

W. Wilkins, Esq.

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3807. Scarcely any change could make it worse?—If you shut them up altogether it would be worse. If the theatres were shut up, there would be certain reserved rents I am obliged to pay, and it would cost me more than now. In Norwich, my tenant has an annual loss of 500*l.*, which is only made up by the other theatres, going from place to place for a short time.

3808. Do you consider sectarianism prevails largely in Norwich?—To a very great extent, and Colchester is similarly circumstanced.

3809. Do you consider the taste for the drama could be at all revived?—I do not know by what circumstance. You must procure better writers. There is a great paucity of good writers.

3810. Supposing authors could obtain a permanent reward; that is, suppose he had a certain sum every time his play was performed at the provincial theatres by which he might obtain an income, do you not think an author would have a natural desire to produce a piece which would be permanent rather than produce something ephemeral?—He would desire, of course, but it does not follow that he would succeed.

3811. Would it not be his interest to endeavour to do so?—Certainly; a man will exert all his talent and power in pursuit of any object which it is interest to attain.

3812. Do you think there has been a dearth of literary talent in the country for the last few years?—I think literary talent has been on the decline generally.

3813. Keeping pace with the decline of talent in the drama?—Yes; and in the arts and sciences I think we have not kept pace with foreign writers.

3814. With foreign writers generally?—Yes.

3815. Do you think their writers are as good as Byron, Scott or Southey?—I allude chiefly to dramatic writing. There are different kinds of dramas, some for representation and some for the cabinet. Lord Byron's dramas, for instance, are better for the cabinet than for representation.

3816. If, as you say, wherever the interests of men direct them to one quarter their full powers and energies will be exerted, do you not consider if the current is particularly strong in favour of the drama, that talent would be directed there as well as into other quarters?—No, I think men of true literary talent look to reward of a different character, to fame and reputation.

3817. Then you do not think fame and reputation would be obtained in the drama?—Yes, if talent can be obtained.

3818. You stated, wherever any particular interest lay in the exertion of any particular powers, it would be natural to expect great powers would be exerted in that direction?—Certainly.

3819. Would that apply to the drama?—Yes; but authors of great talent, who write for the drama, or for the arts and sciences, look to posthumous fame, and present reputation, for remuneration.

3820. That reputation would be acquired in the drama as well as in anything else?—I think a play-writer must be born, as well as a poet, *non fit*.

3821. You consider it just that dramatic authors should be paid for their works at the provincial theatres, though they could not afford to give it?—There is no man who should not be paid for his labour some how or other, either by reputation or profit. Some men are satisfied with fame, others by less noble rewards, by pay.

3822. What form of theatre do you consider best adapted for seeing and hearing?—I think the best form is the semicircle. We know the ancient theatres were built in that form. In the theatre at Omena, which is a semicircle, the voice may be heard all over the house. That form is the most perfect; but there are other considerations which must be taken into account. In the first place the ancients always performed in the open air, and as air is the vehicle of sound, it is necessary it should be pure, but you cannot get that in a theatre that is closed from the air: the air in a theatre is not pure, and is not capable of producing that clearness of tone. There is also a prevalent belief that theatres should be constructed of wood to make it more sonorous, but that is a mistake, as in fact it is like speaking in a tub.

3823. Do you think it is indifferent whether it is constructed of wood or stone?—I think it should be constructed of more permanent materials. If you could have a theatre of iron or a stage of iron, you would have a perfect theatre.

3824. Do you consider a semicircle better than a horse-shoe?—Our theatres are in general constructed in the horse-shoe form, and so are the ancient theatres. The Roman theatres were larger than ours, and we have every reason to believe they heard perfectly well. They were of the horse-shoe rather than the semicircle.

3825. You think when it is in the open air you hear better?—Yes; the elasticity of the air is greater. *W. Wilkins, Esq.*

3826. Do you think the ancients had any secrets with respect to the conveyance of sound?—No, none. In the ancient theatres they performed in masks: some writers say it was to increase the sound of the voice, but I believe it was merely for the purpose of concealing the features.

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3827. Do you think an architect could secure a perfect conveyance of sound in any theatre?—Yes.

3828. You do not consider it is accidental?—No; I consider it is a point of science.

3829. If you were desired to construct a theatre that should be perfectly adapted to seeing and hearing, would you construct it as large as Drury Lane or Covent Garden?—Certainly not; for as our representations take place at night you cannot secure the prevalence of pure air.

3830. You attribute it to the air more than any thing else?—Yes, as a vehicle of sound certainly; if the air is pure its power of conveying a sound will be greater.

3831. How do you secure the prevalence of pure air in a small theatre?—I consider so, *ceteris paribus*; the apertures are larger.

3832. Have you ever built a theatre?—Yes, several provincial theatres, and rebuilt them also.

3833. Have you any general observations to offer to the Committee?—I hope, if the object the Committee have in view may lead to the remuneration of authors, they will think a little of the powers of managers. We play now at Norwich, under the Lord Chamberlain's licence; an Act of Parliament passed to enable the Lord Chamberlain to licence a theatre at Norwich.

3834. Was it to enable the Lord Chamberlain to licence, or the King to grant a patent?—I do not remember.

3835. What Act was it?—A local Act, about 70 years ago. At all other places we are quite at the mercy of the magistrates, who may licence or not at their pleasure.

3836. Is their licence granted or withheld capriciously?—No, not at all; but there is room for caprice: and at the University we have no licence whatever; and, therefore, I should humbly propose that something should be done to enable the Vice-Chancellor at Cambridge to grant permission to perform during the vacations, so that the inhabitants should be enabled to have theatrical amusements like the inhabitants of every other place. If it took place during the vacation, it would have no improper influence on the minds or studies of the students.

3837. Have you reason to suppose that the Vice-Chancellor would grant a licence if he had the power?—Yes, he does so at present, but he does it at his risk; and some timid Vice-Chancellors are afraid to do it.

3838. Was not there a disturbance some years ago at the theatre?—Yes, I believe there was.

3839. You do perform there now during the vacation?—Yes, the Vice-Chancellor permits it without any power.

3840. Then you are liable to prosecution every time you act?—It lies with the Vice-Chancellor whether he will receive informations or not.

3841. Does the theatre answer at Cambridge during the vacation?—Yes; it is one of the things that makes up for the loss at Norwich. The loss there was 500*l.* a year; it was only made up by establishing the Bury and other theatres, so that they go from one to another.

3842. You said your theatre was a nursery for good performers?—Yes.

3843. Can you name any performer of reputation who has come out at those theatres?—Yes; Mrs. Siddons came from Norwich.

3844. Since you had them?—No; they have been a very short time in my possession, not more than 15 years.

3845. During the last 15 years have they produced any eminent actors?—Some very good actors.

3846. Can you name any?—Some of the best actors at the minor theatres.

3847. Who are they?—There is a very celebrated lady, Mrs. Sloman, who is one of the best tragic actresses I ever saw; she is gone to America, as she has not physical powers for the large theatres, and they could not give her enough money at the minor theatres.

3848. Have you found persons who are very good actors in a small theatre who have not physical powers for the large ones?—Yes; it happens frequently. I have

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known three or four who were extremely good performers at a small theatre in the country, when they came to Drury Lane or Covent Garden they have totally failed.

3849. Was that from want of physical organs or bashfulness?—Certainly not from bashfulness, for that is a virtue I never heard they possessed in an eminent degree.

Mr. George Bolwell Davidge, called in ; and further Examined.

Mr. G. B. Davidge.

3850. HAVE you any share in a provincial theatre?—I am lessee of the Royal Amphitheatre at Liverpool.

3851. That is not for the regular drama?—No.

3852. Have you ever had any share in a provincial theatre for the performance of the regular drama?—Never.

3853. Who is the manager of the old Liverpool theatre?—Mr. Lewis.

3854. What are the entertainments of the amphitheatre; you do not act the regular drama?—No; similar pieces to the amphitheatre in London; Ducrow's theatre.

Mr. J. R. Planchè, called in ; and Examined.

Mr. J. R. Planchè.

3855. YOU are the author of Oberon and other dramatic pieces?—I am.

3856. It was stated you received 400*l.* for Oberon from Covent Garden theatre?—I received 400*l.*, including the copyright; 300*l.*, the common terms for a three act opera, which I had been in the habit of receiving before at the theatres, and 100*l.* for the copyright.

3857. What other works have you written?—I have placed, of one description or another, 73 dramas upon the stage.

3858. Which have been the most successful ones?—Charles the Twelfth, the Brigand, the Woman never Vexed, Maid Marian, and the Rencontre.

3859. What has the Brigand produced you?—£. 100.

3860. Has that been very profitable to the theatre?—I have heard from the treasurer of Drury Lane that it produced a great deal of money to them.

3861. Do you conceive it would be very advantageous to authors to have the law in this country analagous to the law in France, to have a copyright in their works?—There cannot be a shadow of a doubt of it.

3862. Do you consider it would be easy to obtain any money from the provincial theatres?—There would be some difficulty in that.

3863. If a piece could not be performed without the leave of the author, do you think authors in general would demand reasonable terms?—Most decidedly.

3864. What would you demand for Oberon?—I will mention a case that occurred to me, as an instance. In the case of Charles the Twelfth, one of the most fortunate of my pieces, and also one of the most original, I asked Mr. Murray, of the Edinburgh theatre, five guineas for permission to perform that piece in any theatre of his for any length of time. I have his letter in my pocket in answer to that, in which he states, that in consequence of the depressed state of provincial theatrical property, and the introduction of half-price, it did not enable a provincial manager to get up a piece at all, and under these circumstances he should be very happy to give it to me, if he could afford it, but he could not, it being an afterpiece. He afterwards obtained surreptitiously a copy of it, which he played many nights as a first piece; he then had a paragraph inserted in the papers, requesting him to play it as an afterpiece, to accommodate those who could not come at first price, and it had a considerable run as an afterpiece.

3865. Are all your pieces licensed?—All of them.

3866. Have you ever had to wait previous to the work being read?—No, I never remember a play being postponed.

3867. You always met with prompt attention?—I have had no communication with the licenser personally, it has been produced generally on the day named, at least the delay did not arise from the licenser.

3868. When you put a play into the hands of a manager for approval, have you ever had much delay?—Yes, considerable.

3869. What do you call a considerable delay?—A whole season sometimes.

3870. Do you think if the legitimate drama were allowed at the minor theatres, it would be advantageous to authors?—Certainly.

3871. Would works like Oberon be as well performed at a minor theatre as at

at Covent Garden?—No small theatre would attempt to play a piece of that description. Mr. J. R. Planché.

3872. Do you consider the small theatres would be able, from the natural order of competition, to afford a fair price to authors?—They have afforded a fair price to me. 10 July 1831.

3873. Have you written for the minor theatres?—Yes; I have written for the Olympic, the Adelphi, and Sadler's Wells.

3874. So far as authors are concerned, it would be advantageous to them?—Yes.

3875. Suppose the property of dramatic authors in their pieces was extended, as is proposed, and that provincial theatres objected to pay anything to an author for the right of representing it; would it not be worth the author's while for mere fame or reputation to permit it to be acted at a provincial theatre?—Yes, certainly, cases might occur; because now they obtain them surreptitiously, and they act them in very imperfect parts, an instance of which occurred in the case of the "Rencontre."

3876. You heard Mr. Wilkins's evidence; do you conceive that provincial theatres are in a state to be able materially to increase the remuneration to be given to dramatic authors?—I conceive if they are playing at a loss; but as Mr. Wilkins has confessed melo-dramas and translations draw some money, if the representation of those pieces which are the most successful in London enable them to lessen their loss, it will be certain gain to them, and if they lessen the loss 1*l.*, the author would surely be entitled to 1*s.*

3877. Would not that be too trivial?—No, I will say a farthing; but I do not think it is from those theatres we should seek remuneration; but from Birmingham, Dublin, Liverpool, Bath, where managers are in the habit of making money.

3878. Do you consider, in fact, that the provincial theatres could give much to authors?—If I may answer the question by putting another, I would ask, was five guineas too much for permission to act Charles the Twelfth in every theatre? It must have cost Mr. Murray as much to obtain a copy of it by a short-hand writer.

3879. You consider if the means of remuneration were even so small as that, such an enactment would be valuable to authors?—Yes. I seldom take up a provincial play-bill in which I do not see a piece to be performed for which I should have a right to claim some small profit.

3880. Do you think 100*l.* or 200*l.* a year would be obtained by the dramatic author under such circumstances?—I have no doubt that at this moment I should be receiving 100*l.* a year from provincial theatres, without any detriment to their interests, if the law had existed at the time I began to write.

3881. Do you think it would be sufficient to enforce that law to give authors a right of action, the same as in the case of literary copyright?—Certainly not; I fear there are very few who could run the risk of an action.

3882. What would you propose?—I had the honour some time ago to submit to the House of Common, through the medium of Mr. Lamb, a bill upon this subject; and I took the opinion of several legal and literary gentlemen, and it was proposed it should be by summary process before a magistrate; that unless the manager of a theatre could produce an attested permission from the author to play that piece he should be fined a certain sum; not for playing the piece, but for breaking the Act of Parliament.

3883. Do you not think there would be difficulties in carrying that summary process into effect; as, for instance, in the case of a translation, how could the justice decide that another person had not translated the same piece?—The title is copyright; they have no business with the same title, because they profess to play a piece performed in London; no other would satisfy them.

3884. Do you think it would detract from the attraction of the piece if they gave it another name?—Most decidedly.

3885. Suppose they gave it another name, and said "translated from the same piece as Mr. Planché's favourite piece in London"?—They would not hazard that, in my opinion; they will always find ways to evade the law; but I should be satisfied with such an Act in my favour.

3886. You think magistrates would be able to carry it into execution?—I cannot say that.

3887. Do you not think they would be very shy in pronouncing a piece a plagiary or not?—I know that is the opinion of Mr. Lamb.

3888. At the time that bill was introduced was it considered by authors in general that the remedy by action would be of no use at all?—Certainly.

Mr. *J. R. Planché*. 3889. You say that some of your plays have been delayed a whole season at some of the theatres?—I do not mean to make any complaint, but I merely state a circumstance which has occurred.

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3890. Have you ever known an instance where a piece has been kept back at a theatre contrary to the wishes of the author?—I do not call it to my recollection at this moment. It has not occurred to me; I have experienced a delay which I thought detrimental to my interests, and also to the interests of the theatre; but I could not complain of it as wilful or personal.

3891. When a piece is accepted by one of the theatres, have you the power of withdrawing it if not produced within a certain time?—I should consider I had, unless I had sold it, and was paid for it.

3892. One of your pieces was, the "Woman never Vexed;" that was founded on an old comedy?—Yes, it was quite so.

3893. Suppose they contended before a magistrate that piece was only an alteration of an old comedy, would it not be a difficult thing for a magistrate to judge of that?—That is not the original title. It was called "The New Wonder, or the Women never Vexed," and the title of mine was "The Woman never Vexed, or the Widow of Cornhill." Mr. Lowndes, the printer, reprinted the old play, and sent it into Covent Garden as the acting play. Mr. Dolby, who had bought my copyright, proceeded against him in Chancery, and stopped him, but at the cost of 30*l.* to himself, he having given me 50 guineas for the copyright.

3894. Your reliance is on the attraction of the title?—Yes, certainly.

3895. Do you not think it would be possible for a country manager to act the same with a different title, and insinuate in the play-bills that it was the same piece under another title?—I have heard it said that there was no Act of Parliament ever framed which you could not drive a coach and six through, and therefore I cannot pretend to judge of that.

Jovis, 12^o die Julii, 1832.

EDWARD LYTTON BULWER, ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. *Thomas Morton*, called in; and further Examined.

Mr. *T. Morton*.

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3896. YOU wish to add something to your former examination?—In my former examination I left my memorandums at home, and I omitted many things which I thought might be worth the Committee's attention.

3897. What is it you wish to state?—First of all, I think I said before that I thought the drama would sustain an injury by allowing the minors to perform what is called the legitimate drama; that was a mere assertion on my part, and I would now, with your permission, endeavour to explain my meaning, by showing how that is grounded; and I would take a practical view of the question. I believe the expenditure of the Theatres Royal exceeds 3,000*l.* a week. I know the expenses of Drury Lane the season before last were 265*l.* a night, and I understand last season it was diminished by 5*l.* or 6*l.* a night; and, therefore, that will amount to more than the sum I have named for the expenditure of the two theatres. Of course this large expenditure is devoted in a great measure to the payment of performers, and I hardly need add, that that expenditure would command the elite of the dramatic corps; and yet, in despite of that, I do not know a complaint so frequently made, both by the press, and in society, as that our third and fourth-rate characters are inadequately sustained. That I think a very important thing for the consideration of this Committee; because what chance is there of the minor theatres, whose first-rate salaries are only commensurate with our third or fourth, acting the great tragedies or comedies effectively and well? I think it is true that is the proportion; our third and fourth rate salaries are equivalent to the minors' first-rate salaries; and, of course, I should say our performers are in the same ratio; or to bring it to a practical illustration, our King Claudius perhaps would be their Hamlet, and then perhaps it might be asked what their King Claudius would be? I think Shakspeare has called him by his true title "a king of shreds and patches." With respect to Shakspeare and his plays, I think I may be allowed to say he has spoken his wishes upon this subject very forcibly, for in
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the prologue to Henry the Fifth, impressed with the nobleness of his subject and the mightiness of his powers, he asks for "A kingdom for a stage, princes to act, and monarchs to behold the swelling scene!" I think he very feelingly complains of how he is "cabin'd, cribb'd, confined within the girdle of those walls;" and for my part, it seems a command upon his countrymen that his pieces should be produced only in the noblest temples of the Muses.

3898. Why were not those commands obeyed by his countrymen at that time, and why were not Shakspeare's plays performed upon larger stages, because they were performed at that time upon stages smaller than those of the minor theatres?—I only express that as the wishes of the author.

3899. But no such stage prevailed in those days?—He asks you to piece out his imperfections by your thoughts; in short, it seems a poetical illustration of the subject, and I have given it as it struck me.

3900. What is your own opinion, as that may be more valuable?—My own opinion is, that it would injure the drama very much.

3901. How do you account for the stages being so small in Shakspeare's time, as you stated you consider it to be a demand of Shakspeare's upon his countrymen that his plays should be represented upon large stages?—Yes, it appears to me so.

3902. Then how do you account for his countrymen disobeying his commands in those days, and representing his plays on smaller stages than those of the minor theatres?—For the same reason that Thespis played in a cart. It was in the infancy of the drama, and that was the cause. He would not have written this ode, this splendid prologue, but to account for the imperfection of the theatre. I never witnessed a representation of any of Shakspeare's plays at the minor theatres without sorrow or disappointment.

3903. Do you consider the Haymarket a minor theatre?—No, I do not.

3904. You consider the stage of the Haymarket theatre large enough?—I do not. I do not think I have seen Shakspeare's plays acted at the Haymarket, and certainly I think they are feebly performed compared with Covent Garden or Drury Lane.

3905. Is that the fault of the performers or the stage?—Generally both. Shakspeare's plays are principally tragedies, and Mr. Morris does not engage a tragic company.

3906. Mr. Kean plays there?—Yes, he plays as a star, and Mr. Kean acts there as he does every where, powerfully; but I think you want the pomp, pride and circumstance of tragedy.

3907. You would prefer Mr. Kean on the stage of Covent Garden or Drury Lane to the Haymarket?—I should prefer the whole play there. I have also seen other great plays acted in minor theatres. I will instance a very fine play, the School for Scandal. That play contains 16 or 17 characters, and I think they all require a large portion of talent to represent them adequately. I remember seeing the School for Scandal, and it appeared to me carelessly done and very imperfectly studied.

3908. You consider it is because there is not a sufficient body of actors at the minor theatres?—Just so.

3909. Suppose there was a sufficient body of actors at the minor theatres, there is no reason why it might not be as well played?—None at all.

3910. Then it would be probable, if men of large capital embarked in the minor theatres, they would engage as large a body of actors, and consequently it would be as well performed?—If you can anticipate that such a large body of talent is to be speculated with, which I doubt.

3911. If persons of sufficient capital were to take the minor theatres, so as to pay the best performers, the drama could be as well performed as it is now at the great theatres?—Certainly, if the theatre was of that reasonable capacity which I advocate.

3912. You say it proceeds in a great measure from the want of actors?—Yes.

3913. What is it you consider chiefly trains an actor to be a good actor; playing in the legitimate drama?—Certainly.

3914. Now there are only two theatres allowed to play the legitimate drama, with the exception of the Haymarket; consequently, if there were more opportunities of playing the legitimate drama the actors would be improved?—It might be; but such is the state of the profession at present they are not to be had; no capital would produce them.

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3915. But suppose there were more opportunities for an actor in playing the legitimate drama, since he is made better by playing the legitimate drama, their acting would be better than it is now?—It might be better; but I think the present taste which governs these minor theatres is extremely injurious to the actors. Formerly, in my earlier days, the country theatres were the school from which the metropolis derived all its actors, and then they certainly acted only the better part of the drama in the country. I remember, in Bath, when the *School for Scandal* was sure, with a stock company, to produce its ten excellent houses in a season. It was the same in other things.

3916. In fact, you mean to say it is the class of performances existing at the minor theatres which tend to degrade the drama?—Yes.

3917. And if they were to play the legitimate drama, they would not deteriorate the drama so much as they do now?—Not if they were competent for it.

3918. At what period are you speaking to the *School for Scandal* being exhibited at the Bath theatre?—Thirty years ago.

3919. Do you recollect who was the principal performer there?—Mr. Dimond, and then came Elliston. Edwin came from Bath.

3920. But he left long before that?—Yes, Edwin left it 10 years before that.

3921. Edwin played Sir Peter Teazle, and Bonner played Charles?—I do not recollect.

3922. Do you not recollect the Bath theatre at that time was looked upon as a school for performers? Mrs. Siddons and others appeared there to great advantage, who could make no impression on the London boards?—No, I think that example is very unfortunate, for it is unnecessary to say what impression Mrs. Siddons made on the London boards.

3923. But when she first appeared she made no impression, and went to the Bath theatre?—Because she was not a good actress at that time.

3924. Then did she become a good actress instantly?—No, 14 years elapsed.

3925. Do you mean to say that 14 years elapsed after her failure in London and her re-appearance?—I do not know; but there was a lapse of 14 years after she played in the *Runaway*, until her appearance in London in *Isabella*.

3926. What are the other observations you wish to make?—I said I had seen the *School for Scandal* performed, and I thought very carelessly, and the dialogue very loosely studied. I remember in particular the gentleman who played Moses; he certainly said a great deal more than was set down for him. I do not say he did not show considerable tact in doing so, for he suited himself to the taste of the audience he was playing to; and his jokes about pork and sausages produced a great deal of delight, perhaps when Shakspeare's dialogue fell from him without a titter or hand of applause. There are other plays which I have seen performed with great satisfaction.

3927. That is owing to the low taste of the audience?—Yes.

3928. Do you consider that the large theatres have at all tended to produce that taste in the audience by the production of melo-drama?—I believe the *Tale of Mystery* was the first melo-drama produced.

3929. Have the great theatres produced pieces equally tending to produce that taste of the public as the minors?—Yes; I consider they have been to blame.

3930. What do you think was the object in granting the patents; to preserve the dignity of the drama?—I think so.

3931. Then if the taste of the public has been deteriorated in the way you state, the dignity of the drama has not been preserved?—I think not.

3932. What other point do you wish to speak upon?—The next point is the necessity of a licenser or some controlling officer, and upon that it has been said it ought to be left open, and things would find their level. I do not think so. I think, on the contrary, the effect would be very injurious indeed to the drama and to the public mind, for so far from finding their level, the very cause of the Licensing Act was that things did not find their level. We know that Fielding's *Pasquin* was the sole cause of the Licensing Act; and I think any body who reads that play will agree with me that a control becomes absolutely necessary.

3933. Suppose that is true that a licence is necessary by law; do you consider it is better a play should be licensed by one licenser or a licensing board?—I think the less is left to individuals the better.

3934. What particular character or part of that play do you object to?—The political excitement it causes; the licentiousness of its political observations.

3935. What

3935. What has it done that it might not be represented in these days?— I cannot tell from my recollection, but I believe it is a matter of Parliamentary notoriety that that was the cause of the Licensing Act.

3936. "The Golden Rump" is supposed to be the cause?—I formerly read Lord Chesterfield's speech.

3937. In *Pasquin* there is nothing more than what takes place every day; it is an account of the general election?—But the satire on political power is very severe.

3938. Do you mean to say if *Pasquin* was represented now it would raise a great excitement?—I think so; a very great one.

3939. But you cannot point out any passage of that play?—No; that is my impression.

3940. Do you think it is the character of Colonel Promise or Captain Place?—No; but the whole texture of it, the object of it has a political tendency.

3941. As much so as *The Man of the World*?—*The Man of the World* is very political. That passed the licenser with some difficulty; it was originally called *The True Born Scotchman*.

3942. Do you consider the *Beggar's Opera* to be political?—It is covertly so, but not so palpable.

3943. You say the less the licensing power is left to an individual the better?—Yes; I think all power is so situated.

3944. Do you think a Board to license plays would be preferable to one licenser?—Yes; I think the less it is trusted to individual caprice the better.

3945. Have you any other observation to offer?—In further illustration of that, I think it is worth while to remark, I am sure every playgoer would agree with me, there is a tendency in the audience to force passages never meant by the author into political meanings. I think constantly I have observed that; and also we all know that a theatre is a place of peculiar excitement; I think their applause is enthusiastic, and their dislikes very violently expressed. I do not know anything more terrible than an enraged audience.

3946. Then it is chiefly from the necessity of not having violent political allusions rather than indecency or immorality that a licenser would be necessary?—I think so; I think indecency corrects itself. The better taste of the audience will always check that. There are two recent instances to show the danger of a theatre being a place for political discussion. The first I will mention is, the visit His Majesty paid to the theatre soon after his accession to the throne, and when the Revolution of Paris broke out. Immediately it was known His Majesty commanded Massaniello, handbills were printed about the town to induce the public to assemble in the theatre, not to partake with His Majesty in the social enjoyment of the drama, but to teach him, through the story of Massaniello the Fisherman, the danger to his throne if he disobeyed the wish of his people, and the King was advised to change the play in consequence of that. That, I think, is far from the purpose of theatrical exhibition. The other instance was the publication of that infamous bill of fare, which has been alluded to in this room, which was issued by the Coburg.

3947. That was put down immediately after it appeared?—It appeared.

3948. By whom were those handbills circulated?—I do not know.

3949. Was it by the theatre, or by individuals?—No, certainly not by the theatre.

3950. Who were they published by?—I do not know the printer's name. It was a handbill, distributed all over London, to the purport I have mentioned.

3951. That was not the fault of the theatre?—No; on the contrary, the theatre never wishes to be made the arena for political warfare.

3952. No licenser could prevent that?—No; it only shows the tendency of the public in excited times to give it a political feature. A gentleman very high in his profession, M. Talma, told me the original French Revolution made slow progress until the theatres became the arena of its triumphs, and then it spread very rapidly.

3953. You have written several very successful plays?—I have written several.

3954. Do you think it is an advantage to an author to have three or four theatres to take his play, where it might be accepted or refused?—It might be, if they had actors competent to the task.

3955. Or if they had funds competent to remunerate an author?—I do not know whether he would make a sacrifice of his little reputation for the sake of his pocket. That is another question; but I think, as far as my experience goes as a writer and a reader of plays, you would be legislating for only a possible event, for I have never

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in my life known a play put by, which the manager thought well of, or delayed beyond the season.

3956. But the manager may not think well of a good play?—Certainly, human judgment is fallible; but it is his interest to think well of a good play, as the whole success of a season depends perhaps on a piece.

3957. But he is not more infallible than the publishers?—The publishing houses refuse works which afterwards produce a very extraordinary effect.

3958. In your capacity of an author, with respect to the alteration of the law of copyright, do you not think it would be advantageous to authors to have the copyright of their plays secured to them?—I think the law at present is very defective; it is unintelligible and not available.

3959. Do you think a law analogous to that in France would be beneficial to authors?—I think it would. I think I heard the Committee state something respecting a doubt they had about a burletta, that the definition was difficult, and the description very intricate. Would it not be sufficient to ascertain what burlettas were when this Act was passed giving them permission? I presume the Legislature never meant to provide for what had never happened. We know at that time the Act allowed them to play these burlettas, they were invariably pieces in verse, sung in recitative, at Sadler's Wells, Astley's and every other place. We know those which belong to great theatres, such as the Dragon of Wantley, Thomas and Sally, Midas, and those things. That was certainly the only burletta which I have described that was performed at the time that liberty was given to the minor theatres.

3960. That may be received as the definition at that period?—Certainly.

3961. At the same time that is not the way in which the word is construed by the present age?—No, that is my idea of burletta, and I think that is what the Legislature intended to license, and nothing else.

3962. Does it specify anything with regard to the number of acts?—No, I think there may be any number of acts.

3963. But the whole was to be recitative and music from beginning to end?—Yes, and very whimsical things they were sometimes. I remember seeing at the time when *The Monster* devastated this town, there was one at Astley's, and it began,

“ Who is this Monster, do you know?

He comes from hell among the fiends below.”

That shows it was exceedingly low that sort of entertainment at that time, which was all, I believe, the Legislature ever meant to grant.

3964. You have quoted a passage from Shakspeare, with a view of proving that Shakspeare would desire his plays to be acted in larger theatres than existed in his time?—That was the object of the quotation.

3965. Is it your opinion that the plays of Shakspeare would appear to greater advantage in larger theatres; that if he had lived in our time, he would have been pleased to have seen them acted in our theatres?—My opinion is, they are acted better in large theatres, and from that, I suppose, he would have thought so too.

3966. To what cause do you attribute there not being larger theatres erected in Shakspeare's time? was it the small size of the town, and the general poverty of the country which prevented those splendid edifices which have arisen in our time?—It was the infancy of the dramatic art, and, like other infancy, it had its cradle and not its temple.

3967. The general state of this metropolis, in short, prevented those splendid edifices which our improvement in wealth has given us?—Yes, they have increased in splendour and magnitude.

3968. Now, with regard to actors, do you think the legitimate drama more likely to be promoted by actors who have exhibited talent in the legitimate drama at provincial theatres, such as Edinburgh, Dublin, Liverpool and Bath, being drawn to the metropolis by their talent and celebrity from those theatres, or do you think the interests of the legitimate drama, meaning Shakspeare, Ben Jonson and the classical writers of the country, would be more promoted by a general opening of theatres to a great extent in this metropolis, to which all pretenders to histrionic fame might aspire?—I think the metropolis demands professors and not pupils.

3969. Then you think the previous education at these provincial theatres, where the dramas of Shakspeare had been always performed, is more likely to be beneficial

to the interests of the drama than an education attempted in the metropolis?—It was so formerly, but I fear now it is not so. I am told at the country theatres (if I may believe the reports of the stars who travel through) the talent is exceedingly humble.

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3970. Do you happen to know whether the remuneration afforded to actors at the country theatres is sufficient to induce beginners to attempt there?—I think remuneration is not the object of dramatic heroes. I think it is fame and an enthusiastic admiration of the art.

3971. Then do you think there is such a total failure in the country theatres, and so great a falling off in the talent that used to originate there 30 years ago, that you apprehend any additional theatres in London would produce talent which the country has not produced?—I think it might.

3972. Has it always been the practice, when any talent was exhibited in the country theatres, that talent found a ready market in the great theatres in London?—It is very much courted and sought after.

3973. Was it the practice for the great theatres to send persons to inquire for talent in all parts of the country?—Very eagerly.

3974. So that any real talent which existed was certain to find a reward in the metropolis?—Yes, it has indeed, I think.

3975. Do you think that allowing all pieces to be performed, without any licensing whatever, would be either consistent with the political safety of the country, or with the interests of the drama itself?—I think both would be in great jeopardy by that allowance.

3976. You mentioned the play of Massaniello; do you happen to know that the frequent performance of that play at Brussels was the main cause of the revolution which took place at Brussels in 1830?—I never heard that fact.

3977. You conceive, for the morals of society and for the safety of our political institutions, some limit is necessary by the constituted authorities to plays which may be presented to the audience?—Certainly I do; a very guarded one.

3978. How many years have you been, as an author and in other ways, connected with theatres?—Forty.

3979. You have frequently witnessed the effect of particular passages on an audience?—Very often indeed.

3980. In particular moments of excitement they produce very great effect?—Tremendous.

3981. You say that talent is always sought for, and it can find easy access to the London theatres?—I think so.

3982. Do you happen to know that Mr. Henderson found great difficulty in getting any engagement; and if it had not been for his appearing at the Haymarket he probably would not have succeeded?—I do not know that; Mr. Henderson was engaged at the Haymarket more than 40 years ago, which is the extent of my memory.

3983. Perhaps you never read his correspondence with Mr. —?—I never did.

3984. He quarrelled with Mr. Garrick, and stated he kept him back purposely. Do you apprehend Mr. Munden would have got engaged at the theatre if it had not been for the death of Mr. Edwin?—I dare say he would; the only wonder is he was so long away from the theatre.

3985. Do you not apprehend if Edwin had lived Munden could not have got an engagement there?—I do not know that.

3986. Do you not know he was engaged purposely to fill his place?—Where there is a vacancy, they supply it as well as they can.

3987. Do you not happen to know that the particular characters of Edwin he filled he did not succeed in, and he took another line of character, old men?—I saw him play Jemmy Jumps 200 times, which was one of the characters of Edwin.

3988. Do you mean he played Jemmy Jumps 200 times?—Yes, from beginning to end.

3989. Did you ever see Edwin in Jemmy Jumps?—Frequently; but upon this question I know many reasons why great country actors are not engaged.

3990. Do you happen to know how old Mrs. Siddons was when she died?—I do not.

3991. It is 56 years ago since she came out at the Bath theatre, so that she could not have been long from London?—I do not know.

3992. Mr. Dowton says, in his evidence, that Mrs. Siddons said to him, "I am glad to see you at Drury Lane, but you have come to a wilderness of a place to act

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in; and God knows, if I had not made my reputation in small theatres, I never should have made it here; but the public give me credit for what they saw me do and heard me say at a small theatre?"—I think that is an odd speech.

3993. Her opinion was, that if she had not made her reputation at a small theatre previously, she would never have succeeded there?—I rather think, for I have spoken to Mrs. Siddons on the subject, it was, that if she had not made her reputation in the small Drury Lane theatre, she never would have got it in the large one.

3994. Then you mean to say she had not made her reputation at Bath before she came to Drury Lane?—In coming to a fresh audience, she must make a reputation before that audience.

3995. Do you not know she had played Isabella and other characters at the Bath theatre, and excited the greatest admiration?—Yes.

3996. Then she had made her reputation at a small theatre before she came to a large one?—She had made her reputation there certainly.

3997. At old Drury Lane she could not make her reputation when she first appeared; she was dismissed?—Yes, because she did not act so well, and had not those characters which were her forte. She appeared in the Runaway, which is a comic character, a sentimental lady.

3998. If she played in the Runaway it must have been immediately before she went to Bath, as it came out somewhere about 1774 or 1775, and Mrs. Siddons played in that, and in 1776 or 1777 she played in Bath, and two or three years after she came to London, so that she must instantly have made an impression there after having failed on the London boards?—I am not aware of that fact.

3999. Do you consider that dramatic literary talent is generally low at this time?—Certainly.

4000. You have said the talents of actors throughout the country generally is low?—Very low.

4001. You say such talent as may be found throughout the country is certain to receive attention at the metropolitan theatres, but there is so very little; so that if the monopoly should be continued to the great houses it would not be upon the ground of its having produced great talent in writing, and great talent in acting?—The talent in writing is very humble at present.

4002. It would not be upon the ground of the great talent which they had produced in dramatic writing; if we were to continue the monopoly of the great houses, it would not be on the ground of the great dramatic talent existing at present, or great talent in acting?—No, not on that ground.

4003. Then on what ground should you say it should be; would you say it should be on the ground of good faith to those who have embarked their money on the faith of those agreements with the two theatres?—I think that is a very substantial argument.

4004. Do you think there is any other argument?—I stated before, that in the present state of the minor theatres they are inadequate to the performance of the drama.

4005. You observed just now, in reply to a question, that you considered a licenser necessary, both for the preservation of morality and for the preservation of our political institutions, but at the same time you stated before it was not on the score of morality, because that would cure itself?—No, it is on the score of politics.

4006. You wish then to correct that observation?—Yes.

4007. In point of fact, do you, in your long experience, know of any dramatic composition of great talent which has not ultimately found its way before the public at one or other of the great theatres?—I have not ventured to say that. I must repeat what I said before; there is a great desire in the managers to obtain the best literary compositions, and also a great desire to obtain the best actors.

4008. Did you ever know of any very celebrated performer in the country who did not ultimately find his or her way to the theatres of the metropolis?—There are many reasons why a good actor should not be engaged at the theatres. In the first place, men make a very false estimate of their talents. Nothing is so common as for actors and managers to differ simply upon the remuneration. The actor puts his estimate upon his talents, and the manager puts his, and the consequence is, if they differ, that man is not engaged. There is another reason; some men, though eminent in a few characters, are not generally useful. Mr. Kean, for instance: If Mr. Kean had the power of impressing upon his memory a new character he would be double and treble the value he is now. I know an instance:

Mr.

Mr. Macklin played but three characters, Shylock, Sir Pertinax Macsycophant, and Sir Archie Macsarcasm. Luckily for Mr. Macklin his talents were such that he had an individual attraction; if that had not been the case, Mr. Macklin must have starved. Then there is another reason which does not appear before the public, but which is extremely important in a theatre, which is, the temporary inability of the performer. It is astonishing to those who are intimate with the Green-room to know what a baleful influence a bad and malignant spirit and a mischievous temper has in a theatre; and that is the reason why many eminent performers have not been engaged, together with the other circumstances. These reasons may account why many performers of talent are not engaged at the theatres royal.

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4009. Do you know any instance within the last 15 or 20 years in which a person of celebrity at the country theatres has been refused access to the theatre to try the opinion of a London audience upon their talents?—I am not acquainted sufficiently with the provincial drama to answer that question.

4010. Have you ever heard of such a case?—Mr. Cooke was held back a long time.

4011. Within the last 15 or 20 years, do you know of any talent of great celebrity in the provinces which has not found its way to a trial on the London boards?—Of my own knowledge, I do not.

4012. In point of fact, have not the great theatres made great sacrifices in giving enormous and exorbitant remunerations to favourite actors?—Very large salaries indeed.

4013. Is it not an inference from that, that having given these salaries, and made great sacrifices for celebrated actors who have made their reputation in town, that they would necessarily have given celebrated actors in the country from whom they could expect success adequate salaries?—I stated before they made eager search for talent.

4014-15. Have not the minor theatres given adequate salaries?—I do not know.

4016. Suppose Miss Kelly was refused an engagement at the large theatres, would it not be hard that she should not be able to go to a minor theatre?—If her terms were reasonable.

4017. It is a proof her terms were reasonable, because she is engaged at the Lyceum?—I do not presume to say why Miss Kelly is not engaged at the large theatres.

4018. You mentioned her as an instance?—Yes; I mentioned also Mr. Kean and Mr. Dowton; but I stated there were three ways of accounting why a good actor or actress might not be engaged at the theatre.

4019. Do you not know it was a complaint among theatrical persons, that while the Kemble family kept such complete possession of the stage, country talent was excluded?—I never heard that.

4020. Do you apprehend if Mr. Cooke had applied to Drury Lane, at the time Mr. Kemble was there, to play Hamlet or Richard, or others of those characters, that he could have got an engagement?—That I do not know; Mr. Kemble was not always manager at Drury Lane.

4021. But you know they had always great influence?—I dare say they had.

Mr. William Moore, called in; and Examined.

4022. YOU wish to be examined upon this subject?—It was the request of Mr. Harris I should be examined by this Committee. Mr. William Moore.

4023. What connexion have you with Covent Garden theatre?—I am a trustee to Mr. Harris, who holds seven-twelfths of the theatre.

4024. What statement do you wish to make respecting the theatre?—I wish to make a statement with respect to the sums which have been advanced on the security of the patent of Covent Garden theatre, which I would prefer making to the Committee alone, and not in public.

4025. Is it the private affairs of Mr. Harris?—It is merely the extent of the incumbrances, the amount of the different sums that have been advanced on the security of the patents of Covent Garden theatre.

4026. That had better be given in his original statement, if Mr. Harris wishes to make a statement?—He thinks it is essential the Committee should be acquainted with the sums advanced by different people on his seven-twelfths of the theatre, in order that the Committee may feel the confidence that has been placed in the title of the patent of Covent Garden theatre.

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4027. What value do you put upon the theatre?—I do not feel competent to answer that question. I can only give an idea of the value from the sums that have been advanced by different parties.

4028. Do you know what the aggregate amount of the money advanced is?—Yes, I do; 65,500*l.* has been advanced to Mr. Harris and his father at different times by different people, on the faith of the patents of Covent Garden theatre; the title, when monies have been advanced, has been referred to from time to time, and has been found completely satisfactory, so as to induce parties to advance money to that extent.

4029. Do you think those sums would have been advanced if Mr. Harris had not conceived he possessed exclusive privileges by the patent?—These sums would not have been advanced if it had not been presumed the patent rendered the theatre valuable, which would have been of no value if it had not been for the patent.

4030. Does not Mr. Harris claim compensation if the patent is done away with?—I do not know what I can say as to his claiming compensation, but he respectfully submits it to you.

4031. If you would send in any statement it would be at the option of the Committee to examine you upon that statement. Does the whole of that 65,500*l.* remain upon the theatre?—Yes, in addition to the rental and seven-twelfths of 90,000*l.*, for that is what he has personally raised on the security of the patent.

4032. Have you ever looked into the patent rights of the great theatres, or have you studied them?—No, I cannot say I have studied them, but I know as much as the proprietors know, I believe. I have been 25 years intimately acquainted with Mr. Harris; I am his trustee, and all his affairs are conducted by me in this country; the security has been submitted to the different parties advancing the money, and they have thought it a sufficient security, and have advanced the money accordingly.

4033. Do you think that if the properties in Covent Garden and Drury Lane were placed before the public in the shape of a lottery, the public would subscribe for them?—I am afraid of that; there are perhaps gentlemen more competent to judge than I am, the lottery-office keepers. The incumbrance upon Covent Garden is 267,000*l.*

4034. Have you any plan to submit which you think would restore prosperity to the great theatres, or stop the ruin?—If it was left to me, and the present arrangement was one of my own, I think it is the most likely way if it was permitted to remain, that is, to pay off all the incumbrances upon Covent Garden theatre, upon the terms they are now acting on.

4035. That is letting the theatre?—Letting the theatre, to preserve a certain annual income, and apply that income to the liquidation of the debts.

4036. You have let it to Mr. Laporte?—Yes.

4037. Have you let him the whole of the theatre?—With the exception of 11 boxes and two-thirds, which he has not got, as they are already disposed of. In addition to the sums I spoke of, monies have been raised upon them, the Duke of Devonshire's box, Lord Spencer's, the Duchess of St. Alban's and others, in addition to those sums.

4038. Do you know what the whole amount of the incumbrances upon that theatre is?—I think it is 265,000*l.*, and these 11 boxes and two-thirds, in addition to that 265,000*l.*; these 11 boxes, which are let to different noblemen, which are of great value also.

4039. Do you know at all what the average income of the theatre is, what it has been for the last three or four years?—No.

4040. You have been a frequenter of the theatre for many years; for how many years?—For 30, intimately acquainted with Mr. Harris, and that has drawn me into that way.

4041. What do you think would be the effect of allowing all plays to be performed without licence, to contain every thing which the writer may please to put down, political allusions, or, in short, every thing at his discretion; what, in your opinion, would be the effect of that, when there should be no limit to indecency of language or political allusions in those performances?—I think it would have a bad effect upon the morals of the frequenters of the theatre, and a bad effect generally; for when minor theatres failed in decent exhibitions, they would resort to indecent exhibitions. You could not have a stronger proof of that than at the Coburg lately.

4042. Have

4042. Have you ever witnessed any particular excitement in the audience at particular moments?—Yes, very great. Mr. William Moor

4043. Passages very much seized on by the audience?—Yes, sentences which have been uttered in old plays have been taken up at the time they were performing, which neither the proprietors nor the actors thought of till the audience caught at them. 12 July 1832.

4044. What sort of excitement was that?—Violent excitement or enthusiasm; that sort of excitement which you may imagine from several thousand persons expressing a warm feeling at once.

4045. Do you think any power of licensing would prevent the people expressing their opinions, and making their application of passages in old plays?—Certainly not.

4046. Have you observed in later years that the audience have occasionally expressed their disapprobation of immoral passages in plays?—Yes, invariably.

4047. That accounts for what we understood to be the practice; namely, striking out a number of immoral passages from old plays?—Yes; if they were to act old plays without that they could not get an audience.

4048. Is that sense of decency very much manifested by audiences of the present time?—Yes, very much.

4049. Then may we not imagine from the improved morals of the public, that on that score the necessity of having a guardian of the morals of the theatre in the Lord Chamberlain may be dispensed with, and it may be supposed to be sufficiently guarded by the good feelings of the audiences generally?—Perhaps not sufficiently, but frequently. Very often managers and actors would attempt (as I have known instances of that) to use indecent expressions, and if it succeeded, very well; it was a very good joke; but if it did not, and it has seldom succeeded, it was not repeated. I have known experiments of that kind, but the thing has generally failed.

4050. They are very dangerous experiments?—Yes, very dangerous; if it succeeded it was a good joke and was repeated, but it seldom or ever succeeded.

4051. Then the necessity for a licenser, in your opinion, must chiefly if not altogether arise, in the present state of society, from your apprehension of the political feelings of the audience?—Yes, and improper things. Authors will introduce improper things into their plays, and will feel much hurt at the licenser striking them out, which any moral man will think ought not to be in.

4052. You say Mr. Harris has been advanced 65,500 *l.*?—Yes; the public, or different people, have advanced to the estate of Mr. Harris 65,500 *l.* on the security of Covent Garden theatre, upon his seven-twelfths, which would not have been advanced was it not that the title was good, and the property was secure.

4053. Have you advanced any part of the 65,500 *l.*?—Yes, I have.

4054. What portion of it?—(No answer.)

4055. Have you observed that the theatre has been less frequented of late years than it was formerly?—Yes; within the last 10 years the average returns of Covent Garden theatre was 53,000 *l.* or 54,000 *l.*, and in 10 years before that 83,000 *l.* or 84,000 *l.*, a difference of 30,000 *l.*

4056. To what do you attribute that?—I have not sufficiently studied the thing; but I consider the minor theatres have done them dreadful mischief, and I attribute it to the minor theatres more than to any other cause.

4057. Do you not suppose the religious feeling, and the difference of hours in the fashionable world have been great causes of the falling off?—It is a cause, but not the great cause. I consider it is the minor theatres more than anything, for 10 years ago the hours were much the same, or 12 or 15 years ago, and yet the theatres were successful.

4058. Do you think the extension of the privilege of acting the legitimate drama to the minor theatres would do the least harm?—Yes.

4059. We find it in the evidence it is not those plays which fill the minor theatres the most; are you not aware of that?—If they are badly done they will not, but if they are well done they will. They play at the Adelphi a perfect drama, as you have said, and they have filled the Adelphi and ruined Covent Garden.

4060. Are you speaking of the legitimate drama?—Yes, of *The Wreck Ashore*, and other pieces, which have done as much injury as the legitimate drama could.

4061. You would then restrict them to burlettas?—I think the patent theatres would naturally wish to restrict them to burlettas, because the present system does them great injury; there are many pieces played at the Adelphi as perfect as they could play them anywhere.

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4062. You attribute the falling off in the prosperity of Drury Lane and Covent Garden to the improvement in the performances in the minor theatres, and the deterioration in the performances of the larger theatres?—I do not say deterioration at the large theatres; but the performances at the minor theatres are certainly improved.

4063. Do you not conceive the performances, take them as a whole, are inferior at the large theatres to what they were some years ago?—The company at Covent Garden theatre in the year 1822 was the most perfect perhaps that was ever exhibited since we had a stage in England, and I take my judgment from a remark of old Mr. Harris, who is now dead; I sat with him when he was seeing one of Shakspeare's plays, and he made the same remark; and if you go over the performers who were at Covent Garden ten years ago, I think you will see they had the best set of performers that were ever seen in England.

4064. Do you not conceive, if the patent theatres were smaller than they are now, they would be attended by a greater number of persons than they are at present?—I think not. Mr. Elliston altered Drury Lane, as it was thought too large, but it has done the theatre no good, the receipts are not better than they were before.

4065. What sort of performances have they produced at Drury Lane since that time? How many great tragedies or comedies have they produced at Drury Lane?—I am not competent to enter into minutiae, but I take it upon the broad scale. I say there was a theatre which was said to be on too large a scale, and it was altered at the expense of 3,000*l.*, and has failed.

4066. Do you, in point of fact, know that in the case of the same play being performed at a large theatre and in a small theatre by the same performers, every part being filled by precisely the same persons, the receipt in the small theatre was infinitely less in proportion than the receipt at the large theatre?—Yes, certainly.

4067. You have known that?—Yes, over and over again. They performed a play at the Opera House to 600*l.*, and the same company then crossed over the way to the little theatre and performed the same play, and there was only two-thirds of that.

4068. Do you not think you have stated a sufficient reason for the falling off of the receipts from the nature of the company, you having stated that in 1822 there was a good company, and at present there is not?—I do not mean to say there is not a good company now, but the company is not equal to that of 1822; 1822 perhaps was the richest company the theatre ever produced.

4069. Then was not the prosperity of the theatre owing to the company, and if so, the adversity is not attributable to the minor theatres, because there is a falling off in the company?—I think it is attributable to the minor theatres in the greatest degree; the greatest evil of the patent theatres is the minor theatres. I do not speak selfishly, for I do not wish Mr. Harris better than I wish Mr. Yates. I think there is the greatest merit attached to the directors of the Adelphi; but from all I have seen it has done injury to the patent theatres.

4070. Do you not think if I could get as good a company in the patent theatres as they had in 1822, that Drury Lane and Covent Garden would attract as much as they did at that time?—No, I do not think so; for they have the Adelphi, and Madame Vestris at the Olympic, which are powerful attractions, against them, which they had not at that time.

Mr. James Kenney, called in; and Examined.

Mr. James Kenney.

4071. YOU are the author of various plays?—I am.

4072. What successful plays have you been the author of?—Latterly I have written *Massaniello*, the farce of the *Illustrious Stranger*, the comedy of *Spring and Autumn*; at the Haymarket, *Sweethearts and Wives*; and before that, *Raising the Wind*, and *Love, Law and Physic*.

4073. You are the author of *Massaniello*?—Yes.

4074. How many nights was *Massaniello* played?—I apprehend it must now have exceeded 150 nights.

4075. At what theatre?—At Drury Lane.

4076. What have you received for it?—Nothing.

4077. Did you make an agreement to receive anything?—Yes; but I made an agreement with the lessee for the time being, Mr. Price, that I was to be paid a certain sum, which was arranged at 50*l.* every third night the piece was acted, up to the 24th.

4078. That

4078. That engagement was not fulfilled?—No.

Mr. James Kenney.

4079. Had you not a remedy by law?—It happened at the expiration of the season in which Massaniello came out; it came out in the month of May in one season, and at the expiration of that season, or rather in the middle of the next, the lessee became a bankrupt, and the treasury was taken possession of by the committee in trust for the theatre, who managed conjointly with Mr. Price for several weeks or months; in fact, till the termination of that season. My application to the treasurer was answered by a promise on his part to submit my case to the committee, and to demand on my behalf the 300*l.* that was due to me. Their answer was, they had nothing to do with it. They were then continuing to play the piece every third or fourth night through the whole season or nearly. Their answer was, they had nothing to do with it; it was the debt of their lessee, and they were not responsible for it, nor could they pay it, nor any part of it.

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4080. What sum do you think Drury Lane has received by the representation of Massaniello?—It is very difficult to compute; but I apprehend from its having been played so often, and its being still played so constantly when the theatre is open, that the profit must have been very great indeed.

4081. You have heard it stated that this piece has rather a revolutionary tendency; do you consider it as such?—No, I apprehend quite the contrary. I was rather fearful it might be considered a Tory play, for it has a Tory moral decidedly; and during the revolution in France, the fifth act was suppressed on account of its having that sort of moral. It was deemed a satire on the mob, and hence the fifth act was suppressed during the late revolution in France. But, however, there is no question, if I may be allowed the expression, that it has a Tory moral. The revolutionary fisherman is humiliated, and a lesson is taught very opposite to a revolutionary one.

4082. So far as you are concerned, as an author, do you think there ought to be some considerable alteration in the laws affecting dramatic copyright?—Indeed I apprehend so; for I can only say, having met with the greatest success for years past, indeed having had a most brilliant success, what remained for me afterwards was most bitter and most humiliating; I had to go from week to week to demand the small sum of 10*l.* in remuneration for my productions; and when I say it was bitter, it was bitter also with respect to the two treasurers, who I know suffered as much in seeing me enter the treasury as I did myself. I can say I am overwhelmed with these humiliations and injustice.

4083. Do you see any prospect of being remunerated for that piece hereafter?—Indeed none; except that I am told a case of partnership might be decidedly established on the part of the committee. Mr. Calcrafft was there frequently, and although he was not manager, he attended as chairman of the committee; he attended at the rehearsals, and often addressed me as if he was concerned in the management of the theatre on behalf of the committee; and I am advised that, in the Court of Chancery, which no poor man like me can venture into, I might have redress, but that is the only choice I have. I can only say the piece, after the refusal of my claim, has been acted oftener than it was before, as the principal support of the theatre, and was afterwards handed over, as I have stated in the preface to a subsequent production, to the present lessee, as the lawful property of the theatre, upon some custom, that when a piece is once played in the theatre they shall have a right to continue the representation.

4084. Have you submitted *The Pledge* to any theatre?—*The Pledge* was acted at Drury Lane; but I apprehend there was nothing which affects the great question in that, although I had many complaints, but that was against the particular management.

4085. Does Drury Lane claim the exclusive privilege of performing that piece?—Not now; it would be open to Covent Garden to perform it now, because it has recently been published. I withheld it in the hope that it might be of advantage to me; that something might be done in the way that this Committee are kindly endeavouring to do, and that the copyright might be of some value to me.

4086. As a literary man, who have turned your attention to the drama generally, had you any feeling previous to the performance of Massaniello, that it would be advantageous to the drama that the legitimate drama should be performed at other theatres besides the great ones?—Why I thought, to speak generally, that an increased and extended population required it, and the public should no more be required to come from Mile End, or the extremities of this extending city, to two theatres, more than to two churches.

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4087. Do you think the drama would be deteriorated at all?—It is not a question I have considered much, but I do not think it would. I think if smaller theatres on a moderate scale were sanctioned by the law, so that they might engage such companies as would be adequate to the representation of the legitimate drama, it would be for its advantage. I know it is an every day observation that the theatres are too large, and many pieces have produced the most excellent effect, and had great success at the Haymarket which would have had no chance at the larger theatres. Perhaps I may be allowed to make another observation with reference to the larger theatres. I think their prosperity has been in a great measure overwhelmed by the necessity of keeping a company of every description; an expensive operatic company, a company for molo-drama, for pantomime, and for tragedy and comedy; whereas the effect of an extended taste for the drama seems to be to classify theatres, so that each theatre might have an establishment at less expense.

4088. Have you any other general observation to offer?—No; I came here merely to satisfy the Committee on any points on which they might be desirous of questioning me, and I confess I am strongly interested that our case should be amended in some shape. I have experienced a good deal of liberality from the proprietors of both the winter theatres, and I should be very sorry to be supposed to betray any hostility to them.

4089. Supposing no play could be acted at any theatre without the permission of the author, and the law provided for that, then your play would not have been thus performed without your consent?—No, certainly; if there was a law by which we were entitled to stop the representation of our plays, or to withdraw them, or take them to another theatre; or if we were entitled to demand our money at the week's end, like an actor, it would be a different matter.

4090. Have you anything to offer respecting the law of copyright?—I have not considered it sufficiently.

4091. That is the feeling with regard to dramatic writers generally?—Certainly, I believe we are of one mind upon that subject. The large salaries which are now paid to actors, are pleaded as a cause for their not paying authors; and they are certainly more than double since the time of the production of the *School for Scandal*, and such comedies as *Speed the Plough*, *John Bull*, and other things which have been exceedingly profitable. At that time the salaries of the best performers did not exceed 15*l.* a-week, now that sum is thought trifling for a night's performance. They will be paid at the week's end.

4092. Are there any sums due to you from Covent Garden for any piece they have played?—Yes, there is a small sum for the *Irish Ambassador*, about half of the stipulated profits.

4093. Do you see any prospect of getting that?—I am in a state of uncertainty upon the subject. The last time I applied I asked for a small instalment of 10*l.*, which I am sorry to confess was an object to me. It was pleaded to me on account of an anterior arrangement, by which the receipts had been put into the hands of the actors; some authors had been provided for, but not I. Miss Kemble received all her money for *Francis the First*, a very meritorious play, and certainly deserving of all she obtained for it; but I thought there was no reason why I should not be paid as well as those who came six months after me.

4094. Did the *Irish Ambassador* bring much money into the treasury of Covent Garden?—It was played nearly 30 nights successively.

4095. What was your stipulation with the theatre for that piece?—I was to have had at the utmost 125*l.*; that is, having taken it there with the explanation that it had been offered to Mr. Price, who, because he had no Irishman, could not venture to act it, I allowed them to take it on much less terms than I had been accustomed to receive.

4096. Then you only received half of 125*l.*?—I have not received half; there is still 75*l.* due to me.

4097. I think you say the interest of the drama would be promoted if the performances were classified at particular theatres, by which you mean that the performance of opera, tragedy, comedy and pantomime at one theatre creates great expense to the theatre?—Very great expense; and when it happens that the principal attraction of the season has been an opera or a tragedy, the rest of the company have been a redundancy; they have had sinecures.

4098. Do you think it would be to the advantage of the public if the performance of tragedy and comedy was limited to a certain number of theatres, and vaudevilles and *pièces de circonstance* were to be performed at other theatres; in short,

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short, that sort of classification to which you have alluded?—I should anticipate some ill consequence from its being absolutely thrown open without a control of some sort. I think that the claims for licences should be investigated, and a case should be made out before a licence is granted.

4099. If the thing is thrown perfectly open, do you or do you not think the interests of the drama would be very much deteriorated?—It is a question I can hardly answer off-hand.

4100. I ask you as an author, if there were 10 or 12 theatres?—I am afraid, if it was thrown absolutely open without a control of some sort, and without an investigation of the claims of the particular persons applying for licences, and as to the sufficiency of the theatres, it would be attended with bad effects. It is such a tempting opportunity that I am afraid it would be very ruinous, and we might be as badly off for our money as we are now in certain cases.

4101. Do you not think if there were a great many theatres performing the legitimate drama, the consequence would be that there must be a great number of inferior actors?—A great number certainly.

4102. Now, supposing you were to write a play of the same talent you have exhibited in writing plays, would not a great many of the points which are produced by the acting be lost, in consequence of the deficiency of the performers?—I think it would operate two ways, that if there would be a necessity for employing a great deal of inferior talent, it would, from the very great competition, elicit more genuine talent.

4103. With reference to your feeling as an author as to the effect upon your productions, how would you feel with reference to a play you might write with the same talent you have exhibited, would you feel the same confidence of its producing that effect upon the public at those small theatres that your efforts have produced when represented at the great theatres with that abundance of good actors to represent your plays?—Judging from the probation in France, I should say no, for there is no doubt that talent is in a much more prosperous state there, and there is much more of it.

4104. Does not the classification exist in France?—Yes.

4105. Then do you attribute the quantum of talent to the classification?—Yes, and I think they would all prosper better. I think if the interests of all the proprietors were compromised, an indemnity might be given to those who were disposed to give up their rights.

4106. You think that liberty might be given to perform the legitimate drama at every theatre, without prejudice to the public taste, and to authors and the drama itself?—I do not know that it would be prejudicial to authors. I think the other would be the best plan; I think that throwing it open would be attended with very evil consequences.

4107. Would you not rather have five markets to take your pieces to than one?—I would, if those markets were not all bad ones; but it is much to be apprehended that they would be so if the thing were thrown open, as many men would be glad, builders and others, to set any one going. It is such a tempting speculation, much more so than a commercial adventure.

4108. Are not the disbursements of a theatre all ready money?—Oh dear, no, tradesmen give very long credit.

4109. The salaries of the actors, and the current expenses are all weekly?—As far as relates to the actors and the officers of the theatre, they are all paid weekly.

4110. Then it is a more difficult enterprise to enter into without a certain capital than the generality of commercial speculations?—Certainly, it requires a great deal of experience, and I believe the lessee system, by letting in a great deal of inexperience, has been injurious to the interests of the drama.

4111. With respect to certain immoral and political passages in plays, which have been alluded to by different witnesses, do you suppose the taste of the audience would be a sufficient guard against immoral and improper passages being introduced, without a licenser?—I think there still exists a power for a licenser to wait the event of pieces, and pieces that have been licensed have been suspended in times of excitement, such as *Venice Preserved* and *King Lear*, during the insanity of the late King, and as happened with many plays. It is in the power of the licenser; he could suspend *Massaniello* when it has a mischievous tendency. I believe the immorality of the thing corrects itself.

4112. You think the immorality corrects itself?—I should think so. I remember Mr. Colman writing me a very good-humoured letter upon the subject relative to

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some scene which he thought a little too free, and he said, "Depend upon it, if I do not cut it out, the audience will cut it out for me." I expressed my acquiescence, and said, if any actor or manager had expressed the same thing I would cheerfully have expunged it.

4113. You conceive the real ground to be depended on for the necessity of a licenser, is with reference to the political allusions which may act upon the feelings or passions of an audience?—Yes, and I think the personal opinions of a licenser may be very injurious in that respect.

4114. You think if a licenser is necessary from political allusions, or any other cause, if the licence was granted by a greater number than one, it would be advantageous?—Yes, I think there should be a greater number; it might be read in general by an individual without injury, but in case a difficulty was felt I think it should be submitted to several.

4115. Do you think it would be to the interest of authors if the legitimate drama was allowed to be played at more theatres than at present?—(No answer.)

4116. You said, if the thing were thrown open entirely it might produce a great deal of dangerous speculation?—Yes.

4117. Supposing a very large number of persons were desirous that a theatre should be erected or licensed, and were to apply to the Lord Chamberlain to license it, and the Lord Chamberlain was obliged to license the house, do you think it might safely be trusted to that large number of persons, all householders, to ascertain whether or not a theatre ought to be licensed?—Certainly. I think a limited extension of them would be of great advantage.

4118. There are three points of view in which this is to be considered: first, with reference to the public. You have said you considered it desirable that the theatres should be so situated that the public might be able to attend them without going to a particular part of the town to see a play?—Yes, without going to a great distance; I think that is hard.

4119. That is your opinion as far as the public is concerned?—Certainly.

4120. Then as regards actors: you say, though it might produce a subsistence for inferior talent, if the legitimate drama was performed at several theatres, it might be a nursery for good actors?—Certainly. I think the old established theatres would have a great advantage over any new ones.

4121. But you think it would be a nursery for good actors?—Certainly.

4122. Would it be advantageous or disadvantageous on the whole to the art of acting?—I should say advantageous generally.

4123. Then as regards authors: do you think that it would be advantageous or disadvantageous to authors to have several theatres where the drama is allowed?—I do think so.

4124. You think it would be advantageous?—I do, certainly.

4125. Then with regard to the classification of theatres: you think it would be advantageous that plays should be classified?—Yes.

4126. Do you think if there was no law to impose a classification it might be trusted to the interests of managers to fall into that classification?—Yes, as in the case of Mr. Arnold, whose licence is for English operas, which he has been able to produce, and do a great deal of honour to the musical genius of the country, and exhibit musical talent in general on a larger scale than if he had a larger general company.

4127. Then would you impose it as a condition of the licence that they should only perform a certain class of representations, or would you leave the classification to them as to which they found the most attractive to the public?—That might be a question, otherwise there would be no classification at all, if the law did not sanction it.

4128. You do not think the manager would only perform that sort of play which he found most attractive to the public?—I think he would.

4129. Then if he would it would not be necessary to impose any particular regulation in the licence?—I do not know that it would.

4130. The interest of managers, if they were enlightened and experienced, would lead them to do that?—Yes, as in the case of the Adelphi, where they would not attempt to play a regular tragedy or a classic comedy.

4131. Then, being advantageous to authors to have the legitimate drama performed at several theatres, and advantageous to the public to see whether they like it, there is no objection to allowing the legitimate drama to be performed at the
small

small theatres?—No. I should beg to observe, that authors have already felt the advantage of the extension of the theatres. Some of the most respectable talent of the day have written with success for Madame Vestris, and have been very handsomely remunerated; and she has done me the honour to make similar applications to me. A great deal of our best talent has contributed to the performances at the Adelphi with great advantage.

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4132. Do you think a successful minor theatre would be always able to give authors a fair remuneration?—Certainly. I think there is every chance that both these theatres are likely for a long time to pay authors exceedingly well.

4133. Do you think the remuneration that is given by the minor theatres for trifling pieces, such as French vaudevilles and *pièces de circonstance*, does in point of fact diminish the number of productions in the regular drama, tragedy and comedy, and so on. If there is a large remuneration given by the minor theatres for these trifling pieces, does not that diminish the demand for and the encouragement to write in the higher class of the drama?—I apprehend that talent is produced by a demand for it in every way, and where the talent of the performers at a theatre is particularly eminent in one branch, authors will naturally lean that way, as during the time of Miss O'Neil and Mr. Kean there were many successful new tragedies; and when the comic companies of Drury Lane and Covent Garden were very brilliant, authors wrote comedies also. Now at present the talent seems to be the other way. You get these vaudevilles more satisfactorily represented upon the whole than the regular drama, and therefore authors incline that way.

4134. Is it not much easier to write a vaudeville for a small theatre than to write a regular drama?—Certainly.

4135. But the remuneration is as considerable for a vaudeville?—Yes, in proportion to the quality.

4136. Then the remuneration being as considerable, and the task easier, does it not lead the authors into that line rather than into the regular drama?—No. I have no hesitation in saying that the feelings of authors will lean the other way, that their inclination will always be to produce what is honourable to their talents.

4137. But they are withdrawn from that by the small theatres, in order to produce what is profitable?—It is only profitable in its proportion. It is not profitable out of the proportion to its inferior quality.

4138. Although there would be more honour in producing a drama of the higher class, there is more profit in producing these trifling things?—Yes, because authors are not paid at all, or they have so much difficulty, owing to the unprosperous state of the patent theatres, that their labour is threefold what it would be in going into a theatre where the remuneration is put on a certain and respectable footing; that is the reason, and that would be my great temptation to go to a minor theatre, and perhaps my sole temptation.

4139. Then the effect of these small theatres has in fact been to produce from all the talent those trifles of the day?—Yes, as all writers must make a beginning; it is a nursery for authors as it is for actors. Mr. Jerrold, who made so successful an experiment at Drury Lane, first wrote for them.

4140. With respect to you and other authors whose fame is established, do you find it more profitable to write for the minor theatres than to write a regular drama, under the circumstances in which the drama is placed by the patent theatres?—If they were paid on the score I have always been paid, or which my agreements have stated I should be paid at the patent theatres, there would be no comparison that my advantage would be to go to them decidedly; it is only on the account I stated, that although the remuneration be more moderate, yet it is satisfactory and is forthcoming. I believe that is so both with Madame Vestris and the Adelphi.

4141. But the taste of the public causes a better remuneration to be given to these trifles than the regular drama, as the matter now stands?—A certain remuneration is given. I dare say there are many gentlemen who are in this room who have no complaint against the patent theatres; perhaps my case is individual, and I should be sorry this Committee should be influenced by my complaints; there are several gentlemen who have been paid every shilling at the patent theatres with less trouble than I have; I only say the difficulty they are in, and the notoriety that they are in an unprosperous state, renders it a painful office to go for your money, and on that account I think it would be more advantageous to go to a minor theatre.

4142. When you gave the Irish Ambassador to Covent Garden theatre, was there no arrangement; were you not given to understand there was a risk as to

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payment?—My arrangement with Mr. Bartley by letter was, that if the piece succeeded decidedly, I should have 100 guineas, without reference to its run, and if it was acted 20 nights, I should have 25*l.* more. Mr. Bartley said, "Nothing succeeds now, and nothing will succeed; we have a great respect for your farce, but we cannot flatter ourselves it will be more successful than anything else." I said to Mr. Bartley, "I shall consider the circumstances of the theatre, and if it is not successful, you shall have every fair indulgence from me;" but I said, "If it disappoints you in that respect, you will consider that, I am sure." The answer was, "Certainly we will." Now it was stated to me in most unequivocal terms, that the piece had been most unexpectedly successful. Mr. Bartley came to me on the 9th night, when it was acted with Hamlet, and said, "We had 90*l.* for the first account in our pit, a thing we had not seen since the first night of Hamlet this season." In fact, to speak plainly, from its success, I considered my case altogether altered, and more so when I found an arrangement had been made by which all the recent productions had been preferred; and then I wrote to Mr. Bartley, to state that any understanding as to my indulging the theatre must be at an end, when the whole sum was given to the proprietor's daughter for her play. I said, "Had you not better have called me in to be a party to such an arrangement?"

4143. You mean to say, if you had been a proprietor's son you would have got your money?—I mean merely to state, when this arrangement was made, Miss Kemble's play was in rehearsal, and announced for a given day, and the proposal to remunerate authors who came in after that was made by Mr. Bartley, the acting manager. If Mr. Robertson, the treasurer, was examined, I apprehend he would confirm my statement, that the piece, contrary to Mr. Bartley's expectation, was decidedly productive and successful. I merely state the fact.

Mr. Edward William Elton, called in; and Examined.

Mr. E. W. Elton.

4144. YOU are an actor at the minor theatres?—Yes.

4145. Do you consider there is any peculiar hardship in the present law as relates to actors generally?—I do. I consider the hardship is very great, and I considered so before I was an actor at the minor theatres.

4146. In what respect?—I have been an actor in a London minor theatre scarcely more than 12 months.

4147. At what theatre?—At the Surrey principally; a short portion of time before that at the Garrick theatre, at the east end of the town. That is all the time I have passed in the London minor theatres. The rest of my professional life has been passed in provincial theatres; some of them of the first class, where I have been in the habit of practising in legitimate as well as other dramas, and I have always thought the present state of the laws as regards the monopoly of the drama in London peculiarly hard upon actors, particularly inasmuch as it narrows the field for the exertion of that talent with which God has gifted them.

4148. If any great talent is exhibited at the provincial theatres, do you not consider that is sought for in the metropolitan theatres?—I do not; and I not only consider it is not sought for, but I have known instances where men of considerable standing and considerable provincial reputation have applied to the major theatres, offering their services, or requesting a trial of their talents, and their applications have not even been attended to, nor have they even received those answers which one gentleman expects from another when he addresses him.

4149. Do you conceive if the metropolitan theatres did seek for the talent of the provincial theatres, there might be talent displayed at the provincial theatres which would not have a fair field for talent in the metropolitan theatres?—Most certainly I do.

4150. Do you conceive a man may be a good actor on a small stage, and not so good an actor on a large stage?—I think there will be, with regard to many actors, a very considerable difference. I know, as an old play-goer as well as an actor, that there is a considerable difference between the acting of the greatest actors on the boards of a moderately sized theatre and a large one. I have seen Mr. Kean act in theatres of all sizes, and have acted with him in many, and I invariably found the nicer and better points of his acting were lost or materially impaired in large theatres, when full effect was always given to them in theatres of moderate size.

4151. Do you consider that actors are trained to great excellence in their art more by one species of composition than another?—Most certainly.

4152. Do you think they can obtain the same excellence in vaudevilles, *pièces de circonstance*, and so on, as in acting regular tragedy and comedy?—Certainly not;

not; I have always found it the contrary with regard to the talent I may possess; I have found my spirit and power of producing effect elevated or depressed in exact proportion to the kind of drama in which that talent was exercised, that is, in proportion to its excellence or inferiority. I have felt myself occasionally degraded by the nature of the performances I have been compelled to take part in.

4153. Do you consider that is a feeling among actors, that the legitimate drama is a better nursery for talent than any other?—I believe that is the feeling of all actors who exercise their art with a real love for it, and a sense of its importance.

4154. Do you conceive the drama could be so much encouraged as to produce more real talent in the histrionic art than we find at present?—I do; I think the more open the field for competition is the greater the chance for producing good actors; I think the greater the demand for good acting, by encouraging the performance of the legitimate drama, the greater will be the number of good actors. I have found in the productions of every art that the supply is generally in proportion to the demand.

4155. Supposing there were seven or eight theatres which had a right to perform the legitimate drama, do you consider it is possible there would be a sufficient supply of actors to furnish each theatre with a respectable company?—In the present state of things I do not; but I do not think seven or eight theatres in London, if they were allowed, would ever be playing the legitimate drama at one and the same time. I think they would classify themselves to a certain extent, according to the demands of their different locations.

4156. And you think they would do that if they were not compelled by any law?—I do.

4157. You belong to the Surrey theatre?—Yes.

4158. Does the manager of the Surrey theatre perform the legitimate drama?—He performs anything he pleases, Shakspeare or other pieces; but I believe, as far as I have seen, he finds it more to his interest in general to perform minor dramatic pieces than to perform the legitimate drama, that is tragedy and comedy; but I am inclined to think he has occasionally, nay frequently, found it more to his interest to play the legitimate drama, if I may judge from the appearance of the houses, but not generally, owing to the present state of the law partly, which renders it difficult to procure a company by which the legitimate drama can be played in a minor theatre in all its parts in such a way as to render it attractive.

4159. The staple profit to him is derived not from the legitimate drama, but smaller pieces?—Yes, I should think so.

4160. In that case, though he follows no law with regard to the selection of pieces, he follows his own interest generally, and takes that which is the most advantageous to him?—Precisely so. There may be rare times when he or the manager of any theatre may have the means of commanding talent expressly devoted to the legitimate drama, and at those times he finds it more to his interest to play it. There may be other times when that is not the case, and he then plays minor dramatic pieces.

4161. What is the present performance at the Surrey?—The Hunchback has been performed for the last three nights.

4162. How did that succeed?—It was most eminently successful, if you allude to the effect produced on the audience.

4163. Were the audience numerous?—Yes; I believe the houses were better than have been seen there for the last three months.

4164. No fault was found with the acting?—I do not know that. I have not seen or sought the criticisms. The effect upon the audience appeared much greater than at Covent Garden theatre, the piece being much more loudly applauded; and I can only attribute it to the circumstance of their being better able to hear, see, and appreciate the drama in a moderate sized theatre; for I would not insult your understandings by saying it was better played at the Surrey theatre than at Covent Garden.

4165. Do you not consider it a great hardship upon the author that you should be able to play that?—I conceive it is a great hardship; I wish the laws were so framed that actors might be liable to a penalty as well the manager, for then the actor would have an opportunity, without infringing his articles of agreement, of refusing to offend against the law.

4166. You have acted in provincial theatres?—I have.

4167. Do you think the provincial theatres could afford to pay an author a small sum for his piece?—I think a provincial theatre of the first class could afford a

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remuneration to authors, which would not be felt as a severe tax upon them, but would be of importance to authors.

4168. They could pay as much as 2*l.* or 3*l.* per night?—I do not think they could pay so much as that; but I have been told by the authors of successful pieces, if they had even been paid as little as half-a-crown per night for the representation of their pieces throughout the country, they would have received a large sum, and a sum which, in instances of very popular pieces, would have satisfied them. I heard Mr. Jerrold make that remark with respect to Black Eyed Susan.

4169. Are there any general observations you wish to make, especially with regard to actors?—I think the present laws affect the exertions of actors very materially. There are so many theatres in the country which demand the first-rate talent, that not one-sixth part of these actors of first-rate talent that are necessarily demanded by provincial theatres, can ever hope to get engagements at Covent Garden or Drury Lane; and yet a country actor's life is considered but as a state of necessary probation, and in most cases is one of positive endurance and deprivation. The highest salary I know paid in a provincial theatre of the very first class, is three guineas a week, and very few receive so much as that, and have to pay their own travelling expenses from town to town, and frequently to provide their own stage dresses; yet it is expected a man receiving that salary shall be able to embody the first characters of Shakspeare.

4170. Do you happen to know any particular instance of clever leading actors of undoubted talent who try to appear before a London audience, who have not been able to obtain engagements at the large theatres?—I do.

4171. Are those instances many?—Not perhaps many.

4172. Have you any objection to name them?—I cannot say I know such facts; I do not know of actors of talent having applied to Covent Garden or Drury Lane and being refused engagements, as such repulses would not perhaps be confessed to; but I have known actors and actresses of the first-rate talent exhibiting their talents in the country very much against their will. I have always observed a strong wish to exist amongst provincial performers that there should be more markets in London for talents, for country actors are always looking to the metropolis as the end and aim of their ambition, and their provincial engagements are considered by them merely as a means of attaining that end.

4173. Is it your belief that those individuals have remained in the country merely on account of the difficulty of getting engagements in London?—I am sure of it. I do not know whether it will be considered improper if I mention my own case. I have been for eight years a provincial actor; I have filled situations of first-rate importance in Liverpool, Manchester, Norwich, and other theatres, not quite of so much importance as those but nearly so, and I have always found the provinces utterly inadequate to my support and that of my family. I have made applications to the large theatres for a mere trial of my talent, and those applications have been wholly unnoticed, not even answered. I at last had applications made to me from the London minor theatres, and observing, with other actors, that those theatres had of late years, with the sanction and the encouragement of the public, made great strides towards attaining nearly the same respectability and excellence as the large houses, I was at length induced to accept those offers.

4174. What parts in the country theatres did you most excel in?—Richard the Third, Othello, Hamlet, and parts of that class.

4175. Did you offer probationary to play any of those parts in the London theatres?—I once did; I wrote at the same time to Mr. Charles Kemble of Covent Garden theatre, and Mr. Alexander Lee of Drury Lane. Mr. Kean at that time had seceded from the stage for a time. I made an offer, certainly a very bold one, to undertake Mr. Kean's characters, or make a trial in them, at a moderate salary, for the remainder of the season. I expressly offered to do so at a very moderate salary. I never received an answer to either application.

4176. Did you state the sum?—I did not.

4177. And you believe others are in the same situation?—I believe so.

4178. You now perform principal parts at the Surrey theatre?—I do.

4179. If those small theatres were not existing you would have no engagement in London?—If the legitimate drama was not played at the minor theatres I should certainly have had no engagement in London.

4180. You would still be performing at the provincial theatres?—Yes; I would not have accepted an engagement at a minor theatre had it been otherwise than it is.

4181. You

4181. You would be performing at a very inadequate salary?—Yes.

Mr. E. W. Elton.

4182. Do you know performers in the country who sustain characters there equally clever with the individuals who sustain those characters in London?—I know many who are equally clever, in the opinion of the audience who witness their talent.

12 July 1832.

4183. In your opinion?—Yes; I have seen instances.

4184. Do you know whether it costs a great deal to give an actor a trial at a great theatre?—I never heard so. I should mention, when I made the application I alluded to at Covent Garden and Drury Lane theatres, I made that application not from an obscure theatre, or as an obscure provincial actor, I was playing the leading characters in the Liverpool and Manchester theatres, Mr. Lewis's theatre, with Mr. Vandenhoff at Liverpool, and solely at Manchester.

4185. You never heard it stated that it costs 100*l.* at a patent theatre to give an actor a trial?—No.

4186. Your line is the tragic?—Yes.

4187. All Mr. Kean's characters?—Yes.

4188. And melo-drame too?—I have been compelled to play a great deal of melo-drame very much against my will in town and country.

4189. You have played with Mr. Vandenhoff?—Yes.

4190. Is he the principal tragic actor in the Liverpool company?—He was then so at Liverpool, but not in Manchester, Chester, and other towns.

4191. What parts have you played with Mr. Vandenhoff?—I have played Edgar to his King Lear, Pierre to his Jaffier, Iago to his Othello, and the like.

4192. Have you ever played at Birmingham or Bristol?—I have played in Birmingham, not in Bristol. I give it as my opinion as an actor, for this reason in addition to others, that the right of playing the legitimate drama in London should be given to other theatres as well as the large theatres, unrestrictedly; that I think it would be advantageous to the proprietors of the great theatres such should be the case. It has been stated, and it is well known, that the actors at the great houses are generally obtained from provincial theatres. The provincial theatres have been the school for the actors at the large theatres in London; but it happens frequently that upon recommendations of persons known by the managers of the large theatres, actors and actresses are brought from the provincial theatres, and fail after they have made long engagements. There have been instances of actors and actresses making engagements for three and even five years, at large salaries at the patent houses, who have failed on their first appearance, and the managers have been consequently saddled with those engagements, although the performers were useless. Now, if the legitimate drama were acted at the minor theatres, they would become the finishing schools, instead of the provincial theatres, and actors and actresses being then placed before the eyes of the public and of managers, and their talent and popularity matters of notoriety, no such mistakes could be made.

4193. Do you suppose if there were these nurseries for actors, and the large houses possessed the greatest capital, they would naturally attract the greatest actors?—Certainly; I think the theatres would always grade, and consequently attract and possess talent, in proportion to the wealth and spirit of the manager, or the local wealth and intelligence of the public.

4194. Then you think no good actors would be allowed to remain at the minor theatres?—I mean to say, when a vacancy occurred at the great houses the manager would have an opportunity of seeing and judging whether that vacancy could not be eligibly filled up from the minor theatres.

4195. You mean the vacancy would be filled up from the minor theatres, and therefore the minor theatres would have a bad company?—No, unless there were vacancies for actors, managers would not engage them; and as vacancies occurred at the minors, they again would be filled up from the provinces.

4196. Do you mean there would be greater talent at the minor theatres, and there would be a greater opportunity for the large theatres to select from that talent when they had a vacancy?—That is my opinion.

4197. Then the great theatres would take the lead in that respect?—Yes.

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A P P E N D I X.

Appendix, No. 1.

COPY of DAVENANT'S PATENT.

CHARLES the Second, by the Grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c., To all to whom these presents shall come, greeting; Whereas Our Royal Father, of glorious memory, by his letters patent, under his Great Seal of England, bearing date at Westminster the 26th day of March, in the 14th year of his reign, Did give and grant unto Sir William Davenant, by the name of William Davenant, gentlemen, his heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, full power, licence and authority, that he, they and every of them, by him and themselves, and by all and every such person and persons as he or they should depute or appoint, and his and their laborers, servants and workmen, should and might lawfully, quietly and peaceably, frame, erect, new build, and set up upon a parcel of ground lying near unto or behind the Three Kings' Ordinary, in Fleet-street, in the parishes of Saint Dunstan in the West, London, or in Saint Brides', London, or in either of them, or in any other ground in or about that place, or in the whole street aforesaid, then allotted to him for that use, or in any other that was or then after should be assigned or allotted out to the said Sir William Davenant by Thomas Earl of Arundel and Surrey, then Earl Marshall of England, or any others, Commissioners for building for the time being in that behalf, a theatre or playhouse, with necessary tiring and retiring rooms, and other places convenient, containing in the whole 40 yards square at the most, wherein plays, musical entertainments, scenes, or other the like presentments might be presented: And Our said Royal Father did grant unto the said Sir William Davenant, his heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, that it should and might be lawful to and for him the said Sir William Davenant, his heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, from time to time to gather together, entertain, govern, privilege and and keep such and so many players and persons to exercise actions, musical presentments, scenes, dancings and the like, as he the said Sir William Davenant, his heirs, exōrs, admōrs or assigns, shall think fitting, and from time to time to act plays in such houses so to be by him or them erected, and exercise musick, musical presentments, scenes, dancing or other the like, at the same or others, houses or times, or after plays are ended, peaceably and quietly, without the impeachment or impediment of any person or persons whatsoever, for the honest recreation of such as shall desire to see the same: And that it should and might be lawful to and for the said Sir William Davenant, his heirs, exōrs, admōrs and assigns, to take and receive of such as should resort to see and hear any such plays, scenes and entertainments whatsoever, such sum or sums of money as was or thereafter from time to time should be accustomed to be given or taken in other playhouses and places for the like, plays, scenes, presentments and entertainments, as in and by the said letters patent, relation being thereunto had, more at large may appear: And Whereas We did by Our letters patent, under Our Great Seal of England, bearing date the 16th day of May, in the 13th year of Our reign, exemplify the said letters patent granted by Our Royal Father, as in and by the same, relation being thereunto had, at large may appear: And whereas the said Sir William Davenant hath surrendered Our said letters patent of exemplification, and also the said recited letters patent granted by Our Royal Father into Our Court of Chancery to be cancelled, wch surrender We have accepted, and do accept by these presents; Know ye that We, of Our especial grace, certain knowledge and meer motion, and upon the humble petition of the said Sir William Davenant, and in conſon of the good and faithful service which he the said Sir William Davenant hath done unto us, and doth intend to do for the future, and in consideration of the said surrender, have given and granted, and by these presents for Us, Our heirs and successors, do give and grant unto the said Sir William Davenant, his heirs, exōrs, admōrs and assigns, full power, licence and authority, that he, they and every of them, by him and themselves, and by all and every person and persons as he or they shall depute or appoint, and his and their laborers, servants and workmen, shall and may lawfully, peaceably and quietly frame, erect, new build and set up in any place within Our cities of London and Westminster, or the suburbs thereof, where he or they shall find best accommodation for that purpose, to be assigned and allotted out by the surveyor of Our works, one theatre or playhouse, with tiring and retiring rooms, and other places convenient, of such extent and dimensions as the said Sir William Davenant, his heirs or assigns, shall think fitting, wherein tragedies, comedies, plays, operas, musick, scenes and all other entertainments of the stage whatsoever,

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ever, may be shown and presented: And We do hereby for Us, Our heirs and successors, grant unto the said Sir William Davenant, his heirs and assigns, full power, license and authority from time to time to gather together, entertain, govern, privilege and keep such and so many players and persons to exercise and act tragedies, comedies, plays, operas and other performances of the stage, within the house to be built as aforesaid, or within the house in Lincoln's-inn-Fields, wherein the said Sir William Davenant doth now exercise the premises, or within any other house where he or they can best be fitted for that purpose within Our cities of London and Westminster, or the suburbs thereof, which company shall be the servants of Our dearly beloved Brother James, Duke of York, and shall consist of such number as the said Sir William Davenant, his heirs or assigns, shall from time to time think meet; and such persons to permit and continue at and during the pleasure of him the said Sir William Davenant, his heirs or assigns, from time to time to act plays and entertainments of the stage of all sorts, peaceably and quietly, without the impeachment or impediment of any person or persons whatsoever, for the honest recreation of such as shall desire to see the same; and that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Sir William Davenant, his heirs and assigns, 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 either have accustomedly been given and taken in the like kind, or as shall be thought reasonable by him or them, in reward of the great expence of scenes, musick, and such new decorations as have not been formerly used: And further, for Us, Our heirs and successors, We do hereby give and grant to said Sir William Davenant, his heirs and assigns, full power to make such allowances out of that which he shall so receive by the acting of plays and entertainments of the stage as aforesaid to the actors and other persons employed in acting, representing, or in any quality whatsoever about the said theatre, as he or they shall think fit; and that the said company shall be under the sole government and authority of the said Sir William Davenant, his heirs and assigns, and all scandalous and mutinous persons shall from time to time by him and them be ejected, and disabled from playing in the said theatre: And for that We are informed that divers companies of players have taken upon them to act plays publicly in Our said cities of London and Westminster, or the suburbs thereof, without any authority for that purpose, We do hereby declare Our dislike of the same, and will and grant that only the said company erected and set up, or to be erected and set up, by the said Sir William Davenant, his heirs and assigns, by virtue of these presents, and other company erected and set up, or to be erected and set up, by Thomas Killigrew, esquire, his heirs and assigns, and none other, shall from henceforth act or represent comedies, tragedies, plays or entertainments of the stage within our said cities of London and Westminster, or the suburbs thereof, which said company to be erected by the said Thomas Killigrew, his heirs and assigns, shall be subject to his and their government and authority, and shall be styled the company of Us, and of Our Royal Consort; and the better to preserve amity and correspondence betwixt the said companies, and that the one may not encroach upon the other by any indirect means, We will and ordain that no actor or other person employed about either of the said theatres ejected by the said Sir William Davenant and Thomas Killigrew, or either of them, deserting his company, shall be received by the governor or any of the said other company, or any other person or persons to be employed in acting, or in any matter relating to the stage, without the consent and approbation of the governor of the company whereof the said person so ejected or deserted was a member, signified under his hand and seal. And We do by these presents declare all other company and companies, saving the two companies before mentioned, to be silenced and suppressed: And forasmuch as many plays formerly acted do contain several profane, obscene and scurrilous passages, and the women's parts have been acted by men in the habits of women, at which some have taken offence, for the preventing of these abuses for the future, We do hereby strictly command and enjoyn that from henceforth no new play shall be acted by either of the said companies containing any passages offensive to piety and good manners, nor any old or received play containing any such offensive passage as aforesaid, until the same shall be corrected and purged by the said masters or governors of the said respective companies from all such offensive and scandalous passage as aforesaid: And We do likewise permit and give leave that all the women's parts to be acted in either of the said two companies for the time to come may be performed by women, so long as these recreations (which by reason of the abuses aforesaid were scandalous and offensive) may by such reformation be esteemed, not only harmless delight, but useful and instructive representations of human life, to such of Our good subjects as shall resort to the same; and these Our letters patent, or the inrollment thereof, shall be in all things good and effectual in the law, according to the true intent and meaning of the same, any thing in these presents contained, or any law, statute, act, ordinance, proclamation, provision or restriction, or any other matter, cause or thing whatsoever to the contrary in anywise notwithstanding, although express mention of the true yearly value or certainty of the premises, or of any of them, or of any other gifts or grants by Us or any of Our progenitors or predecessors heretofore made to the said Sir William Davenant in these presents is not made, or any other act, statute, ordinance, provision, proclamation or restriction, heretofore had, made, enacted, ordained or provided, or any other matter, cause or thing whatsoever to the contrary thereof in anywise notwithstanding. In witness whereof We have caused these Our letters to be made patent. Witness Ourselves at Westminster this 15th day of January, in the 14th year of Our reign.

By the King.

Howard.

Appendix, No. 2.

COPY of KILLIGREW'S PATENT.

CHARLES the Second, by the Grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c., To all to whom this present shall come, greeting; Knowe ye that Wee of Our especial graco, certain knowledge, and mere moõon, and upon the humble petiõon of Our trustie and welbeloved Thomas Killigrew, Esquire, one of the groomes of Our bedchamber, have given and granted, and by this present, for Us, Our heires and successors, doe give and grante unto the s^d Thomas Killigrew, his heires and assignes, full power, licence and authoritie, that he, they and every of them, by him and themselves, and by all and every such person and persons as he or they shall depute or appointe, and his and their labourers, servant and workmen, shall and maie lawfullie, quietly and peaceably frame, erect, new build and sett up in any place within Our citties of London and Westminster, or the suburbs thereof, where he or they shall finde best accomodaõon for that purpose, to be assigned and allotted out by the surveyor of our workes, one theatre or playhouse, with necessarie tyreing and retyreing rooms, and other places convenient, of such extent and dimension as the said Thomas Killigrew, his heires or assignes shall thinke fittinge, wherein tragedies, comedies, plays, operas, musick, scenes, and all other entertainment of the stage whatsoever, may be shewen and presented: And Wee doe hereby for Us, Our heires and successors, graunt unto the said Thomas Killigrew, his heires and assignes, full power, licence, and authoritie, from time to time, to gather together, entertaine, governe, priviledge, and keepe such and soe manie players and persons to exercise and act tragedies, comedies, playes, operas and other performaõons of the stage within the house to be built as aforesaid, or within any other house where he or they can be best fitted for that purpose, within Our cities of London and Westminster, or the suburbs thereof, which said company shall be the servant of Us and Our deare Consort, and shall consist of such number as the said Thomas Killigrew, his heires or assignes, shall from time to time thinke meete; and such persons to permitt and continue att and dureigne the pleasure of the said Thomas Killigrew, his heires or assignes, from time to time to act playes and enterteynment of the stage of all sort peaceably and quietly, without the impeachment or impediment of any person or persons whatso^r, for the honest recreaõon of such as shall desire to see the same: And that it shall and maie be lawful to and for the said Thomas Killigrew, his heires and assignes, to take and receive of such Our subject as shall resort to see or heare anie such playes, scenes and entertainment whatso^r, such some or somes of money as either have accustomed bin given or taken in the like kinde, or as shall be thought reasonable by him or them in regard of the greate expences of scenes, musick and such new decaõons as have not been formerly used; and further, for Us, Our heires and successors, Wee do hereby give and grant unto the said Thomas Killigrew, his heires and assignes, full power to make such allowances out of that which he shall soe receive by the acting of playes and entertainment of the stage as afo^rd to the actors and other persons imployed in actinge, representinge, or in any qualitie whatso^r about the said theatre, as he or they shall thinke fitt; and that the s^d companie shall be under the sole government and authoritie of the said Thomas Killigrew, his heires and assignes; and all scandalous and mutinous persons from time to time by him and them to be eicted and disabled from playeing in the said theatre: And for that Wee are informed that divers companies of players have taken upon them to act playes publicquely in Our said citties of London and Westminster, or the suburbs thereof, without any authoritie for that purpose, Wee doe hereby declare our dislike of the same, and will and graunt that onely the said companie to be erected and sett upp by the said Thomas Killigrew, his heires and assignes, by virtue of this present, and one other companie to be erected and sett up by Sir William Davenant, knight, his heires or assignes, and none other, shall from henceforth act or represent comedies, tragedies, plaies or entertainment of the stage within our s^d citties of London and Westminster, and the suburbs thereof, which said companie to be erected by the said Sir William Davenant, his heires or assignes, shall be subject to his or their government and authoritie, and shall be stiled the Duke of York's Companie; and the better to preserve amitye and correspondence betwixt the said companies, and that the one maie not encroach upon the other by any indirect meanes, Wee will and ordaine that noe actor or other person imployed about either the said theatres eisted by the said Thomas Killigrew and Sir William Davenant, or either of them, or deserting his companie, shall be received by the governour of the said other companie to be employed in acting, or in anie matter relating to the stage, without the consent and approbation of the governor of the companie whereof the s^d person so eicted or deserting was a member, signified under his hand and seale; and Wee doe by this present declare all other companie and companies before mentioned to be silenced and suppressed: And forasmuch as manie playes formerly acted doe containe severll prophane, obscene and scurrulous passages, and the women's part therein have byn acted by men in the habit of woemen, at which some have taken offence, for the preventing of these abuses for the future, Wee doe hereby strictly comand and enioyne, that from henceforth noe new play shall bee acted by either of the said comp^s conteyninge anie passages offensive to pietie and good manners, nor any old or revived play conteyninge any such offensive passages as aforesaid, untill the same

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shall be corrected and purged by the said masters or governours of the said respective companies from all such offensive and scandalous passages as aforesaid; and Wee doe likewise permit and give leave, that all the woemen's part to be acted in either of the said two companies for the time to come may be performed by woemen, soe long as their recreacions, which, by reason of the abuses aforesaid, were scandalous and offensive, may by suche reformation be esteemed, not onely harmless delight, but usefull and instructive representiōns of humane life, to such of our good subiect as shall resort to the same; and theis our letters patent, or the inrollment thereof, shall be in all things firme, good, effectuall in the lawe, according to the true intent and meaning of the same, anything in theis present contained, or any law, statute, act, ordinance, proclamaçōn, provision, or restricōn, or any other matter, cause or thing whatsoever to the contrary in anywise notwithstanding, although express mençōn of the true yearely value or certenity of the premises, or of any of them, or of any other guift or grant by Us or by any of Our progenitors or predecessors heretofore made to the said Thomas Killigrew, and the said Sir William Davenant, in theis present is not made, or any statute, ordinance, provision, proclamaçōn or restricōn heretofore had, made, enacted, ordeyned or provided, or any other matter, cause or thing whatsoever to the contrary thereof, in anywise notwithstanding. In witness whereof, Wee have caused theis Our letters to be made patent. Witness Ourselſe at Westminster the 25th day of April, in the 14th yeare of our reigne.

By the King,

(seal) *Howard.*

Appendix, No. 3.

COPY of the ENTRY in the Books of the Lord Chamberlain's Office of the PATENT
 for the DRURY LANE THEATRE.

Appendix, No. 3.
 Entry of Patent for
 the Drury Lane
 Theatre.

GEORGE the Third, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, To all to whom these presents shall come, greeting; Whereas by an Act which passed in Parliament in the fiftieth year of our reign, intituled, "An Act for rebuilding the late Theatre Royal Drury Lane," upon the conditions and under the regulations therein mentioned, our trusty and well-beloved Samuel Whitbread, Peter Moore, and Harvey Christian Combe, esquires, are appointed trustees for the purposes therein mentioned: And whereas by another Act which passed in Parliament in the fifty-second year of our reign, intituled, "An Act for altering and enlarging the powers of an Act of His present Majesty for rebuilding the late Theatre Royal Drury Lane," provision is made for the appointment of successors to the said Trustees respectively; Now know ye, that We for divers good causes and considerations Us hereunto moving, of Our especial grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, have given and granted, and by these presents for Us, Our heirs and successors, do give and grant unto the said Samuel Whitbread, Peter Moore, and Harvey Christian Combe, their successors and assigns, in trust for the Theatre Royal Drury Lane Company of Proprietors, for and during the full end and term of twenty-one years, to commence from the 2d day of September in the year of our Lord Christ 1816, full power, licence and authority to gather together, form, entertain, govern, privilege and keep a company of comedians for Our service, to exercise and act tragedies, plays, operas and other performances on the stage, within a house to be built in Drury Lane, or within any other house built or to be built, where they can best be fitted for that purpose, within the city of Westminster, and within the limits thereof, and within such places where We, Our heirs and successors, shall reside, and during such residence only; such house or houses so to be built (if occasion shall require) to be assigned and allotted out by the chief officer of our works for a theatre or playhouse, with necessary attiring and retiring rooms, and other places convenient, of such extent and dimensions as the said Samuel Whitbread, Peter Moore, and Harvey Christian Combe, their successors and assigns, shall think fitting, wherein tragedies, comedies, plays, operas, music, scenes, and all other entertainments of the stage whatsoever may be showed and presented, which said company shall be Our servants, and be styled Our Royal Company of Comedians, and shall consist of such numbers as the said Samuel Whitbread, Peter Moore, and Harvey Christian Combe, their successors and assigns, shall from time to time think meet: And We do hereby, for Us, Our heirs and successors, grant unto the said Samuel Whitbread, Peter Moore, and Harvey Christian Combe, their successors and assigns, full power licence and authority to permit such persons at and during the pleasure of the said Samuel Whitbread, Peter Moore and Harvey Christian Combe, their successors or assigns, from time to time to act plays and entertainments of the stage of all sorts, peaceably and quietly, without the impeachment or impediment

of

of any person or persons whatsoever, for the honest recreation of such as shall desire to see the same, nevertheless under the regulations hereinafter mentioned, and such others as the said Samuel Whitbread, Peter Moore and Harvey Christian Combe, their successors or assigns, from time to time, in their discretion, shall find reasonable and necessary for Our service: And We do hereby for Us, Our heirs and successors, further grant to them the said Samuel Whitbread, Peter Moore and Harvey Christian Combe, their successors and assigns as aforesaid, that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Samuel Whitbread, Peter Moore and Harvey Christian Combe, their successors and assigns, to take and receive of such of Our subjects as shall resort to see or hear any such tragedies, plays, operas or other entertainments whatsoever, such sum or sums of money as either have accustomedly been given and taken in the like kind, or as shall be thought reasonable by them in regard of the great expense of building, hiring and fitting up the said theatre: And further, for Us, Our heirs and successors, We do hereby give and grant unto the said Samuel Whitbread, Peter Moore and Harvey Christian Combe, their successors and assigns, full power to make such allowances out of that which they shall so receive by the acting of tragedies, plays, operas or other entertainments of the stage as aforesaid, to the actors and other persons employed in acting, representing, or in any quality whatsoever in and about the said theatre, as the said Samuel Whitbread, Peter Moore and Harvey Christian Combe, their successors and assigns, shall think fit; and that the said Company shall be under the sole government and authority of the said Samuel Whitbread, Peter Moore and Harvey Christian Combe, their successors and assigns, and all scandalous and mutinous persons shall from time to time by them be ejected and disabled from playing in the said theatre: And for the better attaining Our Royal purposes in this behalf, We have thought fit hereby to declare that henceforth no representations be admitted on the stage by virtue or under colour of these Our letters patent, whereby the Christian religion in general, or the Church of England, may in any manner suffer reproach, strictly inhibiting every degree of abuse or misrepresentation of sacred characters, tending to expose religion itself, and to bring it into contempt, and that no such character be otherwise introduced or placed in any other light than such as may enhance the just esteem of those who truly answer the end of their sacred function: We further enjoin the strictest regard to such representations as any way concern civil policy or the constitution of Our Government, that these may contribute to the support of Our sacred authority, and the preservation of order and good government: And it being Our Royal will and pleasure that for the future Our theatre may be instrumental to the promotion of virtue and instructive to human life, We do hereby command and enjoin that no new play, or any old or revived play, be acted under the authority hereby granted, containing any passages or expressions offensive to piety and good manners, until the same be corrected and purged by the said governors from all such offensive and scandalous passages and expressions; and these Our letters patent, or the enrolment or exemplification thereof, shall be in and by all things good, firm, valid, sufficient and effectual in the law, according to the true intent and meaning thereof, anything in these presents contained to the contrary thereof in anywise notwithstanding, or any other omission, imperfection, defect, matter, cause or thing whatsoever to the contrary thereof in anywise notwithstanding. In witness whereof We have caused these Our letters to be made patent. Witness Ourselves at Our palace at Westminster this 19th day of June, in the 52d year of Our Reign.

Appendix, No. 3.
 Entry of Patent for the Drury Lane Theatre.

By Writ of Privy Seal.
Wilmot.

Appendix, No. 4.

1791.—OUTLINE for a general Opera Arrangement, proposed by Messrs. Sheridan, Holloway and William Sheldon, with the approbation of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, His Grace the Duke of Bedford, and the Marquis of Salisbury.

Appendix, No. 4.
 Outline for a general Opera Arrangement.

1st. MR. VANBURGH'S interest in the Haymarket Theatre and property to be purchased of him, and to be vested in trustees, upon the trusts hereinafter mentioned, and subject thereto, in trust for those friends of Mr. Taylor who purchased Mr. Vanburgh's interest, who may at the same moment agree with Mr. Taylor for the granting him a new lease at the expiration of the present one, either for the same rent as is now paid, or for any other rent as shall be agreed upon between them, for the whole of Mr. Vanburgh's present term under the Crown, as also for any new term that he may obtain.

2d. Mr. Vanburgh to use and exert his utmost interest with the Crown for the obtaining such an addition to the subsisting lease as will make up 50 years.

3d. The consideration to Mr. Vanburgh to be 12,000*l.*, to be paid down, and an annuity of 400*l.* to be reserved to Mr. Vanburgh during his life, and also to Mrs. Vanburgh during her life, if she survive him, and (except the Crown rent) to be the first charge upon the property, unless otherways to his satisfaction provided for; and the 3,500*l.* insurance money to be released to him, Mr. Vanburgh remitting to Mr. Taylor all arrears of rent now due to him,