherers* is perhaps inexplicable." Collier, in demonstrating that the puzzle could be solved without any such resource, shows that he himself had but an imperfect idea of the duties of the gatherers. He seems to have concluded that all payment for admission was made at the doors. "The gatherers", he says, "were those who gathered or collected the money, and who, during the performance, after all the spectators were arrived and when their services were no longer needed at the doors, were required to appear on the stage as the guard of Myron-hamet."[3]

[1] Gathering during the performance was one of the oldest of players' customs. Itinerant companies performing moralities adopted it late in the fifteenth century. Cf. A. W. Pollard, *Macro Plays*, Introd. p. xii, and text, p. 17.

[2] See his *History of Theatrical Art*, iii. (1904), p. 109 et seq.

[3] op. cit., iii. 403.

The honest supernumerary could do double duty by taking round the box in the galleries between the acts, but not all gatherers were qualified as "supers", for the reason that some of them were women, and women were not then employed in any capacity on the stage. Among the *Alleyn Papers* is a document recommending Mrs. Rose, the wife of a player, for the position of gatherer.[1] Most of the inferior actors were anxious (to supplement their scanty income) that their wives should be employed in this way. In the will of Henry Cundall,[2] made in 1627, one finds an item beginning:

> I give and bequeath unto my old servant Elizabeth Wheaton a mourning gown and forty shillings in money, and that place or priviledge which she now exerciseth and enjoyeth in the houses of the Blackfryers, London, and the Globe on the Bankside, for and during all the term of her natural life, if my estate shall so long continue in the premises, etc. etc.

The "place or priviledge" referred to was doubtless that of gatherer[3] or doorkeeper. In the epilogue to *The Scholars*, as acted at Salisbury Court circa 1634, we read:

> The stubborne author of the trifle crime,
> That just now cheated you of two hours' time,
> Presumptuous it lik'd him, begun to grow
> Carelesse, whether it pleased you or no,
> But we who ground th' excellence of a play
> On what the women at the dores will say,
> Who judge it by the benches, and afford
> To take your money, ere his oath or word.

These lines testify that a progressive spirit actuated the builders of the last of the private theatres, for they indicate that in Salisbury Court, which dated from 1629, playgoers were provided with more than one entrance to the auditorium proper.

[1] J. P. Collier, *The Alleyn Papers* (Shakespeare Society, 1843), p. 51.

[2] Cited *in extenso* in Malone's *Shakespeare* (Dublin, 1794), ii. pp. 168–72. Cundall was the original Cardinal in *The Dutchess of Malfi*.

[3] The custom of employing women as gatherers seemingly long persisted. Under date 25 January, 1705, Luttrell records, "Last night, Captain Walsh quarrelling with Mrs. Hudson, who keeps the boxes in the playhouse, she pulled out his sword and killed him." The only playhouse then open was Drury Lane.

With respect to the custom of gathering, an interesting side-issue calls for some discussion. It is an extraordinary fact that many writers who have expatiated upon the subject of the payment of Elizabethan dramatists have told us merely of the preliminary earnest money handed over and ignored the chief source of emolument.[1] What excuse they could proffer for this amazing omission, with Collier's section, "On the payment of Authors," confronting them, it would be interesting to learn. The truth is that the dramatist, like the chief players, was paid largely by results. If his play was a success he profited accordingly, for he received the overplus of the second or third day.[2] The overplus evidently meant the net receipts after the daily charge of 45*s.* for hirelings and other expenses had been deducted. In the case of a successful play or a popular author this would often amount to a considerable sum, seeing that admission to the first few performances of a new piece was invariably doubled. Of this sustainment of advanced prices we have indication in Jasper Mayne's lines to the memory of Ben Jonson:

> So when *the Fox* had ten times acted been,
> Each day was first, but that 'twas cheaper seen.

Some authors, however, mere *dilettanti*, looked for no earnest money and took no benefit. Mayne himself was among the number, and in his prologue to *The City Match*, as spoken at the Blackfriars in 1639, wrote:

> Were it his trade, the author bid me say,
> Perchance he'd beg you would be good to th' play;
> And I, to set him up in reputation
> *Should hold a basin forth for approbation.*
> But praise so gain'd, he thinks were a relief
> Able to make his comedy a brief.

Here we have broached the side-issue already spoken of. How did the author collect his dues on his benefit day?

[1] Cf. Karl Mantzius, *History of Theatrical Art*, Vol. iii. pp. 123 ff; Rev. E. R. Buckley, article, "The Elizabethan Playwright in his Workshop," in *Gent's Mag.*, June, 1903; J. Churton Collins, *Posthumous Essays*, p. 24.

[2] Cf. Malone's *Shakespeare* (Dublin, 1794), ii. pp. 115–6 and 267; also Collier, loc. cit.

Did he leave the matter to the tender mercies of the regular gatherers, putting his trust in Providence, or had he the right to appoint his own representatives? As a passage in *Every Woman in her Humour* attests, basins in those days were usually placed at church doors for collecting purposes, but we have no other record that they were ever employed in the playhouse auditorium. Might it not have been that the basin was the sign and token of the author's day, and that when it was held forth "for approbation", the pleased spectator was expected to drop in a trifle extra? One is prompted to speculate as to the possibility of the author figuring as his own gatherer. Mayne's sneer half implies some such arrangement.[1] Custom might have sanctified so humiliating a procedure, but, somehow, try as one will, one cannot imagine rare old Ben making personal appeal of this order.

Old customs die hard, the theatrical custom perhaps hardest of all. Notwithstanding the dismantling of the playhouses by the Puritans and the disruptive tendencies of the Civil War, despite the fact that the new type of Restoration theatre differed from the Elizabethan type in possessing separate entrances to every part of the house, many of the old customs still held sway.[2]

Any respectable person who made the excuse that he wanted to see a friend on pressing business, or who gave the undertaking that he would not remain longer than an act, could go into the house without paying. Worthy Master Pepys records on 7 January, 1667-8, how he visited both theatres, going "into the pit, to gaze up and down, and there did by this means, for nothing, see an act in *The Schoole of Compliments* at the Duke of York's house,

[1] Note, however, that in Act i. 2 of that mysterious play, *Lady Alimony* (reprinted in Hazlitt's *Dodsley*), Trillo wishes the poet on his day "Full audience and honest doorkeepers."

[2] For the allocation of the receipts at the Duke's Theatre in 1661, see Robert W. Lowe's *Thomas Betterton*, p. 75. It was agreed that admission to this house was to be by "ballatine, or tickets sealed for all doores and boxes," but, so far as the boxes were concerned, the arrangement evidently fell through. Three persons were appointed by the manager to receive the money for the tickets in a room adjoining the theatre, and these were watched by others on behalf of the actors. What system was pursued at the Theatre Royal a little later, we have no evidence to show.

and *Henry the Fourth* at the King's house; but, not liking either of the plays, I took my coach again, and home."

Playgoers were very tenacious of their privileges in those days, and maintained them at the point of the sword. In December, 1663, complaint was made to the Merry Monarch that certain roisterers were in the habit of forcing their way into the theatres without paying. A royal warrant was at once issued, proclaiming the unlawfulness of such acts "notwithstanding theire pretended priviledge by custom of forcing theire entrance at the fourth or fifth acts without payment."[1] Late in February, 1665, the King promulgated another edict setting forth that:

Whereas complaint hath been made unto us by our Servants, the Actors in the Royal Theatre, that divers persons refuse to pay at the first door of the said Theatre, thereby obliging the doorkeepers to send after, solicit, and importune them for their entrance money. For the prevention therefore of those disorders, and that such as are employed by the said Actors may have no opportunity of deceiving them, our will and pleasure is that all persons coming to the said Theatre shall, at the first door, pay their entrance money (to be restored to them again in case they return the same way before the end of the Act) requiring the guards attending there, and all whom it may concern, to see that obedience be given hereunto, etc. etc.[2]

Mean advantage was often taken of this privilege of remaining for an act without payment. By dint of going on successive days during the run of a new play, and of sitting out the first act on the first day, the second on the second, and so on, the impecunious or parsimonious gallant could eventually see the whole of a reigning attraction gratis. In the ballad-epilogue to his comedy of *The Man's the Master* (1668), Sir William D'Avenant trenchantly girds at this dishonest practice:

> And some—a deuce take 'em!—pretend
> They come but to speak with a friend;
> Then wickedly rob us of a whole play
> By stealing five times an act in a day.

[1] Cf. Robert W. Lowe, op. cit. p. 24. On May 16, 1668, a warrant was issued iterating this prohibition (*State Papers, Dom. Series, Charles II*, 1667–8, p. 395).

[2] Collier, *Hist. Dram. Poetry*, iii. 341 note.

On the principle of "taste and try before you buy," this concession of seeing an act gratis was so politic that it might have proved satisfactory to all parties had it not been for the evasions of the tricksters. Little notice having been taken of his former warrants, Charles II issued, on 23 July, 1670, a more drastic proclamation. Complaint having been made that people were continuing to force their way into the two theatres without paying, it was decreed that no person was to come rudely or by force into either house without paying the established prices. No money was to be returned to any person whatever, but all leaving their seats during the performance would be given pass-out checks. No one was to be allowed to force their way in "by any pretended usage of an entrance at the fifth act," and the officers and guards attending the theatres were to take such offenders into custody, or lose a day's pay.[1] But for all the heed that was taken of this edict, old Rowley might as well have been the veriest monarch of opera bouffe. An important variant of the proclamation had at length to be issued from Whitehall on 2 February, 1673-4. It began:

Charles R. Whereas complaint hath often been made unto us that divers persons do rudely press, and with evil language and blows force their way into our theatres (called the Theatre Royal in Bridges Street and the Duke's Theatre in Dorset Gardens)[2] at the time of their public representations and actings, without paying the price established at both the said theatres, to the great disturbance of our servants licensed by our authority as well as others, and to the danger of the public peace; our will and pleasure therefore is, and we do hereby straightly charge and command, that no person of what quality soever do presume to come into either of the said theatres before and during the time of acting, and until the plays are quite finished, without paying the price established for the respective places. And our further command is, that the money

[1] *Bibliotheca Lindesiana*, Vol. v, Royal Proclamations, 1485–1714 (Oxford, 1910), No. 3536. Another order to the same effect was issued on 6 November, 1672 (*State Papers, Dom. Series, Charles II*, 1672–3, p. 131). It dealt, however, only with the Theatre Royal (as the Lincoln's Inn Fields house was then temporarily styled), and presented an important new clause: "and particularly that no attendants of the nobility or gentry take a place in the house without paying."

[2] If the testimony of old engravings may be trusted the Theatre Royal (Wren's house) had three front entrances, but the Duke's Theatre only one.

which shall be paid so by any persons in their respective places shall not be returned again, after it is once paid, notwithstanding that such persons shall go out at any time before or during the play: And (to avoid future fraud) that none hereafter shall enter the Pit, First, or Upper Gallery, without delivery to the respective doorkeepers the ticket or tickets which they received for their money paid at the first door.[1]

It is to be noted that no mention is here made of the boxes, and there, at least, one has some reason for believing, gathering went on between the acts as in earlier days. The old money-box had at any rate survived the repressions of the Commonwealth, for Sir William D'Avenant, in the ballad-epilogue to *The Man's the Master* (1668), already referred to, tells the gallants about town:

> You visit our plays, and merit the stocks
> For paying half crowns of brass to our box.

By reference to the last stanza of the epilogue it will be seen that this fraud was practised in connexion with interior gathering, and not in making payment to a box at the entrance door.

Other abuses soon sprang up. Many men of rank and fashion, like Pepys' friend, Sir Philip Carteret, treated the playhouse like a tavern, and "did run upon the score for plays."[2] One has reason to feel thankful to the diary-keeping Secretary of the Admiralty for his evidence on this point, else one might have fallen into the error of looking upon an allusion to the practice in Shadwell's comedy of *The True Widow* (1679) as distorted satire. In a scene in the fourth act of this play representing the pit of the playhouse the following colloquy occurs:

First Doorkeeper. Pray, Sir, pay me; my Masters will make me pay it.

Third Man. Impudent rascal! do you ask me for money? Take that, Sirrah!

[1] *Bibliotheca Lindesiana*, Vol. vi, No. 3588. This order is cited *in extenso*, under a wrong date, in Percy Fitzgerald's *New History of the English Stage*, i. 146. With slight modifications, it was re-issued, under William and Mary, on 14 November, 1689 (*Cal. State Papers, Dom. Ser.*, 1689–90, p. 321).

[2] A similar custom obtained in Paris in Molière's time. See Victor Fournel, *Curiosités Théâtrales*, p. 143.

Second Doorkeeper. Will you pay me, Sir?

Fourth Man. No; I don't intend to stay.

Second Doorkeeper. So you say every day, and see two or three Acts for nothing.

Fourth Man. I'll break your Head, you Rascal!

First Doorkeeper. Pray, Sir, pay me.

Third Man. Set it down; I have no Silver about me; or bid my man pay you.[1]

Theodosia. What! do Gentlemen run on Tick for Plays?

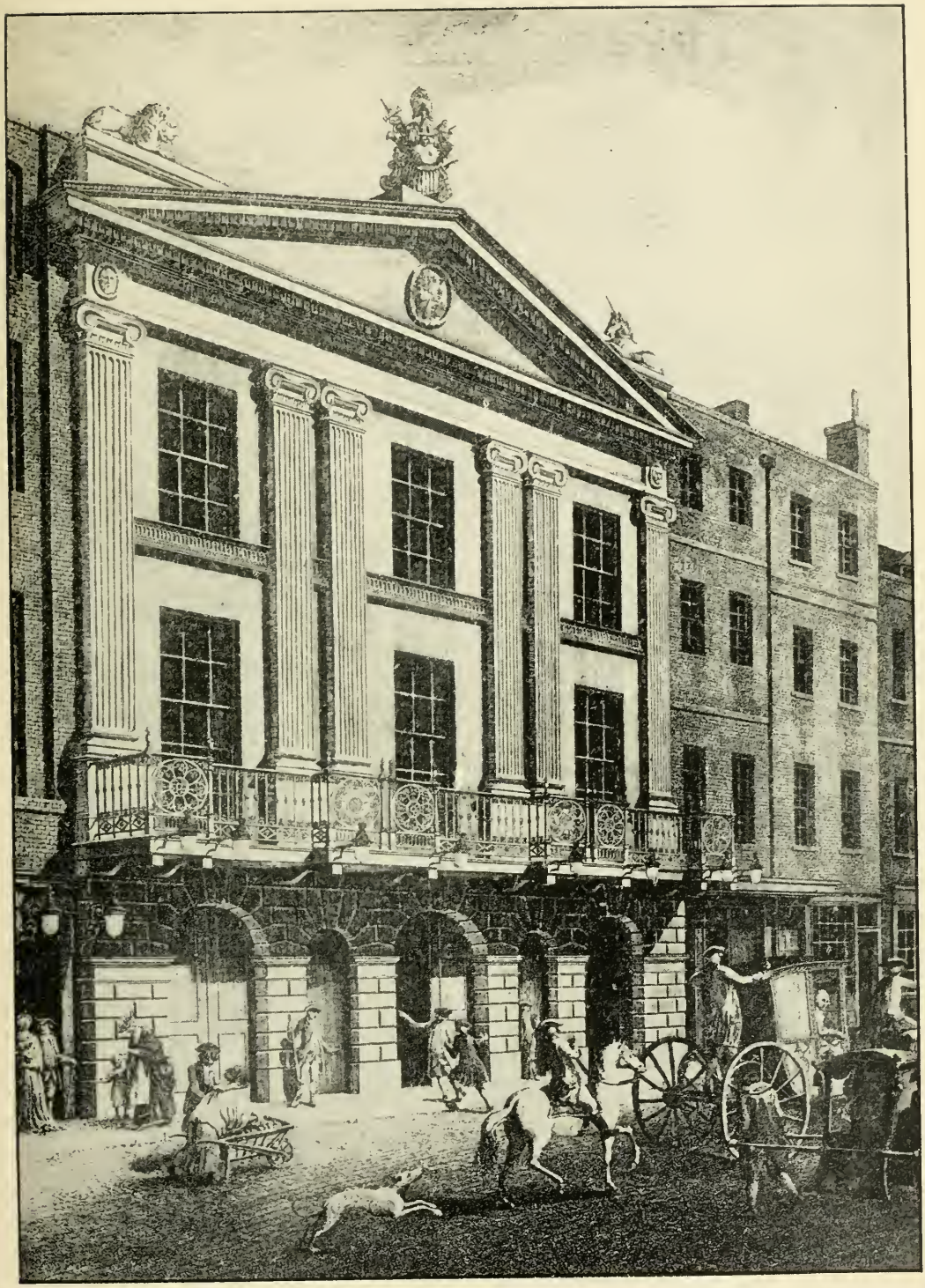
Carlos. As familiarly as with their Taylors.

The occasional reference to the guard in royal warrants of this period regulating the traffic at the theatres draws attention to the fact that, shortly after the King came to his own, officers had been appointed to preserve the peace in the re-opened houses. In August, 1660, there had been much tumult at the Cockpit in Drury Lane through the soldiers making forcible entry into the theatre, and the Duke of Albemarle had found it necessary to make a proclamation[2] to the troops forbidding the practice. Three months later the king issued a warrant to John Rogers granting him authority to provide men to guard "the publique playhouses and showes from all molestation," Rogers to be compensated by the imposition of five per cent. on the theatre receipts, said receipts to be declared on oath.[3] How long this irksome arrangement lasted it would be difficult to say, but it would appear that shortly after the opening of the first picture-stage theatres in Lincoln's Inn Fields and Bridges Street, a military guard was appointed to each theatre and that it stood throughout the performance at the front of the building. An old exterior view of Wren's Drury Lane, as opened in 1674, shows in the façade two niches designed as sentry-boxes and occupied by musketeers. Requisite as this arrangement was in the

[1] The instruction, "bid my man pay you," refers to the circumstance that footmen in attendance on their masters were allowed into the gallery free. Cf. article, "A Restoration Playhouse" (dealing with the Duke's Theatre in 1676), in *The Tribune* for 6 August, 1906. See also the anecdote related by Dr. Doran in *Their Majesties' Servants* (1897), p. 94.

[2] For a copy, see Egerton MSS. 2542, folio 405 (in British Museum).

[3] *State Papers, Dom Ser., Charles II.*



WREN'S DRURY LANE, BUILT IN 1674. [*To face p.* 106.
(Showing the niches for the armed guard).

days when gentlemen wore swords and drew them on the slightest provocation, it sometimes created instead of allaying tumult. Writing on Thursday, 17 December, 1691, Luttrell records:

> Last Tewsday a great disorder at the playhouse[1], where the lord Grey of Ruthen and viscount Longueville were knockt downe and 2 other lords puncht with the butt ends of muskets; they complained of the affront to his majestie, who referred them to the house of lords, where they made application yesterday; and the lords thereon desired his majestie would be please to command the suspending acting of playes till further order.

According to the inquiry[2] which took place in the House of Lords on 17 December, it appears that Lord Grey (accompanied by his brother) tried to enter the theatre without paying and that the sentry stopped him, and said he must take a ticket. The evidence was somewhat conflicting, one witness stating that the Sergeant of the Guard took Lord Longueville by the shoulder and pushed him, and another that the musketeers struck at his lordship's servant, and that a musket went off accidentally in the mêlée. One of the spiritual peers took advantage of this complaint to move the total suppression of the playhouses, on the ground that they were nurseries of lewdness, but the House was not in accord with his sentiments, and merely directed that acting should be suspended until further order, and that the military should discontinue guarding the theatre. The sergeant of the guard and a musketeer were committed to the Gate House in Whitehall and kept in confinement for several days. On 19 December, a petition was presented on behalf of Alexander D'Avenant, Richard Middlemore, and Andrew Card, sharers and adventurers in the Playhouse, praying the removal of the embargo, and promising that care would be taken "to prevent the like miscarriage for the future." Feeling, probably, that the punishment had been in excess of the offence, the Lords at once permitted acting to be renewed.

[1] Evidently Drury Lane.

[2] Cf. *Hist. MSS. Comm.* 13th Rep. (House of Lords, 1690–1.) App., Pt. V, p. 464.

It is difficult to know exactly how or when the subsequent custom of placing two grenadiers on guard on either side of the proscenium arch during the performance sprang into being.[1] No very firm basis exists for the routine opinion that it was purely the outcome of a serious riot behind the scenes at the Lincoln's Inn Fields theatre in February, 1721. In the only authentic account we have of that disturbance, Benjamin Victor's,[2] we read, "The King being informed of the whole affair, was highly offended, and ordered a guard to attend that Theatre as well as the other, which is continued to this day." This has been interpreted to mean that the King then ordered a guard to attend both theatres, but it is doubtful if this is what Victor intended to convey, especially as there is some reason to believe that the practice was already in vogue at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. On the previous page, Victor loosely quotes from Whincop to the effect that "he says, the reason why he sometimes writes the Theatre in Lincolns-Inn-Fields, and sometimes the Theatre Royal in Lincolns-Inn-Fields, is that in the year 1721 Mr. Rich obtained leave for a party of the Guards to do duty at his house like the other, and that gave it the name of the Theatre Royal." It is noteworthy that Victor, in contravening this statement as to the origin of the term Theatre Royal as applied to Rich's theatre, makes no attempt to dispute the assertion that the guard was already in existence at Drury Lane.

Kings might issue edicts but playgoers persisted in pursuing the even tenor of their way. The fop maintained his old right of seeing an act free as it ministered to his vanity. "Then you must know," says Sir Novelty Fashion to Narcissa, in Cibber's comedy of *Love's Last Shift* (1696),

> my coach and equipage are as well known as myself, and since the conveniency of two play-houses I have a better opportunity of

[1] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies*. (First Series), p. 178. For some anecdotes showing how the guard had been occasionally affected by the acting, see *The London Magazine* for June, 1742, p. 292. In 1735, the nightly cost of the guard at Covent Garden was apparently 14*s*. See article, "Old Time Theatrical Expenditure," in *The Stage* for 23 July, 1903.

[2] *History of the Theatres of London and Dublin* (1761), ii. 148–50.

showing them. For between every act—whisk!—I am gone from one to the other. Oh, what pleasure it is at a good play to go out before half an act's out.

Why at a good play? [asks Narcissa.]

Oh, Madam, it looks particular, and gives the whole audience an opportunity of turning upon me at once. Then do they conclude I have some extraordinary business, or a fine woman to go to at least. And then again it shows my contempt of what the dull town thinks their chiefest diversion.

Another eleven years elapse and still the practice holds. In the fourth act of *The Beaux Stratagem*, we find Archer and Aimwell reviewing their old days of impecuniosity, and dreading the necessity of being again obliged "to sneak into the side-box and between both houses steal two acts of a play, and because we han't money to see the other three, we come away discontented, and damn the whole five." This confession is elucidated by a passage in Charles Shadwell's comedy of *The Humours of the Army* (1713), wherein we learn that the old practice of "gathering" in the boxes still went on. The rakes, we are told, "live as much by their wits as ever; and to avoid the clinking dun of a boxkeeper, at the end of one act they sneak to the opposite side till the end of another; then call the boxkeeper saucy rascal, ridicule the poet, laugh at the actors, march to the opera, and spunge away the rest of the evening." The opera to which they marched, otherwise the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, soon grew weary of their presence, and in October, 1714, the management notified the town that "Persons frequently coming for an act without paying, no person can be admitted without a ticket." New rogues found new methods of taking advantage of the old privilege. There were generally two doors into the pit, and, in one scandalous instance that came to light, two persons who came in at one door, with orders, were handed the admission money they were presumed to have paid, on leaving not long after by the other! The latest moment at which they could have left in order to accomplish this act of roguery is indicated in a passage from an unspecified pamphlet by

Theophilus Cibber, quoted by Mr. Percy Fitzgerald in his *New History of the English Stage*[1]:

> There was a person who mingled with this set of gentlemen, more remarkable for his economy than any other extraordinary quality, who perhaps did not pay for one play in ten he saw, as he could reconcile himself with an easy address to solicit an order (or frank ticket) from the managers; nay, he was so particularly cautious in his conduct as to his disbursements, that he often, as he loved music (or pretended a taste for it), would take a place in the pit, to hear the first and second music (which latter used to be some select piece), but prudently retired, taking his money again at the door before the third music,[2] and by that means often kept out a spectator who would have been glad to have enjoyed the whole entertainment, though he paid for it.

As the third music was what was known in Restoration times as "the curtain tune" and heralded the performance, Cibber's parsimonious acquaintance found it necessary to leave in accordance with the regulation, "No money to be return'd after the curtain is drawn." This rule, which long held sway despite intermittent shelving, first came into vogue in the last quarter of the seventeenth century.[3] It had application to all parts of the house except the boxes, where the old custom of gathering between the acts still obtained and led to many abuses. In Dublin, in 1740, one finds Lewis Duval, the manager of the Smock Alley theatre, advertising, "whereas complaints have been made that numbers of persons nightly shift from box to box and into the pit, so to the stage, which appears on inquiry that it is to avoid paying; for the future prevention thereof an office is kept for the boxes, where all gentlemen are requested to take tickets before they go in."[4] Curiously enough, metal checks admitting to the pit and galleries had long been in vogue (examples of Drury Lane pit checks, dated 1671 and

[1] Vol. i. p. 431. The period dealt with would be c. 1740.

[2] For further details concerning the first, second, and third music, see my subsequent paper on "The Persistence of Elizabethan Conventionalisms."

[3] See the Drury Lane bill of 30 November, 1692, cited in my paper on "The Origin of the Theatre Programme."

[4] Advertisement of performance of 27 November, 1740, in *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*.

1684, are still extant),[1] and one cannot well see why the primitive system was allowed to obtain in the boxes.

From Shakespeare to Cibber the dishonesty of the money-taker was a byword.[2] There is still extant a letter from William Birde, the actor, to Edward Alleyn, setting forth that:

> There is one John Russell, that by your appoyntment was made a gatherer with us, but my fellowes finding falce to us, have many tymes warnd him from taking the box; and he as often, with moste damnable othes, hathe vowde never to touch; yet, notwithstanding his excecrable othes, he hath taken the box, and many tymes moste unconscionablye gathered, for which we have resolved he shall never more come to the doore. Yet, for your sake, he shall have his wages, to be a necessary atendaunt on the stage, and if he will pleasure himself and us to mend our garments, when he hath leysure, weele pay him for that to.[3]

Abundant testimony exists to show that the old doorkeepers were past masters in the art of legerdemain. In a satirical pamphlet, published in 1643, called "The Actors' Remonstrance or Complaint for the Silencing of their Profession," one finds the statement whimsically advanced, "Nay, our verie doore keepers, men and women, most grievously complain that by this cessation they are robbed of the privilege of stealing from us with license; they cannot now seem to scratch their heads where they itch not, and drop shillings and half crown pieces in at their collars." All was fish that came to their net; on occasion they could cheat the playgoer equally with the actors. Writing on 23 February, 1668, Pepys says:

> I was prettily served this day at the playhouse door, where, giving six shillings into the fellow's hand for us three, the fellow

[1] For reproductions, see Alexander Cargill's article on "Shakespeare as an Actor," in *Scribner's Magazine*, Vol. ix, No. 53 (1891), p. 619. The Upper Gallery ticket there given as belonging to the Globe was issued by the Red Bull at the Restoration. The undescribed check reproduced on p. 635 is a Dublin theatre-ticket of c. 1693. Cf. *Gent's Mag.*, Vol. lxxxiii, pt. ii. (1813), p. 217, where two other seventeenth-century tickets are given.

[2] For the thieveries of the French doorkeepers in the second quarter of the seventeenth century, see Eugène Rigal, *Le Théâtre Français avant la Période Classique*, pp. 156 ff. That the later English check-taker lived up to the sinister reputation of his predecessors is shown by E. L. Blanchard in "A Chapter on Check-Takers," in *The Era Almanack* for 1874, p. 37.

[3] Collier, *The Alleyn Papers*, p. 32.

by legerdemain did convey one away; and with so much grace faced me down that I did give him but five, that though I knew the contrary, yet I was overpowered by his so grave and serious demanding the other shilling, that I could not deny him but was forced by myself to give it him.

As for the box-keepers, so lax was the check upon them that they waxed fat by systematic peculation. "Box-keepers, whatever they may be now, by the managers keeping an eye over their conduct," writes Davies in his *Dramatic Miscellanies*,[1] "were formerly richer than their masters. A remarkable instance of it I heard many years since. Colley Cibber had, in a prologue or some part of a play, given such offence to a certain great man in power, that the playhouse, by order of the Lord Chamberlain, was shut up for some time, Cibber was arrested, and the damages laid at ten thousand pounds. Of this misfortune Booth and Wilks were talking very seriously, at the playhouse, in the presence of a Mr. King, the box-keeper; who asked if he could be of any service, by offering to bail Cibber.—'Why, you blockhead', said Wilks, 'it is for ten thousand pounds.'—'I should be very sorry', said the box-keeper, 'if I could not be answerable for twice that sum'. The managers stared at each other; and Booth said, with some emotion to Wilks, 'What have you and I been doing, Bob, all this time? A box-keeper can buy us both.'"

In connexion with the production of Fielding's *Pasquin* at the Haymarket in April, 1736, an advertisement was issued that "to prevent the frequent cheats of Doorkeepers, 'tis hoped no gentleman will refuse to take a ticket as he goes in; and the Ladies, to prevent their waiting at the door, are desired to send to the office at the Theatre, where tickets for the day will be delivered each morning at 4*s.* each, Pit 2*s.* 6*d.*, Gallery 1*s.*" Progress, however, was slow, and two years later we find gathering still going on in the boxes. In December, 1738, a correspondent assuming the character of Miss Townley, thus addressed the editor of *The London Evening Post*:—

[1] Dublin, 1784, iii. p. 182.

I am a young woman of fashion who love plays, and should be glad to frequent them as agreeable and instructive entertainment, but am debarred that diversion by my relations upon account of a sort of people who now fill or rather infest the boxes. I went the other night to the play with an aunt of mine, a well-bred woman of the last age, though a little formal. When we sat down in the front boxes we found ourselves surrounded by a parcel of the strangest fellows that ever I saw in my life; some of them had those loose kind of greatcoats on which I have heard called *wrap-rascals*, with gold-laced hats, slouched in humble imitation of *stage-coachmen*; others aspired at being *grooms*, and had dirty boots and spurs, with black caps on, and long whips in their hands; a third sort wore scanty frocks, with little, shabby hats, put on one side, and clubs in their hands. My aunt whispered me that she never saw such a set of slovenly, unmannerly footmen sent to keep places in her life, when, to her great surprise, she saw those fellows, at the end of the act, pay the box-keeper for their places.

By way of keeping a check on the box-keeper, the office of "the numberer" was instituted. In the larger theatres a stage box was assigned to this worthy, and from this coign of vantage he had to take stock of the boxes. Thomas Arne, who held the post at Drury Lane in 1735, was one of the principal witnesses at the trial of Charles Macklin for the murder of Thomas Hallam, his fellow-player.[1] In his *Reminiscences*[2] Henry Angelo writes:

Before Old Drury Lane was rebuilt, the last box next to the stage, of the very upper boxes, on the prompter's side, was called the numberer's box; it projected out from the others like a tub. There, old Hardham, who kept the snuff shop in Fleet-street, and was famous for his thirty-seven (snuff), previous to the half price and after, used to number the audience. When a boy, many an evening, being a favourite of the old man, I was welcome there, when I used to meet Mrs Barry (afterward Mrs Crawford), Mrs Abingdon, and Miss Young (late Mrs Pope), with their long black veils, incog.

Necessity rather than mere matter of custom preserved the Elizabethan practice of charging advanced prices on the first nights of a new play until the meridian of the

[1] E. A. Parry, *Charles Macklin*, p. 27.
[2] Vol. ii. 233. Drury Lane was rebuilt in 1789.

eighteenth century. There was little grumbling over this, as it was felt that the players had a right to recoup themselves for the extra outlay on new scenery and dresses. But with the vogue of pantomimes towards the close of the second decade of the century, and the keen rivalry between the patent theatres in exploiting the new "entertainment", as it was called, the question of finance became more serious. One must recall that the primeval pantomime was not identified with any particular season. As an afterpiece to the play it could be produced at any time or, like an ordinary drama, revived at any time. Its attractions lay in magic and marvels, in comic surprises and bustling dumb show. To produce it adequately made a severe draft on the managerial exchequer, as much as a thousand pounds having, on occasion, to be expended on the elaborate trick scenery and general mechanical equipment. Under these conditions it was not surprising that a more frequent demand came to be made on the playgoer's pocket, as it was necessary now not only to charge advanced prices on the early nights of a new play, but during the first run of a new pantomime. The public grimly bore the infliction ; but there was a limit to its endurance, and snapping point was reached in November, 1744, when Fleetwood, the Drury Lane manager, had the audacity to raise the prices on reviving an old pantomime of no particular merit. The result was rioting in the theatre, followed by a temporary closure. People of taste gave expression to the opinion that pantomimes were a degradation of the stage and refused to be mulcted on their account; but Fleetwood, in an address to the public made in *The General Advertiser*, urged the prime necessity to draw the crowd, arguing (what many later managers found to be a truism) that without the funds provided by pantomimes it would be impossible to pay much attention to the claims of the poetic drama.

At length, on the suggestion of Theophilus Cibber, a compromise was arrived at. It was arranged that during the run of a pantomime full prices should be paid at the doors, but that those who did not care to stop for the

afterpiece should secure a ticket on entering, by returning which before the pantomime began they could obtain a refund of the excess. An announcement to this effect was regularly printed at the bottom of the bills, but the curious thing was that the concession led to no serious diminution of the receipts. Theophilus Cibber, who was in a position to know, questioned if there was a demand in all for £20 in the course of the succeeding decade.[1]

The duration of the custom thus established is impressed upon us by a metaphorical allusion to it made some seventeen years later by Sterne, in *Tristram Shandy*:[2]

> My Uncle Toby and Yorick made the obeisance which was proper; and the Corporal, though he was not included in the compliment, laid his hand upon his breast, and made his bow at the same time—The Company smiled—Trim, quoth my father, has paid the full price for staying out the entertainment. He did not seem to relish the play, replied Yorick.

Since Fleetwood's concession was virtually the acceptance, at certain periods, of half price for the first part of the evening's entertainment, one is naturally disposed to think that it led to the immediate establishment of half price for the second part, that longevous principle known in the beginning as "Half price after the third act," and considerably later as "Second Price at nine o'clock." On further examination, however, it would appear that half price, in the regulation sense of the term, had been established in the London theatres some little time before the riot at Old Drury over Fleetwood's innovation. When the new Capel Street Theatre in Dublin was opened on 17 January, 1744-5, with *The Merchant of Venice*, the newspaper announcement of the event concluded with the intimation, "No odd money taken till after the third act."[3] That half price was then taken in all the Dublin theatres is shown by the fact that when the pantomime of *Harlequin Doctor Faustus* was revived at the Aungier Street Theatre on

[1] Fitzgerald's *New History of the English Stage*, i. 431. For fuller details concerning the riot, etc., see Victor's *History of the Theatres of London and Dublin*, i. 43–7, and Dutton Cook's *Book of the Play*, Chap. xx.

[2] Book v, Chap. 30.

[3] Vol. of *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* for 1745 in the Departmental Library, Dublin Castle.

21 March following, it was notified in the advertisements that, on account of the great expense, "no odd money" would be "taken in any part of the House during the whole performance." If the principle of half price had not been established in London before December, 1744, we should hardly find it existing in Dublin a month later. Nor does it seem feasible to suppose that it had originated in Dublin, despite the fact that the Dublin theatres of the period had a few distinctive customs of their own. Unless imported, it could only have arisen there through popular demand, but as a matter of fact, the system was so little taken advantage of, that it had become obsolete by the middle of the century.[1] Dawson revived it at the new Capel Street Theatre in November, 1773, when the bills announced, "Half price after the third act as in London. No money returned after the raising of the curtain." But again it died out, only to be revived again with more acceptance seventy years later.

Under whatever conditions it had originated in London, whether voluntarily or under pressure, the managers soon grew to look askance at "Half price after the third act." So many exceptions were made to the rule that none but constant playgoers could say when it applied. It was not in force during the first nights of new plays and new pantomimes, or on benefit nights. On any occasion when there was likely to be a full house the managers arbitrarily notified the public that "nothing under full prices would be taken." In process of time a sense of grievance sprang up, and early in 1763 this was adroitly taken advantage of by an elegant man about town and "amateur of the theatre" (as the old phrase went), to arouse antagonism against Garrick, whom, for divers reasons, he owed a grudge. This Mr. Fitzpatrick, who was a man of parts, for all the mud that has been flung at him by Garrickolaters, began by circulating in the taverns and coffee houses on the morning of 25 January an anonymous handbill[2] complaining of the conduct of the managers in

[1] Cf. John O'Keeffe's *Recollections*, i. 286.

[2] Printed *in extenso* in *The Gent's Magazine* for 1763, p. 31, where some account of the disturbance is also given. For other details see Murphy's *Life of Garrick*, Chap. xxx; Davies' *Life of Garrick*, Chap. xxx; and Dutton Cook's *Book of the Play*, Chap. xx.

restricting the rights of playgoers so far as half price was concerned, and suggesting that vigorous action should be taken. A cabal, headed by Fitzpatrick, had already been formed, and the same evening the conspirators attended a performance at Drury Lane of Victor's recently produced adaptation of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, announced as for the benefit of the author. The players in those days were voted fair game by the mob, and when Fitzpatrick harangued the audience concerning the mooted grievance, public opinion ranged itself on his side. When Garrick came on to argue the point, the house was in no mood for casuistry and proceeded to smash things. By way of indirect punishment for his maltreatment of Shakespeare, Victor's benefit proved the worst on record, for all the money had to be returned.

On the following night the cabal attended in full force. Garrick, who had meanwhile taken counsel with his partner Lacy and been over-ruled by his opinion, was at once called for. On making his appearance he was heckled by Fitzpatrick, who curtly demanded, "Will you, or will you not, allow admittance at half price after the third act of every piece, except a new pantomime, during its run in the first winter?" Little Davy meekly answered "Yes", and victory lay with the cabal.

What was in the beginning a conspiracy against Garrick had now developed into a public issue. The victory was only half gained, for Garrick could only answer for Old Drury, and Covent Garden remained unassaulted. On the following night,[1] when the opera of *Artaxerxes* was in the bill at the other house and Beard the manager had thrown down the gage of defiance in announcing that nothing under full price would be taken, Fitzpatrick and his allies turned their batteries in that direction, only to meet with determined opposition. Beard made a vigorous speech, and wound up by saying "No". The only possible rejoinder on the part of the cabal was to tear up the benches, demolish the scenery, and smash the chandeliers, and this they did

[1] Genest says on 24 February, but his dating is clearly wrong.

completely to their satisfaction. Not yet defeated, Beard haled Fitzpatrick and a few of his cronies before the Lord Chief Justice, who duly admonished them. This led to a change of tactics, but after the Covent Garden players were disturbed for several nights with cat-calls, and other annoyances, Beard ate the leek, and peace was declared.[1] Thus was gained, in the words of Davies, "the wonderful privilege of seeing two acts of a play at half price, and the exalting of pantomime to a rank superior to tragedy and comedy."

Relics of one or two time-honoured customs lingered in the boxes of Old Drury until the great success of Mrs. Siddons' epoch-marking engagement of 1782-3 created a revolution in the outworn system of admission. Owing to the steady demand for seats, it was then arranged that places in the boxes could be secured beforehand on paying half the price of admission and securing a ticket. The other half had to be paid on entering the theatre, otherwise the deposit was forfeited. This, of course, was not a system of advance booking, because nobody had as yet hit upon the simple expedient of numbering seats. But only as many people were supplied with tickets for any particular night as the boxes would hold. Those who wished to secure good seats had to go early and bribe the boxkeeper.

To the superior merits of this new system a writer in 1788 bore significant testimony:[2]

> The regulation of detaining all money paid at the door has been found of good effect to the audience. It completely excludes temporary loungers who kept up a continued noise by peeping into the boxes for the purpose of shewing their own persons, and having gained their end, drew their money and retired.

Of a surety Sir Novelty Fashion was not lacking in lineal descendants!

[1] I base here on the accounts of Charles Dibdin (as cited in Mr. H. Saxe Wyndham's *Annals of Covent Garden Theatre*, i. 154–5), and of Thomas Davies, loc. cit. Murphy, whose memory evidently betrayed him, says *per contra*, "Covent Garden was at liberty to proceed on the old system, while Garrick, the great patron of the drama, was obliged to submit to the law of the conquerors."

[2] *Walker's Hibernian Magazine*, 1788, p. 565. Evidently a reprint from some London periodical.

The Origin of the English Picture-Stage

The Origin of the English Picture-Stage

Bating some excellent pioneer work done during the last few years, and that mostly by foreigners, English theatrical history has been, on the whole, indifferently written. Time-honoured fallacies have been again and again complacently endorsed, and for the most part there has been a sedulous avoidance of the drudgeries of research. To think of certain unexplored tracts in English theatrical history is to recall that our historians with their feeble searchlights have only rendered the surrounding darkness more visible. By their muddled methods they have succeeded in obscuring from view the fact that the Civil War delayed the regular employment of successive scenery in the English theatre for fully a score of years. One says, "the regular employment", not the introduction, because there are sound reasons for believing that some tentative use had been made of movable scenery in the private theatres about the period of 1637-40.[1] In the first case we know positively that Nabbes' masque of *Microcosmus* had been "presented with generall liking" (as the title page states) at Salisbury Court in 1637, and nowhere else. And we know also from the book that this masque—which, unlike its court analogues, was divided into acts—had a special proscenium arch and five sets of scenes. Of the arch, or "front", we are told that it was "of a workmanship proper to the fancy of the rest, adorn'd with brass figures of Angels and Divels, with Severall inscriptions, the Title in an Escocheon supported by an Angell and a Divell. Within the arche a Continuing perspective of ruines which is drawne still before the other scenes whilst they are varied."

Apart from this bold attempt to adapt the court masque to the uses of the stage as a substantive entertainment, we have

[1] Fleay finds earlier indications but, irrespective of his confused method of argument, the evidence is too slender to be relied upon. *(Biog. Chron. Eng. Drama* under *Pallantus aud Eudora* and *Love's Mistress).* At present I prefer to choose as starting point a period where the foothold is firmer.

also some evidence indicating that one or two plays written by courtiers were either originally acted at court with scenery and afterwards at the private theatres with the same trappings, or vice versa. In the prologue to Brome's comedy, *The Antipodes*, as spoken at Salisbury Court in 1638, we read:

> *Opinion*, which our *Author* cannot court,
> (For the deare daintinesse of it) has, of late,
> From the old way of Playes possest a sort
> Only to run to those, that carry state
> In Scene magnificent and language high;
> And Cloaths worth all the rest, except the Action.
> And such are only good those Leaders cry;
> And into that beleefe draw on a Faction,
> That must despise all sportive, merry Wit,
> Because some such great Play had none in it.

The reference here, more especially the "and Cloaths worth all the rest," is clearly to Sir John Suckling's tragi-comedy *Aglaura*, which had first been produced at Blackfriars in the Christmas of 1637, and was shortly afterwards acted at court.[1] Of this play, Aubrey, in his account of Suckling, writes, "he had some scenes to it, which in those days were only used at Masques." Moreover, in a letter from Mr. Garrard to Lord Strafford, under date 7 February, 1637-8, we read:

> Two of the king's servants, privy chamber men both, have writ each of them a play, Sir John Sutlin and Will. Barclay, which have been acted in court, and at the Blackfriars, with much applause. Sutlin's play cost three or four hundred pounds setting out; eight or ten suits of new cloaths he gave the players; an unheard of prodigality.[2]

Another item of evidence is presented in the prologue to Brome's comedy, *The Court Beggar*, the first edition of which was issued in 1653, and bears on its title page the erroneous statement that it was "acted at the Cockpit by his Majesty's

[1] For evidence as to the sequence, see the "Prologue to the Court" in the quarto of 1694, described on title page as "presented at Court by His Majesties Servants." A second quarto of the play issued in the same year is described as "presented at the Private House in Black Fryers by His Majesties Servants," and has a different last act. These are the only copies of *Aglaura* in the British Museum.

[2] *Strafford's Letters*, ii. 150.

servants, anno 1632." Seeing that reference is made in Act iii. 2, to Massinger's *King and Subject*, licensed on 5 June, 1638, and in the epilogue to *The Antipodes*, the production of the play may be safely assigned to 1638. Can it be then that in the prologue Brome again girds at *Aglaura?*

> We 've cause to fear your's or the Poet's frown,
> For of late days (he knows not) how y' are grown
> Deeply in love with a new strayne of wit
> Which he condemns, at least disliketh it,
> And solemnly protests you are to blame
> If at his hands you doe expect the same.
> He'll treat his usual way, no gaudy scene
> Shall give instructions what his plot doth mean;
> No handsome love-toy shall your time beguile
> Forcing your pitty to a sigh or smile,
> But a slight piece of mirth, yet such were writ
> By our great Masters of the Stage and Wit,
> Whom you approv'd: let not your sufferage then
> Condemn 't in him, and prayse 't in other men.
> Troth, Gentlemen, let me advise yee, spare
> To vex the poet full of age and care,
> How he might strive to please yee, and beguile
> His humerous expectation with a smile,
> As if you would be satisfyd, although
> His Comedy contained no Antique Show.
> Yet you to him your favour may express
> As well as unto those whose forwardness
> Makes them your Creatures thought, who on the way
> To purchase fame give money with their play.
> Yet you sometimes pay deare for 't, since they write
> Lesse for your pleasure than their own delight,
> Which if our Poet fayle in, may he be
> A scene of Mirth in their next Comedy.

Brome's attempts to resist the encroachments of a flood of dilettanteism, which was bidding fair to swamp professional authorship, serves to emphasize the fact that these sporadic introductions of scenery into the private theatre were not due to the initiative of the players, who could not hope to recoup themselves for any such outlay, but to the

epicurean tastes of a group of courtier-wits, who, instead of looking for some pecuniary return for their work, gave money and rich attire with their plays. As a matter of fact, one of the prime results of the regular employment of scenery at the Restoration period was a considerable advance in the prices of admission, a course authorized by a clause in the new patents.[1]

A third item of evidence testifying to the use of scenery in the private theatres before the Civil War is to be found in the prologue to *The Country Captaine*, a comedy by the Duke of Newcastle, published anonymously in 1649. This play was produced at the Blackfriars, probably in April or May, 1640. That it was written after June, 1639, an allusion in it to the Treaty of Berwick shows.[2] The prologue begins :

> Gallants, I'le tell you what we do not meane
> To shew you here, a glorious painted Scene,
> With various doores, to stand instead of wit,
> Or richer cloathes with lace, for lines well writ;
> Taylors and Paynters thus, your deare delight,
> May prove your Poets only for your sight.

The allusion here is undoubtedly to William Habington's tragi-comedy, *The Queen of Arragon*, which was first played before the King and Queen at Whitehall by amateurs on 9 April, 1640, and, after a second performance there, was given at the Blackfriars by the regular players. According to Sir Henry Herbert, his cousin Habington's play was presented at Court at the instance of the Lord Chamberlain. "It was performed by my Lord's servants out of his owne family, and his charge in the cloathes and sceanes, which were very riche and curious."[3] The allusion in the Duke of Newcastle's prologue to "a glorious painted scene with various doors" apparently points to the fact that the scene referred to was of the type long known in France as "palais à volonté" or "chambre à quatre portes".[4] Considering

[1] For the clause, see Percy Fitzgerald, *A New History of the English Stage*, i. 75.
[2] Fleay, *Biog. Chron. Eng. Drama*, i. 48.
[3] Collier, *Hist. Eng. Dram. Poetry* (1831), ii. 98–9.
[4] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), p. 167.

LA CHAMBRE A QUATRE PORTES. [*To face p.* 124.

Frontispiece to T. Corneille's comedy, *Don Bertrand de Cigaral* (1650), from the Amsterdam edition of 1718.

its continental vogue at this period it is not surprising to find that the "chambre à quatre portes" had already been introduced into England. It came to stay, for one finds traces of it in Restoration times.

Indisposed as were the players to make any change, the tide of public opinion was now running strongly in favour of the regular employment of scenery. One far-seeing courtier-poet had already decided to take it at the full. Opera of a highly elaborate pictorial order was now all the rage in Italy, more especially in Venice, and William D'Avenant made up his mind to introduce the new entertainment into England. This practically meant the building of a new theatre on a somewhat imposing scale, the old houses not being adapted for the accommodation of the Italian system of scenery and machinery. Accordingly, in the spring of 1639, the King encouraged the project by granting D'Avenant a patent to build a theatre behind the Three Kings ordinary in Fleet Street. It was to be furnished "with necessary tiring and retiring rooms, and other places convenient," and in area was to be "forty yards square at the most."[1] The patentee was authorised to

> entertain, govern, priviledge and keep such and so many players and persons to exercise action, musical presentments, scenes, dancing, and the like, as the said William Davenant, his heirs, etc., shall think fit and approve for the said house, and such persons to permit and continue at and during the pleasure of the said William Davenant, his heirs, and from time to time to act plays in such house so to be by him or them erected, and exercise musick, musical presentments, scenes, dancing, or other the like, at the same or other houses at times, or after plays are ended, etc., etc.[2]

Malone and Collier, in assuming this to be a licence for an ordinary playhouse of the conventional type, have failed to grasp the significance of the stress laid on "musick, musical presentments, scenes, dancing, or other the like," the necessary concomitants of contemporary opera. Malone, indeed,

[1] Evidently a large theatre was projected. The first Fortune, a commodious public playhouse, was only 80 feet square, and the Theatre Royal, Bridges Street, the second house of the picture-stage order, measured no more than 112 feet by 59 feet.

[2] Malone's *Shakespeare* (Dublin, 1794), ii. 67; see also Collier, op. cit. ii. 96.

goes widely astray in his interpretation of the word "scenes" as used in the patent, more particularly with regard to the following clause empowering D'Avenant to charge normal rates of admission :—

> And that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said W. D., his heirs, etc., so to take and receive of such our subjects as shall resort to see or hear any such plays, scenes, and entertainments whatsoever, such sum or sums of money, as is or hereafter from time to time shall be accustomed to be given or taken in other playhouses and places for the like plays, scenes, presentments, and entertainments.

Malone argues[1] that throughout the patent the word "scenes" is used to mean "not paintings, but short stage representations or presentments," and gives reasons why, in his opinion, if the introduction of scenery had really been projected, something in excess of the ruling prices of admission would have been permitted to be charged. Even allowing that there is some cogency in the latter part of his contention (although, for that matter, the "or hereafter from time to time shall be accustomed to be given" seems to afford D'Avenant a loophole of escape), one cannot concede that the word "scenes" was ever employed in the theatrical patents of the seventeenth century in the sense of short sketches. On the contrary, "interludes" was the routine phrase bearing that interpretation. One searches in vain for any use whatever of the word "scenes" in any of the patents issued previously. And yet anyone conversant with the old patents knows full well how much they run in the one mould, how mechanical is the iteration of phrase, and in how senseless a manner provisoes are repeated long after time and change have deprived them of their validity. D'Avenant must have intended to build a new kind of theatre and give a new kind of performance, otherwise his patent would have echoed in part the phrasing of the patent granted to the King's players at the Globe and Blackfriars in 1620, a patent which says nothing about musical entertainments or scenes, but authorizes the licencees "freely to

[1] op. cit. ii. 68.

use and exercise the act and Facultie of playing Comedies, Tragedies, Histories, Enterludes, Moralls, Pastoralls, Stage playes and such other like as they have already studied."[1]

To my mind it is plain, not only from the phrasing of the passage, "musick, musical presentments, scenes, dancing, or other the like," but from the clause warranting him to give performances after the normal playing-time that D'Avenant fully intended to give evening concerts as well as occasional performances of opera. We shall see that the actual first musical entertainment given seventeen years later under his auspices *was* a concert. It may be asked, of course, why, if it was the King's intention that D'Avenant should perform operas, no mention of operas occurs in the patent. As a matter of fact, the slangy, elliptical term "opera" had not yet found its way to England. It was an abbreviation of *opera musicale*, a term for which the "musical presentments" of the D'Avenant patent is an adequate equation. Evelyn had never heard the word *opera* till he visited Italy in 1644, and in noting its common use there in his diary on 19 November he is careful to define what it means.

The mystery which surrounds the D'Avenant patent is to some extent dissipated when we come to consider these details. For a man of only moderate means to build and equip a new opera-house, and to furnish it with the necessary singers, dancers, instrumentalists, scene painters and machinists, was a truly formidable undertaking. It is impossible now to determine what insuperable difficulties sprang up in D'Avenant's path, but within five or six months of the granting of the patent he had decided to abandon his immediate project, while still hugging tenaciously his original scheme in its quiddity. Collier seriously confuses the issue by implying that the King for some mysterious reason withdrew his permission.[2] He did nothing of the kind. So far from surrendering his patent, D'Avenant

[1] For the entire patent, see Collier, op. cit. i. 416–7.

[2] op. cit. ii. 95–6. Chalmers maintains that D'Avenant had quarrelled with the ground landlord, evidently basing on the statement in the indenture that the locality in Fleet Street had been "found inconvenient and unfit for the purpose", but proof is lacking, and one has suspicion that the real reason was not avowed.

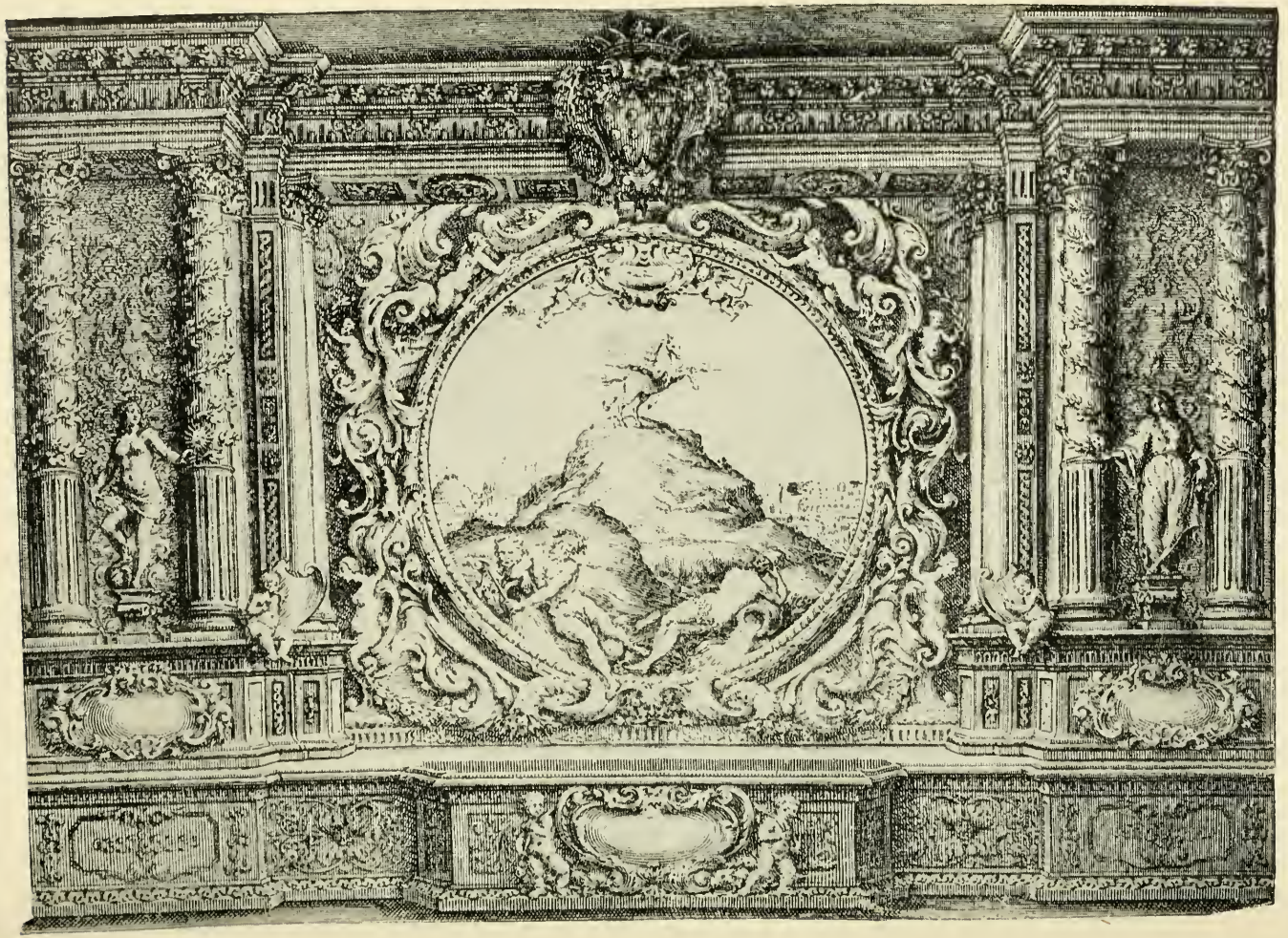
merely made indenture[1] on 2 October, 1639, yielding up his right to erect a theatre in Fleet Street, and undertaking not to erect any other theatre in London or Westminster "unless the said place shall be first approved and allowed by warrant under his Majesty's sign-manual, or by writing under the hand and seal of the said Right Honourable Thomas Earl of Arundel and Surrey." That the patent lay dormant for over a score of years is shown by the fact that its validity was recognized at the Restoration, and that it was under its powers that D'Avenant's players began acting at Salisbury Court. On 9 July, 1660, Charles II issued

> A warrant for a grant to Thomas Killigrew, Groom of the Bedchamber, of license to erect a company of players, which shall be the King's company, and build a theatre; with power to make such allowances as he pleases to the actors, to oblige them to performance of their contracts, or to silence and eject such as are mutinous; and as there has been great licence lately in matters of this nature, no companies of Actors are now to be allowed, saving this one, and that granted by the late King to Sir William Davenant; all others to be totally suppressed.[2]

It is characteristic of D'Avenant's tenacity that the purposes for which the old patent was originally granted were ultimately fulfilled. On 16 May, 1661, the King exemplified under the Great Seal the license granted twenty-two years previously by his royal father, and it was virtually under its authority that the Duke's Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, the first picture-stage theatre, was opened, and that operas were then given for the first time since the Restoration.[3]

Synchronizing with his abandonment of the Fleet Street scheme, D'Avenant was appointed by the Lord Chamberlain governor of the company acting at the Cockpit in Drury Lane,[4] but it cannot be found that during his period of authority he made serious innovation there. While he was still maturing his ideas on the subject of opera, the Civil

[1] For which see Collier, op. cit. ii. 96–7.
[2] *State Papers, Dom. Ser., Charles II*, 1660–61, p. 114.
[3] For the exemplification, see Fitzgerald's *New History of the English Stage*, i. 73–4.
[4] For the warrant, see Collier, op. cit. ii. 101 footnote.



PROSCENIUM FRONT AND PICTORIAL CURTAIN OF THE PERGOLA THEATRE, FLORENCE, 1657.

[*To face p.* 128.

War intervened, delaying the accomplishment of his purposes another fifteen years. After winning his knighthood at the Siege of Gloucester, and retiring for a time to France, he was for long a prisoner in the Tower, but on his release in the meridian of the Commonwealth, he, possibly with the view of replenishing his exhausted resources, strove to effect some realization of his long-nursed scheme. Proceeding cautiously, so as to allay suspicion as to his intent, he began by giving at Rutland House in Aldersgate Street, late in May, 1656, a series of oratorical-cum-musical entertainments, the first of which was billed as "The Entertainment by music and declamations after the manner of the ancients." The new departure consisted of a number of long and tedious disputations, not really dialogues, though Socratic in form, intermixed with appropriate original vocal and instrumental music.[1] It does not appear to have been particularly successful, judging from the fact that on the first day only 150 people assembled in a room capable of accommodating 400.[2] But it probably did all it was intended to do. Rightly or wrongly, one surmises that it was devised partly, in its decorous dulness, to allay suspicion as to the nature of D'Avenant's whole project, and partly, by the speech of Aristophanes, to make defence of the rationality, not of plays, but of musical entertainments embellished with scenery. In a word, he used it as a stalking horse. Already vigorous preparations were being made for the production of the first English Opera. This was *The Siege of Rhodes*, announced as "a Representation by the art of Prospective in Scenes and the Story sung in Recitative Musick." The exact date of its production at Rutland House is unknown, but it can be approximated through a letter of D'Avenant's, addressed to Sir Bulstrode Whitelocke, the Lord Keeper, under date 3 September, 1656, in which we read:

> When I consider the nicety of the times, I fear it may draw a curtain between your Lordship and our opera; therefore I have presumed to send your Lordship, hot from the press, what we mean

[1] For the text, see Maidment and Logan's *D'Avenant*, Vol. iii. 193 ff.
[2] *State Papers, Dom. Ser.*, Interregnum (1656), Vol. cxxviii, No. 108.

to represent, making your Lordship my supreme judge, though I despair to have the honour of inviting you to be a spectator.[1]

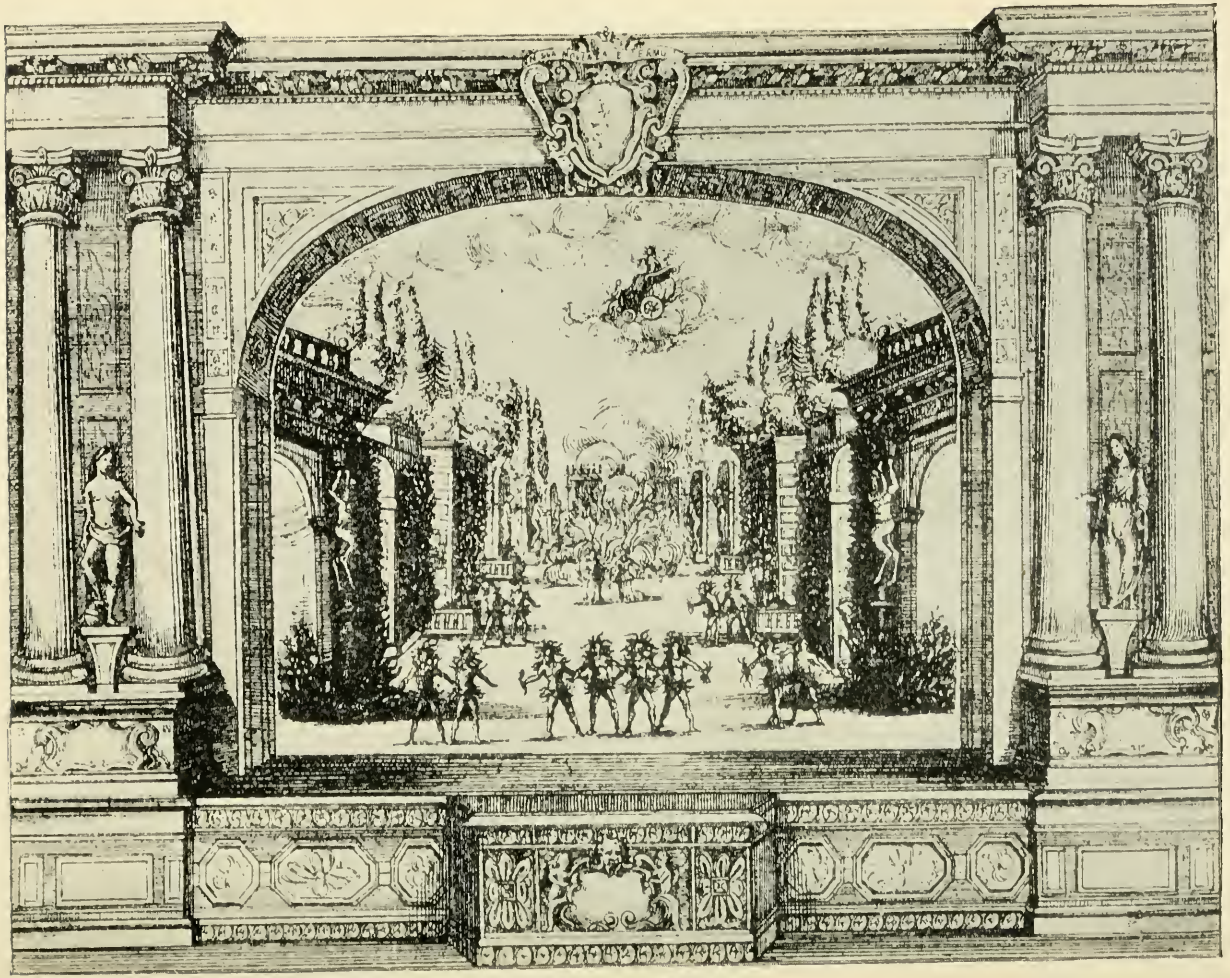
Viewing the conditions under which it was written and produced, one is not surprised to find that *The Siege of Rhodes* bears no particular resemblance to the Italian operas of its period. Up to this time writers of *dramma per musica* had limited themselves to mythological themes the better to give right of existence to the magical surprises effected by the machinists, whose resourceful ingenuity gave great vogue to effects of descending palaces, expanding clouds, and flights of divinities. Debarred from indulging in these scenic extravagances, through sheer lack of the necessary mechanical equipment, D'Avenant had to fall back on a sober, historical theme. Intercalated ballet-dancing, so characteristic a feature of contemporary Italian opera, was equally out of the question. By way of recompense for these shortcomings, the music in *The Siege of Rhodes* was written by no fewer than five composers, Henry Lawes, Captain Cooke, Matthew Lock, Dr. Charles Coleman and Henry Hudson.[2] Scenery of an unobtrusive kind had been provided by John Webbe, Inigo Jones's nephew and son-in-law. Of the harassing limitations of the place of performance, D'Avenant has much to say in his Address to the Reader:

Yet I may forewarn you that the defects which I intend to excuse are chiefly such as you cannot reform but only with your Purse; that is, by building us a larger Room; a design which we began and shall not be left for you to finish because we have observed that many who are liberal of their understanding when they would issue it out towards discovery of imperfections, have not always Money to expend in things necessary towards the making up of perfection.

It has been often wisht that our Scenes (we have oblig'd ourselves to the variety of Five Changes, according to the Ancient Drammatick distinctions made for time) had not been confin'd to eleven foot in height, and about fifteen in depth, including the place

[1] Whitelocke's *Memorials*, p. 639. D'Avenant's address to the reader, in the first edition of the opera, evidently printed before the performance, is dated "August 17, 1656."

[2] Cf. *The Musical Antiquary*, January, 1911, p. 68, article on "A Great English Choir-trainer: Captain Henry Cooke." It is noteworthy that Cooke and Lock also took part in the opera as performers.



BALLET OF FURIES IN THE OPERA-BALLET OF *IPERMNESTRA*.
(Pergola Theatre, Florence, 1658).

[*To face p.* 130.

of passage reserv'd for the musick. This is so narrow an allowance for the fleet of Solyman the magnificent, his Army, the Island of Rhodes, and the varieties attending the Siege of the City; that I fear you will think we invite you to such a contracted Trifle as that of the Caesars carv'd upon a Nut.

As these limits have hinder'd the splendor of our Scene, so we are like to give no great satisfaction in the quantity of our Argument, which is in story very copious; but shrinks to a small narration here, because we could not convey it by more than seven Persons; being constrain'd to prevent the length of Recitative Musick, as well as to conserve, without encumbrance, the narrowness of the place.

In its original form, *The Siege of Rhodes* was divided into five acts, called *entries*, after the method followed in the French *ballets de cour*. As in the court masques of the Caroline period, a special emblematic frontispiece was provided with a title-inscription at the top. On the two sides columns of "gross rustic work supported a large frieze in the midst of which there was an escutcheon bearing in bold letters the word *Rhodes*." The whole had an embellishment of crimson drapery on which divers trophies of arms were fixed. Although nine changes of scene were made in the five entries, or acts, always with a clear stage, only five different scenes were shown, as explained by D'Avenant in his address to the reader. Most of the vital characteristics of each scene were expressed on the back flats, which had more the aspect of a latter-day panorama than of theatrical scenery in the current acceptation of the term. On the small stage of Rutland House the introduction of a host of supernumeraries was wholly impracticable, and D'Avenant followed French precedent[1] and established an English one[2] in representing his crowds on canvas.

What measure of support was given to *The Siege of Rhodes* at Rutland House one cannot say, but it would appear that shortly after its production, D'Avenant, irritated beyond endurance by the cramped conditions under which performances had to be given, abandoned the room and

[1] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), p. 194 footnote.

[2] For later English examples, see Crowne's *History of Charles the Eighth of France* 1672), ii. 2, and Lee's *Theodosius*, description of scene at beginning of Act i.

shelved his scheme. Nothing further is to be gleaned until 15 October, 1658, when we find Dr. Thomas Smith, writing from Cockermouth to his friend Sir Daniel Fleming, "Sir William D'Avenant the poet-laureate, has obtained permission for stage plays and the Fortune Playhouse is being trimmed up."[1] To adopt a proverbial Irish saying, Smith, "if he did not knock it down, at least he staggered it." It was the dismantled Cockpit in Drury Lane that was being fitted up for D'Avenant, and the permission was for operas, not plays. There can be little doubt that the poet had obtained this concession by holding the candle to the devil. In 1662, Sir Henry Herbert, the rapacious Master of the Revels, in connexion with his dispute with D'Avenant, delivered a statement of his claims to the Lord Chancellor and Lord Chamberlain, in which he characterized his antagonist as

A person who exercised the office of Master of the Revells to Oliver the Tyrant, and wrote *the First and Second Parts of Peru*, acted at the Cockpit in Oliver's tyme,[2] and solely in his favour; wherein hee sett of the justice of Oliver's actinges, by comparison with the Spaniards, and endeavouring thereby to make Oliver's crueltyes appear mercyes, in respect of the Spanish crueltyes; but the mercyes of the wicked are cruell.

That the said Davenant published a poem in vindication and justification of Oliver's actions and government, and an Epithalamium in praise of Oliver's daughter, M. Rich;—as credibly informed.[3]

It was probably at the beginning of December, 1658, that D'Avenant opened the Cockpit with his new opera, *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru*.[4] The opening is not likely to have occurred much earlier as, although Cromwell

[1] *Hist. MSS. Comm. Report*, 12, Pt. vii.

[2] It is doubtful if Cromwell were living at the time of the production of either *The Cruelty of the Spaniards*, etc., or *Sir Francis Drake*; but one at least was likely written considerably beforehand and submitted for approval.

[3] Malone's *Shakespeare* (Dublin, 1794), ii. 219. Frances Cromwell was married to Rich on 11 November, 1657.

[4] The books of the Cockpit operas appear to have been issued while they were being performed, seeing that two of them bear on the title page, "represented at the Cockpit in Drury Lane at three afternoone punctually." As *The Cruelty of the Spaniards*, etc., was printed in 1658, and *The History of Sir Francis Drake* and *The Siege of Rhodes* in 1659, the dates would roughly indicate the order of production.

died on 3 September, his funeral did not take place until the 23 November. Great outcry arose amongst the Presbyterians, and on 14 December, Rachel Newport wrote to her brother, Sir R. Leveson, "it is thought the opera will speedily go down; the godly party are so much discontented with it." The consequence was that nine days later a warrant was issued from Whitehall under Richard Cromwell's protectorate, appointing a commission to inquire into the nature of the performances at the Cockpit and to demand on what authority they were being given.[1] That the outcome was not disastrous to D'Avenant's fortunes is shown by the fact that under date 5 May, 1659, Evelyn writes in his Diary:

> I went to visit my brother in London and next day to see a new opera after the Italian way in recitative musiq and sceanes much inferior to the Italian composure and magnificence: but it was prodigious that in a time of such public consternation such a vanity could be permitted. I being engaged could not decently resist the going to see it though my heart smote me for it.

As to the merits of the opera, Evelyn could speak with authority. Had he not seen *Ercole in Lidia* magnificently performed at the Teatro Novissimo, in Venice, in 1645?

Although *The History of Sir Francis Drake* formed the first part[2] of the Peru story, it seems, oddly enough, to have been produced after *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru*. This conclusion is derivable on a double count. In the first case it is indicated in the order of printing. Then again, we find it pointed out in the quarto of *Sir Francis Drake*, that the frontispiece was the same as that used for *The Cruelty of the Spaniards*, the excuse being that "it was convenient to continue it, our Argument being in the same country." It would appear from this that *Sir Francis Drake* was a pure afterthought. Note that when the two operas came to be revived in 1663, as portions of D'Avenant's curious composite piece, *A Playhouse to be Let*, the proper sequence was followed, the *Drake* opera comprising the third act and *The Cruelty* the fourth.

[1] For the order, see R. W. Lowe, *Thomas Betterton*, p. 10.

[2] It is called "The First Part" on the title page of the quarto of 1659.

For the *Cruelty of the Spaniards*, D'Avenant employed the old proscenium arch made for the original version of *The Siege of Rhodes*, merely altering the title-inscription and adding a couple of emblematic shields:

An arch is discern'd rais'd upon stone of Rustick work; upon the top of which is written, in an Antique Shield, *Peru*; and two Antique Shields are fixt a little lower, on the sides, the one bearing the Figure of the Sun, which was the Scutchion of the Incas, who were Emperors of Peru; the other did bear the Spread Eagle, in signification of the Austrian Family. The designe of the Frontispiece is, by way of preparation to give some notice of that argument which is pursu'd in the Scene.

The book reveals that the curtain was drawn up at the beginning and fell at the close, but we have no hint that it was let down between the acts, or entries. The opera was divided into six entries, at the end of each, possibly by way of *intermedii*, dancing and acrobatic feats were given. Thus at the end of the first entry we read:

After the song, a Rope descends out of the Clowds, and is stretcht to a stifness by an Engine, whilst a Rustick Ayre is played, to which Apes from opposite sides of the Wood come out, listen, return; and comming out again, began to dance, then, after awhile, one of them leaps up to the Rope, and there dances to the same Ayre, whilst the other moves to his measures below. Then both retire into the Wood. The Rope ascends.

Between the two Peru operas a considerable difference in structure is to be noted. Whereas *Sir Francis Drake* really partook of the nature of music drama, having dialogues in song, *The Cruelty of the Spaniards* merely consisted of a series of panoramic backgrounds, one to each entry, accompanied by illustrative songs and dances. In the latter, at the beginning of each entry, while the scene was being (doubtless, visually) changed, music was played, mostly symphonies arranged in four sections. Once the change was made the stage remained for some time clear, in order that the audience might note all the details of the paintings. This was vitally necessary, seeing that most of the scenes presented a host of figures, one of them, indeed, showing

the great Peruvian army put to flight by a small body of Spaniards. Here, for example, is the official description of the scene of the first entry:

A lantdchap of the West Indies is discern'd; distinguisht from other Regions by the parcht and bare Tops of distant Hills, by Sands shining on the shores of Rivers, and the Natives, in feather'd Habits and Bonnets, carrying, in Indian Baskets, Ingots of Gold and Wedges of Silver. Some of the Natives being likewise discern'd in their naturall sports of Hunting and Fishing. This prospect is made through a wood, differing from those of European Climats by representing of *Coco Trees*, Pines and Palmetas; and on the boughs of other Trees are seen Munkies, Apes and Parrots; and at further distance Vallies of Sugar-Canes.

In connexion with the wood, which, it is plain to be seen, was expressed on the wings, an interesting point remains to be noted. Although a different scene was used for each entry, no scene being repeated, these tree wings remained stationary throughout. As the scenes, with one exception (that of the fifth entry "a dark prison at great distance"), are all exteriors, there was nothing seriously discordant about this arrangement. Proof of the permanence of the wings is afforded by the fact that at the end of each entry the dancers always come out from "opposite sides of the Wood." This statement is made even at the end of the scene representing the prison, with its racks and other engines of torment. Odd as it seems to us now, this system of the partial change was one of the several scenic systems then in vogue on the Continent, and it had already been followed in England in a few of the Caroline court masques and pastorals.[1] Among the designs by Inigo Jones preserved in the Lansdowne MSS.[2] in the British Museum is one inscribed:

Ground platt of that kind of scene with triangular frames on the sides, when there is but one standing scene, and ye scene changes only at ye back shutters, as imparted for the scene for ye Pastorall of *Florimen*[3] in the hall at Whitehall in 1635.

[1] For indication of its popularity in France, circa 1647, see Ludovic Celler, *Les Décors, les Costumes, et la Mise en Scène au Dix-Septième Siècle*, p. 71. [2] No. 1171, design x.
[3] For which, see *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), p. 136.

Like all the scenic systems of the period, the principle of the partial change was Italian in origin. Some relics of its former employment are to be noted on the Post-Restoration stage. Thus, in Dryden's opera, *Albion and Albanius* (1685), we have, near the close of Act i, the direction, "Part of the Scene disappears, and the Four Triumphal Arches, erected at his Majesty's Coronation, are seen." Again, at the beginning of Act ii, we read, "The Scene is a Poetical Hell. The Change is Total. The Upper Part of the House as well as the Side Scenes." This indicates that even then the wings were not always changed with the flats.

Much that is here said about the mounting of *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru*[1] applies to the *History of Sir Francis Drake*, as first given. One cannot be positive, however, that the wings were again stationary, although, as all the scenes were exteriors, mostly prospects of cities, permanent tree wings would have harmonized with one and all. The back scenes were again elaborately panoramic, with views of people, ships, mules coming down mountain passes and what not.[2] They were evidently flats, not drops, for in the middle of the fifth entry the scene "opened" and revealed "a beautiful Lady ty'd to a tree," doubtless a painting on another flat scene.

In connexion with these Cockpit performances one other point remains to be noted. In his memoir of D'Avenant, Aubrey writes:

> Being freed from imprisonment, because plays (scil. trage, and comedies) were in those presbyterian times scandalous, he contrives to set up an opera *stylo recitativo;* wherein Sergeant Maynard and several citizens were engagers; it began at Rutland House in Charter House-yard; next (scilicet anno . . .) at the Cock Pitt in Drury Lane, where were acted very well, *stylo recitativo*, Sir

[1] Appended to the quarto of 1658 is the note, "Notwithstanding the great expense necessary to Scenes and other ornaments in this Entertainment, there is good provision made of places for a shilling."

[2] This type of scene persisted for some little time on the early picture-stage. In Settle's *Empress of Morocco* (1673), at the beginning of Act ii. we read, "The scene opened is represented the prospect of a large river with a glorious fleet of ships, supposed to be the navy of Muly Hamet." See also the plate illustrating this scene in the original quarto (reproduced in *Cassell's Library of English Literature*, Vol. iii. "Plays," p. 327).

Francis Drake's . . . and *The Siege of Rhodes* (1st and 2nd Part). It did effect the eie and eare extremely. This brought scenes in fashion in England; before at plays was only an hanging.[1]

Aubrey, who wrote circa 1680, frequently forgot names, dates and other necessary facts, and so was compelled by his indifferent memory, in Sterne's phrase, to hang out lights: hence the breaks in the above passage. Under the circumstances it is difficult to know how much reliance to place on his statements. But it is noteworthy that he speaks here of the Second Part of *The Siege of Rhodes* as having been produced at the Cockpit at this time. Hitherto it has been understood that the Second Part was not produced until shortly after the expanded First Part was revived at the Duke's Theatre in 1661, a belief strengthened by the fact that the earliest issue of the Second Part is dated 1663. But it seems highly probable that the first draft of the Second Part was produced at the Cockpit in 1659, seeing that the First Part had been revived there, and that three operas (all we know of definitely) were scarcely enough to keep the theatre going from December until May.

When the King came to his own, exactly a year after the close of D'Avenant's Cockpit venture, the long silenced players were too eager to begin acting to trouble much about the trappings of the stage. The first marked innovation was not the permanent adoption of scenery but the employment of actresses. One cannot say exactly when the first English actress appeared. It may be that Jordan's prologue, introducing her as Desdemona, was spoken at Vere Street on 8 December, 1660, when *Othello* was certainly acted there. But we have really no definite foothold until we read in Pepys' *Diary* of the performance of *The Beggar's Bush* at the same theatre on 3 January following: "it being very well done, and was the first time that I ever saw women come upon the stage."[2] It was not until almost six months later that scenery began to be regularly—but not even

[1] Aubrey's *Brief Lives* (edited by Andrew Clark, 1898), i. 208.
[2] Cf. Dutton Cook, *A Book of the Play*, Chap. xvi, "Her First Appearance."

then universally—employed. Consequently, the story of the Restoration stage in the first twelve months of its record forms the closing chapter in the history of the old platform-stage.

Such were the laxities of the times, and so eager were the players to renew activities that they did not even trouble in the beginning to get the necessary permission from the King or The Master of the Revels. Three of the old dismantled playhouses, The Red Bull, the Cockpit and Salisbury Court were hastily fitted up, and acting was resumed on the old, old lines. The story of the period is a very tangled skein, but an accurate summary of the main evolution of things is given in Wright's *Historia Histrionica* (1699), where Lovewit says :

> Yes; presently after the restoration, the King's players acted publickly at the Red Bull for some time, and then removed to a new built playhouse in Vere Street, by Clare Market. There they continued for a year or two, and then removed to the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, where they first made use of scenes, which had been a little before introduced upon the publick stage by Sir William D'Avenant, at the duke's old theatre in Lincoln's-inn-fields, but afterwards very much improved, with the addition of curious machines by Mr. Betterton at the New Theatre in Dorset Garden, to the great expense and continual charge of the players.

Let it here be said with emphasis (for, thanks to the muddling of our historians, much confusion exists on the question of the introduction of scenery), that not the slightest flaw or defect is to be found after the minutest examination in the above statement. The picture-stage era undoubtedly began with the opening of the new Duke's Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields late in June, 1661, when *The Siege of Rhodes* was revived.[1] Before that neither scenery nor opera had been seen upon the Restoration stage.

In connexion with that statement I anticipate being asked a somewhat ugly question. On or about 8 November, 1660,

[1] For the date, see Robert W. Lowe, *Thomas Betterton*, pp. 83–4. What a pity it is it can only be approximated ! The event was truly epoch-marking, more especially as, according to Downes, the opening day was the first occasion on which Charles II visited a public theatre.

the King's players removed from the old Red Bull, where they had been acting for at least three or four months, to a new playhouse constructed in Gibbons' tennis-court in Vere Street, near Lincoln's Inn Fields. Pepys, who visited the new house on 20 November to see *Beggar's Bush*, was highly taken with the acting, and adds, "indeed it is the finest playhouse, I believe, that ever was in England." Now, the question I anticipate is, why did Killigrew fit up this new theatre and remove the King's players there unless it was to have the advantages of scenery? The only answer I can give, lame enough in all conscience, is that Clerkenwell was somewhat out of the way, and that a more central position was desirable. Remark that when D'Avenant built the Duke's he built it in the same locality.

If one cannot be exactly sure what was Killigrew's aim in removing, one is at least able to say positively that from first to last scenery was never used at Vere Street. Apart from Wright's precise statement this can be shown by more closely related evidence. Let us look, for example, at Dryden's first play, *The Wild Gallant*, which was originally produced at Vere Street on 5 February, 1662-3.[1] The play was not printed until 1669, some two years after its revival in altered form, and with a new prologue, at Drury Lane; but even at this date it presents a sufficiency of evidence to show that its original production took place in a theatre of the platform-stage order. In the earlier prologue the speaker enters and tells the audience the poet had bidden him go and consult the astrologers as to the probable luck of his play. Then we have the direction, "The Curtain drawn discovers two Astrologers; the Prologue is presented to them." A brief conversation between the three follows, in which the astrologers shirk the issue, and the Prologue, having finally addressed the house, bespeaking its good will, the play begins. Now, whereas this prologue is not at all of the Restoration picture-stage class, it is somewhat in the old platform-stage manner, and practically implies the use of the traverses and rear-stage. If we seek for precedent we

[1] Cf. Evelyn's *Diary* under that date, and Pepys under 23 February, 1663.

shall find it in *Doctor Faustus* and *The Merry Devill of Edmonton*. In the former, Chorus delivers the prologue, and on coming to the words, "and this the man that in his study sits," rapidly draws the traverses. In the latter, the Prologue pulls aside the curtains and reveals Faber.

As there are indications of changes of scenery in *The Wild Gallant* quarto of 1669, the text undoubtedly represents the revised and altered play as acted at Drury Lane. But it presents at least two indications of the nature of the stage on which it was originally acted. In Elizabethan days it was customary for eavesdroppers to enter, not by the usual doors, but on to the rear-stage, where they peeped through the curtains, taking care to show themselves to the audience. But they did not formally "enter" until they came forward.[1] This is exactly paralleled in Act iv, Scene 1, of Dryden's play. The scene is a room, "a table set, with Cards upon it." Trice, all alone, proceeds to play an imaginary game of Piquet with Loveby—and loses money to him. While he is so engaged, "enter Loveby behind." He listens, and when Trice whimsically begins to abuse him for winning his money, comes forward. The direction is, "Loveby enters." Now, although the conventionalism of entering behind to listen was followed on the early picture-stage,[2] the character on that stage only made one formal "entry", as there were no traverses to hide behind. He simply stood at the back. The other characters had entered through the proscenium doors and stood on the apron well to the front.

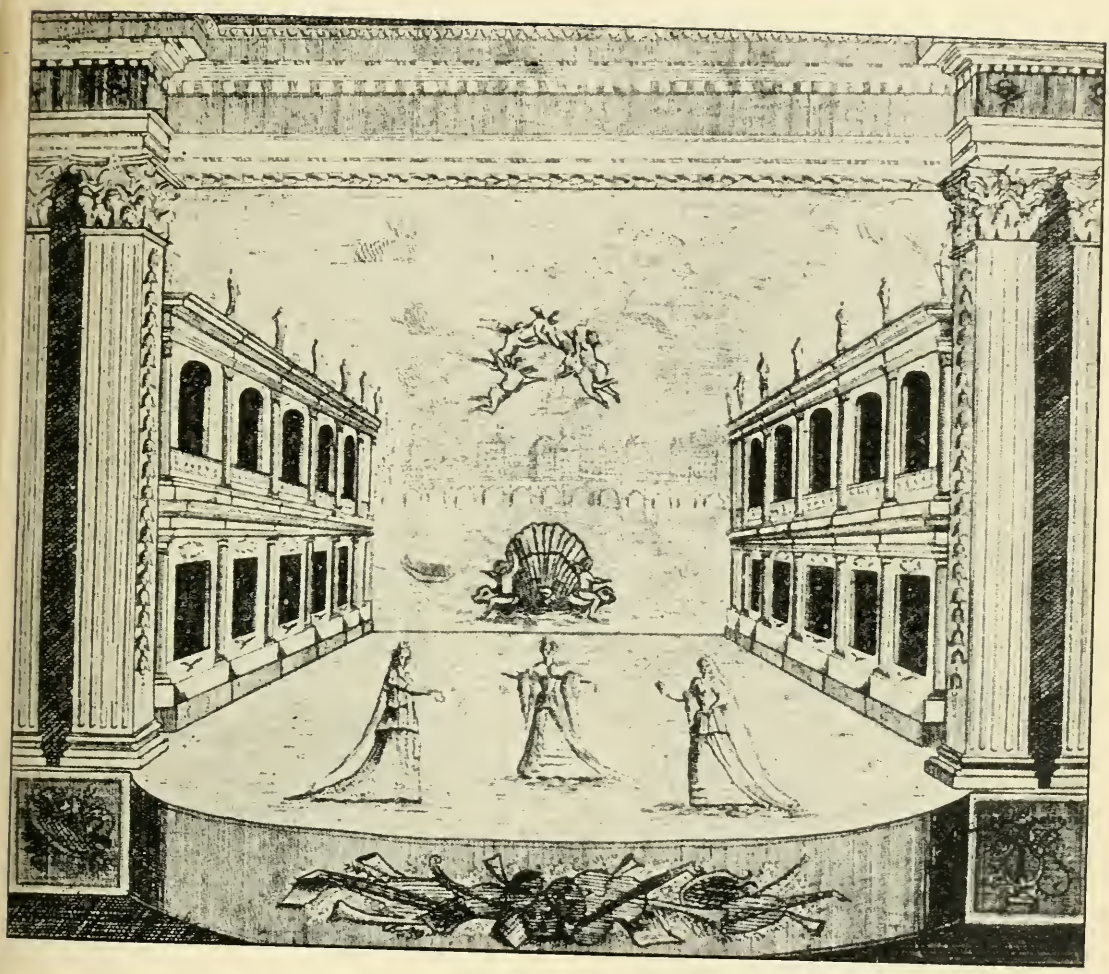
It seems to me, furthermore, that the following colloquy in the fourth act owed its origin to the fact that the Vere Street theatre stage, like all the platform-stages, was adorned with tapestries.

Enter CONSTANCE, *as with Child.*

Nonsuch. Now Gentlewoman! is this possible?
Const. I do not reach your Meaning, Sir.

[1] For examples see *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Q 1 and 2, Act iv. 1, where Oberon listens; *Cymbeline*, Act v; *The Fatal Dowry*, iii. 1; *The Dutchess of Malfi*, iii. 2. Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), pp. 171–2.

[2] See *The Squire of Alsatia*, iii, "Enter Ruth behind them"; *All for Love*, iv. 1; *The Country Wit*, ii. 1.



SCENE IN THE OPERA OF *ARIANE* AT THE THEATRE ROYAL,
BRIDGES STREET, 1674.
(Prologue, showing view of the Thames at back).

[*To face p.* 140.

Non. Where have you been of late?

Const. I seldom stir without you, Sir; These Walls most commonly confine me.

Non. These Walls can get no Children; nor these Hangings; though there be Men wrought in 'em.

Isa. Yet by your Favour, Nuncle, Children may be wrought behind the Hangings.

Pepys records many visits to Vere Street from its opening to its close, but in none of his entries does he make any mention of scenery. If he had seen plays mounted there in the new fashion, why should he have jotted down on 7 May, 1663, when the Vere Street company opened at Drury Lane, "this day the new Theatre Royal begins to act with scenes, The Humourous Lieutenant, but I have not time to see it." There can only be one meaning to that sentence, and that Wright has already yielded us.

Outside Italy the science of theatre-building at this period was ill-considered. In England the logical progression should have been from the hexagon or circle of the Elizabethan public theatres to the semi-circle, or horse-shoe shape, of the picture-stage. Unfortunately, when the first Restoration theatres came to be built, French example intervened. In Paris, from 1620 onwards, most of the troupes had been installed in playhouses fitted up in tennis-courts.[1] This was false economy, for a long narrow building such as a tennis-court was ill-adapted, in point of both sight and hearing, for dramatic performances. At the Restoration the English idea was to unite the principle of the French tennis-court playhouse to the seating disposition of the old private theatres, an unhappy amalgam. Whereas the existing French theatres had, and (with one exception) long continued to have, a standing pit, the Restoration pit was seated. French travellers, such as Sorbières[2] and Balthasar de Monconys, who both visited London in 1663, emphasize this fact. In a note on Drury Lane, made on 22 May, 1663, shortly after its first opening, Monconys writes, "Tous les bancs du parterre

[1] For full details see Germain Bapst, *Essai sur L'Histoire du Théâtre*, pp. 167-71. See also p. 183 for view of the théâtre du Marais.

[2] *Relation d'un voyage en Angleterre*, etc. (1664), p. 166.

où toutes les personnes de condition se mettent aussi, sont rangez en amphitheatre, les uns plus hauts que les autres."[1] Thus in France the pit was the worst part of the house, in England the best. Thirty-five years later Misson records:

There are two theatres at London[2] one large and handsome, where they sometimes act operas, and sometimes Plays: the other something smaller, which is only for plays. The Pit is an Amphitheatre fill'd with Benches without Back-boards, and adorn'd and covered with green cloth. Men of quality, particularly the younger sort, some Ladies of Reputation and Virtue, and abundance of Damsels that hunt for Prey, sit all together in this Place, Higgledy-piggledy, chatter, toy, play, hear, hear not; farther up, against the wall, under the first Gallery, and just opposite to the stage, rises another Amphitheatre, which is taken up by persons of the best Quality, among whom are generally very few men. The Galleries, whereof there only two Rows, are fill'd with none but ordinary people, particularly the upper one.[3]

The earliest and, for long, sole exception in France to the principle of the standing pit occurred in the first Paris Opera-house, as constructed in a tennis-court in the rue de Vaugirard in 1671. Seeing that this house had a seated pit, arranged amphitheatrically, one is inclined to think that a hint had been taken from the Restoration theatres.[4]

In the later private theatres of the platform-stage type the amphitheatrical pit was a logical development from the unseated yard of the public theatres. We who are accustomed to a pit extending beneath the dress circle must bear in mind that in the Elizabethan public theatres the yard was strictly circumscribed in its limits by the lowermost gallery. This can be clearly deduced from the Fortune

[1] *Journal des Voyages de Monsieur de Monconys* (Lyon, 1666), Pt. ii. p. 25.

[2] The Queen's (formerly the Duke's in Dorset Gardens) and Drury Lane. The Queen's was the operatic house.

[3] Misson, *Mémoires et observations faites par un voyageur en Angleterre*, The Hague, 1698 (cited from English translation of 1719). I drag in this interesting quotation, *vi et armis*, because the reference to the benches of the pit being covered with green cloth proves my contention in *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), p. 188, a contention which has been vigorously disputed by Mr. Hamilton Bell in his thoughtful article on "The Playhouse in the days of Shakespeare and Elizabeth," in *The New York Times*, of 13 October, 1912.

[4] For details, plans, etc., see Ch. Nuitter et E. Thoinan, *Les Origines de L'Opéra Français*, Chap. vi, *passim*.

building contract and the Dutch sketch of the Swan. At the Fortune the stage was "to be paled in belowe with good stronge and sufficyent newe oken boardes, and likewise the lower storie of the said frame withinside, and the same lower storie to be alsoe laide over and fenced with strong yron pykes."

Cockpits were usually arranged amphitheatrically, and the first amphitheatrical pit may have come in with the transformation of the Cockpit in Drury Lane into a playhouse. We seem to have some evidence of the disposition in the direction on Shirley's masque, *The Triumph of Peace*, "The scene is changed and the Masquers appear sitting on the ascent of a hill, cut out like the degrees of a theatre." All we know definitely, however, is that the amphitheatrical pit existed at the Restoration. One result of the arrangement was that the last row of the gradually ascending pit was only a few feet below the ledge of the boxes. This explains what to the latter-day mind proves a puzzling passage in Dennis's account of Wycherley's intrigue with the Duchess of Cleveland. "She was that Night," he writes, "in the first Row of the King's Box in Drury Lane, and Mr Wycherley in the Pit under her, where he entertain'd her during the whole Play."[1] It also explains that announcement so frequently made in connexion with benefit nights in the eighteenth century, when admission to the pit was charged at box rates, "Pit and Boxes laid together."[2] All these matters will be the more readily comprehended after a careful scrutiny of the accompanying view of the interior of the old Haymarket, originally published in Gilliland's *Dramatic Mirror* in 1808.

If the physical limitations of the Vere Street theatre formed the only reason for Killigrew's non-employment

[1] This means that Wycherley was in the back row of the pit, for the King's Box (following the continental method) was then in the middle of the first circle. Cf. Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage*, i. 473.

[2] Lowe (*Thomas Betterton*, p. 34) appositely cites a passage from one of Congreve's letters describing a fashionable gathering at the Queen's in Dorset Gardens :—"The boxes and pit were all thrown into one, so that all sat in common; and the whole was crammed with beauties and beaux." Are we to assume from this that on such occasions all barriers were removed?

of scenery before the opening of Drury Lane, it is curious that D'Avenant when he came to create the English picture-stage should have pitched on another tennis-court,[1] not a hundred yards away, wherein to build his theatre. But it may be that lack of means compelled him to content himself with a ready-made shell, despite its inconveniences; and one indeed finds a half hint to that effect in his prologue to the Second Part of *The Siege of Rhodes*, as spoken at the new theatre shortly after its opening:[2]

> But many trav'lers here as Judges come,
> From Paris, Florence, Venice, and from Rome,
> Who will describe, when any scene we draw,
> By each of ours, all that they ever saw.
> Those praising for extensive breadth and height,
> And inward distance to deceive the sight.
> When greater objects, moving in broad space,
> You rank with lesser, in this narrow place,
> Then we like Chessmen on a Chess-board are,
> And seem to play like Pawns the Rhodian Warr.
> Oh money! money! If the Wits would dress,
> With ornaments, the present face of Peace;
> And to our Poet half that treasure spare,
> Which Faction gets from Fools to nourish war;
> Then his contracted Scenes should wider be,
> And move by greater Engines, till you see
> (Whilst you securely sit) fierce armies meet,
> And raging Seas disperse a fighting Fleet.

Pepys, like a child with a new toy, was all excitement over D'Avenant's innovation, and of *The Wits*, the first play to be adorned with scenery on the public stage, had perforce to record, "and indeed it is a most excellent play and admirable scenes." Of *Hamlet*, the first Shakespearean

[1] Lisle's, extending from the back of Portugal Row, on the south side of Lincoln's Inn Fields, to Portugal Street. When the house was abandoned by the players in 1674 it was, on Aubrey's showing, reconverted into a tennis court. Betterton and his fellows turned it again into an indifferent playhouse in 1695, but were glad to leave it in 1705. Subsequently it was rebuilt by Rich, and opened in 1714. Cf. Lowe's *Thomas Betterton*, p. 148.

[2] Vide ante p. 137. If an earlier performance of the Second Part could be established, this ascription might reasonably be disputed.

play to be given on the picture-stage, his opinion was, "done with scenes very well." But all was not well with the new theatre, and two months later, on 21 October, 1661, we find him writing:

> To the Opera, which is now newly begun to act again, after some alteration of their scene, which do make it very much worse; but the play *Love and Honour*, being the first time of their acting it is a very good plot, and well done.

Doubtless Drury Lane (otherwise the Theatre Royal, Bridges Street) was a considerable improvement on the Duke's, more particularly as it was a specially built theatre, not simply a theatre rigged up in a tennis-court. Monconys, who visited it on 22 May, 1663, shortly after its opening, recorded, "les changemens de Théâtre et les machines sont fort ingenieusement inventées et executées." But for the matter of that, he was equally well pleased with the scenic effects at the Duke's, "où les changemens de scene me plurent beaucoup." Considering that the initial advantages lay with Drury Lane, it was not so superior as might have been expected. During the period in 1665-6 when the theatres were closed through the Plague, occasion was taken to make material alteration of that house. On 19 March, 1665-6, Pepys records, "after dinner we walked to the King's playhouse, all in dirt, they being altering of the stage to make it wider. But God knows when they will begin to act again." It was really not until the opening of the Duke's Theatre in Dorset Gardens in 1671 that England could be said to possess an adequate house of the new order, one in which both actor and machinist had elbow-room. In the second Duke's D'Avenant made amends for the shortcomings of the first, although he did not live to see it launched into success.

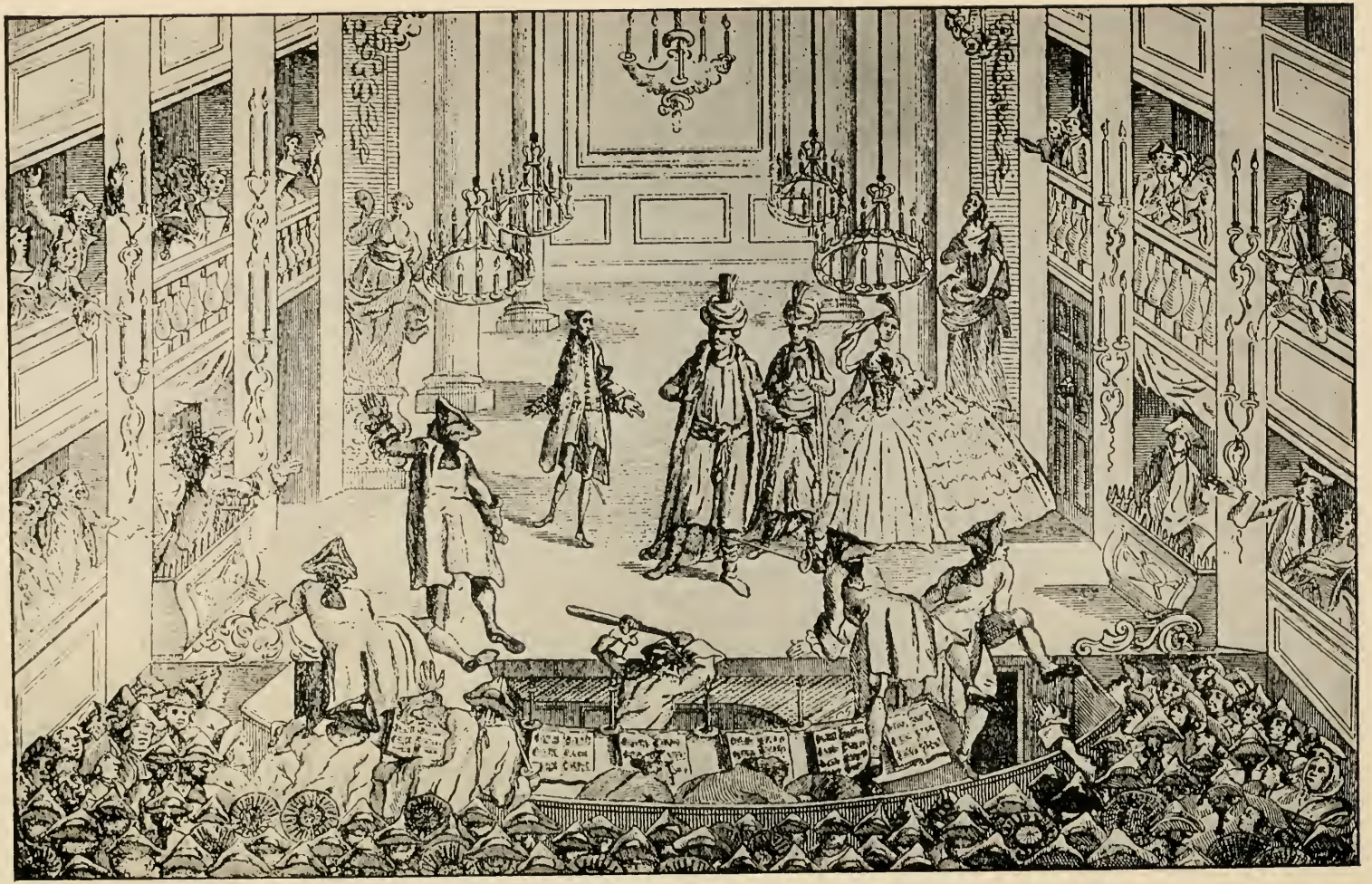
The English picture-stage of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries owed its distinctiveness to the concessions which had to be made in the beginning to the usages and prejudices of players habituated to the methods of the platform-stage. As created by D'Avenant it was a happy amalgam of the prime characteristics of the platform-stage

and the masque-stage of the Caroline period. Permanent entering doors and balconies the players still required to have, but as the tiring-house disappeared with the introduction of scenery, the doors and balconies had to be brought to the front and placed on either side of the proscenium arch.[1] The apron, so long a characteristic of our theatres, was apparently born of the physical limitations of the Duke's Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. In a long, narrow house, where many of the audience were situated remote from the players, it was necessary that the stage should jut out as far as possible, so that the players might come well to the front to make themselves heard. At a slightly later period a similar apron had to be introduced into the Italian opera houses for an almost identical reason. On the subject Algarotti writes:

> As most people are captivated with what appears grand and magnificent, some were induced to resolve on having a theatre built of an excessive extent, and out of all reason, where, however, they should hear commodiously; which to effect, they made the stage whereon the actors perform, to be advanced into the parterre several feet; by that expedient, the actors were brought forward into the middle of the audience, and there was no danger then of their not being heard. But such a contrivance can only please those, who are very easily to be satisfied. For who that reflects, does not see that such a proceeding is subversive of all good order and prudent regulation?[2]
>
> The actors, instead of being so brought forward, ought to be thrown back at a certain distance from the spectator's eye, and stand within the scenery of the stage, in order to make a part of that pleasing illusion for which all dramatic exhibitions are calculated. But by such a preposterous inversion of things, the very intent of theatric representation is destroyed; and the proposed effect defeated, by thus detaching actors from the precincts of the decoration, and dragging them forth from the scenes into the midst of the parterre; which cannot be done by them without shewing their sides, or turning their shoulders to a great part of the audience,

[1] See my paper on "Proscenium Doors: an Elizabethan Heritage," in *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series).

[2] Colley Cibber, writing from the actor's standpoint, thought otherwise. See the extract from his *Apology*, cited at pp. 165–6 of the First Series of these Studies.



FITZGIGGO: A NEW ENGLISH UPROAR.
(Covent Garden Riot of 1763).

[*To face p.* 147

besides many other inconveniencies; so that was conceived would prove a remedy, became a very great evil.[1]

I have quoted Algarotti at some length because his reflections tend to show that where the players or singers of old, either for the purpose of being better heard or, in an ill-lit theatre, of being better seen, confined their acting to the forepart of the stage, the effect of the mounting must have been decorative rather than realistic.[1] Since acting on the Restoration Stage was still largely an art of rhetoric, probably this was all that D'Avenant and Killigrew aimed at. To admit this is to expose the fallaciousness of the time-honoured contention that the introduction of scenery spelled the downfall of poetic drama. Scholars have allowed themselves to be deceived by a synchronization of events in no wise inter-related. The truth is that the great seventh wave of Elizabethan poetico-dramatic impulse had reached high water mark considerably before the Civil War and the disruption of the theatres. With Shirley, the tide had begun to ebb.

[1] Count Algarotti, *An Essay on the Opera* (London, 1767), pp. 96–7.

[2] For ocular demonstration of this, see the accompanying plate of "Fitzgiggo: a new English Uproar," taken from a rare broadside issued in connexion with a riot at Covent Garden in 1763.

The Persistence of Elizabethan Conventionalisms

The Persistence of Elizabethan Conventionalisms

Unsatisfactory as must necessarily be all attempts at terse generalization, one may venture the opinion that the difference between the dramaturgy inspired by the platform-stage and the dramaturgy inspired by the picture-stage is, broadly speaking, the difference between the ill-made and the well-made play. It was not until the oppressive luxuries of scenery began to curb poetic imagination that the science of dramatic construction came to be thoroughly considered. In following this line of argument one champions the cause of that "mechanical school of critics" which has been derided for seeking in the physical conditions of the Elizabethan playhouse some clue to the characteristics of Shakespeare the dramatist. "For the reader who runs while he reads", we have been told, "it is a simple and obvious solution of many difficulties; as simple and obvious as would be the explanation of the form of a snail by the shape of its shell."[1] Here the analogy is so absurd that it may be readily confuted. For example, dramatic climax as we now know it is mainly the outcome of the tableau ending, just as the tableau ending was itself due to the introduction and growing frequency of employment[2] of the front curtain. Find a type of national theatre with an unenclosed stage, and, whether it be in the Athens of Sophocles' age or the London of Shakespeare's, you may assume its drama to be essentially anti-climactic. So far from ending abruptly on the topmost note of high emotional stress, Elizabethan tragedy draws to a close in a diminuendo of philosophic calm. In the absence of a front curtain the dead bodies had to be borne off with solemn dignity.

[1] *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. ccvii, 1908, p. 421, article on "Mr. Hardy's *Dynasts*."

[2] i.e., between the acts. It is doubtful whether the custom of the curtain falling regularly between the acts came into vogue until the eighteenth century. This point will be discussed later.

In the Pre-Restoration epoch, when the plastic platform-stage set no limits to the dramatist's concepts and the public brought to the theatre a ready, and, in a sense, trained imagination, the dramatist was more concerned with poetry than stage architectonics. Unhampered by accessories, he was at liberty to construct his play much as he pleased, without pausing to consider whether any particular act had exceeded a maximum number of scenes, or troubling to see that the act itself concluded with a well worked up picture-poster situation. There was little symmetry of outline but much beauty of ornament. Technically speaking, the play was not so much the thing as the story : that had to be told in full with all circumstantiality. Where the theme was already popular there could be even some looking before and after. The picture, not yet framed, ran off into space. If an old wives' tale had to be told in terms of the theatre, an old wife had to be introduced as if relating it. Whistler's *mot* "why drag in Velasquez?" might well be parodied by the latter-day technique-ridden playwright in asking "why drag in Christopher Sly?" Certainly, to say the least, the acting merits of *The Taming of the Shrew* are not improved by his presence.

The transition from the ill-made play to the well-made play, from the composite play of slow impulsion and abounding anti-climax to the unified play of strictly sequential interest and marked rhythmic progression, neither followed quickly upon the advent of the picture-stage nor came at long last with startling abruptness. So tardy and insensible was the change that to indicate clearly how it was brought about would demand an elaborate disquisition. To some extent it will suffice now to say that opposing forces had to fight out the battle. Scenery as it developed and became systematized had the tendency, both by dint of its limitations and its elaboration, to simplify the action. The whole trend of technical progress was towards the firm establishment of the principle of one act, one scene. For this reason, the evolution of stage mounting ran counter to the preservation of all complexities pertaining to the nature of duality

of plot. But a predilection for Tragi-comedy, with its alternations of laughter and tears, had almost become part and parcel of the English playgoing temperament; with the result that we find the genre pursuing as vigorous an existence in Dryden's later day as in Beaumont and Fletcher's prime.

On the early picture-stage the persistence of the ill-made play and of the conventions associated with it was due to a variety of causes. The composite nature of this new stage, with certain features permanent and traditional and other features innovative, mobile, adaptive, lent itself readily to this prolongation. Players, too, are notoriously conservative, and one must recall that not only the old actors but the new actresses had been trained in the platform-stage routine. Moreover, for some years the old Elizabethan drama continued to form the staple repertory of the theatres, one material result of which was that the primitive scenic system, instead of developing along its own plane, had to conform to the necessities. Possibly for the reason that the theatre was then closely associated with the Court, the Restoration dramatist was more of the type of courtier-poet than actor-playwright, and his interest lay anywhere but in matters of technique. Except when French influence formed a disturbing factor, he wrote his play largely on the old models, as if the plastic stage of yore was still in existence. The use of scenery as a grateful but subsidiary adjunct he did not understand. The question of stage mounting was either considered by him not at all or much too curiously. It was perhaps inevitable, although certainly unfortunate, that scenery should have been looked upon in the beginning simply as show, a pretty gewgaw to be exploited purely for its own sake. The result was the upspringing of an abnormal but happily short-lived type of play which masqueraded as comedy, but was nothing better than an unmeaning hotch-potch of pastoral, masque and opera. The exemplar was *The Slighted Maid* of Robert Stapylton, originally produced at the Duke's Theatre, Lincoln's Inn Fields, in February, 1662-3. As the novelty wore off these abuses corrected

themselves, but meanwhile a hankering had been created for show which grew by what it fed on, and has never since been wholly appeased. It is surprising to find that even under these conditions of unstable equilibrium many of the old platform-stage conventions still maintained their sway in the theatre. The persistence of some of them has already been demonstrated,[1] but several others demand full consideration.

As the overture precedes the play, so we may begin by discussing music and musicians. Revelation of an interesting matter comes to us from Samuel de Sorbières, who visited London in 1663, and from Count Magalotti, who came to England early in 1669 as one of the suite of Cosmo III, Grand Duke of Tuscany. Both give some account of the Restoration playhouses and agree on one particular point. "The Musick with which you are entertained," we learn from Sorbières, "diverts your time till the Play begins, and People chuse to go in betimes to hear it."[2] Writing of his experience six years later, Magolotti records, "before the comedy begins, that the audience may not be tired with waiting, the most delightful symphonies are played; on which account many persons come early to enjoy this agreeable amusement."[3] There was, of course, another reason why people should go betimes to the theatre, besides the enjoyment to be obtained from listening to beautiful music. This was the desire to secure good seats. We must recall that in 1669 it was customary on the first days of a new play to open the doors at noon, although the performance never commenced before three[4]; and as at that period the custom of sending footmen to secure places had not been introduced, playgoers had to go early and take bodily possession of their seats. Probably on normal occasions the doors were not opened quite so early, say

[1] See the paper on "Proscenium Doors: an Elizabethan Heritage," in the First Series of these Studies.

[2] *A Voyage to England* (1709), p. 69.

[3] *Travels of Cosmo III, Grand Duke of Tuscany, through England during the Reign of Charles II*, 1669 (London, 1821), p. 347.

[4] See Pepys' *Diary*, 2 and 18 May, 1668, and 25 Feb., 1668–9. For the hour of commencing, see Lowe's *Thomas Betterton*, pp. 15–6.

about one o'clock. There are good reasons for believing that this early opening and the long musical prelude were inheritances from the old private theatres. When Philipp Julius, Duke of Stetten-Pomerania, visited the Blackfriars in September, 1602, he found that "for a whole hour preceding the play" a delightful musical entertainment was given.[1] But before one can accept the Blackfriars practice as the prototype of the Restoration custom another point has to be determined. We know for certain that in the last quarter of the seventeenth century the preliminary music was divided into three parts, known distinctively as First, Second and Third Music.[2] The Third Music was also known as "the Curtain Tune", from the circumstance that it heralded the rising of the curtain.[3] When we come to seek indications of these three divisions in the old private theatres all resources fail. True, we have Crites' simile,[4] "like an unperfect prologue at third music," but the reference seems rather to be to the third trumpet blast which invariably heralded the Prologue's coming.[5] One, indeed, would be disposed to look upon the principle of the three divisions as a Restoration innovation were it not for one significant circumstance. Shirley's masque, *Cupid and Death*, originally performed in 1653, was revived in 1659 at the military grounds in Leicester Fields, when the music was provided by Matthew Lock and Christopher Gibbons. The overture was then arranged in three parts, the last called "the Curtain aire".[6] The conclusion derivable from this is that the principle of the three divisions was a convention of early Italian opera, and was first adopted in England in connexion with the Court Masques of, say, the early Caroline period. Since the custom of giving a long musical prelude had then been many years in vogue at the private theatres, it is conceivable that about 1630 the principle of the three

[1] Cf. C. W. Wallace, *The Children of the Chapel at Blackfriars*, 1597–1603, pp. 105–7.

[2] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), pp. 197 and 198[2].

[3] Thus in the play-house scene in Shadwell's *A True Widow* (1679), we have the direction, "They play the curtain-tune, then all take their places." In most copies this is mis-printed "curtain-time".

[4] *Cynthia's Revels* (Blackfriars, 1600), iii. 2.

[5] Note that in Ben Jonson's plays the Induction begins after the second sounding and the Prologue enters after the third.

[6] *Oxford History of Music*, Vol. iii. 213–4.

divisions was applied to it. As there was no front curtain in the platform-stage theatres, "the Curtain Tune" would then be known as "Third Music". Note that whereas the term "Curtain Tune" disappeared at the close of the seventeenth century, the term "Third Music" lasted for close on another hundred years. If we cannot concede a private-theatre archetype for the three divisions we are compelled to fall back on the theory that the principle was derived from the later Caroline masques and first introduced into the theatres in the D'Avenant operas. That the masque had some influence of the sort is shown by the survival of the term "Curtain Tune." But why should there have been an alternative and more popularly accepted phrase? Restoration opera had marked conventions of its own, such, for example, as the secondary, emblematic proscenium,[1] and a regular operatic custom does not necessarily become a normal theatre-custom.

Something remains to be said as to the remarkable longevity of the system of First, Second and Third Music. Our first definite trace of it in the English theatre occurs in 1674, when Lock wrote the preliminary and interact music for Shadwell's opera of *The Tempest*. This was published in 1675, together with Lock's music for *Psyche*. The First Music consisted of an Introduction, followed by a Galliard and a Gavotte; the Second Music of a Saraband and a Lilk; and the Curtain Tune (which was really the overture), of descriptive music indicating a storm. Obviously, on ordinary dramatic occasions, the Third Music would seldom be so closely related to what was to follow. Here we have indicated a distinction of method.

The custom soon passed over to Dublin, where we find it flourishing in the middle of the eighteenth century. On 3 October, 1748, when the Smock Alley Theatre opened for the winter season with *As You Like It*, it was advertised that the First Music would play at 5.30 p.m.; the Second at six o'clock; and the Third at half-past six; after which the curtain was to rise. When *Coriolanus* was given at the

[1] For which see the First Series of these Studies, p. 198.

same house on 7 May, 1752, the advertisement concluded with: "N.B. By command the Play will not begin till half an hour after seven, the first Musick at half an hour after six." Meanwhile the custom still remained in vogue in London, where it would appear that at Drury Lane, about 1740, the Second Music was generally the best selection. Adroit people could hear this gratis, as money was returned to those who went out immediately before the rising of the curtain.[1] In an account given of the riot at Garrick's theatre on 25 January, 1763, over the question of Half Price we read that "at night, when the third musick began at *Drury Lane*, the audience insisted on *Britons strike Home* and *The Roast Beef of Old England*, which were played accordingly."[2] After which the row started. I have cited this passage mainly to draw attention to the recognized custom of calling for tunes, about which something will shortly be said. In concluding my brief history of the rise and progress of the First, Second and Third Musick, it may be pointed out that the practice was maintained at least until the dawn of the nineteenth century. At that period English opera continued to be written with the tripartite prelude.[3] In 1784 Drury Lane opened its doors at a quarter past five, exactly an hour before the performance. The longevity of First, Second and Third Music is indicated in some lines written by John O'Keeffe, the dramatist, to Wilde, the Covent Garden prompter, about 1798 :—

> Thro' dressing rooms is heard the warning call,
> "First music, gentlemen; first music, ladies";
> "Third music!" that's the notice to appal.[4]

In the majority of cases the old conventionalisms that survived were conventionalisms associated with the later private theatres, not those distinctively of the public theatres, although a few carried over were common to both. Our only trace of the custom of calling for tunes in Pre-

[1] Vide ante p. 110, extract from Theophilus Cibber.

[2] *Gent's Magazine* (1763), p. 32.

[3] I have in my possession a copy of Shields' overture to the Covent Garden opera of *Rosina* (1783), as reprinted at Dublin by Hime, circa 1790. It is arranged in three movements with changes of tempo.

[4] O'Keeffe's *Recollections*, ii. 422, app.

Restoration times is at the Blackfriars in 1634.[1] No clue to the continuance of this free and easy habit presents itself in the latter half of the century, but later evidence clearly shows that it must have been practised at that period. In a satire on the fops of the time and their conduct in the theatre, written as if by one of the brotherhood, and published in *The Universal Spectator* of 11 June, 1743,[2] the writer boasts of being the first to call for "The Black Joke," and glories in the fact that the musicians were compelled to come out and play it. Many absurd concessions had to be made in those days for the sake of peace and quiet. This especially applies to Ireland, where the recognized custom of calling for tunes frequently occasioned riot and disorder through the demand for party tunes. In January, 1806, Thos. Ludford Bellamy, the new Belfast manager, found it requisite to advertise that "to prevent any unpleasant consequences which may arise from Airs being called for not advertised in the Bills, Mr. Bellamy deems it necessary to inform the Public that *God Save the King* will be performed by the Band at the end of the fourth act of the Play, *Patrick's Day* prior to the farce, and *Rule Brittania* between the 1st and 2nd Acts, and on no account whatever will they be played at any other period of the evening." In Dublin relics of the custom lingered for another forty years.[3] But for the firmness of Calcraft, the Hawkins Street lessee, at one particular crisis, it might still be pursuing a vigorous existence there. Eighteenth-century emigrants had carried the seeds of the custom to America, where they found congenial soil and germinated with rapidity. Writing of the New York Theatre in 1803, Washington Irving, under the pen-name of Jonathan Oldstyle, says :

> I observed that every part of the house has its different department. The good folks of the gallery have all the trouble of ordering the music (their directions, however, are not more frequently followed than they deserve). The mode by which they issue their

[1] See the First Series of these Studies, p. 88, under "Whitelocke's Coranto."

[2] Reprinted in part in *The London Magazine* (1743), p. 296.

[3] Cf. *Dublin University Magazine*, Vol. lxxiii, 1869, p. 441, J. W. Calcraft's unsigned article on "The Theatre Royal, Dublin, from 1845 to 1851."

mandates is stamping, hissing, roaring, whistling, and, when the musicians are refractory, groaning in cadence. They also have the privilege of demanding a bow from John (by which name they designate every servant at the theatre who enters to move a table or snuff a candle); and of detecting those cunning dogs who peep from behind the curtain.[1]

One marked difference between the theatrical routine of the seventeenth century and the routine of to-day is due to specialization of function. The vocations of player and musician are no longer confused. Nowadays, when a song in a play has to be accompanied or incidental music rendered, the musicians fulfil their duties in the orchestra. Far otherwise, and better, was the Elizabethan custom. In Shakespeare's time, when songs[2] were rendered on the outer stage, or dances[3] given, the musicians usually came on to play. In most cases they were integral factors of the scene, and generally spoke a few words in character during the action.[4] On the other hand, where languishing music was utilized to heighten the emotional stress of a scene, the effect was usually accentuated by not making its source apparent.[5]

This confusion of the vocations of player and musician, or, in other words, the remarkable frequency with which the musicians, both in their own character and as ordinary supernumeraries,[6] were pressed into the service of the scene, was largely due to the circumstance that the music room was in stage regions and of ready access. This being so, one would naturally expect to find that all the musical and other conventions to which the arrangement gave rise would disappear when the platform-stage was superseded. Whether their normal position in the early picture-stage

[1] Cited in Dunlap's *History of the American Theatre* (1833), ii. 176.

[2] *Cymbeline*, ii. 2; *John a Kent and John a Cumber* (1595), where Shrimp sings; *The Duke of Milan*, ii. 1.

[3] *Orlando Furioso* (1593), Dance of Satyrs; *Lust's Dominion*, iii. 2; *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 2; *Hyde Park*, iv. 3. Sometimes singers and dancers were their own accompanyists, as in *Timon of Athens*, Act i; *The Tempest*, iii. 2; *Midas*, iv. 1; and *The Poetaster*, iv. 2.

[4] *Romeo and Juliet*, iv. 5; *Every Man out of his Humour*, iv. 1; *Northward Ho!* iv. 3; *Westward Ho!* v. 3; *Othello*, iii. 1.

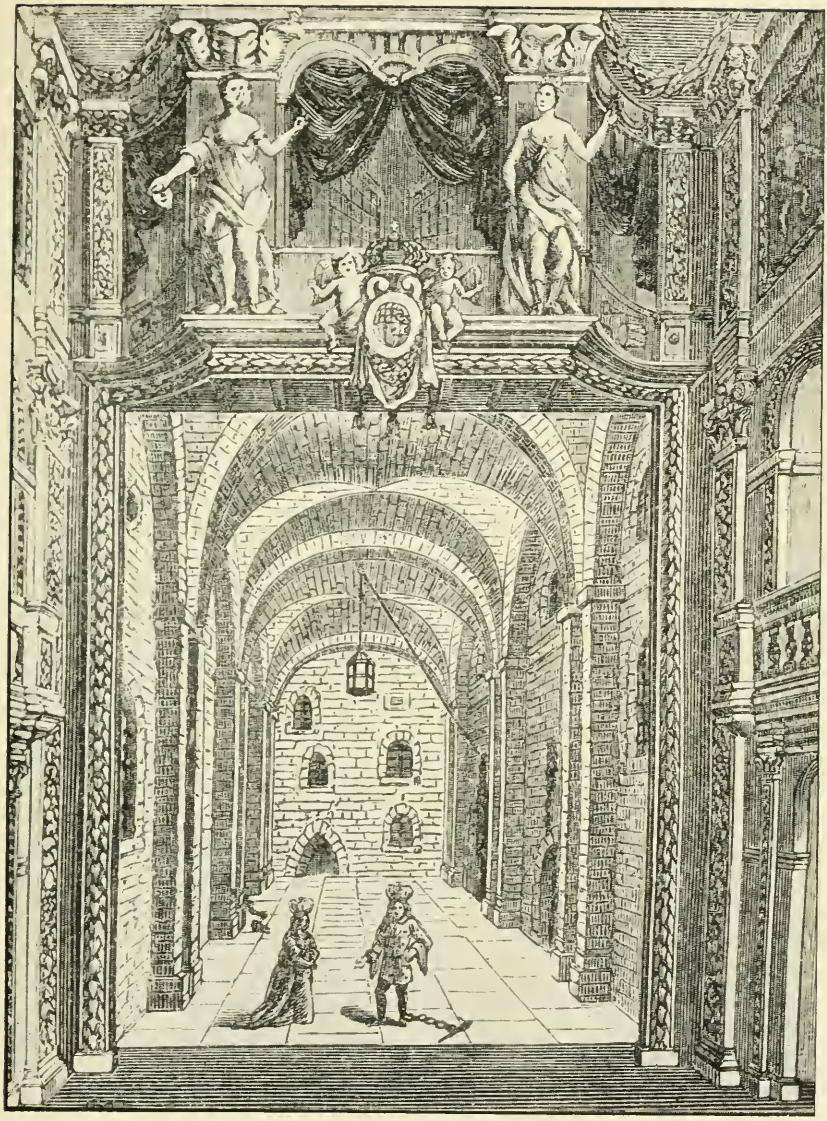
[5] *Alphonsus, King of Arragon*, iii. 2; *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv. 2 ("Musicke of the Hoboyes as under the Stage"); *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, v. i; *The Lady of Pleasure*, iv. 1.

[6] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), p. 90.

theatres was in a music loft above the proscenium or in an enclosure in front of the stage,[1] the musicians were equally remote from the players. Strange to say, however, this material change caused no serious interruption of the old conventions. The music loft and the orchestra were simply used during the playing of the preliminary music and of the inter-act tunes. One refers here, of course, to ordinary performances, not to those special occasions when opera was given.

Abundant textual evidence exists to show that from the earliest days of the picture-stage until at least the opening years of the eighteenth century, the musicians continued to come on the stage when incidental song and dance were given, and sometimes to lend illusion to the scene by forwarding the action. We have an example of the fulfilment of this latter duty in Dryden's *An Evening's Love; or The Mock Astrologer*, as produced at the Theatre Royal on 18 June, 1668. In the serenade scene in Act ii, Scene 1, the musicians accompanying the rival lovers engage in the quarrel of their employers and fall to fisticuffs. In Otway's *Friendship in Fashion*, originally performed at Dorset Gardens in 1677, the fiddlers are constant in their attendance on Lady Squeamish and her rabble rout. In Lord Lansdowne's *The She Gallants*, as produced in Lincoln's Inn Fields late in 1695, the musicians come on in Act iv, Scene 1, to accompany the song, "While Phillis is drinking", and at the close of the scene, when all are about to depart to a tavern, they strike up and march off playing. In the opening scene of Mrs. Centlivre's *The Beau's Duel; or a Soldier for the Ladies* (1702), the fiddlers evidently enter for the serenade when addressed by Sir William Mode, but no stage-direction occurs to that effect. At the close of the scene he says, "here music, strike up a merry ramble and lead to my Lodgings." As with song, so with dance; the music was generally played on the stage, not in the orchestra.

[1] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), pp. 162–164. For view of the music loft at the Duke's in Dorset Gardens, see the illustration from *The Empress of Morocco*, now reproduced. A further proof that this elevated room was used by the musicians is that its carved base was adorned with musical emblems.



SCENE FROM *THE EMPRESS OF MOROCCO.*
(Duke's Theatre, 1673). [*To face p.* 160.

Examples abound, but two will suffice. One will be found at the close of Shadwell's *Bury Fair* (1689), and the other at the close of Congreve's *The Way of The World* (1700). In the latter, the entrance of the musicians was led up to by the dramatist, who made Sir Wilful express a desire for a dance. "With all my heart, dear Sir Wilfull," replies Mirabell, "What shall we do for music?" On which Foible interrupts with, "O, Sir, some that were provided for Sir Rowland's entertainment are yet within call." Evidently they then came on, but the direction says simply "a dance".[1]

That the musicians in 1699 figured on occasion on both sides of the curtain is brought home to us by an extraordinary warrant sent in February of that year by the Lord Chamberlain to the patentees of both companies :—

> Several persons of quality having made complaint to me that the musick belonging to your theatre behave themselves disrespectfully towards them by wearing their hats on, both in the Playhouse and upon the Stage : these are therefore to require you to give orders that for the future they take care to be uncovered during the time they are in the House.[2]

We come now to some consideration of the persistence of one or two well-worn conventions of dramatic construction, notably, the introduced masque and the visualization of dreams. Mostly the resource of the private-theatre playwright, the introduced masque was of two kinds, the dramatic and the non-dramatic. By this attempt at classification one does not mean that one kind was germane and the other not; each had its measure of illusion, because both gave a more or less faithful picture of contemporary manners. But whereas the non-dramatic masque,[3] while often deftly interwoven and occasionally lending itself, as in *Love's Labour's Lost*, to the rapier-play of wit, in nowise forwarded the action, and was merely introduced to delight the audience

[1] Cf. *All Mistaken, or The Mad Couple* (1667), as cited in Cunningham's *The Story of Nell Gwyn* (1903), p. 65; also Cibber's *The Double Gallant* (1707), and *The Rival Fools* (1709), at end of both.

[2] H. C. de Lafontaine, *The King's Musick*, p. 488.

[3] For examples, see *The Tempest*, iv. 1; *Timon of Athens*, Act 1; *The Gentleman Usher*, ii. 1; *May Day*, v. 1; *The Widow's Tears*, iii. 2; *Women Pleased*, v. 3; *A Wife for a Month*, ii. 6; *The Maid's Tragedy*, i. 1.

with a dainty or eccentric dance executed by a number of fantastically arrayed people; on the other hand, the dramatic masque[1] more fully justified itself by leading up to a sharply contrasted theatrical surprise which hastened the catastrophe. One is at first disposed to see in these two divisions the fruits of technical evolution, to jump at the conclusion that the dramatic masque was the perfected form of the non-dramatic. Colour is given to this specious theory by the fact that Shakespeare, while dovetailing the masque into the action with the hand of a master craftsman, never makes it the means of a *coup de théâtre*. When he desires to arrive at an effect of this order he employs the play within a play, or bye-play, as it was called in his day. Further bolstering is given to the theory by the fact that in Caroline times the dramatic masque preponderates in the current scheme of dramaturgy, the non-dramatic kind having been largely superseded by the terminal dance. But all theorizing of this order falls to the ground when we find that some of the earliest introduced masques were of the dramatic order. Take the example afforded by the Pre-Shakespearean *King Richard II*, a play which belongs to circa 1592. Here we find the King and his retinue riding down to Plassy, disguised as masquers, with the intention of carrying off Woodstock. In the midst of the revels danger is scented and an alarm given; too late, however, for their purpose is effected. Marston, in *The Malcontent* (a Blackfriars play of 1603), put the intercalated masque in the fifth act to analogous use. For the most part, however, the dramatist of the strictly Shakespearean era either confined himself to the non-dramatic masque or, if he made resort to the dramatic, failed to squeeze the last drop of stage effect out of its potentialities. None rose to the melodramatic heights of Middleton in *Women Beware Women*. Recall how Guardiano in the fifth act devises a scheme of wholesale slaughter in the midst of the ducal revels, how Isabella and Livia are poisoned by the fumes of a subtly-prepared censer, how Hippolito is

[1] Cf. *The Dutch Courtezan*, iv. 1; *The Lover's Melancholy*, iii. 3; *The Constant Maid*, iv. 3; *The Cardinal*, iii. 2; *No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's*, iv. 2.

mortally wounded by the mock Cupid's envenomed arrow, and how Guardiano himself, by a swift retribution, breaks his neck in falling through a trap-door prepared for another.

The great days of the Court Masque ended with the Civil War,[1] and as a picture of contemporary manners the introduced masque had less and less right of existence after the Restoration. But while there can be little doubt that the reiteration of the device in the last half of the century was due to the opportunities it afforded for spectacular display, it needs to be noted that in the beginning its revival was matter of pure convention. The last introduced masque written for performance on the obsolescent platform-stage was the one seen at Vere Street on 25 April, 1662, in the third act of Sir Robert Howard's tragi-comedy of *The Surprisal.*[2] In Pre-Restoration days, and more especially in the private theatre, some of the charms of the Court Masque were reflected by its abbreviated ectype. But the platform-stage was better adapted for the reproduction of its poetic and terpsichorean characteristics than of its pictorial. Lyric beauty is the dominant quality of the introduced masques in *The Tempest* and *The Maid's Tragedy.* As in the latter play, some attempts were occasionally made at suggesting an elaborate background, mainly by the use of "properties", or what we now call "set-pieces"; and the normal machinery of "the Heavens" permitted of the realization of the common masque-effect of the God out of the car.[3] But the last word in Pre-Restoration spectacular display is said by Middleton's *No Wit, No Help like a Woman's,*[4] and compared with the scenic glories of the introduced masque on the early picture-stage, it is at best a feeble whispering. To reproduce the magic surprises of visual scenic transformations was clearly impossible on a stage devoid of an enclosed front. In this respect the

[1] Beyond Evelyn's records of masques at court on 2 July, 1663, and 18 February, 1666–7, we have no further trace of attempts to renew the old glories at Whitehall until 15 Dec., 1674, when *Calisto* was first performed. But Crowne's production was more of an opera in the reigning French style than a masque. See Herbert Arthur Evans, *English Masques* (Warwick Series), Introd. pp. liv–lv.

[2] For the date, see Sir Henry Herbert's list as given in Malone's *Shakespeare* (Dublin, 1794), ii. p. 224.

[3] Cf. *The Tempest*, iv. 1; *A Wife for a Month*, ii. 6; *The Widow's Tears*, ii. 2.

[4] See the Masque of the Elements in Act iv, Scene 2.

picture-stage had the advantage, but it is important to note that the first introduced masques seen upon it, so far from being prolongations of the old convention, were not, strictly speaking, masques at all, and owed their existence to the dominating influence of Franco-Italian court opera. This serves to emphasize the fact that the menace to the well-being of poetic drama in Restoration times was not from mere excess of spectacular display, but from the tendency to indulge in florid operatic interspersements. The first new introduced masques seen at the Duke's Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields were those included in *The Slighted Maid* and *The Stepmother*, two melanges by that arch spectacle-monger, Sir Robert Stapylton, both produced with acceptance in 1663. Beyond dazzling the eye and charming the musical sense none had any *raison d'être*. In *The Slighted Maid* the masque of Vulcan's Smithy, with its dance of Cupids and Cyclops, formed the terminal scene of the piece. One readily divines the source of inspiration when one reads in the book that over the scene was inscribed, "Foro del Volcane." In *The Stepmother*, a slightly later play, two masques of a wholly extrinsic order were introduced, and for these vocal and instrumental music had been written by Matthew Lock.

There was no revival of the old masque convention until Dryden's tragi-comedy of *The Rival Ladies* was produced at the Theatre Royal on 4 August, 1664. Although bearing indications of the influence of Stapylton's methods, the masque of "The Rape of Proserpine," introduced in the third act, ended with a dramatic surprise binding it closely to the main embroilment. Less relevant, but more elaborate in spectacular display, was the masque seen at the opening of the second act of Lord Orrery's tragedy, *The Black Prince*, when produced at the Duke's theatre on 19 October, 1667. As the question whether the curtain was regularly lowered between the acts in the first picture-stage theatre[1] has immediate bearing on several important points, such, for example, as the origin of tableaux-endings, it is worthy of

[1] Already discussed in the First Series of these Studies, pp. 174–5. Something more will be said about it later.

note that in the quarto of this play, published in 1669, we have the following sequence:

The End of the First Act. The Curtain falls.

ACT II

The Curtain being drawn up, King Edward the Third, King John of France, and the Prince of Wales appear, seated on one side of the Theater; waited on by the Count of Guesclin, the Lord Latymer, the Lord Delaware, and other Lords, with the King's Guards. On the other side of the Theater are seated Plantagenet, Alizia, Cleorin, Sevina, and other ladies. The SCENE opens; two SCENES of Clouds appear, the one within the other; in the hollow of each cloud are women and men richly apparell'd, who sing in Dialogue and Chorus, as the Clouds descend to the Stage; then the Women and Men enter upon the Theater and dance; afterwards return into the clouds, which insensibly rise, all of them singing until the Clouds are ascended to their full height; then onely the SCENE of the King's magnificent Palace does appear. All the Company rise.[1]

If it had been usual at this period to drop the curtain between the acts, the directions here at the close of the first act and the opening of the second would surely have been superfluous. This point has bearing on a matter subsequently to be discussed, but the citation has otherwise been given at length to indicate the highly elaborate nature of the introduced masques of the period. It is noteworthy that as the claims of spectacle grew more imperative there was a weakening of the pretence that the introduced masque was performed for the amusement of the mock audience. Settle has a pertinent masque[2] of the dramatic order in his sensational farrago, *The Empress of Morocco* (1673), but as the principal characters in his play take part in the masque, and are not endowed with the uncommon faculty of Sir Boyle Roche's bird, we have the anomaly of an entertainment being presented to vacancy. Once the illusive pretence became thoroughly ignored, the introduced masque showed a tendency to develop into elaborate *intermedii*, as in

[1] For an equally elaborate masque, but a vision conjured up by a magician, see Crowne's *History of Charles the Eighth of France* (1672), v. 3.

[2] Notable as the only introduced masque of the seventeenth century of which we have an authentic illustration. See the original quarto.

Ravenscroft's comedy of *The Anatomist; or The Sham Doctor*, which, as performed at Lincoln's Inn Fields in November, 1696, was combined with Motteux's masque of *The Loves of Mars and Venus*, given in instalments between the acts by way of providing amusement for the dramatis personae! Thus it was that in one guise or another the introduced masque persisted until at least the second decade of the eighteenth century, eventually providing an exemplar for the serious section of the curiously composite scheme of English Pantomime.

Unlike the introduced masque, to which as a dramatic expedient it was somewhat akin, the bye-play had no particular vogue in Post-Restoration times. While it was an easy matter to stage a play within a play in days when movable scenery was not employed, it proved a difficult matter on the early picture-stage, where, by logical development, it became a question of showing a theatre within a theatre. Shadwell's attempt to solve the problem in 1678 in *A True Widow* proved so disastrous that subsequent dramatists fought shy of the convention, and but for its preservation through the perennial popularity of *Hamlet*, it might have disappeared altogether from the wide scheme of dramaturgy.[1] Shadwell's failure was due to lack of concentration. There was a curious sequence of scenes showing the arrival of the spectators at the theatre, the beginning of the bye-play, its interruption by rowdies, and some frolicking behind the scenes. In a note prefixed to the quarto of his play, published in 1679, Shadwell made comment on the fiasco. After referring to some printer's errors in the book, he goes on—

> But the greatest mistake was not printing the Play in the Play in another character, that that might be known in reading which a great many do not find in the acting of it; but take notice, two lovers, Wife and Husband are all that speak in that.
>
> In the action many doubted which belonged to the farce in the Play, and which to the Play itself, by reason of promiscuous speaking,

[1] For latter-day examples, see *New Shakespeareana*, iii, 1904, No. 4, pp. 126–7, my article on "Plays within Plays."

and I found by venturing on that new thing, I ran a great risk. For some, I believe, wished the Play like that part of a farce in it; others knew not my intention in it, which was to expose the style and plot of farce-makers to the utter confusion of damnable farce and all its wicked and foolish adherents. But I had rather suffer by venturing to bring new things upon the stage than go on like a mill-horse in the same round.

The persistence on the picture-stage of the old convention of the visualization of dreams was due to the same reason as the preservation of the incidental masque. Both were eminently grateful to the spectacle-monger. While it seems not unlikely, judging by their close inter-relationship in Elizabethan drama, that the visualized dream developed out of the dumb-show, the evidence to hand does not wholly justify that conclusion. We have early examples in which the portent of the dream is expressed in pure dumb-show,[1] and we have equally early examples in which speech, even dialogue, is employed.[2] Unless one could arrive at the archetype it would be dangerous to predicate concerning origins. What is more material now is for us to note that early in the seventeenth century the visualized dream disassociated itself with dumb-show, and assumed some of the trappings of the intercalary masque. For a good example we need not look beyond *Cymbeline*, v. 4, with its striking effects of the descending god and the thunderbolt. Even more masque-like in character is the vision scene in *The Rebellion* (circa 1638),[3] with Love speaking in mid-air and Death emerging to drive him away. On the early picture-stage all these spectacular characteristics were over-accentuated until the vision was given a prominence out of all proportion to its importance. The most flagrant example of this occurs in Otway's tragedy, *Alcibiades*, as performed at Dorset Gardens in 1675. In Act v. 2, "a darken'd Tent", Timandra is discovered asleep on a couch. After two Spirits have indulged in a brief vocal dialogue (an obvious parody

[1] *The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntington* (1598), Act 1; *If you know Not me, you know Nobody*, Pt. I (1605), Act ii.

[2] *Grim the Collier of Croydon* (1599), i. 1; *Alphonsus, King of Arragon* (1599), iii. 2; *King Richard III*, Act v.

[3] Act iii. 3.

on one of the spurious Witch scenes in *Macbeth*), the scene changes to Elysium, and while the song continues several other Spirits fly down and dance. Then a Glorious Temple, bearing the Spirits of the Happy, slowly descends to earth and suddenly disappears, leaving to view the original tent-scene with the sleeping lady.

No evidence exists to show whether or not the old custom of spectators sitting on the stage was revived at the Restoration during the closing months of the platform-stage era. All we know for certain is that the custom was not allowed to obtain on the picture-stage for some years after its inception. Sorbières, when he visited London in 1663, remarked that the English stage, in striking contrast with the French, was unencumbered with spectators.[1] A little over a year later, when some trouble had been experienced through the bloods about town invading the players' quarters, the King issued an order which must have temporarily checked any tendency towards the renewal of the old practice :—

Charles R. Whereas complaint hath been made unto us of great disorders in the attiring-house of the Theatre of our dearest brother, the Duke of York, under the government of our trusty and well-beloved Sir William Davenant, by the resort of persons thither to the hinderance of the actors, and interruption of the scenes. Our will and pleasure is that no person, of what quality soever, do presume to enter at the door of the attiring-house, but such as do belong to the Company and are employed by them. Requiring the guards attending there, and all whom it may concern, to see that obedience be given hereunto, and that the names of the offenders be sent to us.[2]

Nine years later, on 2 February, 1673-4, the King issued another order bearing indication that spectators had once more begun to infest the stage. After dealing with disorders in front of the house at both theatres, this runs on :

And forasmuch as 'tis impossible to command those vast engines (which move the scenes and machines) and to order such a number

[1] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), p. 188. For the practice in France at this period, see Pougin, *Le Théâtre à l'Exposition Universelle de* 1889, pp. 66–7.

[2] Issued on 25 February, 1664–5. Cf. Fitzgerald's *New Hist. Eng. Stage*, i. p. 96, where the dating is ambiguous.

of persons as must be employed in works of that nature, if any and such as do not belong thereunto be suffered to press in amongst them; Our will and command is that no person of what quality soever presume to stand or sit on the stages or to come within any part of the scenes before the play begins, while 'tis acting, or after 'tis ended; and we strictly here command our officers and guard of souldiers, which attend the respective theaters, to see this order exactly observed.[1]

Notwithstanding all these threatenings of pains and penalties, the old custom was eventually re-established. In Lord Lansdowne's comedy, *The She Gallants*, as produced at Lincoln's Inn Fields late in 1695, one finds Philabel in the third act expounding the new method of damning plays. At the first performance the mischief-makers scattered themselves in sections all over the house,

> some in the Pit, some in the Boxes, others in the Galleries, *but principally on the Stage;* they cough, sneeze, talk aloud and break silly jests; sometimes laughing, sometimes singing, sometimes whistling, till the House is in an uproar; some laugh and clap; some hiss and are angry; swords are drawn, the actors interrupted, the scene broken off, and so the Play's sent to the devil.

For long after this neither ridicule nor royal edicts could dislodge the stage lounger from his coign of vantage. It was not until 1763, or thereabouts, that the nuisance was wholly got rid of.[2]

Owing to the temporary disuse on the early picture-stages of the old practice of sitting on the stage, a certain bizarre scheme of private-theatre dramaturgy, whose existence depended wholly on the practice, fell also into desuetude. This was the Jonsonian type of satire which employed mock spectators as a sort of chorus to the play. One calls it Jonsonian because rare old Ben so frequently employed it,[3] but it neither originated with him nor shone to best advantage under his handling. For the root idea one has to go

[1] *Bibliotheca Lindesiana*, vi. No. 3588. This order is inaccurately cited and under a wrong date by Fitzgerald, op. cit. i. 146–7. It was reissued, with slight variation, under William and Mary, on 14 Nov., 1689.

[2] For fuller details, see my article on "The Audience on the Stage," in *The Gent's Magazine* for June, 1888.

[3] See *The Poetaster; Every Man Out of His Humour; The Staple of News* and *The Magnetic Lady*.

to Munday's curious piece, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, as acted at the Rose, circa 1597.[1] In the wide scheme of Elizabethan drama no class of play was more ephemeral than the mock-spectator play. Only one piece of this order, and that by far the most delightful, held its place on the stage after the Civil War. Irresistible in its way as *Don Quixote*, which it in some measure recalls, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* was given at Vere Street on 5 May, 1662, and had occasional later revival before the close of the century. At long last one pedestrian poet, old Elkanah Settle, was directly inspired by its technique, and the result was his comedy of *The City Ramble; or the Playhouse Wedding*, brought out at Drury Lane on 17 August, 1711. Irrespective of the unhappy period of production, a new play of this type was foredoomed to failure; and the ingenuity displayed by Settle in pouring the old wine into new bottles proved no mitigating circumstance. When the play opens we find the Common Council-man, his wife and their daughter Jenny seated as spectators in the middle-gallery side box over one of the proscenium entering doors. An actor comes on to speak the prologue, and a colloquy immediately ensues between him and the Common Council-man. At its close the husband and wife descend to the stage, secretly followed by Miss Jenny, whose lover happens to be one of the players. Her place in the side-gallery box is quickly taken by an obliging actress, dressed and masked like herself. Then husband and wife appear on the stage, and are handed by the Prologue into a stage-box. This is the cue for the play to begin. The action passes in Verona, and in nowise resembles the story of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, but during the intervals the Common Council-man and his wife discuss the play much after the old method. At the end of the fourth act the worthy couple desert their snug position in the stage-box, and trot off behind the scenes. With the opening of the last act we see them coming on again behind, attended by an actor. Miss Jenny assists her spouting lover by assuming a character in the play,

[1] Otherwise notable as the first "rehearsal" play.

which runs its placid course amid the naïve "asides" of the Common Council-man and his spouse.

On the early Elizabethan stage a curious convention held sway, born of the employment of the multiple scene[1] in the Mysteries[2] and Moralities, as well as in the later performances of plays at Court. Journeys both long and short were performed in full sight of the audience. This explains the direction in *Romeo and Juliet*, i. 5 (Quarto 1), so often misconstrued, "they march about the stage, and servingmen come forth with their napkins." Precisely what this signifies will be the more readily grasped by considering the analogous direction in *The Famous Historie of Sir Thomas Wyat*, "A Dead March, and pass round the stage and Guildford speaks." Here the journey from Sion House to the Tower was visually accomplished by a mere circling round the stage. Out of this convention arose the correlated practice of changing the place of action while the characters remained, and that without any symbolic action indicative of a journey. To the modern reader unversed in old methods there are some bewildering transferences of this order in *Arden of Feversham*, Act i, where the scene shifts abruptly from a room in Arden's House to the exterior, with a journey performed to the painter's house, and all without break.[3] Sometimes by the mere drawing of a curtain the characters were transferred from the outside of a house to the inside, or from one room to another.[4]

Although these conventions were best observed in the days when the principle of the multiple scene flourished at Court, or up to the meridian of Shakespeare's career, traces of their persistence are to be found even in the Caroline period, when improved methods of technique were struggling for the mastery. For example, the more illusive method of

[1] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), pp. 127, and 237–43.

[2] E. K. Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage*, ii. 134; C. F. Tucker Brooke, *The Tudor Drama*, pp. 21-3, Mystery of Abraham and Isaac, circa 1458 (for text of which see *Anglia*, xxi, 1899, pp. 21–55).

[3] Cf. *The Two Angry Women of Abington* (1599), Act i. Also *Edward II*, v. 5, for a sudden transition, which, by the way, proved very puzzling to the audience when Marlowe's play was revived at Oxford in August, 1903.

[4] Middleton's *A Mad World, My Masters*, ii. 7; *The Tempest*, v. 1.

effecting a change of scene had been practised in *The Faithful Friends* (ascribed, no doubt wrongly, to Beaumont and Fletcher).[1] In Act iv, after the banquet and masque, Rufinus says, "Away, before them, lead to the chamber called Elysium." Tullius, Philadelphia and Rufinus exeunt, a rich bed is thrust out, and they enter again, Tullius saying, "this is the lodging called Elysium." On the other hand, in a considerably later Blackfriars play, *The Goblins*, reversion is made to the primitive system. Although the break is well led up to in the fifth act of Suckling's tragi-comedy, the change of scene to Sabrina's chamber is made while the characters remain.

One sturdy convention of Elizabethan dramaturgy was fated to pass away with the rise of the picture-stage—the convention of the unlocated scene.[2] Vagueness of background was no longer possible once the principle of successive scenery was adopted. The unlocated scene owed its origin to long familiarity with the arbitrary laws of the multiple scene,[3] and by a parity of reasoning one would expect to find that all the other stage practices which sprang from the same source had also disappeared with the coming of the picture-stage. Strange to say, however, that was not the case. The principle of the transference of scene while the characters remain persisted on the English stage until the second decade of the eighteenth century. On the early picture-stage the use of the flats closing in the scene was analogous to the use of the traverses shrouding the rear stage in the Pre-Restoration theatres. It brought the mountain to Mahomet. By simply drawing the flats the characters on the stage were at once placed in another room. An early example of this occurs in Dryden's *The Rival Ladies*, as produced at the Theatre Royal in August, 1664. Act v, Scene 1, opens in a carack. The Captain says, "Don Rod'rick's door opens, I'll speak to him." Then we have the direction, "The scene draws and discovers the Captain's

[1] Cf. Fleay, *Biog. Chron. Eng. Drama*, ii. 331, No. 297.
[2] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), pp. 67–8.
[3] ibid, p. 238, and more particularly note 3.

cabin; Roderick on a bed, and 2 servants by him." The Captain then proceeds to address Roderick just as if he had come to his bed-side.

Two other points in connexion with this scene are noteworthy. Doors were seldom, if ever, provided in the scene on the early picture-stage, their presence being largely obviated by the permanent proscenium entering doors, which answered all ordinary purposes. Hence, where we find a character giving instructions for a door to be opened that somebody in a suppositious inner-room may be seen, we may infer (in the few instances where accompanying stage directions are wanting) that this was a cue for the partial withdrawal of the back flats.[1] Again, at the end of the scene, between Roderick and the Captain, we have the direction, "Bed drawn in, exeunt," indicating that when the flats were opened the bed was thrust well forward. This curious survival of an old Elizabethan custom was due to the necessity of making audible the speech of the supine representative of Roderick, a necessity which indicates the origin of the practice. Thus, in Dryden's last play, *Love Triumphant; or Nature will Prevail* (1694), we read at the opening of Act ii, "The Scene is a Bedchamber, a Couch prepar'd, and set so near the Pit that the audience may hear."

Still quainter than the earlier example is Dryden's employment of the adopted convention of transference of scene with a full stage in *An Evening's Love, or the Mock Astrologer*, as produced at the Theatre Royal in June, 1668. At the close of Act iv, Scene 1, while Wilding is soliloquizing, "the scene opens and discovers Aurelia and Camilla; behind them a table and lights set on it. The Scene is a Garden with an arbour in it." Thus interrupted, Wilding merely says, "The garden door opens! How now, Aurelia and Camilla," etc., and then departs unseen. Shortly afterwards Don Melchior enters, and is taken for a ghost by the women, one of whom in her fright overturns the table and

[1] Cf. Otway's *The Soldier's Fortune*, Act iv, where the characters are closed in in front after the Drawer is directed to shut the door. Also Dryden's *An Evening's Love*, v. 1, end ("Maskall, open the door"); Crowne's *Sir Courtly Nice* (1685), i. 1, at end, and v. 3, end; and Congreve's *Love for Love*, iv. 1.

lights. The scene is then closed in by the running in of another pair of flats, but Don Melchior is left standing in front,[1] and opens a new scene with a soliloquy. Dryden at this juncture evidently believed it was a poor convention that couldn't be made to work both ways!

Slightly later examples of transference of scene while the characters remain are to be found in Crowne's *The Country Wit* (1675), Act iii, and in Otway's *Don Carlos* (1676), Acts iv and v. The earlier example in Otway's tragedy is somewhat curious. The fourth act opens in an ante-chamber to the Queen's apartment. While the King and Ruy Gomez are conversing, the scene draws and reveals to their sight Don John and Eboli embracing.[2]

As time went on, bland acceptance of this convention led to curious intricacies of technique. Towards the close of the last act of Nat Lee's tragedy, *The Massacre of Paris* (1689), the Queen Mother set an unexcelled precedent for Sir Boyle Roche's bird in contriving to be in three places at once. In Scene 5, representing the Louvre, we find her saying,

> Here, Colonel, bring your prisoners,
> And let me see these leaders of the faction.

Then the scene draws, exposing the commanders, who are shot. Afterwards the scene is drawn again to reveal the Admiral's body burning. It is noteworthy that most of these changes from one part of a building to another, "openings of doors", and discoveries were not reckoned separate scenes in the technical or literary sense. Lee heads Act v. 5, "Scena Ultima", oblivious of the two marked changes taking place in it. In accordance with this convention Addison opens the back scene in the last act of *Cato* (1712) to reveal the philosopher dying in his chair, although in other respects the Unity of Place is so strictly observed that only one scene was used throughout, "A Large Hall in the Governor's Palace of Utica."

[1] For later examples of this practice, see Jevon's *The Devil of a Wife* (1686), i. 3 at end; and Southerne's *The Wives' Excuse; or Cuckolds make Themselves* (1692), iv. 1.

[2] Cf. Lee's *Constantine the Great* (1684), iii. 2 ("See there the Bed's prepar'd"), and v. 2 ("Behold the poison'd Bath"); Southerne's *The Wives' Excuse* (1692), Act v.

Albeit that in point of dramatic construction Nicholas Rowe was a neo-Elizabethan, it comes with some surprise to find him writing a tragedy in 1715 which ends with a compound transference of scene similar to the one in *The Massacre of Paris*.[1] In his *Lady Jane Gray*, as produced at Drury Lane in April of that year, Act v, Scene 2, shows the ill-fated heroine at her devotions in her cell in the Tower. After a poignant interview with Guilford, who is led off to execution, she rails at Gardiner, and concludes her reproaches abruptly with, "and see my journey's end." Accompanying this is a direction, "The scene draws, and discovers a scaffold hung in black, Executioner and Guards." After taking farewell of her attendants, and making a final speech, Lady Jane Grey goes up to the scaffold, and another pair of flats are run on in front, closing in the scene of execution but closing out Gardiner, to whom Pembroke immediately enters, with his mouth full of bitter reproaches, and then the play ends. In point of theatrical effectiveness nothing could have been clumsier. Here we have the expiring flicker of the old transference of scene with a full stage, as well as of the well-worn principle of terminal anti-climax. Already in Comedy new concepts had begun to rule.

With regard to exits and entrances a curious parallelism is to be noted between the routine of the platform-stage and of the early picture-stage, and that, despite their marked physical differentiation. On both the great majority of exits and entrances were made through two permanent doors, situated on the one in the tiring-house façade, and on the other at the sides of the proscenium arch. The main exception to the rule on both was associated with the entrance of eavesdroppers who came on behind.[2] Exits were mostly made through the permanent doors, but occasionally characters disappeared from sight by being closed in. On the platform-stage this was only possible where the action was momentarily confined to the lower or upper inner-stages.[3]

[1] For a simple transference of this order, see his tragedy, *The Royal Convert* (1707), v. 2.

[2] Vide ante pp. 44 and 140.

[3] Cf. *Volpone, or the Fox*, v. 6; *The Mad Lover*, v. 1; *The Fatal Contract*, v. 2; *Lust's Dominion*, i. 1, end.

On the picture-stage this was frequently effected by running on a pair of front flats. Most remarkable parallelism of all, acts on both types almost invariably ended with a clear stage.[1] Here we have clear evidence of the perpetuation of an early Elizabethan conventionalism in the very presence of physical conditions which positively clamoured for an entirely different system. If the front curtain has one particular gratefulness more than another it is the adaptability with which it lends itself to effective tableaux-endings. But the correlative arrangement of the early picture-stage indicates why these were so long avoided. Acting could and did take place occasionally within the scene, but in the ill-constructed and ill-lit theatres of the Post-Restoration times it was necessary for the most part that the players should keep well to the front, on the apron; and at the close of an act it was easier to make an effective exit by the bordering proscenium doors than to work gradually inwards so as to form an effective tableau. Apart from this, the Post-Restoration dramatist had no understanding of the art of the curtain. He could conceive that a terminal tableau would be effective, but he did not know how to arrive at it dramatically. Here, for example, is the germ of the modern tableau, taken from Mrs. Behn's first play, *The Forced Marriage*; *or The Jealous Bridegroom*, as acted at the Duke's Theatre, Lincoln's Inn Fields, late in 1670.[2] At the close of Act i, we read:

> The Curtain must be let down; and soft Musick plays: the curtain being drawn up, discovers a Scene of a Temple: The King sitting on a Throne, bowing down to join the Hands of Alcippus and Erminia, who kneel on the steps of the throne; the Officers of the Court and Clergy standing in order by, with Orgulius. This within the Scene.
>
> Without on the stage, Philander with his sword half drawn, held by Galatea, who looks ever on Alcippus: Erminia still fixing her eyes on Philander; Pisaro passionately gazing on Galatea; Aminta on Fallatio, and he on her; Alcander, Isillia, Cleontius, in other

[1] For a few platform-stage exceptions, see *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), pp. 86–7.

[2] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), pp. 194–5.

several postures, with the rest; all remaining without motion, whilst the Musick softly plays; this continues awhile till the curtain falls; and then the Musick plays aloud till the Act begins.

Unfortunately, one cannot speak with any certainty as to the exact physical disposition of the first Duke's Theatre, no view or description of the interior having come down to us; but if by "without on the stage" Mrs. Behn implies "out on the apron", then the latter part of the arrangement must have been particularly clumsy, as, owing to the curtain being behind the proscenium opening, all the characters posing without must have taken their places and gone off in full sight of the audience. But it may be that the description is misleading.

Some proof must now be advanced that the characters at the end of an act left the stage by means of the proscenium doors instead of being enclosed by a falling curtain. It will not suffice to say that in the seventeenth-century quartos of picture-stage plays this is indicated by the terminal "exeunt", for, viewing the clumsiness of old-time directions, which sometimes meant anything but what they said, this might be plausibly assumed to be a conventional equation for "curtain". The point is best driven home by citing examples where towards the close of an act the characters go off gradually, one by one, until the stage is left clear. Take the concluding twenty lines of the fourth act of Otway's *Alcibiades* (1675). First Alcibiades and Timandra, "exeunt several ways guarded, and looking back on each other." Then the King speaks seven lines and departs, leaving the Queen, who concludes the act with a brief speech, and finally goes off. So far from this being a special arrangement necessitated by the exigencies of the plot, one finds it cropping up again in Otway's later plays, notably at the end of the third and fourth acts of *Don Carlos, Prince of Spain* (1676).[1] By way of indicating the space of time which elapsed before tableaux-endings became the rule, it may be pointed out that Cibber's comedy, *The Careless Husband*, as produced

[1] For examples in Dryden, see *Troilus and Cressida; or Truth found too Late*, Act iv; *The Spanish Fryar*, Acts i. ii and iv; *The Duke of Guise*, Act ii.

at Drury Lane in December, 1704, has two exits in rapid sequence at the close of the fourth act.[1]

There are other terminal directions in the old quartos which could hardly be contorted to imply the falling of a curtain, and must therefore be taken at their surface value. Notable among these is the "exeunt omnes", so often to be found at the end of the last act.[2] Equally explicit is the "Exeunt, the King leading her," which occurs at the close of Act iv of Dryden and Lee's tragedy, *The Duke of Guise* (1682).

This wholesale departure of all the characters at the end of the play, after the Elizabethan method, draws attention to the fact that the curtain did not fall until after the delivery of the epilogue. Any doubts that might be entertained on this point will be allayed by Dryden's epilogue to *Sir Martin Mar-all*, as spoken at the Duke's on 15 August, 1667:—

> As country vicars, when their sermon 's done
> Run hudling to the benediction;
> Well knowing, though the better sort may stay,
> The vulgar rout will run unblessed away:
> So we, when once our play is done, make haste
> With a short epilogue to close your taste.
> In thus withdrawing, we seem mannerly;
> But when the curtain 's down, we peep, and see
> A jury of the wits, who still stay late,
> And in their club decree the poor play's fate.

Sometimes the epilogue was spoken before the dramatis personae departed, as in the case of Arrowsmith's comedy of *The Reformation* at Dorset Gardens in 1673,[3] but under any circumstances the curtain did not fall until it was delivered.

This (as one takes it) wholly unnecessary preservation of the principle of the general departure at the end led to the continuance of the old system of bearers for the dead. Even

[1] Cf. Farquhar's *Sir Harry Wildair* (1701), end of Act iii, where Wildair "pushes him [Banter] out, and exit."

[2] For examples, see *An Evening's Love; Sir Courtly Nice; The Plain Dealer; Titus and Berenice; The Cheats of Scapin; Love and a Bottle* and *The Mourning Bride.*

[3] Cf. Howard's tragedy, *The Vestal Virgin* (1665), in which, "just as the last words were spoke, Mr. Lacy enter'd and spoke the Epilogue"; also *The Mock Duellist*, 1675.

at the very close of the century[1] cues were provided in the text intimating when the bearers were to fulfil their office, as in the last scene of Congreve's *The Mourning Bride*, where Alphonso says, "Let 'em remove the body from her sight." More positive evidence of the employment of bearers is to hand in Dryden's tragedy of *Tyrannic Love; or the Royal Martyr*, as acted at the Theatre Royal about May, 1669.[2] At the end, after "exeunt omnes", we have the epilogue with the heading, "spoken by *Mrs. Ellen*, when she was to be carried off dead by the Bearers." This was the historic occasion on which Nell Gwyn, to the exceeding delight of the Merry Monarch, suddenly jumped up, and, after boxing one of the bearers' ears, exclaimed:

> Hold! are you mad? you damned confounded dog!
> I am to rise and speak the epilogue.

Everything points to the fact that on the early picture-stage the curtain, so far from being put to what would now be called its obvious uses, was rarely employed to any material advantage. It would seem that to a large extent the system followed on the Caroline masque-stage[3] and in D'Avenant's Commonwealth operas[4]—a system Italian in its origin and European in its vogue[5]—obtained throughout the latter half of the seventeenth century; and that the curtain, once up, did not fall until all was over. The known exceptions are not more numerous than are necessary to prove the rule.[6] Usually the scene with which one act concluded remained in sight of the audience until the next act began, when it was drawn off (or closed in) and a new scene revealed. This would explain why we find directions at the beginning of acts like, "Scene draws off and discovers Lady Knowell," etc., as in *Sir Patient Fancy* (1678), Act iii, and "the Scene

[1] Note the reference in *The Spectator*, No. 341, 1 April, 1711–2, to the persons "whose Business it is to carry off the Slain in our English Tragedies."

[2] Although not printed until 1670 the play was licensed for publication on 14 July, 1669.

[3] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), pp. 118–9.

[4] Vide ante p. 134.

[5] At the Opera House in Paris the custom of dropping the curtain between the acts did not come into use until 1828. See Bapst, op. cit. p. 385.

[6] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), p. 171 note 2; also this book, ante pp. 165 and 176.

changes to the tent of Achilles," as in *Heroic Love* (1698), Act ii. Even so late as 1715 we find Addison writing at the beginning of the second act of *The Drummer*, "scene opens and discovers Vellum."

In Italy the principle of the open stage from start to finish was established by the abounding popularity of the *intermedii*, which grew in time to overshadow the substantive play. It may be that, following the precedent of inter-act dancing at the old theatres, more interludes were performed on the Post-Restoration stage than mere documentary evidence would warrant us to believe. Writing of Katharine Philips's posthumous tragedy, *Horace*, as given at the Theatre Royal, Pepys records on 19 January, 1668-9:

> Lacy has made a farce[1] of several dances, between each act one; but his words are but silly and invention not extraordinary as to the dances, only some Dutchmen come out of the mouth and tail of a Hamburgh sow.

If this was the type of farce feebly satirised by Shadwell in *The True Widow* (1678), the genre must have been more popular than surface indications denote.

All these facts go to show that the kind of stage effect sought for at the ends of acts was not an effect of grouping but an effect of picturesque exits. In Post-Restoration times was doubtless established that principle of the "springing off with the established glance at the pit and projected right arm," which still flourished a century later.[2] The closing of the acts grew to be marked by a neat rounding off of speech, which led to an extraordinary development of the conventional tag.

So little consideration has been given to the history of the tag that some inquiry into its rise and progress is now imperative. To begin with, one must hazard a definition of the term in its strictly specialized sense. In its final mould, as familiarly known to playgoers half a century ago, the tag formed the closing lines of the play. Whether in prose or verse, it was an epigrammatic summing up of the moral

[1] According to Mrs. Evelyn it was acted by the author and Nell Gwyn, and took very well. [2] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse aad other Studies* (First Series), p. 181.

intended to be conveyed. In speaking it, the player generally came forward, and, ceasing personation, made direct appeal to the audience. Here, for example, is the tag to *The Lady of Lyons* (1838):—

> Ah, the same love that tempts us into sin,
> If it be true love, works out its redemption;
> And he who seeks repentance for the past,
> Should woo the Angel Virtue in the future.

When we come to probe into the question of origins, we shall find that the moralizing tag was unknown in the Elizabethan era, or to speak more definitely, within the period of Shakespeare's intellectual activities. Tags of simple appeal, begging the applause and good report of the audience, are to be found now again in the drama of that glorious epoch, but even in this elementary form, they are the exception, not the rule. Shakespeare for the most part avoids them, although at the close of *All's Well that Ends Well* we find the King "advancing" to say:

> The King's a beggar now the play is done;
> All is well ended if this suit be won,
> That you express content, which we will pray
> With strife to please you, day exceeding day.
> Ours be your patience then, and yours our parts;
> Your gentle hands lend us, and take our hearts.

The normal elementary tag was delivered by a single speaker, but in *Greene's Tu Quoque; or the City Gallant*, as acted circa 1611[1], we find a curious variant in which a rhyming tag of sixteen lines is distributed among eight people, a couplet to each. Of this order, but not so happy (because the plot is continued in it), is the tag in *The Adventures of Five Hours* (1662).[2] Although of rare occurence the multiple tag persisted throughout the eighteenth century, and relics of it are still to be found in provincial pantomime of the old-fashioned order.

It has been said that "regarded genealogically, the tag is the offspring of the epilogue, which, in older times, consti-

[1] Cf. Fleay, *Biog. Chron. Eng. Drama*, i. 72–3.
[2] As printed in Hazlitt's *Dodsley*.

tuted so marked a feature in dramatic entertainments."[1] In a sense there may be truth in this, but it must be pointed out that the moralizing tag could not have been the offspring of the conventional epilogue, for at no time in its history was it the mission of the epilogue to moralize the play.[2] On the other hand, if it could be assumed that the moralizing tag[3] was directly descended from the tag of simple appeal, then the epilogue might be fittingly placed at the head of the genealogical tree. The point is somewhat puzzling, but the primitive tag seems to have been arrived at by attempts to incorporate the epilogue with the play, as in *All's Well that Ends Well; As You Like It* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The most ingenious tag-epilogue of this order is to be found in *The Pleasant Historie of the Two Angrie Women of Abington*, as acted at the Rose, circa 1596. Here Mall Barnes' closing speech begins thoroughly in character and, developing into a disquisition on goose, ends in an appeal to the audience not to indulge in hissing.[4]

Although a few earlier examples might be found (such as the Bastard's magnificent peroration in *King John*), the principle of the moralizing tag dates as a convention from the beginning of Charles the First's reign. But frequently as it then occurs the moralizing tag seldom attains distinction, and is rarely beyond the level of Shirley's maxim in *The Witty Fair One*:—

> When all things have their trial, you shall find
> Nothing is constant but a virtuous mind.[5]

Once the tag had reached its ultimate, or aphoristic, stage its tenure was assured. Unmoved by all the ebbs and flows

[1] *The Era Almanack*, 1874, p. 70, article on "Tags," by William Sawyer. This is principally interesting for the examples it gives of latter-day tags.

[2] Cf. G. S. Bower's article on "The Prologue and Epilogue in English Literature," in *Colburn's New Monthly Magazine*, February, 1882, pp. 182-3.

[3] Note that when it came into vogue it did not immediately supersede the primitive form. Tags of simple appeal are to be found in *The Parliament of Love* (1624); *The Great Duke of Florence* (1627); *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (1633) and *The Parson's Wedding* (1640).

[4] In the argot of the wings "goose" or "to get the bird" is still the common term for hissing.

[5] For other Caroline examples, see *The Roman Actor; The Picture; The Unnatural Combat; A Match at Midnight* and *The Cardinal*.

of dramatic evolution, it maintained its pride of place for wellnigh two hundred and fifty years, and only disappeared within living memory. So grateful, indeed, was the idea of the tag in its quiddity that a gradual extension of its elementary principles became a distinguishing characteristic of Post-Restoration dramaturgy. In process of time tags were not only appended to intermediate acts[1] but to intermediate scenes. In this happy way terminal speech was rounded to a close, and the well-graced actor given opportunity to make effective exit. Tags of this secondary order were mostly in rhyme, and in prose comedies and blank-verse tragedies told by contrast. Now and again the poet fashioned a brilliant couplet, and one at least has gained a widespread popularity, that with which Congreve concludes the third act of *The Mourning Bride*:—

> Heaven has no rage, like love to hatred turned,
> Nor hell a fury, like a woman scorned.

Only a well-seasoned actor could exploit the idea to its fullest possibilities, and thus it is that what was perhaps the most effective of all intermediate tags occurs at the end of the third act of Cibber's comedy, *The Comical Lovers* (1707), where Florimel says:—

> So have I seen in tragick scenes, a lover
> With dying eyes his parting pains discover,
> While the soft Nymph looks back to view him far
> And speaks her anguish with her Handkercher.
> Again they turn, still ogling as before,
> Till each gets backward to the distant Door;
> Then, when the last, last look their grief betrays,
> The act is ended, and the Musick plays.

The humour of this travesty lay in the fact that as Florimel delivered the lines he and Celadon suited the action to the word, gradually backing towards the proscenium doors. No sooner was the last line uttered than they made rapid simultaneous departure. By this period, the meridian of the

[1] *The Gentleman Dancing Master* (1673), *passim*; Lee's *Nero, Emperor of Rome* (1675) and *The Rival Queens* (1677); D'Urfey's *The Fond Husband* (1676); Dryden's *Troilus and Cressida* (1679).

Augustan era, the tag had attained its full development. In the plays of Mrs. Centlivre, tags not only conclude intermediate scenes,[1] but are occasionally bestowed upon characters which leave the stage in the middle of a scene. Little by little, however, as the sense of realism grew and stage rhetoric began to lose its hold, these extensions of the fundamental principle wasted away, until nothing was left but the final aphoristic tag.[2]

We come now to the sturdy persistence of a convention whose roots were firmly embedded in later Elizabethan comedy, a convention essentially Shakespearean, although largely the prerogative of the young eyases and their especial private-theatre drama: the principle of the neatly led-up-to terminal dance. One finds the germinal idea in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Much Ado About Nothing*, but for its flowering one has to turn to the prevailing scheme of dramatic construction at the Blackfriars a year or two later, to comedies like *Sir Giles Goosecap* and *May Day*. At a subsequent period the occasional concluding dance crystallized into a regular convention at the private theatres by way of compensation for the exclusion of the public-theatre "Jig", whose characteristics were too gross for a refined audience. Sometimes when a principle was well established, no reference was made to its observance. In the Caroline period, absence of stage-directions cannot be taken to imply that the terminal dance was not regularly given. In some cases an intelligent reading of the text will prove obedience to the ruling law. Thus, in Shirley's *The Lady of Pleasure*, as acted at the Cockpit in 1635, no terminal direction occurs, but Sir Thomas Bornwell finishes by saying:—

> Our pleasures cool. Music! and when our ladies
> Are tired with active motion, to give
> Them rest, in some new rapture to advance
> Full mirth, our souls shall leap into a dance.

[1] Cf. *The Provoked Husband* (1727), v. 2, end, where Lady Townly has a rhyming tag of six lines.

[2] Dutton Cook dwells on the essentially British characteristics of the tag, and notes its absence from the foreign stage. See his *A Book of the Play*, Chapter on "Epilogues".

The preservation, in comedy, of this terminal dance by the characters after the Restoration led, if not to sameness of plot, at least to sameness of *dénouement*. There could be no footing it at the end unless wedding bells were imminent or a truce declared to the game of cross-purposes. It took some moral courage on the part of the dramatist to flout routine and run counter to popular desire; but on occasion a scheme of plot was devised which precluded the possibility of the rejoicings of dance at the close.[1] A typical case in point was Congreve's second comedy, *The Double Dealer*, as produced at Drury Lane in 1694. One wonders whether the initial ill-success of the play was in anywise owing to the necessary elimination of the regulation dance. It may be that that great baby the Public pouted over being deprived of its toy. Colour is given to this idea by the fact that the dance was restored to its pride of place in Congreve's two later comedies.

In the last act of *The Wild Gallant* (1663), Dryden makes quaint allusion to the popularity of the practice. Isabella says, "Come, Nuncle, 'tis in vain to hold out now 'tis past remedy: Tis like the last act of a Play, when people must marry; and if Fathers will not consent then, they should throw Oranges at 'em from the Galleries; why should you stand off and keep us from a Dance?" Dryden could afford to risk the suggestion on this occasion, because Nunkey relents and the play ends with the usual dance. In point of delighting the many-headed beast with the expected, Tragedy was at a serious disadvantage; but the chances are that when the sterner Muse inspired the bill, a jig was given after the epilogue. On 7 March, 1666-7, when Pepys went to Lincoln's Inn Fields to see Caryl's new tragedy, *The English Princess; or the Death of Richard the Third*, he records:

To the duke's playhouse, where little Miss Davis did dance a jig after the end of the play, in boy's clothes; and the truth is, there is no comparison between Nell's dancing the other day at

[1] So far as one can judge from the absence of textual indications the final dance was omitted in Otway's *Friendship in Fashion* and *The Soldier's Fortune*, although given in his version of *The Cheats of Scapin*.

the king's house in boy's clothes and this, this being infinitely beyond the other.

As time went on, writers of comedy were hard put to it to lend variety to the terminal dance, and at the same time effect the usual neatness of dovetailing. Pressure from without, however, was never serious, for the public rarely wearied of the regulation country dance by all the characters. Even when the eighteenth century had got well under weigh, one finds the country dance written into the last act of many plays, notably of Mrs. Centlivre's *The Platonick Lady* (1706) and *The Wonder* (1714). One of the earliest departures from routine was made by Shadwell in *The Sullen Lovers* (1668), where a clever boy was introduced made up as Punchinello, who danced so well in character that good Master Pepys wrote of it in his whole-souled way as "the best that ever anything was done in the world." Exactly thirty years later Farquhar introduced "an Irish entertainment of three Men and three Women, dressed after the Fingallian Fashion" into his Drury Lane comedy, *Love and a Bottle*. This was in all probability a dance.[1] Subsequently the masquerade dance had some little vogue. One finds it introduced at the close of Cibber and Vanbrugh's long popular comedy, *The Provoked Husband* (1727), as also in *The Miser* in 1732. It gives no room for surprise that the latter is the only example of the terminal dance in Fielding, seeing that the convention was then seriously on the wane. It seems to have preserved its popularity much longer on the Dublin stage than in London. Writing of Henry Brown, the actor-manager of Smock Alley in 1758-60, one of the ablest comedians of his time, John O'Keeffe says:

Brown's best parts were Perez, the Copper Captain; Don John in *The Chances;* Benedick, Bayes, Sir John Restless, and Barnaby Brittle. At those times, in Ireland, every comedy and comic opera ended with a country dance by all the characters, which had a charming and most exhilarating effect, both to the dancers and

[1] Thirty years later a certain Fingallian Dance enjoyed great popularity on the Dublin stage.

the lookers-on. A particular tune, when he danced, was called "Brown's Rant". In the course of the dance, as he and his partner advanced to the lamps at the front of the stage, he had a peculiar step which he quaintly tipped off to advantage; and the audience always expecting this, repaid him with applause.[1]

One interesting item of evidence points to the fact that by 1776, so far as the London stage was concerned, the vogue of the terminal dance had wholly disappeared. John Bell in that year issued an edition of standard plays "as performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane," and "regulated from the Prompt-Books by permission of the Managers, by Mr. Hopkins, Prompter." The reprints of *The Provoked Husband*, *Love Makes a Man* and *The Miser* indicate in each case by inverted commas the omission of the terminal dance, and of all dialogue leading up to or referring to it. Can it be that specialization of function was once more showing its potency, and that the players looked upon it as *infra dignitatem* to foot it?[2]

In the English theatres of the seventeenth century there does not appear to have been any official whose duties exactly corresponded to those of the *Orator* of the contemporary French stage.[3] Indeed, but for a chance simile, we should be wholly unaware that the custom of giving out the next play and the day of acting originated in Pre-Restoration times. In the Folio edition of Beaumont and Fletcher's works, published in 1647, one finds some preliminary lines by H. Moseley, entitled "The Stationer," which begin :—

> As after th' *Epilogue* there comes some one
> To tell spectators what shall next be shown ;
> So here am I.

If evidence as to the continuance of the practice in Restoration days is equally meagre, it is none the less satisfactory. Once more the invaluable Pepys comes nobly to our rescue. On 15 September, 1668, the diarist paid a

[1] O'Keeffe's *Recollections*, i. p. 49.

[2] For a suggestive French analogy, see V. Fournel, *Curiosités Théâtrales*, p. 134.

[3] For an interesting account of the duties of the *Orator*, with details of some distinguished holders of the office, see Mantzius, *A History of Theatrical Art*, iv. pp. 87–91. Cf. A. Bouchard, *La Langue Théâtrale*, p. 20 under "annonce".

visit to the Theatre Royal to see Dryden's indifferent new comedy, *The Ladies à la Mode*. He is careful to record that when Beeston came on at the end to announce a repetition of the piece on the following day both he and the audience "fell a-laughing," which was not surprising, for thin as the house was then, it was likely to be thinner at subsequent performances. But one wonders what Molière's comrades would have said if he, as *Orator*, had gone over so frankly to the enemy.

Before the days of newspaper advertisements and regulated dramatic criticism these oral announcements were of manifold utility. So far as new productions were concerned, they relieved author and player alike of the burden of uncertainty. Assuming that the play was heard out to the (often bitter) end, its fate could be determined by the degree of acceptance with which the announcement of its repetition was received. Thus, when, after the first performance of the pseudo-Shakespearean play of *Vortigern* at Drury Lane on 2 April, 1796, Barrymore came on to announce its repetition, the uproar was so great that he found it impossible to gain a hearing. Even when John Kemble came forward immediately afterwards to give out *The School for Scandal* for the following Monday, the audience for long refused to listen to him, thinking he was anxious to plead the cause of the spurious play. But, like the ringing of church bells on Sundays, the practice of giving out plays long survived the necessity which called it into being. In France, where an almost equal conservatism reigned, the office of *Orator* was abolished in 1793.[1] In the United Kingdom the custom of giving out the play survived for another half century. With it passed away the last of the Elizabethan conventionalisms.

[1] Victor Fournel, *Curiosités Théâtrales*, p. 130.

Irish Players at Oxford in 1677

Irish Players at Oxford in 1677

Although much given in remoter times to the acting of Latin plays, Oxford, up to a period within living memory, was remarkable for its profound distrust of the professional player. To win a patient hearing from the University in Elizabethan days was so notable an achievement that the fact that *Hamlet* had been acted there by the Globe company shortly after its first production was proudly blazoned on the title-page of one of the early quartos. For long the visits of the London players were confined to a few days in the summer during that Saturnalian period known as "the Act". Fixed to begin on the first Monday after 7 July, the Act consisted of the ultimate, but merely ceremonious exercises for the degrees of Master of Arts and Doctor of the Faculties. It was a period marked by relief of tension, when the Terrae Filii were allowed to crack their coarse, often stupid, jokes, and to afford academic precedent for the quips and cranks of Bones and Massa Johnson. After the puritanical repressions of the interregnum the Act never wholly recovered its joyousness, but in July, 1661, "to spite the Presbyterians," the players were allowed to return. Unfortunately, the new histrionic conditions which came in with the Restoration brought a seriously disturbing element into the almost monastic seclusion of the University. In journeying to Oxford to play twice daily on a stage erected in the yard of the King's Arms at Halywell, the Red Bull company brought with them several actresses, the first ever seen at the University, and the innovation caused much troubling of the waters. Writes Anthony Wood: "These players, wherein women acted (among which was Roxilana, married to the Earl of Oxon.), made the scholars run mad, run after them, later ill courses—among which Hyde of Allsoul's, A.B., afterwards hanged."[1] Under the circum-

[1] *The Life and Times of Anthony Wood, antiquary of Oxford, 1632–1695, described by himself*, collected and edited by Andrew Clark, i. 405–6.

stances it is not surprising to find that for a considerable period no further visits of the players were permitted. At last, however, in July, 1669, the Duke's company from Lincoln's Inn Fields were allowed to attend the Act, and by their performances in the Guildhall Yard cleared the respectable sum of £1,500. One is not astonished to learn of the amount, when one also learns from Wood that "the scholars pawn'd books, blankets, bedding to see them."[1]

A few years later it became customary for the King's players from the Theatre Royal, Bridges Street, to visit Oxford in the summer, and to signalize their advent by addressing the University in a prologue written by Dryden and generally spoken by Hart. But in 1674 their behaviour during their sojourn was so reprehensible that further visits were forbidden. They had already been punished in their pockets, for, on 28 July, 1674, we find Humphrey Prideaux, writing to John Ellis:

> The players parted from us with small gains, not having gained so much, after all things payed, to make a divident of 10*l* to the chiefe sharers; which I hope will give them noe encouragement to come again. Neither, I suppose, will the University for the future permit them here, if they can be kept out, since they were guilty of such great rudenesses before they left us, going about the town in the night breakeing of windows, and committeing many other unpardonable rudenesses.[2]

But the Act was shorn of more than half its gaiety by the absence of the players, and the town soon longed to have them back. Ill disposed to pardon those who had offended so deeply, James, first Duke of Ormond, who had been Chancellor since August, 1669, eventually saw a way out of the difficulty. In 1677, when he was also Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, he solved the problem by bringing across the Channel the first Irish troupe of players that had ever visited England, a troupe long under considerable indebtedness to him for his patronage. These Irish players hailed from the Dublin Drury Lane, or, in other words, from that Theatre

[1] Wood, ii. 165.

[2] *Letters of Humphrey Prideaux to John Ellis* (Camden Society, 1875), p. 5.

Royal, Smock Alley, which had been built and opened by John Ogilby, the histriographer, in 1662. Very little now is known concerning them; nothing, indeed, of any consequence save that Joseph Ashbury was their leader. Born in London in 1638, Ashbury was related, through his mother, to Sir Walter Raleigh, and, as an ensign, had fought in Ireland under Ormonde in the closing months of Oliver Cromwell's rule. Chetwood, the prompter, who saw him on the stage in his extreme old age—in or about 1718—was highly pleased with his acting:

> His Person was of an advantageous Height, well proportioned and manly; and, notwithstanding his great Age, erect; a Countenance that demanded a reverential Awe, a full and meaning Eye, piercing, tho' not in its full Lustre; and yet I have seen him read Letters, and printed Books, without any Assistance from Art; a sweet-sounding manly Voice, without any Symptoms of his Age in his Speech. I have seen him acquit himself in the Part of *Careless* in the *Committee* so well, that his Years never struck upon Remembrance. And his Person, Figure, and Manner in *Don Quixote* were inimitable. The Use of a short Cloak in former Fashions on the Stage seem'd habitual to him, and in Comedy he seemed to wear it in Imagination, which often produced Action, tho' not ungraceful, particular and odd to many of the Audience; yet in Tragedy those Actions were left off, and every Motion manly, great, and proper.[1]

Notwithstanding the remarkable picturesqueness of its annals, the Dublin Stage has been from first to last painfully derivative and parasitic. It is only within the last decade that Ireland has set herself to repair this fault and to lay the foundations of a national drama. But it may be noted that by the time of the visit of the Irish players to Oxford in 1677, Smock Alley had already acquired some little reputation as an originating theatre. In 1663, Katharine Philips's tragedy, *Pompey*, had been produced there under distinguished auspices; and in 1671 and 1674 two tragi-comedies from the pen of John Dancer, an accomplished servitor of the Duke of Ormonde, had won some acceptance. All three were taken from the French, *Pompey* and *Nicomede*

[1] W. R. Chetwood, *A General History of the Stage*, etc. (London, 1749), p. 85.

from Corneille, and *Agrippa, King of Alba* from Quinault. Unfortunately, history is silent as to what the Irish players presented at Oxford, but, although audiences at the Act favoured comedy rather than tragedy, it seems not unlikely, all things considered, that one (or both) of Dancer's plays was given during their stay. One matter is reasonably certain —Ormonde is not likely to have hazarded his reputation as a man of taste and judgment by bringing to the University under his aegis a troupe of barnstormers. It is necessary to emphasize this point, because, as will shortly be seen, the greatest English dramatic poet of the time, a genius whose pronouncements on things literary and dramatic still have potency, saw fit, in his partisanship, to bespatter the Smock Alley troupe with ridicule. If the Dublin players were really as vile as Dryden makes them out to be, it is singular that no inkling of their inefficiency has come down to us. Even in their earliest days, when some crudities might naturally have been expected, skilled opinion preponderated in their favour. Writing to Poliarchus from Dublin on 3 December, 1662, only a month or two after Smock Alley was first opened, Orinda, "the matchless", says :

> But I refer it wholly to you and will now change my subject, and tell you that we have plays here in the newest mode, and not ill-acted; only the other day, when *Othello* was play'd, the Doge of Venice and all his Senators came upon the stage with Feathers in their Hats, which was like to have chang'd the Tragedy into a Comedy, but that the Moor and Desdemona acted their parts well.[1]

"In the newest mode" doubtless meant "with scenery". On previous 19 October, Orinda had informed the same correspondent, "we have a new Playhouse here, which in my opinion is much finer than D'Avenant's; but the Scenes are not yet made." As no consideration had then been given throughout Europe to the question of accurate costuming, we may assume that Orinda's "with Feathers in their Hats" is a euphemism somewhat akin to Ibsen's "vineleaves in the hair."

[1] Katharine Philips, *Letters of Orinda to Poliarchus*, second edition, 1709.

Evidence as to the capacity of the Smock Alley players at a time nearer to their Oxford visit is to be found in Sir Ellis Leighton's letter to Arlington, under date 4 May, 1670, acquainting him of Lord Berkeley of Stratton, the new Viceroy's, first visit to the Dublin theatre:

> Tuesday, in the afternoon, his Excellency went to the Theatre, where *The Loyal Subject* by Beaumont and Fletcher, first played in 1618, was acted. The house was full of the ladies and nobility in town. The actors, most of them, act very well. They want good clothes. But his Excellency's bounty and the advantage they will have by his countenance will soon make both them and the scenes very fine.[1]

This opinion, in a letter written to Arlington at the same period, his Excellency confirmed. For any raggedness and disorganization that then existed there was very good reason, for Berkeley's highly unpopular predecessor, John, Lord Robarts, had silenced the Smock Alley players for some time, and left them in a state of painful uncertainty as to their future livelihood.[2]

Nothing was lacking to the success of the Irish players at Oxford but the presence of their patron. According to Carte, Ormonde had purposely abstained from attending the Act so as to avoid the necessity of conferring honorary degrees upon persons he considered unworthy of the distinction. Be that as it may, we find Thomas Dixon, on 1 August, 1677, writing to his friend, Sir Daniel Fleming, setting forth that

> the Duke of Ormond, our Chancellor, was expected at the Act, as may appear from the lower end of the Friday scheme, but he did not come; yet we look for him still this week or the next. His players, who were with us at the Act, and twenty days after, carried, it is said, 600*l.* or 700*l.* clear gains out of Oxford. They acted much at the same rate the King's and Duke's used to do.[3]

A comparison of the reputed profits of the Irish players in 1677 with the reputed profits of the Red Bull company

[1] *Cal. State Papers, Ireland, Charles II*, p. 327.

[2] Gilbert's *History of the City of Dublin* (1861), ii. p. 68.

[3] *Hist. MSS. Comm. Report*, 12, App., Part vii. p. 139 (MSS. of S. H. Le Fleming, Esq., of Rydal Hall). Wood is silent regarding the visit.

in 1661, assuming that both acted the same number of times, would give the impression that the former met with but indifferent success. It is doubtful, however, what credence may be placed in hearsay evidence of this order. The only sound inference that can be drawn is connected with another matter. Seeing that it had been customary before this, as it was for thirty-five years after, for the players attending the Act to perform twice daily, it seems reasonably assured that the Smock Alley company followed the old routine. Apparently, on Colley Cibber's showing, it was not until *Cato* was acted at Oxford by the Drury Lane players in 1712 that the precedent was disregarded. *Apropos* of this visit, he writes:

> It had been a custom for the Comedians, while at Oxford, to act twice a day; the first play ending every morning before the college hours of dining, and the other never to break into the time of shutting their gates in the evening. This extraordinary labour gave all the hired actors a title to double pay, which at the act in King William's time I had myself accordingly received there. But the present managers considering, that by acting only once a day, their spirits might be fresher for every single performance, and that by this means they might be able to fill up the term of their residence without the repetition of their best and strongest plays; and as their theatre was contrived to hold a full third more than the usual form of it had done, one house well filled might answer the profits of two but moderately taken up; being enabled too, by their late success at London, to make the journey pleasant and profitable to the rest of their society, —they resolved to continue to them their double pay, notwithstanding this new abatement of half their labour.[1]

Double pay for a week or two at a time when the theatres were closed came like manna in the wilderness to the London players; and one can conceive their feelings on being ousted from their pride of place by a cry of players from over sea. Due allowance must be made for all this when we come to consider Dryden's virulent attack on the Smock Alley company.

After the summer of 1677, no further visits of players to Oxford can be traced for three years. In the middle of May,

[1] *Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber, Comedian*, Chap. xiv.

1680, we find Ormonde writing from Dublin to John Fell, Bishop of Oxford, informing him that he had recommended a set of players to the acceptance of the University for the period of the Act, but that he thought the inconveniences they brought in their train so grave that he would be glad of an excuse, provided no other were admitted, and he besought his lordship to convey his mind to the Vice-Chancellor.[1] In a letter written on 22 June following, the Bishop replied:

> As to the other affair of comedians, the King's players having had cold reception from Mr Vice Chancellor in their desires to be received here this Act, obtained a solemn recommendation from His Majesty, and that not taking the desired effect they have procured a second letter. What the event will be I know not, but I think if the Vice Chancellor be forced to receive them, he will so shorten their time as may discourage them from coming on such terms.[2]

Discouragement proved of no avail, for we find Anthony Wood recording that in July, 1680, "the King's players began to act in my brother Robert's tennis court." Whether it was that the players feared to offend Ormonde, no caustic allusion was made to the visit of the Smock Alley company in Dryden's introductory prologue[3] as spoken before the performance of Lee's tragedy of *Sophonisba, or Hannibal's Overthrow*. That was reserved for a later and less apposite occasion. In the succeeding autumn, the Duke of York left London for a lengthened stay in Edinburgh, and many of the players followed in his train. To this circumstance allusion is made in the prologue to Crowne's tragedy of *Thyestes*, which was apparently produced by the prentice hands of the Drury Lane company in the Lent of 1681.[4] One consequence of the defection was that when the King's players attended the Parliament at Oxford in March, 1681, they were in a highly crippled state. It was thought better to make confession of their weakness at the outset, and Dryden took advantage of the opportunity to defame the

[1] *Ormond Papers*, Vol. v. p. 320. [2] Ibid, v. p. 338.

[3] For which see *Dryden's Poetical Works* (Globe edition, 1904), p. 442. It was first published in the *Miscellany Poems* of 1684, and afterwards reprinted, with slight variations, in the quarto of *Sophonisba* issued in 1685.

[4] The play was published in April or May of the same year.

Irish players. Here is the greater part of his inaugural prologue :—

> Discord and plots, which have undone our age,
> With the same ruin have o'erwhelmed the stage.
> Our House has suffered in the common woe,
> We have been troubled with Scotch rebels too.
> Our brethren are from Thames to Tweed departed,
> And of our sisters all the kinder-hearted
> To Edenborough gone, or coached or carted.
> With bonny bluecap there they act all night
> For Scotch half-crown, in English three-pence hight.
> One nymph to whom fat Sir John Falstaff's lean,
> There with her single person fills the scene.
> Another, with long use and age decayed,
> Dived here old woman, and rose there a maid.
> Our trusty door-keepers of former time
> There strut and swagger in heroic rhyme.
> Tack but a copper lace to drugget suit,
> And there 's a hero made without dispute;
> And that which was a capon's tail before
> Becomes a plume for Indian emperor.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> But why should I these renegades describe,
> When you yourselves have seen a lewder tribe?
> Teague[1] has been here, and to this learned pit
> With Irish action slandered English wit;
> You have beheld such barbarous Macs appear
> As merited a second massacre;
> Such as, like Cain, were branded with disgrace,
> And had their country stamped upon their face.
> When strollers durst presume to pick your purse,
> We humbly thought our broken troop not worse.
> How ill soe'er our action may deserve,
> Oxford 's a place where wit can never sterve.[2]

Notwithstanding that the Drury Lane players gave Saunders' new tragedy, *Tamerlane the Great*, before the King at this period, they met with a very indifferent

[1] The generic name for the Irish in the seventeenth century. It is so used in Shirley's *Hyde Park* (1632), iii. 1.

[2] *Dryden's Poetical Works* (Globe edition), p. 450. First published in the *Miscellany Poems* of 1684.

reception. When they returned again to the University, probably for the Act in the ensuing summer, Dryden girded mordantly at the "busy senates", whose presence might possibly have been of some slight advantage to the neighbourhood:

> Whereas we cannot much lament our loss
> Who neither carried back nor brought one cross.
> We looked what representatives would bring,
> But they helped us,—just as they did the King.[1]

It probably never occurred to Dryden, except as a painful afterthought, that in abusing the Irish players he was finding serious fault with that high taste in dramatic matters for which the University was remarkable, a taste which he himself had extravagantly eulogized in some of his earlier prologues.[2] These "barbarous Macs" who had "slandered English wit" were the especial favourites of the Chancellor, and had entertained the University for three weeks on end. Is it likely that an audience, for whose judgment Cibber had so profound an esteem, would have endured for so long a time a troupe of barnstormers? Hearken to Cibber's testimony:

> A great deal of that flashy wit, and forced humour, which had been the delight of our metropolitan multitude, was only rated there at its bare intrinsic value; applause was not to be purchased there, but by the true sterling, the *sal atticum* of a genius; unless where the skill of the actor passed it upon them with some extraordinary strokes of nature. Shakspeare and Jonson had there a sort of Classical authority; for whose masterly scenes they seemed to have as implicit a reverence as formerly for the ethics of Aristotle; and were as incapable of allowing moderns to be their competitors as of changing their academical habits for gaudy colours or embroidery.[3]

For the aspersions cast upon her players Ireland took a noble revenge in contributing many able recruits to the English stage. Blot out the records of Wilks, Quin, Peg Woffington, Spranger Barry, Macklin and Miss O'Neill from English theatrical annals, and you rob them of much

[1] Vide ibid, p. 449.
[2] Note especially his Prologue to *The Silent Woman* in 1673 (Globe edition), p. 420.
[3] Cibber's *Apology*, Chap. xiv.

of their picturesqueness and not a little of their glory. But it is curious to note for how long after the Oxford visit of 1677, Irish players came over, not in companies, but as single spies. After a lapse of sixty-five years, in August, 1742, another Smock Alley company sailed for Liverpool "in order to entertain the nobility and gentry at Preston at the Jubilee, which is said to be held there once in 20 years."[1] But it was not until May, 1903, that the first organized troupe of Irish players was seen in London. Happily at that time the critics, sitting in judgment on the acting of the Irish National Theatre Society at the Queen's Gate Hall, were able to turn one of Dryden's strictures inside out, and to tell the Abbey Players (as they are now more familiarly known) that they "had their country stamped upon their face."

[1] *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* for 24 August, 1742, as cited in Broadbent's *Annals of the Liverpool Stage*, p. 18.

Louis XIV's Scene Painters

Louis XIV's Scene Painters

French theatrical history, generally so luminous, so accurate, so painstaking, has blundered terribly in its records of two great scene painters, father and son. By some extraordinary initial error, never yet detected, the stories of Gaspare and Carlo Vigarani have been fused into one, and a composite figure created as harmful in its way as the Monster in *Frankenstein*. Truth now demands that this artificial being, all compact of falsity, should be dissolved into its original elements.

One must needs preface this narrative by pointing out that the scene painter *per se* is purely a product of latter-day specialization. In remoter times the artist seldom worked in a single medium or confined himself to the one class of work. Thus it is that if you seek the history of the great scene painters you will have to look for it in the records of the great architects and sculptors and of the masters in fresco and in oils. Begin at the Renaissance and you will find that the progress of stage mounting is summed up in the careers of men like Bramante, Peruzzi, Aristotile da San Gallo, Ferdinando Bibiena, Inigo Jones and the Chevalier Servandoni. Half a century or so ago the superfine art critics sniffed when Stanfield and Roberts were made Royal Academicians. They did not know, poor creatures, that infinitely greater men had been associated with the theatrical paint frame. The fact had escaped them that in the glorious days when the artist recognized but one art, and made no nice distinctions, the divine Raphael had painted scenery for the court of Pope Leo X.[1]

It is in keeping with the story of that art upon which he left his impress that Gaspare Vigarani should have pursued the calling of an architect and engineer. Born at Reggio nell' Emilia about the year 1586, his services were much in demand in his native country during a very considerable

[1] Cf. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), p. 116.

period. Distinction, however, did not begin to crown his career until he was long past middle age. In 1652 he went to Mantua to superintend the fête given in honour of the coming of the Archduke Ferdinand and of Francesco Sigismondo, brothers of the Duchess Isabella Chiara. Two years later his services were requisitioned by Francesco I, of Modena, in connexion with the celebrations held over the Duke's marriage with Lucrezia Barberini. While there he designed and superintended the building of a fine theatre, subsequently taken as the model of the vast Théâtre des Machines erected in the Tuileries.[1]

Early in 1660 Giacomo Torelli, the great French court scene painter and theatrical wonder-worker of his age (was he not once attacked at Venice by bravoes as an emissary of the devil?), became smitten with home-sickness, and, having amassed a comfortable fortune, decided to retire to his native city of Fano. The Grand Monarch, nothing if not connoisseur, and keenly appreciative of Torelli's services, regretted this decision, and all unwillingly cast about him for a suitable substitute. The result was that the Duke of Modena, on hearing of Louis' dilemma, sent him old Gaspare Vigarani.

Torelli's successor had some unenviable characteristics which the circumstances of the hour immediately brought to the surface. Although he was an artist of commanding ability and had little reason to dread comparison, Gaspare was consumed by an unreasoning jealousy. He determined so far as it lay in his power to stamp out the memory of his illustrious predecessor. Brought in haste to France to officiate at the Louvre in connexion with Cavalli's opera of *Serse*, whose performance had been arranged by Mazarin in celebration of the King's marriage, Gaspare found there was no time to provide the necessary scenery. The opera had six new *intermedii* and called for elaborate mounting. Some old scenery by Torelli remained available and might have

[1] Tiraboschi, *Notizie de' Pittori, Scultori, Incisori e Architetti, natii degli State del Seren. Sig. Duca di Modena* (Modena, 1786), p. 350; also A. Ademollo, *I Primi Fasti Della Musica Italiana a Parigi* (1645–62), Milan, no date, p. 77 note.

served at a pinch, but Gaspare refused all compromise. Before a court habituated to a high degree of scenic luxury Cavalli's opera had to be performed on 22 November, 1660, with no more fitting background than a number of rich tapestry hangings.[1]

Such was the elder Vigarani's jealousy of his great predecessor that it did not suffice to him merely to avoid using any of Torelli's old scenes and machines. He had determined upon starting with a clean slate, and had made up his mind to destroy all the relics of his eminent compatriot. An opportunity soon came. It is revealed to us by the Register of Lagrange that in October, 1660, the theatre of the Petit Bourbon was demolished, much to the discomfiture of Molière whose company acted there, and who had difficulty in getting another asylum. On obtaining leave to act in the Palais Royal, the great comedian begged that all the auditorium fittings and stage accessories of the old house should be granted him. To this the King graciously consented, but meanwhile "le Sr. de Vigarani, machiniste du Roy, nouvellement arrivé à Paris" had taken possession of the old scenery and machinery, under pretext of turning them to advantage in the palace of the Tuileries, and that Torelli's memory should be blotted out, had lost no time in consigning the whole to the flames.[2]

Concerning a remarkable feature of the *Ballet of the Seasons* at Fontainebleau in July, 1661, Madame de la Fayette writes:

> L'on répétoit alors à Fontainebleau, un ballet que le roi et Madame dansèrent, et fut le plus agréable que ait jamais été, soit par le lieu où il se dansoit, qui était le bord de l'etang, ou pour l'invention qu'on avait trouvée de faire venir du bout d'une allée le théâtre tout entier charge d'une infinité de personnes qui s'approchoient insensiblement, et qui faisoient une entrée en dansant sur le théâtre.[3]

[1] Nuitter et Thoinan, *Les Origines de l'Opéra Français*, Introd. pp. lviii–lxi.

[2] Nuitter et Thoinan, p. lxi. footnote; see also Mantzius, *History of Theatrical Art*, iv. pp. 136–8.

[3] Ludovic Celler, *Les Décors, les Costumes, et la Mise en Scène au Dix-Septième Siècle*, p. 123.

In the absence of indications to the contrary, one is justified in supposing that this mysterious huge machine, which glided towards the audience with its freight of capering courtiers, and (like the ghost in *The Corsican Brothers*) contrived to conceal its method of progression, one makes no doubt that this masterpiece of ingenuity was the work of Gaspare Vigarani. In association with his friend Amandini, Gaspare was at this time vigorously engaged upon the erection of the grandiose Salle des Machines in the Tuileries, a court theatre which derived its title from the fact that it had been specially designed for the exploitation of striking spectacular effects. Nothing quite so vast and ornate had been seen in Modern Europe; and the glories of the great Teatro Farnese of Parma were now to be eclipsed. Some idea of the immensity of the Salle des Machines may be derived from the measurements given by the Abbé de Pure.[1] The stage was 132 feet deep, and the height of the wings to the bottom of the sky borders was 24 feet. From the borders to the roof was an unseen space for the working of the scenes and machinery of some 37 feet. Below was a cellar 15 feet in depth. The width of the proscenium opening was 32 feet. The auditorium was constructed on an equally vast scale. In height and breadth it was the same measurement, viz., 49 feet (not reckoning the space occupied by the lateral corridors); and its depth was 93 feet. The whole building was in the form of an ellipse. The auditorium held over seven thousand spectators, and was magnificently decorated with golden sculptures and allegorical paintings. The frescoes on the ceiling had been designed by Le Brun and executed by Noel Coypel.

To aid in the construction of the scenery and machinery Gaspare Vigarani brought from Italy his son Carlo, a brilliant architect-mechanician whose notable work in France has, through the bungling of the historians, been entirely placed to his father's credit.[2] The Salle des Machines was

[1] *Idée des spectacles anciens et nouveaux* (1668), as cited at length by Pougin, *Le Théâtre à l'Exposition Universelle de* 1889, pp. 62–3.

[2] For evidence of this confusion, see Germain Bapst *Essai sur l'Histoire du Théâtre*, pp. 389–90; V. Fournel, *Curiosités Théâtrales*, p. 27; Pougin, op. cit. p. 62; Nuitter et Thoinan, op. cit. *passim*.

duly inaugurated on 7 February, 1662, by the performance of an Italian opera called *Ercole Amante*, which, after the approved manner of the time, was packed with surprising mechanical effects, among which swiftly changing scenery and descending clouds with living freights played a prominent part.[1] What rendered the occasion memorable was the appearance of the King and Queen on the stage in the prologue. The fifth scene, a finely conceived Inferno, long haunted the imagination of the Grand Monarch, and to get rid of the obsession His majesty finally commanded Molière to compose *Psyche* for its further exploitation. One thinks in this connexion of Mr. Crummles and his famous pump and tubs. But the outstanding feature of *Ercole Amante*, if we are to place credence in the Abbé de Pure as chronicler,[2] was Carlo Vigarani's great machine, showing the apotheosis of Hercules and Beauty and their ascent to regions divine. This immense moving platform was 60 feet long by 40 broad, and to the astonishment of the vast audience, bore upwards in easy progression all the members of the royal household, or no fewer than a hundred souls. One wonders more at the sublime confidence of the court than at the daring and the ingenuity of the great mechanist.

Feeling the weight of years pressing upon him, and fully assured that none but his son would be his successor, Gaspare Vigarani took his farewell of the French court, and in June, 1662, returned to Modena.[3] Out of gratitude for his strenuous labours Louis XIV wrote a warm letter of thanks and praise to the Grand Duke, a testimony of merit which has been preserved in the works of Tiraboschi.[4] The incident formed a fitting close to a memorable career; and on 9 September, 1663, the elder Vigarani passed quietly away at Modena, aged about 77.[5]

Equal as the father and son were in merit, it cannot be gainsaid that the younger Vigarani was, *par excellence*, the great stage artificer of the golden days of Molière. Hence

[1] Nuitter et Thoinan, pp. lxii–iii; Celler, pp. 124–8.

[2] Pougin, op. cit. p. 62. Note that this is the first definite record of "le Sieur Charles Vigarany" in Paris. The exact date of his arrival is not readily determinable.

[3] Tiraboschi, op. cit. p. 354. [4] ibid. loc. cit. [5] ibid.

it is with feelings of pleasure and pride that one sets about redeeming his memory from the obscurity into which, through the irony of circumstance, it has fallen. A not inconspicuous figure amid the brilliant galaxy of a glorious era, Carlo Vigarani devoted his talents and the remainder of his days to the upholding of the French theatre. In due process of time he took out letters of naturalization and was appointed by royal warrant "inventeur des machines des théâtres, ballets, et festes royalles."[1] Ever a court favourite, he received from time to time many handsome presents from the king. In 1664 he distinguished himself at Versailles by the notable scenic work done in connexion with the production of the *Princesse D'Elide*.[2] The fashion of the times, based on a noxious Italian principle, ordained that the comedies of Molière should be interspersed with costly interludes or allied with fantastic ballets; an illusion-marring system all compact of painful artifice which made of the scene painter a man of equal importance with the dramatist. Thus the relationship of Inigo Jones to Ben Jonson at the court of Charles I was precisely the relationship of Carlo Vigarani to Molière at the court of the Grand Monarch. The only real difference was that Jonson as masque-writer was helpless without his gorgeous scenery, whereas Molière's court comedies could on occasion stand alone.

It remains to be noted that Versailles at this period lacked possession of a permanent theatre, a difficulty which Vigarani easily surmounted (thanks to his royal master's fat purse) by erecting provisional stages as the occasion demanded. Very ornate and striking was the theatre constructed by him in the Park in 1668 for the production of *George Dandin* and *Le Triomphe de l'Amour et de Bacchus*. The salle was lit by no fewer than thirty-two crystal chandeliers, which bore in all considerably over three hundred *bougies* and provided a dazzling spectacle.[3]

[1] Bapst, p. 390, note 1. The warrant was issued on 5 November, 1679.

[2] Celler, pp. 133–5.

[3] Bapst, p. 352; Celler, pp. 135–9. For Carlo Vigarani's work at Versailles in connexion with the fêtes of 1674, see Felibien, *Les Divertissements de Versailles, donnez par le Roy à toute sa Cour, au retour de la Conqueste de la Franche Comte, en l'année*, 1674, p. 85.

In the mellow days of *Le Soleil*, performances in the Salle des Machines were few and far between, the vast auditorium having proved far from comfortable. There, however, was produced in 1671, with sumptuous mounting by Vigarani, the *Psyche* of Molière and Corneille, a piece, as we have already noted, which owed its origin to the existence of an old Hell scene, stored away in the recesses of the Tuileries. It was in keeping that when *Psyche* was revived at the Palais Royal in 1678, Vigarani should again be responsible for its mounting. One recalls that a *maquette*, or scene-model, of the second tableau of the second act, after Carlo's original design (now in the National Archives), was to be seen in the theatrical section at the Paris Exposition of 1878.[1] Vigarani's scenic and mechanical work was not without its influence on the trend of English stage mounting in the Post-Restoration period. Shadwell not only adapted *Psyche* for the Duke's Theatre, but he made use of divers of the Italian's fantastic flying effects in his operatic perversion of *The Tempest*. With pardonable pride the Duke's players boasted in their epilogues that they had indulged their kind friends, the public, with a degree of scenic splendour only possible elsewhere to great monarchs with unfathomable purses.[2]

Little employed in the days of Louis XIV, the great Salle des Machines has a curious and, on the whole, disappointing history. Its memories survive in those technicalities of the coulisses, "cour" and "jardin", readily recognizable as the Gallic analogues of our "O. P." and "P. S."[3] Built originally to excite artificial emotion, this immense barrack of a theatre was the scene of many a realistic outburst in the stormy days of the Revolution. Before that, however, it had undergone a remarkable temporary transformation, the details of which afford some clue to the immensity of the building. When the Palais Royal was burnt down in 1763, permission was given to its former occupants to remove, during the period of rebuilding, to the vast house

[1] *Catalogue de l'Exposition Théâtrale*, 1878, anon. (par Charles Nuitter), No. xx, p. 25.

[2] See especially the epilogue to Shadwell's *Psyche*.

[3] Georges Moynet, *Trucs et Décors*, p. 26.

in the Tuileries. It hardly seems credible, but the story goes that the two architects employed succeeded in constructing an entire theatre the exact size of the old Palais Royal wholly on the stage of the Salle des Machines. The old auditorium, it appears, was partitioned off, and used as a magazine for scenery and properties.[1]

At the time of the foundation of the Académie Royale de Musique, Lully, the composer, had solemnly joined forces with Carlo Vigarani by a contract dated 23 August, 1672, but it is to be presumed that the architect-painter had already set about building the new Opera House in the rue de Vaugirard, where the Académie was to have its establishment.[2] This surmise is justified by the fact that the new house opened its doors on the ensuing 15 November with a pasticchio called *Les Festes de l'Amour et de Bacchus*, for which Vigarani had provided the mounting. To the story of this theatre is attached a notable event, nothing less than the first state visit of a French monarch to a resort of the kind. Accompanied by a distinguished train, Louis XIV repaired on 27 April, 1675, to the rue de Vaugirard to see the *Cadmus et Hermione* of Quinault, that fine work which, according to the *Gazette de France*, was embellished "avec des machines et des décorations surprenantes dont on doit l'invention et la conduite au sieur Vigarani, gentilhomme Modenois."[3]

To the methods of scene painting in the latter half of the seventeenth century one is afforded some clue in the details of the work done in connexion with the production of *Le Malade Imaginaire* at Versailles in 1674. For the première of Molière's last comedy the scenery was painted by Simon and Rambour, two French artists who worked under the direction of Vigarani. Canvas was not favoured in those days, for the architectural backgrounds provided for the play were painted on paper which had been glued upon wooden frames.[4] This was distinctively an Italian system, and Italy has not yet wholly abandoned it. One recalls that when the *Ruy Blas* of Marchetti was performed at Her

[1] Pougin, p. 63. [2] Nuitter et Thoinan, pp. 280–4. [3] ibid. p. 289. [4] Bapst, p. 391.

Majesty's Theatre in November, 1877, the scenery was painted in Italy on sheets of paper by Magnani and sent over to be mounted on canvas. The effect was said at the time to be very pleasing.[1]

To enumerate all the various labours of the younger Vigarani would be to give this sketch the air of a bald catalogue, but one must not omit to record that he executed the scenery for the opera of *Atys*, produced at the Palais Royal in 1676. His original design for the scene of the fifth act is preserved in the Mobilier National, and from it in 1878 was made, on the instruction of the Ministry of the Fine Arts, a second *maquette* for the theatrical section of the Paris Exposition of that year.[2]

In or about 1679 Carlo Vigarani constructed for the King, in the Gardens of Versailles, an ingenious Water Theatre admitting of a great variety of striking aqueous effects; its characteristics have been preserved in an engraving by Israël Sylvestre. Not long afterwards he was temporarily ousted from his pride of place at the Palais Royal, where Berain succeeded him as designer and Rivani as machinist.[3] It is difficult to say exactly when he was reinstalled, but a record of the year 1707 shows that at that period "le sieur Vigarany, machiniste de l'Opéra" was in receipt of a salary of 6,000 livres per annum in his several capacities as inventor and superintendent of the machines of the theatres and the court. Not only that, but he enjoyed a third of the profits of the Opera, and must have held altogether a position of great emolument.[4]

Possibly had portraits of the two Vigaranis been preserved among other French theatrical memorabilia, the historians might not have made such a painful jumble of their records. But no portrait of either is known—and thereby hangs a tale. Some thirty-five years or so ago, when Charles Garnier was building that striking monument to his genius, The Grand Opera, his scheme of decoration included statuary.

[1] Percy Fitzgerald, *The World Behind the Scenes* (1881), p. 258.
[2] *Catalogue de l'Exposition Théâtrale*, No. xix, p. 25.
[3] Chouquet (Gustave), *Histoire de la Musique Dramatique en France* (1873), p. 320.
[4] M. J. Moynet, *L'Envers du Théâtre* (1874), p. 279.

What more fitting subject for the chisel, thought he, than the Grand Monarque's scene-painter, the great Vigarani? True, like all the rest of his race in his day, he knew of only one Vigarani, that composite being whom Clio, in a perverse hour, had blundered into creating. Still we must remember that it was Molière and Lully's sublime artificer whom Garnier really had in his mind's eye. To Charles Nuitter, the erudite archivist of the Opera, he made application for a portrait of this genius, but none could be found. To get out of the difficulty Nuitter suggested—still confusing the two Vigaranis—that an ideal bust should be made, and that the sculptor should be instructed to bear in mind that his subject was an Italian of a peevish and narrow-minded disposition. He justified this description by the fact that (Gaspare) Vigarani had destroyed all the scenic work of his predecessor at the French court. The idea commended itself to Garnier and was carried out.[1] In this quaint way were the sins of the father visited on the son.

[1] Bapst, p. 390, note 1.

A Player-Friend of Hogarth

A Player-Friend of Hogarth

Jemmy Spiller was born in 1692. His father, a Gloucestershire carrier, falling heir to a little money, apprenticed him to Mr. Ross, a landscape painter, under whom he acquired an elementary knowledge of art which afterwards stood him in good stead in "making-up". Becoming stage-struck after witnessing the atrocious efforts of a company of strollers, the headstrong lad broke his indentures and packed off with the player-folk. Like many another brilliant comedian, he made but ill estimate of his powers, and was highly delighted on finding himself permitted by his companions to murder Alexander the Great and divers other heroic characters. Chance, however, soon took him to the metropolis, where his abilities were at once recognized and speedily diverted into the proper channel. Our first trace of him in the player's Mecca is at Drury Lane on 27 December, 1709, when we find him playing Harlequin (an ordinary speaking part) in Mrs. Behn's farce of *The Emperor of the Moon*. His was an instance of an early marriage unhappy in its sequel. Shortly after his début in the metropolis he espoused one Mrs. Elizabeth Thompson, characterized as "a pretty woman and a good actress, but rather vain and affected." At Drury Lane on 27 March, 1710, Mr. and Mrs. Spiller figured in the bill as Boatswain and Lucy in *Bickerstaffe's Burial; or Work for the Upholders*. Already authors had begun to see the utility of writing parts to exploit the young actor's rich vein of humour. One of these —Corporal Cuttum in Aaron Hill's farce, *The Walking Statue*—had been created by him on 9 January previously.

Like most of the principal comedians of his time, Spiller was prominently identified with the annual performances given in the theatrical booths at the fairs. In the summer of 1710 we find him appearing at Pinkethman's Booth at Greenwich, where he sustained, among other characters, Polonius and Bustapha in *The Maid of the Mill*, and became

so popular as to be accorded a benefit. During 1712-3 he "created" several new characters at Drury Lane, notably Ananias in Hamilton's *Petticoat Plotter*, Smart in *The Female Advocates*, and Lawyer Foist in *The Apparition*. Late in 1714 he deserted old Drury for Rich's new theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where he soon became quite indispensable. Among a great variety of parts sustained there during the following year were several original "creations", such as Crispin in *The Perplexed Couple*, Captain Debonair in *Love in a Sack*, and Merlin in *The Lucky Prodigal*.

It would appear that the new playhouse was not too well patronized at the outset, and that salaries were not always paid with the regularity desirable. Spiller being at rehearsal on a Saturday morning, what time the ghost was usually expected to walk, asked a comrade-at-arms if Mr. Wood, the treasurer, had gone his rounds. "No, faith, Jemmy," replied the other, "I'm afraid there's no cole" (a cant word for money). "By God!" said Spiller, "if there's no *cole* we must burn *Wood*."

Taking a leaf out of Aaron Hill's book, one or two of Rich's resourceful hacks bethought them of writing parts to act as setting for the brilliant lustre of Spiller's talent. In Bullock's *A Woman's Revenge; or a Match in Newgate*, first produced on 24 October, 1715, the adaptive actor-author had fashioned two rôles (Tom and Padwell) to be doubled by his genial fellow-comedian. Afterwards, when publishing his play, he dedicated it to the wit in the following droll style:

To my merry friend and brother comedian, Mr. James Spiller.

Dear Jemmy—My choice of you for a patron will acquit me of those detestable characters, which most of our modern authors are obnoxious to, from their fulsome dedication—I mean a mercenary and a flatterer. My prefixing your name to these sheets will clear me of the former, and there is no fear of incurring the scandal of the latter, since the greatest encomiums which my humble pen could draw out, come far short of your just praise. I could expatiate on your many excellent virtues, your chastity, your temperance, your generosity, your exemplary piety, and your judicious and fashionable management in your conjugal affairs; but since I am as well

acquainted with your aversion to reading I shall content myself with mentioning the many obligations I have to you, particularly for your good performance in this farce, especially in your last part; I mean that of Padwell; in which you was a shining ornament to the scene of Newgate; and you must not think I flatter you, when I tell you, you have a natural impudence proper to the character and become your fetters as well as any that ever wore them. And I am sorry I could not, without giving offence to the critics, and deviating too far from the rules of comedy, bring you to Tyburn for the better diversion of the audience; but I hope you are satisfied with my good wishes and will give me leave to subscribe myself

Your Obliged, Humble Servant,

CHRISTOPHER BULLOCK.

The sharpness of the rivalry between the two patent theatres has amusing illustration in a quaint anecdote told of Spiller in connexion with this period. Nothing if not bibulous, Rich's easy-going henchman engaged in a drinking bout at the Gun Tavern, Billingsgate, with Pinkethman of Drury Lane, and, being endowed with more staying power, outlasted his old-time associate. No sooner had the potency of the liquor rendered poor Pinky "o'er all the ills of life victorious," than his adroit antagonist went through his pockets and took therefrom the part of the "Cobler of Preston," in a farce so called, which the abnormally obese Charles Johnson had written for Drury Lane. Jemmy carried the spoils of war to his friend Christopher Bullock, who set to work on a Friday to construct a rival piece on the *ex pede Herculem* principle: the fundamental idea in both being obviously that of Shakespeare's "Sly, the Tinker."[1] On Saturday night the farce was completed and put forthwith into rehearsal, with the result that its production took place on the following Tuesday, 24 January, 1716, with Spiller as Toby Guzzle. This quite took the wind out of old Drury's sails, as the original "Cobler" failed to make its appearance for several days after, when the effect was that of a damp squib. *A propos*, Samuel Ireland, the Hogarthian commentator, in speaking of Spiller, says :—

[1] Samuel Ireland, *Graphic Illustrations of Hogarth*, i. (1794), p. 64. This book is not to be confused with John Ireland's *Hogarth Illustrated*, a work published about the same period.

I have seen a well-engraved ticket for his benefit, which had for its supporters, himself on one side, and his wife on the other, both in a state of intoxication. In this ticket the name of Spiller was spelt with an *æ* diphthong; a whimsical conceit which seems to have arisen from his name being sometimes spelt with an *e* and at others with an *a*. Thus, whatever was the orthography, it was sure to be in the right.[1]

Ireland errs very flagrantly in assuming that the features of this benefit ticket afford another illustration of Spiller's audacious habit of flaunting his vices before the public. So far from being depicted in their private capacities, the actor and actress were here represented in the parts played by them in *The Cobler of Preston!*

On 21 April, 1716, we find Spiller, for Shaw's benefit, speaking an epilogue "after the approved manner of Pinkethman," seated on an ass.[2] A curious commentary, this, on the taste of the times! Later on in the year we learn of him as Bottom in Leveridge's comic masque of *Pyramus and Thisbe* and as Aspin in *Woman's a Riddle*. A noteworthy production at Lincoln's Inn Fields was that of Taverner's comedy, *The Artful Husband*, which first saw the light on 12 February, 1717, and was played fifteen times during the season.[3] In Stockwell, Spiller had a part of no very great importance, but the exquisite finish of his rendering gained him one of the finest compliments ever paid to an actor. Victor relates that on the first night the comedian's "Patron and Admirer, the late Duke of Argyle, went to see the comedy; but his attention was entirely engrossed by a new actor, as his Grace then thought him, and to so great a degree that the Duke recommended him that night behind the scenes to Mr. Rich as a young actor of merit, and one that deserved his Encouragement."[4] The matter-of-fact Genest

[1] op. cit. i. 71.

[2] The notorious ass-epilogue was first spoken by Dogget as Sancho Panza after D'Urfey's *Comical History of Don Quixote*, Pt 1., at Dorset Gardens, in May, 1694. Subsequently it became the dubious heirloom of Jo. Haines, Pinkethman, and other low comedians. See *The Eliz. Playhouse and other Studies* (First Series), p. 169, illustration.

[3] It was revived in 1720, when Spiller spoke a new epilogue by Lewis Theobald dealing with the South Sea Bubble. For copy, see the fourth edition of the play (8vo, 1735).

[4] Victor's *History of the Theatres of London and Dublin*, ii. 69.

has thrown doubts on the credibility of this story, but Dr. Doran, by recalling an analogous experience of his own in connexion with Lafont, has shown that the incident is quite within the regions of possibility.[1] Happily, as we shall see anon, Victor's testimony concerning Spiller's unrivalled powers of personification is amply corroborated.

Not quite so agreeable, by the way, was Jemmy's experience with another Duke—his Grace of Wharton. Happening to be present one night in a tavern when this dissolute nobleman compelled his companions, in a drunken freak, to take off a garment with the toasting of each health, he divested himself of peruke, waistcoat, and coat with great equanimity. Further than that he confessed his inability to go, having, as he rather shamefacedly acknowledged, quite forgotten to put on his shirt![2]

Among the attractions advertised for Mr. and Mrs. Spiller's benefit on 13 April, 1717, was a "New Comi-Tragi-Mechanical Prologue in the gay style," written and to be spoken by the facetious Jemmy himself. At Pinkethman and Pack's booth at Southwark Fair in the September following, we find him figuring as Trusty in a new Droll, entitled *Twice Married and a Maid Still*. At Lincoln's Inn Fields in December was produced Bullock's original farce, *The Perjurer*—a coarse satire on country justices for the penance undergone at their hands by luckless barnstormers. Spiller played Spoilem, a stroller, and spoke a prologue containing the significant line:

> In these short scenes my character is shown.

During 1718-9 Jemmy created several important new characters, notably Periwinkle in *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*, Ranger in *The Coquet*, Jerry in *The Younger Brother*, Prate in *'Tis Well If It Takes*, and Captain Hackit in *Kensington Gardens*. Rich's company was woefully inadequate for the general requirements, and very often the square peg found itself in the round hole. It was thus with poor Spiller on 7 January, 1720, when only his strong powers of personifica-

[1] Doran's *Their Majesties' Servants* (edited by R. W. Lowe, 1888), i. 344.
[2] Ireland, op. cit. i. 70.

tion kept him from making ludicrous the gloomy rôle of Jachimo in a mysterious Shakespearean sophistication called *Cymbeline, or the Fatal Wager*. Later in the month he was the original Philip in *Whig and Tory*.

Possibly few comedians at any period ever took greater liberties with their public, or presumed more on their popularity, than the subject of this sketch. For his benefit on the ensuing 31 March Spiller issued the following topical advertisement:

For the Entertainment of Robinson Crusoe. A collection of farces after the English manner, viz., Walking Statue, Hob or Country Wake, and Cobler of Preston. And whereas I, James Spiller, of Gloucestershire, having received an invitation from Hildebrand Bullock, of Liquor-pond Street, London, to exercise the usual weapons of the noble science of defence, will not fail to meet this bold invader, desiring a full stage, blunt weapons, and from him much favour.

In the thirteenth number of *The Anti-Theatre*, issued two days before the benefit, a letter is printed from Spiller to the editor—

I have a great desire to engage you to be my friend, and recommend me to the town; and, therefore, I take the liberty to inform you that on next Thursday will be acted, *for the benefit of myself and creditors*, a collection of Farces, after the English manner; and as I am a curious observer of nature, and can see as much with one eye as others do with both, I think I have found out what will please the multitude. . . . I have tolerable good luck, and tickets rise apace, which makes mankind very civil to me; for I get up every morning to a levee of at least a dozen people, who pay their compliments, and ask the same question: "When they shall be paid?" All that I can say is that wicked good company have brought me into this imitation of grandeur. I loved my friend and my jest too well to grow rich; in short, wit is my blind side; and so I remain, &c.

It is not known under what circumstances Spiller was deprived of an eye—a loss to which he here makes sportive allusion. Happily, owing to the dim stage lighting of the period, the blemish did not affect his capacity for Protean disguise. By his benefit he realized some £107, but instead of paying his creditors, he made off to Dublin, where, mixing

himself up in dubious company, he was robbed of almost every farthing he possessed. Scrambling back to London, he was received with open arms by Rich, and was at once re-engaged at a salary of £4 per week. He returned just in time to take part in the memorable revival of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (22 October, 1720), in which Quin achieved sudden distinction by his unexpected exhibition, as Falstaff, of rare comedy powers. In discussing this revival, Davies gives an incorrect cast—a blunder which has been rectified by the laborious Genest. To Spiller the former assigns Dr. Caius, the latter Pistol.

On 19 January, 1721, Jemmy created the part of Snap, a stock-jobber, in a skit on commercial gambling, entitled *The Chimera*. On 24 April following we find him playing Crispin the Sham Doctor in the farce of *The Anatomist*—a condensed and considerably altered version of Ravenscroft's old comedy so called. It is to this personation that the celebrated Italian actor-author, Luigi Riccoboni, refers in the following citation from his "Historical and Critical Account of the Theatres in Europe"[1]:—

At the Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields I happened to be at the acting of a comedy the principal plot of which I was a stranger to, but with ease could understand an episode which the author without doubt had placed in the intrigue; it is that scene which we have so often seen in the *Crispin Medicin*.[2] The sole alteration that is made therein is the introducing an old man in the Place of a Footman, who by his bustle excites the laughter of the audience, while he places himself in the room of a dead body which the physician is to dissect. The scene was thus disposed; the amorous old gentleman entertains himself with a footman belonging to his mistress's house; the footman either hears, or pretends to hear a noise, and desires the old fellow to hide himself; all the doors being locked, he advises him to place himself on the board on which the body is laid. After some difficulties made, the old man consents to it and does precisely what *Crispin* does in the *French* comedy; but to give it the greater air of truth the footman makes the old man strip to his shirt; the operator

[1] London, 1741, a translation from his *Reflexions historiques et critiques sur les différens théâtres de l'Europe* (Paris, 1738).

[2] A prose comedy in three acts, produced in Paris in 1674 and printed in 1680. Noel le Breton, Sieur de Hauteroche, its author, was a comedian of the Troupe Royal.

comes; chirurgical instruments are brought; he puts himself in order to begin the Dissection; the old man cries out and the trick is discovered.

He who acted the old man executed it to the nicest perfection, which one could expect in no player who had not forty years' exercise and experience. I was not at all astonished in one respect, but I was charmed now to find another *M. Guerin*,[1] that excellent comedian, Master of the Company at Paris which had the misfortune to lose him in our time. I was mistaken in my opinion that a whole age could not produce such another, when, in our own time, I found his match in *England*, with the same art and with talent as singular. As he played the part of an old man, I made no manner of doubt of his being an old comedian, who, instructed by long experience, and at the same time assisted by the weight of his years, had performed it so naturally. But how great was my surprise when I learn'd that he was a young man of about twenty-six! I could not believe it, but I own'd that it might be possible; had he only used a trembling and broken voice and had only an extreme weakness possessed his body, because I conceived it possible for a young actor by the help of art to imitate that debility of nature to such a pitch of exactness; but the wrinkles of his face, his sunk eyes, and his loose and yellow cheeks, the most certain marks of a great old age, were incontestable proofs against what they said to me. Notwithstanding all this I was forced to submit to truth, because I knew for certain that the actor, to fit himself for the part of the old man, spent an hour in dressing himself, and that with the assistance of several pencils he disguised his face so nicely, and painted so artificially a part of his eyebrows and eyelids that at the distance of six paces it was impossible not to be deceived. I was desirous to be a witness of this myself, but pride hindered me; so knowing that I must be ashamed, I was satisfied with a confirmation of it from the other actors. *Mademoiselle Sallé*, among others who then shone upon that stage, confessed to me, that the first time she saw him perform she durst not go into a passage where he was, fearing lest she should throw him down should she happen to touch him in passing by.

Both Victor and Ireland, in referring to this remarkable tribute, fix the date of Riccoboni's visit at 1715, misled probably to some extent by the Italian actor's statement regarding Spiller's age, which is absurdly wide of the mark.

[1] Guerin d' Estriché (1636–1728), who made his début in 1672, married Molière's widow five years later, and retired in 1717.

Jemmy must have been close on thirty-five when his artistry aroused the admiration of the famous Lelio. The latter first came to Paris from Parma in May, 1716, when the Italian comedy was re-established there by the Duc D'Orléans as Regent.[1] Apparently his first visit to London was paid in 1727, at a period when Mlle. Sallé was at the fag-end of her long engagement at Lincoln's Inn Fields.[2]

Exasperated by his infidelities, Mrs. Spiller in 1722 left her husband for good. His subsequent career was one of riot and disorder. For a period of two years theatrical annals have no record of his name. Improvidence soon compelled him to take refuge in the Mint, where, adapting himself to his surroundings, he contrived to get up a performance of *The Drummer*, realizing some twenty pounds from auditors as needy as himself. Rising to the occasion, he wrote and delivered a merry epilogue brimming over with quaint conceits and topical allusions :—

> Odd may it seem, indeed a very joke,
> That player should complain of being broke;
> But so it is, I own it void of shame
> Since all this worthy circle are the same.
> But pardon—I perhaps mistake the matter,
> You mayn't have all occasion for Mint water;
> Were 't so our fate we need not much deplore,
> For men of note have made this tour before.
> Since South sea schemes have set the world a-madding
> Some topping dons have hither come a-gadding;
> Pall Mall no longer can some sparks delight,
> And Covent Garden grows too unpolite.[3]

After matriculating at the Mint, Spiller took further degrees in degradation at the Marshalsea, where his wit so charmed the turnkey that the worthy fellow threw up his gruesome post and became mine host of "The Bull and Butcher," in Clare Market, then a region of fashionable riot, the better to enjoy the droll's society. The butchers of the

[1] *Le Nouveau Théâtre Italien* (Paris, 1753), i, avertissement, p. viii.

[2] Cf. Emile Dacier, *Mademoiselle Sallé* (Second Edition, 1909), pp. 28–9. As the fact has escaped M. Dacier, it may be noted here that Mlle. Sallé and her brother made their English débuts, when children, at the Italian Opera House in the Haymarket on 8 December, 1716. See Michael Kelly's *Reminiscences* (1826), ii, Appendix, p. 347.

[3] For a complete copy of the epilogue, see Ireland, op. cit. i. 65.

district were hail-fellow-well-met with the players, and sided with them in all their frolics. There were high jinks, moreover, at the weekly club held at "The Bull and Butcher," one of the members being no less a personage than Hogarth, who was responsible for the engraving on the silver tankard handed round at these merry meetings.[1]

Early in 1725 Spiller's name crops up again at Lincoln's Inn Fields. On 11 January he appeared as Brainworm in a revival of *Every Man in His Humour*. Towards the close of the year we find him creating Trusty in *The Capricious Lovers*. After that he dives once more below the surface, not to emerge until 29 January, 1728, when he bears his honours proudly as the original Mat o' the Mint in *The Beggar's Opera*. In this characterization, according to Akerby his panegyrist, "he outdid his usual outdoings to such a degree that whenever he sang he executed his part with so truly sweet and harmonious a tone and in so judicious and ravishing a manner that the audience could not avoid putting his modesty to the blush by repeated clamours of encore." From all accounts, it would appear that Spiller contributed very materially to the success of Gay's famous opera. Macklin, who was present at the first performance, has put it on record that the fate of the piece hung in the balance until the song and chorus, "Let us Take to the Road," came to be rendered.

For Jemmy's benefit this season Hogarth engraved a carefully executed ticket, in which the droll is depicted in the act of selling vouchers of admission for the night, while angry creditors growl in his ears and hungry-eyed bailiffs make ominous approach.[2] How sternly realistic all this was is shown by the fact that in his closing days Spiller seldom dared venture outside the theatre, where he shared an apartment with the equally thriftless Walker, the original Captain Macheath. While playing clown in Lewis Theobald's pantomime of *The Rape of Proserpine*, on 31 January, 1729, before the Prince of Wales and other notabilities, Jemmy was seized

[1] For a reproduction of the design, see Ireland, i. p. 77.
[2] Reproduced in Doran (op. cit., edit Lowe), i. 336. Cf. Ireland, i. 62.

with apoplexy, and died in the theatre a week later at the early age of 37. To the last his bright mother-wit never forsook him. On being carried up to his room he rallied somewhat, and recognizing the invalided Walker, with whom he had had some recent dispute, said to him, "You see, Tom, I told you I would be even with you before long, and now I've kept my word." Manager Rich buried poor Motley at his own expense, and followed him to his last resting-place in the churchyard of the parish of St. Clement Danes.

"By the concurrent desire of an elegant company," who, according to Akerby, were assembled at the "Bull and Butcher" over a bowl of arrack punch a few weeks before Jemmy's death, "and by the generous offer of Mr. Laguerre,[1] who was one of the company, and as excellent a master in the science of painting as music, the sign was changed from the 'Bull and Butcher' to the 'Spiller's Head,' and painted by the said Mr. Laguerre gratis, in a manner and with a pencil that equals the proudest performance of those who have acquired the greatest wealth and reputation in the art of painting." Thus it happened that, like Tarleton of old, and Joey Grimaldi of later memory, Rich's clown was paid the honours of public-house apotheosis. It is noteworthy, however, that the new sign was not put in place until after Spiller's death, when it bore the following inscription :

> View here the wag who did his mirth impart,
> With pleasing humour and diverting art;
> A cheerful bowl in which he took delight,
> To raise his mirth and pass a winter's night.
> Jovial and merry did he end his days
> In comic scenes and entertaining plays.

At once a movement was set on foot to have the comedian's life written, and a Clare Market butcher made the following appeal to his fellows:

> Down with your marrow-bones and cleavers all,
> And on your marrow-bones ye butchers fall !
> For prayers from you, who never pray'd before,
> Perhaps poor Jemmy may to life restore.

[1] Jack Laguerre, for whom see *D. N. B.* under "Louis Laguerre", his father.

"What have we done?" the wretched bailiffs cry,
"That th' only man by whom we liv'd should die."
Enrag'd, they gnaw their wax and tear their writs,
While butchers' wives fall in hysteric fits;
For, sure as they 're alive, poor Spiller 's dead;
But thanks to Jack Legar we've got his head.
Down with your ready *cole*, ye jovial tribe,
And for a mezzotinto cut subscribe;
The markets traverse, and surround the Mint;
It shall go hard but he shall be in print.
FOR
He was an inoffensive merry fellow,
When sober hipp'd, blithe as a bird when mellow.

Two modest shilling pamphlets were issued, the one containing sundry details of Spiller's life, by Akerby, the painter, and a portrait after Laguerre; the other his "merry jests, diverting songs and entertaining tales." Spiller's wit made up in copiousness what it lacked in quality. Of his alertness, whether drunk or sober, there can be no question. Even pain did not affect the jocose spirit of the man. Seeing him worried one day at rehearsal by an exasperating attack of the toothache, the barber of the theatre offered to remove the offending molar. "I cannot spare a single tooth now, friend," replied the sufferer, "but after the 10th of June [when the season ended] you may have the lot and welcome." Although enjoying a salary much above the average, Jemmy was ever in debt, and was once upbraided for his improvidence by an Italian *prima donna* who lived in high state on an indifferent professional income. "Madame," he replied, with a leer and a bow, "unhappily, what renders you rich keeps me perpetually in want!"

Poor Jemmy! What Victor has written might very well stand for his epitaph. "Spiller shared the general fate, for years together, of performing all his parts excellently well in an unfashionable theatre and to thin audiences; a fate, I fear, in some respects, he too much merited. He was a man of an irregular life, and therefore lived neglected; and after death was soon forgot."

Garrick's First Appearance as Hamlet

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To be twenty-five and already a great actor, to have the world at one's feet, to love and be beloved by a vivacious and beautiful woman one's associate in art—that, if anything, should surely spell happiness. Such, at any rate, was the enviable state in which David Garrick found himself at the period of his first visit to Dublin in June, 1742. To his travelling companion and lady-love, charming Peggy Woffington, it was an agreeable home-coming after her triumphs at Covent Garden; and even little Davy can hardly have deemed himself wholly a stranger in a strange land, seeing that he was Irish on the mother's side. Only a month or two before Garrick's arrival Handel had given to the world in Fishamble Street his immortal "Messiah". Never had Fortune so magnificently preluded a great actor, never was a public put in so receptive a mood for inspired acting. Dublin rose nobly to the occasion, and night after night packed the little theatre in Smock Alley throughout that sultry summer. It mattered not that fever came—"the Garrick fever", as it was called by association—and decimated the ranks of play-lovers. And to think that the chameleon-like genius who created all this sensation had been scarcely a year upon the stage! As in a magic glass he was seen conjuring up in quick succession the ruthless egoism of Gloster, the racking senile madness of King Lear, the Scapin-like knaveries of Sharp, the well-graced affectations of Lord Foppington, the monkey-tricks of Master Johnny, the humours of Bayes and the sorrows of Pierre. But the crowning effort was yet to come, that achievement by which Garrick was to place the keystone to the arch of his triumphs. During his novitiate (if he can be truly said to have had any) at Goodman's Fields in London, he had played the Ghost to Giffard's Hamlet, but his initial embodiment of the morbidly introspective young Prince was a treat reserved for playgoers by the Liffey.

According to the terms of his agreement with the Smock Alley managers, Garrick was entitled during his visit to two benefits. The first had been duly taken on 24 June as King Lear, and the second was announced for 19 July in *The Fair Penitent.* But for reasons that will now be made clear the latter was postponed to 12 August and the bill changed. Five days before his first appearance in the great testing character of Hamlet, *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* published a paragraph setting forth that

> Mr. Garrick thinks it proper to acquaint the town that he did not take *The Fair Penitent* (as was given out) for his Benefit; that play being disapproved of by several Gentlemen and Ladies, but by Particular Desire, deferred it till Hamlet could be got ready, which will be played on Thursday next, the part of Hamlet by Mr. Garrick, Ophelia by Mrs. Woffington. With Dancing by Signiora Barberina and Mr. Henry Delamain.

The celebrated danseuse, Barbara Campanini,[1] better known under her stage name of La Barbarina, had come over from London (where she had been drawing rank and fashion to Drury Lane) at the same time as Garrick and Peg Woffington. A magnificent full-length portrait of her, by Antoine Pesne, is preserved in the Imperial Palace at Berlin.[2] Curiously enough, she was not fated to dance at Smock Alley on the night of Garrick's début as Hamlet. The band happened to be labouring under some grievance at the time, and struck peremptorily at the last moment. Their absence was not nearly so serious a matter as the sudden defection of the orchestra would have been on the occasion of Mr. Martin Harvey's first appearance as Hamlet,[3] when, as will be readily recalled by Dublin playgoers, an elaborate symbolic overture and much original incidental music were provided. A century and a half ago audiences could enjoy Shakespeare without any such adventitious aids. But the public in those days were rigorous in demanding that the full promise of the playbill should be put into execution,

[1] For whom, see Emile Dacier, *Mademoiselle Sallé*, pp. 208 seqq. She came to Paris from Italy in July, 1739.

[2] Reproduced by Gaston Vuillier, *A History of Dancing* (1898), p. 152.

[3] An event which took place at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, on 21 Nov., 1904.

and thought nothing of tearing up the benches when faith was not kept. Hence the position was not without its grave contingencies. On the great Hamlet night, certain dances had been advertised to be given between the acts as a supplementary attraction, but La Barbarina and her companion could not be expected to dance without musical accompaniment. The occasion was to be one of pomp and grandeur, as the Lords Justices had signified their intention to be present. A disturbance on a State night would have been gravely injurious to the future interests of the theatre. So Garrick took advantage of his abounding popularity to throw oil upon the waters before the surface became ruffled. In other words, he came before the curtain between the acts and begged the indulgence of the house with regard to the unavoidable omission of the dances under the embarrassing circumstances. The audience was at once propitiated. But one takes leave to think that the measure of anxiety and uncertainty which obsessed Garrick at the moment must have militated against the exercise of his full powers on the critical occasion. A first night Hamlet under such conditions could not well be without its blemishes. Nevertheless, as we shall see, Garrick triumphed over all his difficulties.

The extraordinary action of the Smock Alley fiddlers afforded gossip for the quidnuncs, and remained a nine days' wonder. In *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* for 16 August, 1742, occurs a curious counter-advertisement throwing some meagre light on the odd dispute:

Whereas an advertisement was Yesterday published and handed about the Coffee Houses containing a sort of an Excuse for the Musick, for their non-attendance at the Playhouse in Smock Alley on Thursday the 12th of this instant, August, at the play of Hamlet for Mr. Garrick's benefit. Now being apprehensive that the said advertisement is calculated to injure the Company of said Theatre in the opinion of the Town, they therefore think themselves obliged to inform the Publick that upon Examination of the Playhouse Accompt books, they find that since the management of the Company has been committed to the care of the persons now concerned, there is not one Night's sallery due to the Musick, altho' they insist in their advertisement that there were four nights; and they further beg leave

to say, that being disappointed of Musick on the above night, they sent to the Band, desiring them to attend as usual, and that whatever appeared to be justly due to them should the following day be paid; and tho' two acts of the play were then over, the Person who applied to them on the company's behalf, offered to pay them down the money for that night's performance, that the Lords Justices (who were then in the house) might not be disappointed of the dances mentioned in the bills. And tho' several of the said band actually belonged to the Castle and State Musick, yet they peremptorily refused to come, as did also Mr. John Blackwood, who is an annual servant to the company, and had in his custody the copies of the dances etc. And they further take leave to observe that the said Band carried their ill behaviour so far as to enter into a combination to intimidate several other Performers from supplying their places, by threatning that whoever should play in the Musick Room of said Theatre should never be engag'd or concern'd in any Band or Concert of Musick with them.

It is noteworthy that "the musick room" was the old term for the place now known as the orchestra.

Intelligent as was the interest in the drama at this period, such a feature of the Irish Press as theatrical criticism was then utterly unknown. The occasion, however, brought forth the man. Two days after Garrick's first performance of Hamlet, some scholarly devotee of the drama sent him an anonymous communication, in which strictures upon his acting and upon his pronunciation of various words were mingled with high encouragement and strophes of enthusiasm. Garrick was sensible enough to profit by the criticism of his masked admirer, and carefully preserved the epistle. Ireland's first dramatic critic had posthumous honours thrust upon him, for his long pronouncement on "Hamlet" was given to the world some eighty years later, when Boaden published an ill-arranged selection from Garrick's correspondence.[1]

Dating from Dublin, Saturday, 14 August, 1742, the critic says:

Sir,—As I am entirely unknown to you, I take the liberty to give you my opinion upon some few things that I have taken notice of

[1] *Private Correspondence of David Garrick* (1831), i. pp. 12–14.

in your public performances, most of which I have attended, and do really think that you will in time, and with a little more experience, be the best and most extraordinary player that ever these kingdoms saw. I cannot, therefore, but with regret observe some things that not only displease me, but I am pretty sure, offend the most judicious and discerning part of your audience.

He goes on to find fault with Garrick's pronunciation of certain words, such as "matron," "Israel," "appal" and "Horatio," and then proceeds:

I went the other night to see you perform the part of Hamlet, and do indeed think that you got a great deal of deserved applause. I doubt whether the famous Betterton did the part half so well the first time he attempted it. The character of Hamlet is no small test of a man's genius, where the action is inconsiderable, and the sentiment so prevailing and remarkable through the whole. I own that upon your first encounter with the ghost, I observed with some astonishment, that it was a considerable time before you spoke.[1] I beg of you, Sir, to consider that these words—

"Angels and Ministers of grace defend us!"

follow upon the first surprise, and are the immediate effects of it. I grant you that a little pause after that is highly proper; but to repeat them at the same time, and in the same tone of voice with the speech,

"Be thou a spirit of health", etc.,

is very improper, because they are by no means a part of that speech. You certainly kept the audience in a strange suspense, many of whom, I suppose, were afraid, as well as I, that you wanted the assistance of the prompter. There is one thing that I must mention, which I think has but a very ridiculous appearance, although it has been practised by every one that I have seen in that character; and it is this:—when the Ghost beckons Hamlet to follow him, he, enraged at Horatio for detaining him, draws his sword, and in that manner follows the Ghost; presently he returns, Hamlet still following him sword in hand, till the Ghost says

"I am thy Father's spirit!"

at which words Hamlet with a very respectful bow, sheaths his sword; which is as much as to say, that if he had not been a Ghost upon whom he could depend, he dared not have ventured to put up

[1] This remained a characteristic of Garrick's acting at this juncture (see his *Life* by Arthur Murphy, Chap. v; also Austin Brereton, *Some Famous Hamlets*, p. 14).

his sword. The absurdity of this custom is plain from the nature of spirits, and from what Marcellus a little before says, that "it is as the air invulnerable." I think it would be much better if Hamlet should at these words—

"By Heaven! I'll make a ghost of him that lets me!"

only put his hand to his sword, and make an attempt to draw it.

The scene between Hamlet and Ophelia, and likewise that with the Queen, you played so inimitably well, and with such strict justice, that I never saw anything equal to it in my life; and indeed I can almost say the same of the whole character. I do not understand your leaving aside that beautiful part, his directions to the Players; and unless it was an unskilful person that was conscious to himself that he could not keep up to the nicety of his own rules, I know no reason for it; but that, I am sure, you need not fear.[1] I wish that, instead of it, you would omit that abominable soliloquy, that is such a terrible blot and stain to a character, that, were it not for that, would be complete; I mean that part where Hamlet comes in with a resolution to kill his Uncle, but finding him at his prayers, he says he will not do it, lest he should do him a piece of service and send him to Heaven.

We pause here to say that not a few latter-day impersonators of Hamlet have taken this view and omitted the soliloquy. In his closing, encomiastic sentences the critic contrives to make neat allusion to the defection of the band:

Till you came upon the stage to let us know that the music would not attend you, I never thought of it; as it was formerly said of Milton's poetry, that it was so sublime and grand in itself, that it needed not the embellishment of rhyme, so can I say of you in the part of Hamlet, that the satisfaction I received from thence was so great, that music could not have added anything to make it more complete than it was. With this I conclude, that if you find anything here that you think worthy of your observation and practice, the end I proposed will be fully answered; if not, yet I shall still remain your constant well-wisher and admirer.

With these and many similar oral compliments lingering in his mind, Garrick had no reason to regret his first visit to Dublin. Small wonder that he returned for a whole season to the fascinating city by the Liffey only three years later.

[1] Restored when he first played Hamlet in London (see Murphy's *Life*, Chap. v).

Appendices

Appendix I

Amended Chronological List of Elizabethan, and quasi-Elizabethan, Playhouses (1576—1663).

The Theater.

Unroofed theatre; situated in Moore-fields, Shoreditch; built by James Burbage, 1576; pulled down, 1598; authentic views, none.

The Curtain.

Unroofed theatre; situated in Moore-fields, Shoreditch, on ground called the Curtain, near Holywell Lane; built in 1576; pulled down c. 1630; last referred to in 1627; site afterwards known successively as Curtain Court, Gloucester Row, and Gloucester Street; authentic views, none.

The First Blackfriars.

First roofed (or private) theatre; constructed by Richard Farrant early in 1577 on a section of the second floor of the old Blackfriars monastery; abandoned c. May, 1584; authentic views, none. (For details, see C. W. Wallace, *The Evolution of the English Drama up to Shakespeare*, Chapters xv-xxi.)

Paul's.

Roofed theatre; situated in the Choir Singing School, near the Convocation House (St. Paul's); built c. 1581; suppressed, 1590-6; last trace of, 1608; burnt down in Great Fire, 1666; authentic views, none.

Newington Butts.

Unroofed theatre; situated in Lambeth; built c. 1586; pulled down c. 1603; authentic views, none.

The Rose.

Small, unroofed theatre; situated on the Bankside in Southwark; built between 1587 and 1592; first referred to in 1592, last in 1622; authentic views: (Exterior) Norden's Map, 1593.

The Swan.

Unroofed theatre; situated in Paris Garden, Southwark; built 1595 by Francis Langley; pulled down c. 1635; authentic views: (Interior) Van Buchell's sketch, after de Witt, 1596; (Exterior) Visscher's Map, 1616; Manor Map, 1627.

The Second Blackfriars.

Small roofed theatre, built in 1596 by Burbage on the first floor of the South section of Blackfriars Monastery; pulled down 6 August, 1655; authentic views, none.

The First Globe.

Unroofed theatre; situated on the Bankside; built 1598, burnt down 29 June, 1613; authentic views, none.

The First Fortune.

Unroofed square theatre; situated in Golden Lane (afterwards Red Cross Street), Cripplegate; built 1600; burnt down, 9 December, 1621; authentic views, none.

Red Bull.

Unroofed theatre; situated in St. John Street, Clerkenwell; built c. 1600; enlarged in 1632; last used as playhouse 1663 (see Pepys' *Diary*, 25 April, 1664); authentic views, none.

Whitefriars.

Small roofed theatre; erected in the Hall of Whitefriars Monastery, adjoining Dorset Gardens, Fleet Street; opened c. 1608[1]; abandoned before 1616, when surveyed as in bad repair, but re-opened subsequently and finally closed in 1621; authentic views, none.

The Hope.

Unroofed theatre and Bear-baiting arena; situated on the Bankside; built 1614; dismantled in 1656, but re-opened after the Restoration simply as a Bear-garden; last trace of, 1682 (see T. F. Ordish's *Early London Theatres*, p. 242); authentic views: (Exterior) Visscher's Map, 1616; Merian's Map, 1638; "Cittie of London" Map, 1646.

The Second Globe.

Unroofed theatre (on site of, but much superior to, the first house); built 1614; pulled down 1644; exterior view of, Visscher, 1616.

The Cockpit, or Phœnix.

Small roofed theatre; constructed in the Cockpit in Drury Lane c. 1617; dismantled 1649; last used 1664; site afterwards known as Pit Court; authentic views, none.

[1] Some slender traces exist of an earlier Whitefriars playhouse c. 1580, but the evidence is too inconclusive to base upon. Cf. Collier's *Hist. Eng. Dram. Poetry*, iii. 290; and Cunningham's article on the Fleet Street Theatres in *Shakespeare Society Papers*, v. p. 89.

The Second Fortune.

Unroofed, brick theatre; erected on site of older house c. 1623; dismantled in 1649, and never afterwards used as a playhouse; serving as a secret conventicle in November, 1682; later used as a brewery. For exterior view in final stage, see Wilkinson's *Londina Illustrata.*

Salisbury Court.

Roofed theatre of 140 ft. by 42 ft.; erected in 1629 by Richard Gunnell and Wm. Blagrave on the site of the old granary of Dorset House, near Fleet Street; dismantled 24 March, 1648-9; purchased in 1652 by William Beeston, the player, and rebuilt by him in April, 1660, at a cost of £329 odd; last used 1663; destroyed by Great Fire, 1666; authentic views, none. (For details, see *Shakespeare Society Papers*, iv. pp. 98 ff.)

The First Dublin Theatre.

Small roofed theatre; built in Werburgh Street in 1634 by John Ogilby; notable as the only Pre-Restoration playhouse outside London; closed in October, 1641, by order of the Lords Justices, and afterwards converted into a cowhouse. For this theatre Shirley wrote *The Royal Master*; *St. Patrick for Ireland* and other plays.

Vere Street.

Oblong roofed theatre; situated in Bear Yard, Vere Street, Clare Market; built in a tennis-court; last constructed house of the Elizabethan order; opened by Killigrew and the King's players, November, 1660; abandoned April, 1663; used as a Nursery for actors in 1669 (see Pepys' *Diary*, 23 April, 1669); served as a Meeting House from 1675 to 1682; subsequently used as a carpenter's shop and a slaughter house; destroyed by fire 17 September, 1809; for view of ruins, see C. W. Heckethorn's *Lincoln's Inn Fields and the Localities Adjacent*, p. 138.

Appendix II

The Oldest Known English Playbills

(Vide ante pp. 80–81).

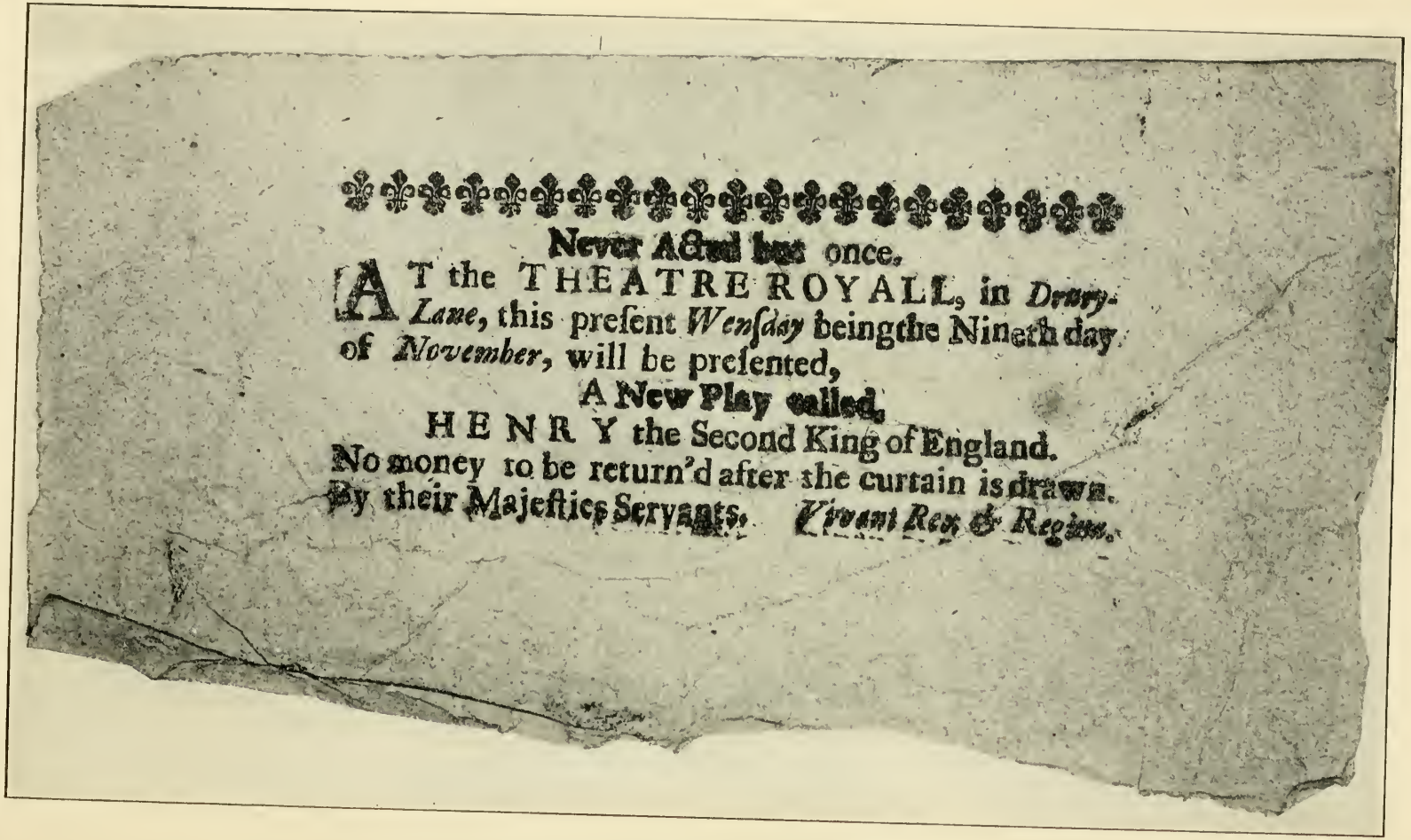
Further search having been made at my instance in the Verney archives, I am pleased to say that in the nick of time the old bills have been discovered, and that Sir Harry Verney, with rare courtesy, has permitted me to make photographs of them for reproduction. Owing to the fact that the bills are inaccurately described in Mr. Alfred J. Horwood's calendaring of the Verney Papers in the *Historical Manuscripts Commission Report* of 1879, it came as an agreeable surprise to find that they are four in number, not three. This mistake arose through assigning *All For Love* and *Theodosius* to the one bill. I had myself originally suspected some such confusion in connexion with the two plays, but later on my suspicions were allayed by Malone's statement as cited on page 81, note 1.

Another fact unrevealed by the *Report* is that the bills deal with two theatres, Drury Lane and the Queen's in Dorset Gardens. But since they all run in the one mould and belong to the period of 1692-4, it is requisite to bear in mind that they were issued by the one theatrical organization. After the union of the two companies in November, 1682, London, while continuing to possess two theatres, only boasted a single troupe of players until April, 1695. Acting, for the most part, took place at Drury Lane, but occasional performances had to be given at Dorset Gardens to propitiate the adventurers. The following is a summary of the details presented by the various bills.

(1) *Henry the Second King of England*, at Drury Lane on Wednesday, 9 November (1692). "Never acted but once." Size of bill $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $3\frac{1}{4}$; size of printed surface $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches by $1\frac{3}{4}$.

(2) *The Indian Emperour; or the Conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards.* Drury Lane, 30 November (1692). Size of bill $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches by $3\frac{1}{4}$; of printed surface $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches by $1\frac{3}{4}$.

(3) *All for Love, or The World Well Lost.* Queen's Theatre, Dorset Gardens, Wednesday, 9 May (1694). Size of bill 6 inches by $2\frac{1}{2}$; of printed surface $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches by $1\frac{1}{2}$.



Never Acted but once.

AT the THEATRE ROYALL, in *Drury-Lane*, this preſent *Wenſday* beingthe Nineth day of *November*, will be preſented,

A New Play called,

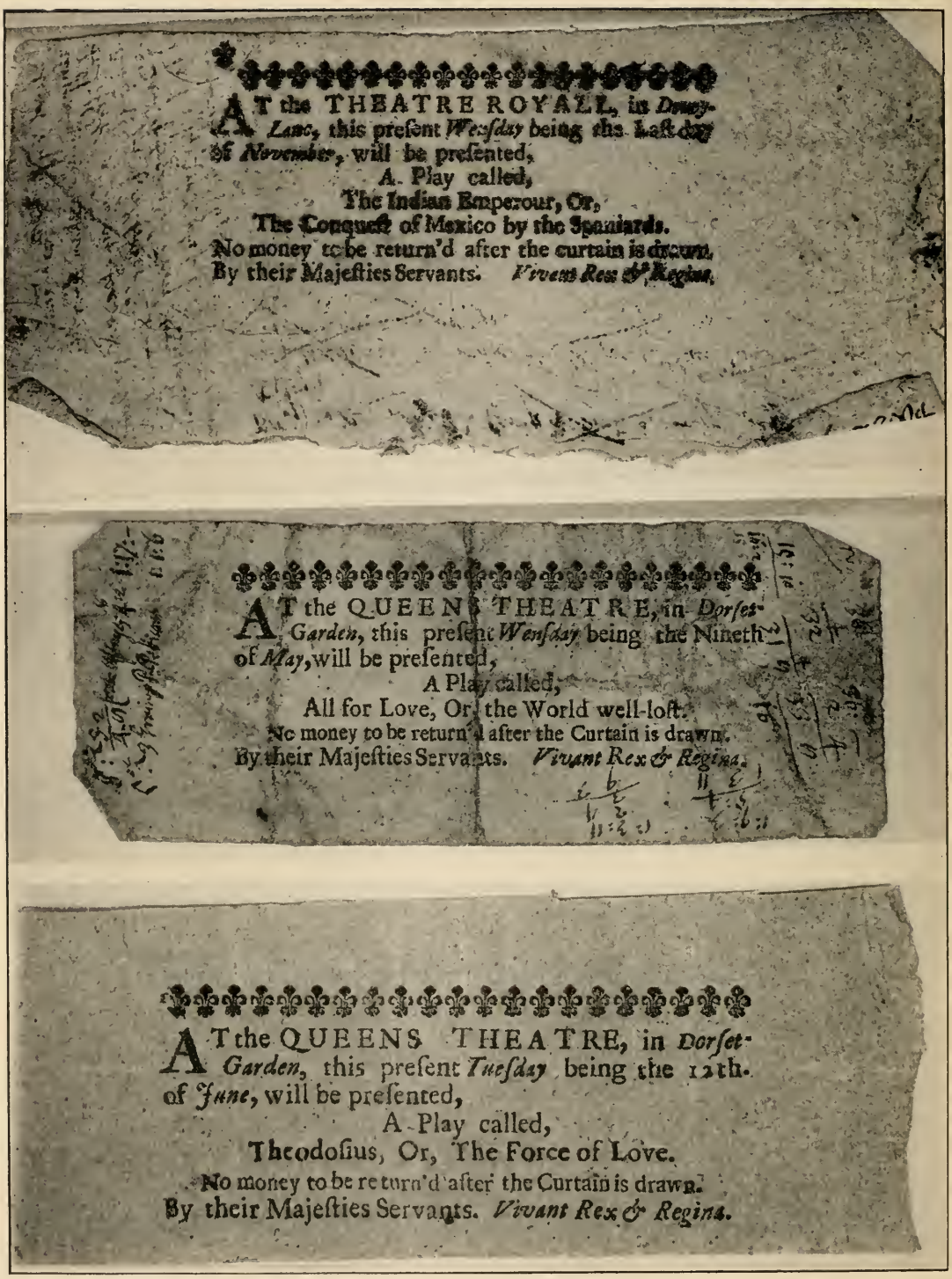
HENRY the Second King of England.

No money to be return'd after the curtain is drawn.

By their Majeſties Servants. *Vivant Rex & Regina.*

THE OLDEST KNOWN ENGLISH PLAYBILL (1692).
(Exact facsimile).

[*To face p.* 240.



AT the THEATRE ROYALL, in *Drury-Lane*, this present *Wednesday* being the Last day of *November*, will be presented,
A Play called,
The Indian Emperour, Or,
The Conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards.
No money to be return'd after the curtain is drawn.
By their Majesties Servants. *Vivant Rex & Regina.*

AT the QUEENS THEATRE, in *Dorset-Garden*, this present *Wensday* being the Nineth of *May*, will be presented,
A Play called,
All for Love, Or the World well-lost.
No money to be return'd after the Curtain is drawn.
By their Majesties Servants. *Vivant Rex & Regina.*

AT the QUEENS THEATRE, in *Dorset-Garden*, this present *Tuesday* being the 12th. of *June*, will be presented,
A Play called,
Theodosius, Or, The Force of Love.
No money to be return'd after the Curtain is drawn.
By their Majesties Servants. *Vivant Rex & Regina.*

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY PLAYBILLS [*To face p.* 241.
(Reduced facsimiles).

(4) *Theodosius, or the Force of Love.* Queen's Theatre, Dorset Gardens, Tuesday, 12 June (1694). Size of bill 6 inches by $2\frac{1}{2}$; of printed surface $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches by $1\frac{1}{2}$.

(1) This is now the oldest extant English playbill and the third oldest known bill in Europe.[1] Since it indicates the second performance of Bancroft and Mountford's tragedy, my date (ante p. 81) for the production of the play—derived from a contemporary newsletter transcribed in one of the *Historical Manuscripts Comm. Reports*—is slightly astray. Everything now points to the fact that *Henry II King of England* was first produced on 8 November, 1692.[2]

(2) With the exception that the original has the mis-spellings "Wensday" and "Emperour", this bill has been correctly given by me (from the *Historical Manuscripts Comm. Report*) at p. 81. Allowing for necessary changes of theatre, dating and play-title, the formula is the same in all. One notes that the hour of performance is not specified.

(3) Dryden's tragedy, *All for Love*, dates from December, 1677, when it was produced at Drury Lane. Dorset Garden Theatre ceased to be called the Duke's, and became the Queen's, on the accession of James II in 1685. This bill bears on the back and front some writing believed to be in the hand of Sir Ralph Verney, together with the date "May, 1694." This affords a clue to the date of the bill, for 9 May, 1694, fell on a Wednesday.

(4) Lee's tragedy of *Theodosius* was first produced in 1680, and was so frequently revived that some caution is necessary in dating this bill. However, the "Vivant Rex et Regina" at the end apparently limits it to the reign of William and Mary, and 1694 is fairly conclusive seeing that 12 June in that year fell on a Tuesday.

To eyes habituated to the amplitude of the latter-day day-bill what will appear remarkable about these bills is the meagreness of their information and the tininess of their size. The music-lover was left to discover how best he could that three out of the four plays announced had the extra attraction of fine vocal and instrumental music by Purcell. If the bills were used indifferently as poster and as handbill one cannot well see why they should have been so limited in size. That they were delivered at the houses of aristocratic patrons of the play their preservation in the Verney archives clearly attests.

[1] For facsimiles of French *affiches* of 1630 and 1659, see Pougin, *Le Théâtre à l'Exposition Universelle de* 1889, pp. 17–18.

[2] For other evidence, see *Quart. Mag. International Musical Society*, Year V, Pt. IV, 1904, p. 527, W. Barclay Squire's article "Purcell's Dramatic Music."

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*** The small superior figures refer to footnotes.

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PLATFORM-STAGE ERA