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**May 4-July 31, 1815.**

[ 20. May. 1815 ]

London

Waldie: XXXII, 55

... I went to the C. G. Theatre alone, & got a place in the pit at the end of a bench. Full house -- Miss O'Neill the attraction in Belvidera. Certainly she plays it with great energy & in the violent parts has great power & nature & feeling -- but she wants softness, for her "my dear husband carries a dagger in his once kind bosom" was a harsh scold & not a tender appeal -- yet many parts were far superior to all I ever saw except Mrs. Siddons. She is a charming girl indeed -- not beautiful but interesting. Her mad scene was admirable. Conway was tame & dull in many parts of Jaffier -- but where he gave way to his feelings gave some bursts of power & effect which were much applauded -- but his imitation of Kemble occasionally is plain -- his acting wanted keeping & nature often; but here & there he is really great. His figure is worse than ever.

XXXII, 56

Mr. Barrymore murdered Pierre most completely -- the play was very badly done except by Miss O'Neill & Conway -- & alas! how far behind are they to Mrs. Siddons & Kemble. I wish Young had played Pierre as the part would have suited him. The Fortune of War followed, and it is laughable & amusingly written. The scene is in the Netherlands. Mathews as Guntrum, the fat farmer, and Liston as the love-making sharper, Vander-scamp, were truly comical. Mrs. Davenport as Mrs. Duffendorf, Jones as the Poet & Soldier, Abbott & Planchard the officers, were very good. Miss Foote also pretty in Adela & Mrs. Gibbs in the chambermaid. Altogether very entertaining.

[ 25. May. 1815 ]

Charlotte & I went to the Opera to a play & music for the Caledonian Asylum. Not very full. Douglas. Norval, Rae -- Randolph, Egerton -- Glenalvon, Conway -- Old Norval, Terry. The 2 last good -- the rest vile. Mrs. Renaud had much feeling but no variety in Lady Randolph -- it was a most dull play.

Braham sung Abercrombie -- Mrs. Davison the Scots ballad of My boy Tammy -- Mrs. Salomon a bravura accompanied by Nicholson on the flute, beautiful -- & Madame Marconi sung a fine song very well indeed -- her voice & execution are improved. Mad<sup>e</sup>. Sessi sung her grand bravura of Portojall's -- Son Guerriera -- a most noble piece, in which she displays

XXXII, 66

great powers & execution. She is a charming singer -- the song was much like Son regina & indeed I believe is the same with alterations. Altogether some capital music.

Mr. Bartley spoke an address. Next came the Druid, with all the opera chorus & dancers except the chief dancers. Fingal by Pope, Roscrana by Mrs. Faucit, & the Druid by Mr. Bartley -- very dull. Some good choruses. The opera orchestra is much reduced in value by having Spagnoletti to lead instead of Weichsel. During the masque of the Druid Signors Graam & Le Vasseur each sung an air, the former very well indeed -- & Miss Mortimer, lately come from Italy, sung also -- affected, out of tune, and bad manner & voice, but some powers. The best thing of all was Mrs. Dickons in the Soldier Tired. I never heard such amazing sweetness, brilliancy, & flexibility. She is indeed an admirable singer.

[ 30. May. 1815 ]

... Miss Kell, Charlotte, William, & I tried to go to Incledon's benefit & see the Lord of the Manor, but it was full, so I went to Drury Lane & got a good place in the pit.

XXXII, 74

... The play was the Revenge. Kean is improved, & gave Zanga with great effect in many parts -- tho' he was always too mean & cat-like & diabolical, & made his deception too evident to Alonzo -- he wanted dignity & his gait & action are as bad as ever. In the last scene his triumphant malevolence was really great -- but his powers failed in his last exit -- & his "Hell blows all her fires" was poor indeed after Kemble, who seemed to suffer the agonies he spoke of: -- however Zanga is, I think, by far the best character I have seen him do. Carlos by Mr. Wallack very well -- Leonora by Miss Lydia Kelly poor indeed, no idea of acting -- Rae in Alonzo was not quite so bad as in Douglas, but he was all strut, noise, & rant -- nothing like nature, & a miserable copy of Young.

The Weathercock came next -- Penley capital in Sneer -- Gattie & Oxberry poor in Old Fickle & Briefwit. Miss Kelly pleasing & agreeable, as she always is, in Variella. Bannister shews great humor in the lawyer, gardener, & quaker -- but wants spirit & life in giving the full effect of Tristram's part. On this account I prefer Betty's manner of doing

XXXII, 75

it, for it is more natural & amusing, tho' he has not the great comic variety of countenance in the different parts, which Bannister alone depends on -- as he goes thro' it rather tame. It is his last appearance on the stage except his Benefit on Thursday when he takes his leave.

[ 31. May. 1815 ]

Called on Mr. Jones at theatre to try for a box for his Night -- none to be got. Saw him -- he asked me to go on the stage in the Masquerade as a great favor -- he has only allowed Kean a friend -- no other -- & I go with Betty as his friend. Called & saw Betty & Mrs. Betty. He & I went to Box office to get places for Mrs. B. & a lady. Jones' night is to be wonderfully full indeed, & a most brilliant thing.

XXXII, 78

[ 1. June. 1815 ]

... Charlotte, Jane, & I went to C. G. Theatre to Lady Collingwood's box ... very full house. The Stranger. Young hard & cold in the Stranger -- Solomon, Emery -- Peter, Simmons -- Steinfort, Barrymore -- the Count, Hamerton -- the Countess, Mrs. Egerton -- Charlotte, Mrs. Gibbs -- Annette, Mrs. Liston -- & Mrs. Haller, Miss O'Neill -- a most lovely & striking representation -- all depressed quiet, softness, & elegance -- fine conception -- in some parts she might have been more violent -- but her distress thro' quiet is so natural, affecting, evident, & great that one feels every line -- she was in this part on the whole equal to Mrs. Siddons -- far below her in expression of face, but in manner & accent more retiring, soft, modest, & conscious, yet in the scene where she sends her message to her husband she was very inferior -- her best scenes were her story to the Countess & her last scene -- tho' in some parts of the last she might have done more-- yet her power by quietness of drawing

XXXII, 79

tears is astonishing -- & altogether her acting in Mrs. Haller is admirably conceived & most delightfully expressed, & draws tears from every eye. There were several times such choruses

of tears & handkerchiefs as I have not heard for long. Certainly it is far beyond her Belvidera -- at least far more perfect, even if it does not shew such great powers.

We had the Fortune of War, which goes off better by repetition & in which Mathews, Liston, Jones, & Mrs. Davenport are capital. Bannister had his benefit at D. L. tonight & took his leave of the stage after playing Echo in the World & Walter in the Children in the Wood. He is not what he was -- but he is a great loss -- he was to speak his thanks for his twenty years of favor. I should have liked to have heard it much, but could not be in 2 places at once -- & could not leave my party or I should have moved from Covent Garden after the play.

XXXII, 80

[ 2. June. 1815 ]

... William & I went to Betty's, & went with him & Butler & Miss Griffiths to the play. Very good seats in first circle, five boxes from the stage. Mrs. Betty was upstairs in a private box. Jones' benefit. I never saw such a full house -- even the lobbies were crammed -- & the farthest pigeon holes quite full -- above 720. Love & Gout -- a most merry amusing comedy, full of equivoque & neat writing -- but no new characters.

XXXII, 81

Sir Solomon Gander, Mr. Terry -- Lady Gander, Mrs. Davenport -- Miss Dimple, Mrs. Kennedy -- Old Ardent, Mathews -- Young Ardent, Abbott -- Rusty, Blanchard -- Shears, Liston -- O'Blunder, Hamerton -- Lucy, Miss S. Booth -- Sabrina, Miss Seymour. Nothing can exceed it for fun, situation, & equivoque. I don' know when I've been more amused. Mathews, Liston, Jones, Abbott, Mrs. Kennedy, & Mrs. Davenport were inimitably good.

The Musical piece of Brother & Sister, a spanish piece -- Duruset, Mathews, Liston, Miss Mathews, & Miss Stephens. I don't know what it was about, except that I heard Miss Stephens at the beginning sing the Echo Song, which is most heavenly & sweet. She is much improved indeed -- her echo cadence is most delightful.

Before the end of the first act we went with Betty to the stage door where we & others were admitted by tickets: & after we got drest, me as a fellow commoner of St. John's & he as a Pilgrim, we went to the wing, where I had a chat with Mrs. Mountain & saw the end of Brother & Sister, & then in the Green room we saw lots of masques coming in -- very

XXXII, 82

amusing to see the odd figures -- Conway a fat friar, Mathews a quack doctor, Liston a boy, Mrs. Mountain a ballad singer, Mrs. Dickons, Silence. I was introduced to Terry, De Camp, Sinclair, Duruset, Miss Foote, &c. The Masquerade commenced with an Introductory Dialogue by Jones & Farley -- & a Prologue by Jones -- then the Hall of the Theatre with groups of tumblers, harlequins, dancers, &c. arriving, crossing the stage -- we at the wing -- then the Scene drew up & displayed a grand temple on the back & lots of colored lamps -- very splendid -- & we were all on the stage 300 or 400 at least. Military band, dancing, curious groups. I was with Mrs. Edwin, a very pretty & pleasant mask, and we went to the lamps and heard all the songs -- between each of which was Military band & dancing. Mathews sung Bartlemy Fair, Incledon the Lady of the Village, Sinclair & Miss Stephens "Together let us range," & the Red Cross Knight was sung



in chorus. Grimaldi & Bologna did the dance from Mother Goose, but the best of all was Liston & Jones as Moll Flagon & Young Contrast dancing the Minuet from The Lord of the Manor. Fireworks. Balloon ascended & went out at the ventilator above the pit, where it burst & scattered down a shower of little balloons & mottoes on the pit. God Save the King in full chorus. Altogether most amusing. So much a crowd on the stage, I was quite at ease & went constantly to the lamps with Mrs. Edwin, my favorite Widow Cheerly, as a very pretty peasant girl. After it was over, we all went to the King's Saloon, where was a supper, or rather sandwiches, cakes, oranges, ices, negus, lemonade, &c. Here we all unmasked -- & I saw Jones, Young, Sinclair, Conway, Betty, Mr. Jerdan, Mr. Andrews, & the Duke of Devonshire -- & had much chat with His Grace, who came to speak to Duruset while I was talking to him. He is indeed

XXXII, 84

a most elegant & pleasing young man, quite at ease & natural, neither condescending nor stiff. We staid about an hour all in the supper room & then moved to the Green room & people went away. I walked off with Mr. Jerdan at 1 -- & home to bed at 1/2 p. 1, after a most amusing evening, having made my first appearance in public on the Covent Garden stage as a Cantal & performed God save the King to the best of my vocal powers.

XXXII, 85

[ 3. June. 1815 ]

... Walter Griffith came to us, and he & Charlotte & Jane & I went to the opera. Barsene Regina di Lidia -- Barsene, Madame Sessi.-- Narsete, Marzochi -- Alceste, Graam -- & the

Priest & Confidante, Le Vasseur & Luigia. Marzochi sung finely but his manner is bad. The music by Liverati & Portogallo if not original was very rich & pretty -- & displayed Sessi's great powers & astonishing compass up to G in alt most wonderfully.

I was quite delighted with her powerfully fine tones so perfect in tune & most brilliant execution -- her high notes are wonderful indeed. Graam is a sweet singer -- a charming voice & easy natural manner -- but no actor -- his duet with Sessi was delightful -- as was her duet with Marzochi -- the Trio in first act was encored & was delicious -- but the best thing was the Finale of the 1st act which was exquisite harmony & brilliant execution by Sessi. Her 2 airs

XXXII, 86

were very rich & admirably adapted to her. Liverati's music is more in the Guglielmi & Cimarosa style -- than in that of Pucitta & Paesiello. I much prefer it to Pucitta, tho' not so easy. The opera was delightful. Both the Spanish Divertisement & Calife de Bagdad were much curtailed in order to finish by 12 -- the new dancers are capital. Old Vestris, whom I saw at Paris 13 years ago & is now 66, danced admirably -- his plomb & execution & grace astonishing, & his figure very fine -- Leon is a good dancer -- also C. Vestris & Bourdin -- Madame Leon is a pretty woman & pleasing dancer & so is Mad.<sup>lle</sup> Mangin -- Mad. Del Caro is lively, clever, & active, but not in my way. The truly charming dancer is Mad.<sup>lle</sup> Melanie -- I never saw such elegance, ease, softness, & modesty, & such precision & perfect neatness of execution. I think she is far the best we have had for many years: young & pretty & a charming figure.

[ 5. June. 1815 ]

... went to 1/2 price at C. G. Theatre & got good places in boxes, tho' it was very full indeed. Saw the last act of Grecian Daughter. Mr. Young dressed & acted Evander most vilely. Conway was very animated in Dionysius & played some parts of it very well. Phocian, Abbott -- Philotas, Terry.

XXXII, 91

Miss O'Neil was spirited, grand, & elegant -- but had not the soul of Mrs. Siddons. It is too dignified for her -- but her manner of killing Dionysius & then running to her father's arms was beautifully affecting.

Comus succeeded. It is beautifully got up indeed & a most splendid thing. Spirit, Duruset -- he displayed great powers & fine toned voice in his invocation to Sabrina. Sabrina, Mrs. Sterling -- squalled out of tune terribly. Miss Stephens was the Pastoral Nymph & sung the songs, especially Sweet Echo, most sweetly but rather tame. Miss Mathews was lively & pleasant in Euphrosyne. Mr. Liston & all the others Bacchanals -- as were Sinclair, Incledon, Broadhurst, & Taylor. The laughing chorus was most admirably got up & managed -- it had a capital effect. Conway was good in Comus & Abbott in the Elder Brother. Lady by Mrs. Faucit & Younger Brother by Miss Foote. The Scenery is beautiful & rich -- on the whole much amused.

XXXII, 93

[ 6. June. 1815 ]

... Charlotte, Jane, & I went to the play at D. L. Theatre. Mrs. Dickons' benefit. Very good house -- not crammed -- good places in the pit -- Artaxerxes. T. Rovedino in Artaxerxes was poor -- a young lady in Arbaces, a pupil of Mrs. D., was tolerable -- very little power, but was well taught. Bellamy was a poor Artabanus after Incledon. Miss Horrebow was Semira. It was

far inferior to the same at C. G. Theatre except

XXXII, 94

Mandane, Mrs. Dickons -- which was indeed far superior to Miss Stephens. Every song drew peals of applause. Her "Adieu," "Fly soft ideas," "If ever the cruel," were done with some dramatic flourish, but without loss of purity -- her ornaments are not the florid imposition of artifice, but the graces of an animated spirit & natural vivacity -- the 2 duets & "The Soldier Tired," which last she sung twice most inimitably & con spirito. I never heard any thing more delightful -- her acting & singing were exquisite indeed. Master Barnett sung the Bewildered Maid very sweetly. The Irishman in London. Nothing could be more amusing than De Camp in Edward -- he was highly comic & full of life & extravaganza -- he quite cuts out Johnstone, who is much fallen off & did not make much of Murtoch, tho' his face is still capital. Wallack & Mrs. Orger looked handsome & Penley was comic in the old man.

Naldi & Mrs. Dickons performed the sol fa Duet in Il Fanatico. It was really admirable -- & went off with peals & acclamations & would have been encored if it had not been so long. They both acted it so well, it was really a feast.

Next came Ella Rosenberg -- which I have often seen before.

XXXII, 95

Pope in the Elector, Decamp in Montfort are good -- but Wrench in Storm & Rae in Rosenberg are so-so, & Mrs. Edwin does not exactly suit these parts, tho' she looks interesting. Mrs. Sparks is excellent in Mrs Flutterman & Penley decent in the husband.