
T H E

THEATRICAL REVIEW.

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *September 21.*

The BEGGAR's OPERA.

THIS Opera hath been universally allowed the master-piece of the celebrated Mr. *John Gay*, in the dramatic walk. The unprecedented success of this piece, on its appearance, and the frequent repetitions of it every season since, are such testimonies of its unrivalled merit, as render our entering into a particular description of it almost unnecessary. From the first Scene to the last it abounds with Wit and Humour truly genuine, and Satire apparently just; and the generality of the Songs are compleat Epigrams.—It made its appearance in the year 1727, and so powerfully captivated all ranks of people, that it almost instantaneously produced that laudable reformation it evidently meant to establish, *viz.* a contempt for the Italian Opera, which at that time was the idol of the Nobility and Gentry of this kingdom, while the *English Theatre* (in possession of the most excellent Plays and some of the most inimitable Actors that ever did honour to any nation) was almost totally neglected.—It had an uninterrupted Performance in London of sixty-three nights,

2 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

and was afterwards played in most of the principal towns in England, Scotland, and Ireland with incredible success: thus, in one season, did this single Piece, by the poignancy of it's Satire and brilliancy of it's Wit, effect that change which had been attempted by some of the ablest Writers of that time without success, by recalling the taste and understanding of the people from an adoration for mere sound and shew, to a relish for a species of entertainment that is an ornament to this country, and even adds a dignity to human nature.

It is recorded, that this Opera was rejected by the Managers of Drury-lane Theatre, and that the Manager who afterwards received it, signified on the first Rehearsal, that he had no opinion of its succeeding, and therefore appeared unwilling to perform it, so that he was prevailed on with great difficulty to give it a trial. On the first night of its being represented, the Audience were silent for a time, and did not seem inclined to give it their approbation, however, before it was half performed, they became sensible of its merit, and through the whole of the last Act, honoured it with universal applause.

The original Overture which is still performed, was composed by the late Dr. Pepuch, and the Songs are adapted to well known Airs, some of which are excellent, and have still the power to charm, notwithstanding the extraordinary revolution which the taste in Music hath undergone of late years.

The

The Critics, or rather such as grasp at shadows and neglect the real substance, have censured this Piece, and complained of its immoral tendency, because the principal persons of the Drama are dissolute and abandoned throughout, and the Hero a Gambler and Highwayman, whom the Poet has placed in a pleasing point of view, and rewarded with happiness instead of sentencing him to condign punishment.—To this we answer, that most of those positive Gentlemen, who at once determine peremptorily, generally give their opinion without much knowledge of the cause before them.—The design of the Poet has always been universally understood, and we will venture to assert, that through the whole Piece, there are sufficient hints thrown out, manifestly tending to shew the turpitude of every species of villainy, and expressed in such terms as will not fail to warn the minds of the unthinking of the danger attending on the commission of every immoral and dishonest action.

Thus much for the Piece : with respect to the *Performers*, we are sorry to observe, that we have seen it infinitely better played at this Theatre than it was on Saturday evening. Several of the Actors were very imperfect in their parts, frequently misplacing their speeches, which sometimes obliged them to repeat them over again in their proper places, in order to preserve the necessary connection : such errors are very fatal to the preservation of that propriety and appearance of reality, which should

4 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

ever be observed in dramatical representation ; but as faults of this nature carry their own conviction with them, there is reason to imagine they will evince the necessity of greater attention in future.

Mr. *Vernon* is inimitable in the character of *Macheath* ; the united powers of genius, judgement, and attention are so forcibly displayed, that we think we may pronounce him unrivalled in this Part. — Mrs. *Wrighten* played the Part *Poll Peachum* (being her first appearance in that character) as a substitute for Mrs. *Baddeley*, and we are of opinion the Performance was not injured in the least by the change. — Miss *Pope* supported the part of *Lucy* with her usual vivacity, and copied her inimitable predecessor, Mrs. *Clive*, so closely, that it is but just to observe, that the merit of her playing amply compensated for her want of abilities as a Singer.

To which was added,

HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS.

THIS Piece came out in the year 1759, and met with uncommon success, and indeed was inimitably performed. Its merit is very considerable, as it not only points out some of the follies of persons in high life, the contemptibility and ridiculousness of which are pleasantly exposed in the imitation of those follies by their own servants, but, as its second and principal aim is to convince persons of fortune who are not always so attentive to the conduct of their own affairs as is sometimes necessary, and who are too apt to repose a
greater

for September, 1771.

5

greater confidence in their servants than is commendable, what frauds and impositions they frequently suffer from the extravagance and infidelity of those very servants.—It met with a very violent opposition when it was first performed in Scotland, from the servants of the Nobility and Gentry in that kingdom, which, however, produced in a great measure the very reformation endeavoured to be prevented by the opposition, viz. an immediate association, publicly subscribed to by persons of the first rank, to put a stop to a scandalous custom, only prevalent in these kingdoms, of giving Vails.—We believe it was never publicly known by whom it was written, and it is not improbable, but that motives of self-preservation might lead the Author to conceal himself, for it is difficult to say where the resentment of the party-coloured regiment might have ended had they known on whom to have exercised it.

This Piece suffers greatly in the representation, on account of the loss of some very principal Actors who performed in it when it first made its appearance.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Sept. 23.*

The CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

THIS Comedy was written by Mr. *David Garrick* and Mr. *George Colman*, in conjunction, whose abilities as Authors are so generally known, that it would be superfluous to notice them in this place.

B 3

With

6 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

With respect to the Comedy before us, there is something to blame, and something to commend. But as in life, so in writing, some faults should be endured without disgust when they are associated with transcendent merit; and indeed when this is really the case, they generally meet with lenity from their union with excellence. We are scarcely presented with one new character it is true, but perhaps it is almost impossible to find a real character, which hath not already been exhibited on the Stage; however, it is but justice to observe, that tho' the Characters are not new, they are well discriminated, at the same time that a strong preservation runs through the whole; and the Plot, part of which is professedly borrowed, receives considerable advantages from the masterly conduct of it. With respect to Moral, it is certainly deficient. for the offenders (if they may be termed so) are the only persons rendered happy in the catastrophe. From the united efforts of two such theatrical Geniuses, a more perfect Piece might reasonably have been expected; but, considering the present dearth of comic Writers, this Piece is no very inconsiderable acquisition to the Stage. As a piece of Entertainment, it is capable of affording innocent merriment, and on this account very justly merits that applause it has so generally received. It has been observed by the Critics, with some degree of justice, that the character of *Lord Ogleby* is a palpable imitation of *Lord Chalkstone*, in *Leticia*, for there certainly is a strong family likeness between
between

for September, 1771.

7

between them.—We cannot dismiss this article without noticing an impropriety which we are surprized the Authors could be guilty of. We mean *Lovewell's* Address to the Audience in the last speech; though it is evidently calculated to secure the favour of the Audience, it is an offence against one of the most essential rules of the Drama; every dramatic action is supposed to be performed independent of Spectators. When this Comedy first appeared at *Drury-Lane* Theatre, in the year 1766, it received great advantages from several excellent Actors, some of whom are lost to the world, and others to the Stage; and it is highly improbable that we shall ever see it so well performed again at this Theatre.—Many of the Characters are supported with spirit and propriety; and, when we consider how difficult it must be to sustain such a Character as that of Lord *Ogleby*, we think it but justice to observe, that Mr. *Kniveton* is no very humble imitator of that great original, Mr. *King*.

To which was added,

The C O M M I S S A R Y:

A Comedy of two Acts, by Mr. Foote.

THERE is little of dramatic regularity in this Piece, nor is it equal, in point of Merit, to several other Performances of this Author. It possesses many strokes of keen Satire, and some judicious touches of temporary Humour; but though the *Commissary* is evidently drawn from a real and living

8 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

living Character, it is *outrè* in the extreme ; for it is impossible that such an Ideot, as is here represented, should have had the capacity, and we may say, policy, of raising himself from obscurity to the height of opulence, by the methods with which he stands accused.

Upon the whole, though we have seen this Piece better performed, it is represented here with some degree of credit, and receives no inconsiderable advantage from the just and spirited performance of Mr. *Quick*, in the character of the *Commissary*.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *September 24.*

The WEST INDIAN :

A Comedy.

THE Public are indebted to the ingenious Mr. *Cumberland* for this valuable acquisition to the Stage, which without doubt is a more finished Work than either of his preceding Pieces : We mean the Comic Opera of the *Summer's Tale*, and his Comedy of the *Brothers* ; the first of which met with a very cold reception from the Public, and the latter with an indulgence it by no means merited. His Tragedy of the *Banishment of Cicero* was published, but never brought on the Stage ; notwithstanding which, it is by no means a despicable Performance ; and we cannot resist a temptation of quoting a passage from a very judicious

cious Critic's remarks on this Tragedy :
 "Though the Piece (says he) might perhaps have given some little scope to the ill-nature of the Critics had it appeared on the Stage, yet for the Closet, it is far from wanting merit, but on the contrary, gives hopes that the Theatre may yet receive some future Ornaments from the same Pen, should the Author think fit to pursue with ardour his passion for the Dramatic Muse."

It is with infinite pleasure we see this prophecy verified in the instance of the Comedy now before us ; for, though it is not wholly free from objections, when examined with critical attention, yet, when we consider how few, if any, of our modern Pieces, are free from those inaccuracies, into which the Author has fallen, we think ourselves obliged to acknowledge, that it highly merits the universal applause it has received.

We shall quit this Piece at present, but propose, in some future Observations, to point out the merits and defects of it at large, for the entertainment of our Readers, free from a severity prompted by envy, or a disposition inclined to censure.

With respect to the representation of this Piece, Mr *Garrick* undoubtedly shewed great skill, in what is usually termed, casting the Parts. The excellence of the Performers, from the highest to the lowest in the first run of it, was such as deserved great praise ; and except in one Character, they all retain their respective stations : We allude to Miss *Rogers* in the part of *Louisa Dudley*, in the room of Mrs. *Baddeley*. We would not by any means

10 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

means attempt to check this young Lady in her progress to Fame, but we think her likely, in the present instance, to lose that favour with the Public she hath already established; for though we allow her to have merit, we cannot think her so proper to fill this Part as Mrs. *Baddeley*, or several other Actresses at this Theatre. We think there is a kind of poetical injustice done to this Piece by this substitution, as she by no means answers the description given of Miss *Dudley* by *Belcour*.

To which was added,

THE C H A P L E T.

THIS Piece was written by the ingenious Mr. *Mendez*, and professedly intended for Music. The Plot is simple, natural, and pleasing. It was inimitably set to Music by Dr. *Boyce*; and as at first, so it still continues to give general satisfaction in the Representation, and is one of the most pleasing and compleatest Musical Entertainments ever exhibited.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Sept. 25.

H A M L E T:

A Tragedy, by Shakespear.

THE Story on which this inimitable Tragedy is founded, is taken from the Danish History of *Saxo Grammaticus*. The Scene, *Elfsnoor*.—It would exceed the limits of this Plan, were we at once, either to enter into a minute examination of this

this Piece, with respect to its merits as a Drama, or single out the innumerable beauties it contains; this, amongst other entertaining and interesting particulars, shall be strictly attended, to in the course of this Work. We shall content ourselves at present, with laying before our Readers a general character of this Play, as given by Dr. *Johnson*, in his edition of *Shakespeare's* Works, and which we apprehend to be worthy the notice of the Curious.

"If the Dramas of *Shakespeare* (says he) were to be characterized, each by the particular excellence which distinguishes it from the rest, we must allow to the Tragedy of *Hamlet* the praise of Variety. The incidents are so numerous, that the Argument of the Play would make a long tale. The Scenes are interchangeably diversified with Merriment and Solemnity; with Merriment that includes judicious and instructive observations, and Solemnity not strained by poetical violence above the natural sentiments of Man. New Characters appear from time to time in continual succession, exhibiting various forms of life, and particular modes of conversation. The pretended madness of *Hamlet* causes much mirth, the mournful distraction of *Ophelia* fills the heart with tenderness, and every Personage produces the effect intended, from the Apparition that in the first Act chills the blood with horror, to the Fop in the last, that exposes affectation to just contempt.

"The Conduct is perhaps not wholly secure against objections. The Action is indeed

12 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

deed for the most part in continual progression, but there are some Scenes which neither forward nor retard it. Of the feigned madness of *Hamlet* there appears no adequate cause, for he does nothing which he might not have done with the reputation of sanity. He plays the Madman most, when he treats *Ophelia* with so much rudeness, which seems to be useless and wanton cruelty.

"*Hamlet* is, through the whole Play, rather an Instrument than an Agent. After he has, by the Stratagem of the Play, convicted the King, he makes no attempt to punish him, and his death is at last effected by an incident which *Hamlet* has no part in producing.

"The Catastrophe is not very happily produced; the exchange of Weapons is rather an expedient of necessity than a stroke of art. A scheme might easily have been formed, to kill *Hamlet* with the dagger, and *Laertes* with the bowl.

"The Poet is accused of having shewn little regard to poetical Justice, and may be charged with equal neglect of poetical Probability. The Apparition left the regions of the dead to little purpose; the revenge which he demands is not obtained but by the death of him that was required to take it; and the gratification which would arise from the destruction of an Usurper and a Murderer, is abated by the untimely death of *Ophelia*, the young, the beautiful, the harmless, and the pious."

Thus far *Dr. Johnson*. Many of the Speeches in this Play are considerably reduced,
and

and some omitted, in the representation, and, indeed, they are marked for that purpose in some of the Printed Copies of a very early date. Sometimes the omissions leave the Play better, and sometimes much worse, and appear to be done only for the sake of abbreviation.

It is recorded of the Author of this excellent Play, that altho' his knowledge and observation of Nature rendered him the most accurate Painter of the Sensations of the human mind in his writings, yet so different are the talents requisite for acting from those required even for dramatic Writing, that the part of the *Ghost* (no very considerable Character) was almost the only one, in which he was able to make a Figure as a Performer.

As this Play is represented here, we cannot help being of opinion, that some of the Characters are given to very improper Performers, who, in some other departments, might serve the Theatre more eminently, and therefore their Names shall rest in silence; as Improprieties of this nature are to be charged to the Managers, who are too frequently shamefully negligent and inattentive in filling up the under Characters in many of the Plays; but more on this head hereafter.

Mr. *Smith* supports the part of *Hamlet* with great justice; but since the death of that truly excellent Actress, Mrs. *Pritchard*, we do not remember to have regretted the loss of her, on any occasion, more than we did during the performance of this Play this evening.

Most

14 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Most of the Performers we have seen in the Part of *Polonius*, seem greatly to mistake the Character, and by Buffoonery, and a kind of Pantomimical Deportment, render him ridiculous, which does not appear by any means to have been the Poet's intention.— He is drawn as a Man bred in Courts, exercised in Business, stored with Observation, confident of his Knowledge, proud of his Eloquence, and declining into Dotage. This mode of Oratory is truly represented as designed to ridicule the practice of those Times, of Prefaces that made no Introduction, and of Method that embarrassed, rather than explained. This is a true Portrait of the Character, as drawn by *Shakespear*.

Let the Actor who is to perform the Part of *Polonius*, recollect with attention, that most excellent piece of advice which he gives to his Son *Laertes*, at parting, Act I. Scene 6. and he will be cautious how he sports with the Character.

———“ Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportioned thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar;
The friends thou hast, and their adoption try'd,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel,
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,
Bear't that th' opposer may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice.
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not exprest in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
And they in *France*, of the best rank and station,
Are most select and generous, chief in that.

Neither

Neither a borrower, nor a lender be;
 For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
 And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
 This above all; to thine own self be true,
 And it must follow, as the night the day,
 Thou can'st not then be false to any man."

The Part of *Ophelia* was performed by Mrs. *Mattocks*, being the first time of her appearing in this Character, and we hope it will ~~not~~ be the last.

To which was added,

THOMAS and SALLY.

THIS little Entertainment was written by Mr. *Bickerstaff*; the Plot is extremely simple, and the Conduct of the Piece has little to recommend it, except in the instance of Sally's integrity to *Thomas*, who, though in an humble situation in life, rejects every tempting solicitation from the *Squire*, notwithstanding his importance and superiority; a circumstance, that affords a very useful lesson to the Fair Sex. It was excellently set to Music by Dr. *Arne*, and not only met with great success on its first appearance, but has frequently been performed every Season since, with great applause.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, September 26.

C Y M B E L I N E :

A Tragedy, by Shakespear.

THIS pleasing Dramatic Romance (for it cannot be considered in any other light) is one proof, amongst many, of the amazing

16 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

amazing fertility of *Shakespeare's* unbounded fancy; for though the Plot, as far as it relates to *Posthumus* and *Imogen*, is taken from *Boccace's Decameron*, and the rest from the ancient traditions of the *British* History, there is little historical besides the names.

Dr *Johnston* observes of this Play, that "it has many just Sentiments, some natural Dialogues, and some pleasing Scenes, but they are obtained at the expence of much incongruity. To remark (continues he) the folly of the Fiction, the absurdity of the Conduct, the confusion of the names and manners of different Times, and the impossibility of the Events in any system of Life, were to waste Criticism upon unresisting imbecility, upon faults too evident for detection, and too gross for aggravation."——Whoever places himself in the Critics chair, must subscribe to these sentiments; but then, it should be considered of whom we are speaking: Of *Shakespeare*, the first Dramatic Author in the World; who, scorning to be bound by any Laws, gave a loose to the workings of the most extensive imagination that ever possessed the mind of Man. The irregularities in this Piece are numerous, we confess; yet, notwithstanding all these, it contains an infinity of Beauties, both with respect to Language, Character, Passion, and incident; and the severity of Criticism must abate of its rigour, by contemplating on those wonderful strokes of Genius with which it abounds; so that while the Judgment is displeased with the improbability of the Plot, and inconsistency of the Dramatic Action,

Action, the Mind must receive the highest satisfaction from the pleasing excursions of Fancy: and though it is impossible we can be inattentive to the obvious defects of the Piece, the pleasure we receive from it, on the whole, naturally inclines us to behold them with an eye of favour.

This Piece was revived some years since with great Alterations, consisting chiefly of a removal of the most glaring Absurdities, with respect to Time and Place, an omission of some Characters and Scenes not necessary to the general Design, and which, only increased the number of its Perplexities, and retarded the progress of the main Design. As it now stands its Merit is sufficiently known, and the satisfaction it has constantly given in the Representation, has always been express'd with the highest applause.

The learned and ingenious Mr. *William Collins*, of *Chichester*, wrote a very elegant Song for the Obsequies of *Fidele*, in the room of the old one, and we believe it was introduced on the revival of the Piece, but is now omitted. We do not think the Managers blameable in this, as the performance of it must rather retard the Action, for which reason, part of the old one is repeated by *Guiderius* and *Arviragus* with more propriety.

With respect to the Representation of this Piece, we are sorry to observe, that the Parts of *Posthumus*. and *Jachimo*, suffer greatly by the loss of those excellent Actors, Mr. *Powell*, and Mr. *Holland*. We do not mean to depreciate the Merit of Mr. *Reddish*.

18 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

disb, and Mr. *Palmer*, by this remark ; it is to be presumed every Performer does his best, and consequently deserves commendation : Comparisons are odious, when injurious to the reputation or interest of any one Individual whatever, and, to praise the Dead at the expence of the Living, is neither just, nor generous. Mr. *Reddish* rants a little too much in some of the passionate Speeches, which is injurious to his voice, as well as unnecessary to that propriety he means to support by it. To “*tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings,*” (to use the language of *Shakespeare*, in *Hamlet*’s remarks to the Players) is a practice avoided by every judicious Actor, who has taken the pains to inform his understanding in the arts of his Profession, and acquire a perfect knowledge of the Parts he plays. All unnecessary force is unnatural, and tho’ it may strike the ears of the ill judging, a repetition of it will soon lose its influence even with them, while every instance of it will be sure to meet with the disapprobation of the more judicious.

Mr. *Palmer*, in *Jachimo*, has, with great judgment, corrected one error which his predecessor Mr. *Holland* repeatedly committed in this part ; and which was absolutely inconsistent with that attention to propriety so necessary to be preserved inviolable in every Dramatic Action : we mean the appearance of reality. Mr. *Holland* never lowered his voice, or however, not sufficiently, in the *Chamber Scene*, Act 2. *Imogen* is supposed to be asleep, and while

Jachimo

Jachimo notes the particulars of the room, &c. too much caution and stillness cannot be used, which *Mr. Palmer* very judiciously observes.

Miss Younge's excellent performance in the part of *Imogen*, naturally leads us to congratulate the Managers on her return from *Ireland*. In the present dearth of good Actresses, especially in the Tragic Walk, she is a very valuable acquisition to the *British Theatre*. Her voice is inimitably suited to the Stage, her deportment easy and natural, and her sensibility forcible and affecting. We rate this Actress very high in our esteem, because her merit is conspicuous, and she has repeatedly discovered evident tokens of laboured attention, to the duties of her profession.

After this, we must beg leave to point out a small error in her playing the part of *Imogen*; and which was too obvious to escape notice. — When *Jachimo* arrives from *Italy* at the *British Court*, he is introduced to her by *Pisanio*, who says to *Imogen*, on his approach, “Madam, a noble Gentleman of Rome comes from my Lord with Letters.” And *Jachimo*, on his first entrance informs her, that “the worthy *Leonatus* is in safety.” These circumstances ought to awaken the highest joy and transport in *Imogen*, instead of which, we were sorry to observe, she dropped a solemn curtsy, and without one joyous feature said, with the utmost languor, “Thanks, good Sir, &c.” — And even after she had read the Letter he brought from *Posthumus*, and she addresses herself to him again,

20 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

again, her indifference was still the same. As this was evidently want of attention, it is remarked with a view to prevent a repetition of the same impropriety, and not from a disposition prompt to censure.

To which was added,

The MAYOR of GARRATT.

THIS is a very indifferent Performance, and greatly inferior to many of Mr. Foote's Pieces. The Incidents are trifling, and produced without regularity, and the Satire is directed to very improper Objects, and such as are beneath the importance of ridicule. *Weston* is inimitable in the Part of *Jerry Sneak*; nor do we think *Love* without merit in *Major Sturgeon*. The Song, of *Johnny Pringle*, is contemptible to the utmost extreme; and we hope, never to hear the first Theatre in *Europe* disgraced with it again.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Sept. 27.

The S T R A T A G E M :

A Comedy, by Farquhar.

THIS well known Comedy was brought on the Stage in the year 1710, and met with great success; since which time it has frequently been repeated every Season with general applause.

The Plot is judiciously contrived, and the Author has been very happy in the choice of his Subject. It contains a variety of Incidents, which render the Representation
pleasing

pleasing and interesting. The Characters are naturally drawn, but not strongly marked, and the Language, though sprightly and unaffected, is very deficient with respect to solidity. In this, as in all his other Pieces, the Author has given a strong proof of his having acquired a very considerable knowledge of the World, and a clear judgment of the manners of Mankind. Yet, after having granted this, we are obliged to remark, that in the Comedy before us, many of the Scenes are very reprehensible, as being not only indelicate, but immoral; and indeed, there is a looseness of Manners, and a spirit of Libertinism, too predominant throughout the whole of *Farquhar's* Dramatic Works. The *Stratagem* was the last Piece he ever wrote, and it is related, that it was designed and compleated in the space of six weeks, during which time he languished under a fatal illness, that put an end to his life in the run of the Piece.

To which was added,

THE DEVIL TO PAY.

THE ground work of this Piece was taken from a Farce, written by *Jevon*, the Player, intituled, *A Comical Transformation*. It has undergone various Alterations since the original Author, *Mr. Caffey*, first introduced it on the Stage in the year 1731; but it was reduced to the form in which it now stands, by the late *Mr. Theophilus Cibber*. *Mrs. Clive*, (then Miss *Raffor*) was the original *Nell*, and in that Part, first discovered some sparks of that Comic Genius by which

22 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

which she afterwards so eminently distinguished herself, and which supported her in the estimation of the Public, almost forty years.

With respect to the Piece itself, it is beneath Criticism, as the Plot is founded on the highest impossibility; notwithstanding which, it has always given pleasure in the Representation, and been received with considerable applause. The Songs are adapted to old favourite Airs, several of which were composed by the ever memorable Mr. *Henry Purcell*. It is very well performed at this Theatre.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *September 28.*

The MOURNING BRIDE:

A Tragedy, by Congreve.

THIS Tragedy made its appearance on the Stage in the year 1697, and met with uncommon success, though by far the most inferior of this Author's Dramatic Works; notwithstanding which, *Congreve* himself preferred it to all the rest. This will prove, that the opinion of an Author respecting his own Performance, and of the Public in general, is very seldom to be relied on in cases of this nature.

The *Scene* is laid in the Court of the King of *Valentia*. It must be confessed, that the Story is pleasingly told, and the Incidents very affecting, but there are innumerable faults in the Language, which contains

too much of the Bombast, and too little of Nature, to merit any great degree of praise; and yet, there are many instances of a fine taste in the Sentiments, though they are sometimes rather strained and artificial, and such as Nature suggests not to any Person on such occasions as give rise to them.— With respect to Regularity, it is not altogether unexceptionable; for though through the first four Acts, the unities of Time and Place are strictly observed, yet, in the last Act, there is a great error with respect to unity of Place; for in the three first Scenes of that Act, the place of action is a room of state, which is changed to a Prison in the fourth Scene: The chain also of the Actors is broken, as the Persons introduced in the Prison are different from those who made their appearance in the room of state. This remarkable interruption of the Representation, makes in effect two Acts instead of one; and therefore, unless it is allowable for a Play to have more than five Acts, the Piece before us is very defective in point of Regularity; and were we to admit of six Acts, the imperfection here would not be altogether removed, without a longer pause in the representation than is allowed in the acting; for it requires more than a momentary interruption to enable the imagination readily to accommodate itself to a new Place, or to the prorogation of Time.

The Parts of *Osmyn* and *Almeria* were supported by Mr. *Reddish* and Miss *Younge* with great attention and sensibility. We could have wished to have seen the Part of the
King

24 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

King performed by an Actor more accustomed to the Language of Tragedy than Mr. *J. Aickin*; and also the Part of *Leonora* by a better Actress than Mrs. *Johnston*, who seems but little acquainted with any Language. Many of our best Plays are greatly injured in the representation, by the distribution of the under Parts to Performers incapable of doing justice to them.

To which was added,

HARLEQUIN'S INVASION:

A Pantomime Entertainment.

THIS Entertainment was first brought on the Stage in the year 1759. It is introduced by a Prologue, which calls it a *Christmas Pye*, and is a judicious Satire on the ridiculous taste for this species of Mummery. The Plan of it is a supposed Invasion made by *Harlequin* and his Associates upon the Frontiers and Domain of *Shakespeare*. The Business of this Entertainment is not carried on in dumb show, but the Characters are made to speak. The Catastrophe is the defeat of *Harlequin*, and the restoration of King *Shakespeare*. Independent of this Plan, it contains many genuine strokes of Wit, and some temporary touches of Satire; several of the Characters are drawn with great ingenuity, and the whole is rendered a very pleasing Entertainment, as it has received very considerable improvements since it was brought out.

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Sept. 30.

GEORGE BARNWELL:

A Tragedy, by Mr. Lillo.

THE *London Merchant, or the History of George Barnwell*, as it was titled by the Author, was first played at *Drury-Lane Theatre*, in the year 1730, and met with very great success. The Story is very interesting, and conducted with great ingenuity and judgement, and the Catastrophe truly affecting. The Characters are all taken from those in the middle station of Life, yet the Piece contains a distress, which renders it much more affecting than many Plays, where Events are represented that are thought of much higher importance, and in which the fate of Kings and Empires is at the point of being decided by a single battle.—The Author was very happy in the choice of his Subject, and has shewn a wonderful skill in the art of moving the tender Passions; and his *Pathos* is very great. It is written in Prose, yet the Language is finely adapted to the Subject, and sufficiently elevated to express the Sentiments of the Characters. The Moral it inculcates is noble, and of the highest importance to Youth, particularly such as are concerned in the various branches of Mercantile Business, in the great Metropolis of the Land of Commerce. On this account alone, abstracted from its Merit as a Dramatic Work, it is deserving of the highest praise.

26 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

“ When this Piece first appeared, (says an ingenious Writer on the subject of Theatrical Exhibitions) as it was found to be taken from a well-known old Ballad, many of the Critics of that time, who went to the representation of it, formed so contemptible an idea of it in their expectations, that they purchased the Ballad, (some thousands of which were used in one day on this account) in order to draw comparisons between that and the Play: But the Merit of the Play soon got the better of this Contempt, and presented them with Scenes written so truly to the heart, that they were compelled to subscribe to the Power, and drop their Ballads, to take up their Handkerchiefs.”

We are sorry we are obliged to observe, that this Play is very indifferently performed here, for scarcely is one Character played well.

To which was added,

The C O M M I S S A R Y .

An Account of this Piece may be seen in Page 7.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, October 1.

AS YOU LIKE IT:

A Comedy, by Shakespear.

THIS inimitable Comedy does great honour to its immortal Author, as it is one of the most pleasing Pastoral Dramas on

on the English Stage. The Incidents are numerous, and though few of them are striking, they are in general pleasing. New Characters appear from time to time in continual succession, and most of them are well supported. The Scenes are interchangeably diversified with merriment and solemnity, but some of them are very trifling, and rather retard than promote the general Design. The Unities are repeatedly broken, and the Catastrophe is not very happily produced. The Comic Dialogue (as Dr. Johnson observes) is very sprightly, with less mixture of low Buffoonery than in some other of *Shakespeare's* Plays; and the graver Part is elegant and harmonious.—The Characters of *Touchstone* and *Rosalind* are Beings of *Shakespeare's* creating, and the Conduct of the Piece is evidently his own; but the Plot, as far as relates to the Characters of *Oliver*, *Jaques*, *Orlando*, and *Adam*, with the Episodes of the Wrestler, and the banished Train, are doubtless taken from *Chaucer's* Legend of *Gamelyn* in the Cook's Tale.—The Scene lies first, near *Oliver's* house; and afterwards, partly at the Court of one of the Dukes of *France*, and partly in the Forest of *Arden*. Upon the whole, notwithstanding many faults too obvious to escape critical examination, it is an excellent Play, and never fails of affording the highest satisfaction in the Representation.

It contains innumerable Beauties, amongst which is the justly admired Speech on the different Stages of human Life, which we

23 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

shall present to our Readers, referring them to the Play for the rest :

—————" All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women meerly players;
They have their *exits* and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts :
His acts being seven ages. At first the Infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms,
And then, the whining School-boy with his satchel,
And shining morning-face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then, the Lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eye-brow. Then a Soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden, and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble Reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then, the Justice,
In fair round belly, with good capon lin'd,
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances,
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean of slipper'd Pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side ;
His youthful hose well sav'd, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank ; and his big manly voice,
Turning again towards childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second Childishness, and meer oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing."

Act II. Scene 9.

In one instance, this Play is memorable, the mention of which will not, we apprehend, be disagreeable.—It was in the Part of *Rosalind* that the late Mrs. Pritchard was
pecu-

peculiarly noticed, whose modesty, in the early part of life, rendered her fearful of exerting to their full extent, those amazing talents with which she was favoured by nature, and had improved by observation. The Speech that first obtained her any considerable applause, was the following: "*Take the cork out of thy mouth, that I may drink thy tidings.*" The praise she received for her spirited manner of speaking this, gave a new spirit to all the rest; she was applauded throughout, and for ever after (says an ingenious Writer) *ex eo Corydon, Corydon, est tempore*, and otherwise, perhaps, the best Actress of the *British Stage*, would have perished in oblivion.

The principal Characters in this Play are excellently performed at this Theatre.

Touchstone was a favourite Character of *Shakespear's*, and so it seems to be with Mr. King. We have seen several excellent Actors play this Part, but in none were the peculiar requisites for the support of it, so strongly united as we observe them in him; and without doing an injury to the memory of any deceased Actor, or the reputation of any living one, we think we may venture to give him the preference of all we have ever seen play the Part.

Mr. *Brereton's* personal appearance is most happily adapted to the Character of *Orlando*; but we wish he would labour less, and endeavour to give the Part that spirit and ease which it requires. Upon the whole, though he gave us few opportunities to

30 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

praise him, there were still fewer instances deserving censure.

Jaques is a Character well suited to Mr. *Love's* capacity; but was he a little more attentive to deliver the fine flowing Periods in this Part with grace and dignity, he would be intitled to a greater degree of praise. Mr. *Moody* plays the interesting Part of *Adam* with great sensibility. Nothing can equal Mr. *Vernon's* taste and elegance of expression, in *Amiens's* two Songs, of, *Under the Greenwood Tree*, and, *Blow, blow, thou Winter Wind*, but the Merit of the Composer who set them to music. Mrs. *Bradshaw*, in the Character of *Audry*, seems to express every thing the Poet could possibly intend.

Celia, is a Part not badly calculated for so young an Actress as Miss *Rogers*: And lastly, it would be wasting words to say more, than that Mrs. *Barry* has now no equal in the Part of *Rosalind*, nor do we think she ever had a superior.

To which was added,

THE P A D L O C K :

A Comic Opera, in two Acts, by Mr. Bickerstaff.

THE Ground-work of this little Piece is taken from the Novel of *The Jealous Husband*, written in Spanish by the celebrated Author of *Don Quixote*. The Circumstance of the Padlock is here very naturally introduced; and, when we consider that it was professedly written for the purposes of Music,

sic, we think it intitled to a considerable degree of praise. The Music is composed by Mr. *Dibdin*, who has been very happy in numberless instances, but he stands accused of having taken most of the Songs from the Music of an *Italian Opera*, on the same Subject, or very similar to it. We know not how true this charge is, and as we never remember to have heard it fully proved, we are inclined to believe it arose solely from the suggestions of envy, on account of the great reputation he acquired by this Performance; however, should it be otherwise, we will venture to pronounce, that there is great Merit even in the application.

This Piece from the first, to the present time, has always been excellently performed, and justly merits the applause with which it has been received. Mr. *Dibdin's* excellence in the Character of *Mungo*, the black Servant, is too generally known and acknowledged, to require any explanation here. Mr. *Bannister* deserves great praise in the Character of *Don Diego*; and Mr. *Vernon* supports the Part of *Leander* with infinite spirit and propriety, and undoubtedly stands unrivalled in it. *Ursula*, in the hands of Mrs. *Dorman*, deserves the tribute of laughter, for being well figured, and as well spoke. The Part of *Leonora* was, this evening, performed by a young Gentlewoman, being her first appearance. Her Voice is clear and musical, and her Figure well suited to the Character; and we doubt not, but when time has rendered her familiar to the Stage,

C 4

the

32 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

she will amply recompence the Public for the favourable reception, and general applause she experienced on this occasion.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *October 2.*

O R O O N O K O :

A Tragedy, by Southerne.

THIS well-known Tragedy, was brought on the Stage, in the year 1696, and is the most perfect, as well as the most pathetic of all *Southerne's* dramatic Pieces. The tragic Part is truly interesting and affecting, and sufficiently atones for the low trifling ribaldry of the comic Part. The Language of the former is truly poetical, and the Sentiments such as do honour to the dignity of human Nature. In the year 1759, the ingenious Dr. *Hawthorne*, brought out an Alteration of this Play, at *Drury-Lane Theatre*, in which the comic Part is entirely expunged, greatly to his honour, and the credit of the Stage ; and though the additional extent he has there given to the Characters of *Aboan* and *Hotman*, does not sufficiently fill up the hiatus which the omission of the Comic Part has occasioned, the attempt to clear this excellent Piece from the filthiness which empoisoned the Merit of the other Parts, was so truly laudable, that we must excuse that apparent deficiency in the Piece, which was almost unavoidable, from the considerable share the

Comedy

Comedy had in the length of it. The Scene is laid in one of the English Colonies in *America*, and the Plot professedly borrowed from a Moral of Mrs. *Beba's*, of the same name. We are sorry to find that the Managers of this Theatre, have not thought fit to adopt this Alteration, in preference to the Original. If by the continuing to perform the *Oroonoko* of *Southerne*, it is intended to avoid that deficiency we have been speaking of, we cannot help observing that Regularity is purchased at the expence of Decency and good Manners.

We wish the Representation of this Play here, would give us an opportunity to say any thing in favour of it.

We do not think Mr. *Savigny's* powers, so well suited to *Oroonoko*, as some other Characters he has played. His manner of speaking, is sometimes expressive and pleasing, but in other instances, deficient in that strength of power necessary to command a large Audience: nor do we think his Person happily adapted to this Character: However he is much superior in *Oroonoko*, to Miss *Miller* in *Imoinda*. The Managers must surely have a partial fondness for this young Actress, to sport with theatrical propriety, and their own credit, by giving this capital and exalted Character to her; in which we are afraid, she will lose that reputation she has acquired in others more aptly suited to her Abilities.

Mr. *Bensley* gives evident demonstration of an endeavour to please in the Part of *Aboan*, and therefore, we are unwilling to enter too

34 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

closely into an examination of his Merits in this Character. The under Characters in general are well supported, and it is but just to observe, that though their Stations are humble, they merit more esteem from their Performance in this Play, than is due to their Superiors.

To which was added,

M I D A S :

An English Burletta, by Mr. O'Hara.

THIS Mock-Opera, when it first appeared, was in three Acts, but in that Form many of the Scenes were tedious, on which account, it did not meet with the success it merited : It contains infinite humour ; tho' we cannot help thinking that, as the Performance turns chiefly on the Heathen Deities, in themselves truly ridiculous, they are not the proper objects of Burlesque, the design of which, is to turn great things to farce. As the Piece is now played, it is reduced to two Acts, and is greatly curtailed of those tedious Parts which, in a great measure, prevented it from receiving that applause in its original State, it has ever since experienced on every Representation. It is excellently performed, and, on the whole, is now rendered one of the most pleasing Entertainments we have on the Stage.

DRURY.

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, October 3.

The MERCHANT of VENICE:

A Tragi-Comedy, by Shakespear.

THE Fable of this excellent Play is taken from a Story in the *Pecorone* of Ser Giovanni Fiorentino, a Novelist, who wrote about the year 1378, which Story has been translated into *English*, and is epitomised by Dr. Johnson, and inserted at the end of the Play, in his edition of *Shakespear's* Works. But it has been imagined, that the choice of the Caskets is borrowed from a Tale of *Boccace*, though Dr. Johnson is of opinion, that *Shakespear* had some other Novel in view. This Tale also, he has abridged, and inserted with the other, to which we refer the curious Reader, not having room to give a place here to either of them. Other Writers assert, that the Story of this Play is founded on a real fact, which happened in some part of *Italy*, with this difference indeed, that the intended cruelty was really on the side of the Christian, the Jew being the unhappy Delinquent who fell beneath his rigid and barbarous resentment.—The Scene lies partly at *Venice*, and partly at *Belmont*, the Seat of *Portia*, on the Continent.—This Play was first printed in the year 1600, but how long that was after its first Representation, does not any where appear. It has generally been stiled a Tragi-Comedy, but we do not think it properly belongs to that denomination.

36 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

“Of the *Merchant of Venice* (says Dr. Johnson) the Style is even and easy, with few peculiarities of diction, or anomalies of construction. The comic Part raises laughter, and the serious fixes expectation. The Probability of either one or the other Story cannot be maintained. The union of two Actions in one Event is in this Drama eminently happy. Dryden was much pleased with his own Address in connecting the two Plots of the *Spanish Friar*, which yet, I believe, the Critic will find excelled by this Play :” And he might have added the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, of the same Author ; where the two Plots are sweetly connected, and have only so much variety as to resemble shades of colours most harmoniously mixed. Here, the under Plot is admirably connected with the principal one, so as to employ the same Persons ; the one always occupies the interval of the other, and both are happily concluded together.

But to return to the *Merchant of Venice*.

The Plot is well contrived, notwithstanding it is irregular ; but the Unities of Time and Place are materially broken. The Characters are well chosen, and, in general, supported in a masterly Manner. The Incidents are not only numerous, but pleasing and affecting, and many of the Sentiments are truly sublime. In short, tho’ this Piece hath many defects, its beauties are infinitely more numerous. — With what art, and perfect knowledge of human Nature in her most degenerated State, has the Poet drawn the Character of *Shylock* ! How nobly has he
availed

availed himself of the general Character of the *Jews*, the very Quintessence of which he has displayed in a delightful manner, in order to enrich this Character: And, though he has evidently deviated from a Matter of fact, (according to Tradition) in representing the Jew the Hero of Villainy and Barbarity, instead of the Christian, popular Prejudice will sufficiently vindicate him; not that we think he was absolutely bound to adhere to the matter of fact, if it really was so. After all, the Picture here drawn, is so disgraceful to human Nature, that we doubt whether it ever had an Original.

The Beauties of this Piece are innumerable, as has been observed before; and it would require time to point them out minutely. The decision of *Portia's* fate by the choice of the *Caskets*, is very happily contrived, as it not only affords a pleasing suspense, but gives opportunity for many excellent reflections on a train of sophistical deductions. *Shylock's* sudden transitions from one passion to another, in the third Act, is finely imagined, and inimitably supported. His Daughter's infidelity, and the loss of the valuables she had taken with her, agitate his mind to distraction and despair; while the news of *Antonio's* losses awaken joy, malevolence, and revenge. But as all description must greatly fall short of the beauty of the real Scene, we should think ourselves blameable in not quoting it.

Shylock. How now, Tubal, what news from Genoa? Hast thou found my Daughter?

Tubal.

38 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Tubal. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Shylock. Why there, there, there, there ! A diamond gone cost me two thousand ducats in Francfort ! The curse never fell upon our Nation till now, I never felt it till now ; two thousand ducats in that, and other precious, precious jewels ! I would my Daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear ! O, would she were hers'd at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin ! No news of them ; why, so ! and I know not what's spent in the search : why, thou loss upon loss ! the Thief gone with so much, and so much to find the Thief ; and no satisfaction, no revenge, nor no ill luck stirring, but what lights o' my shoulders ; no sighs but o' my breathing, no tears but o' my shedding.

Tubal. Yes, other men have ill luck too : Antonio, as I heard in Genoa——

Shylock. What, what, what ? ill luck, ill luck ?

Tubal. Hath an argosie cast away coming from Tripolis.

Shylock. I thank God, I thank God ; is it true, is it true ?

Tubal. I spoke with some of the Sailors that escaped the wreck.

Shylock. I thank thee, good Tubal ; good news, good news, ha, ha, Where, in Genoa ?

Tubal. Your Daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, one night, fourscore ducats.

Shylock. Thou stick'st a dagger in me ; I shall never see my gold again ; fourscore ducats at a sitting, fourscore ducats !

Tubal. There came divers of Antonio's Creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot chuse but break.

Shylock. I am glad of it. I'll plague him, I'll torture him. I am glad of it.

Tubal. One of them shewed me a Ring, that he had of your Daughter for a Monkey.

Shylock,

Shylock. Out upon her! thou torturest me, Tubal; it was my Turquoise; I had it of Leah when I was a Bachelor; I would not have given it for a Wilderness of Monkies.

Tubal. But Antonio is certainly undone.

Shylock. Nay, that's true, that's very true; go seek me an Officer, bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandize I will. Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our Synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our Synagogue, Tubal."

How admirably are the dissimilar Emotions, arising from unconnected Causes, here brought on in quick succession, and producing opposite effects. The Emotions being unequal in force, the stronger, after repeated conflicts, extinguish the weaker. *Jessica's* elopement, and infidelity, make no figure in opposition to his intended revenge on *Antonio*; for after a few slight vibrations, his mind settles in joy, and his loss is forgot. This Scene is a master-stroke, and so is the Trial Scene, in the fourth Act; the anxiety, both of the Characters themselves, and of the Audience, being kept up to the very last moment: And surely no Incident can give more general joy, or greater heart-felt satisfaction, to every generous mind, than that natural and happy turn of *Portia's*, by which *Antonio*, in the very crisis of his fate, is released from the power, and intended cruelty of the blood-thirsty Jew.—The celebrated Speech, in this Scene, wherein *Portia* recommends Mercy to *Shylock*, is probably one of the finest pieces of Oratory on the subject, that has ever

40 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

ever appeared in any Language; and while it is an ornament to the Stage, we think it would do honour to the Pulpit; and, as it has ever been the subject of general approbation amongst the critical Admirers of Beauty and Elegance, we shall venture to give it our Readers.——

“ The quality of Mercy is not strain’d;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heav’n
Upon the place beneath: It is twice blest’d;
It blesteth him that gives, and him that takes.
’Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The throned Monarch better than his Crown;
His Sceptre shews the force of temporal pow’r,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of Kings;
But Mercy is above this scepter’d sway,
It is enthroned in the hearts of Kings;
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly pow’r doth then shew likest God’s
When Mercy seasons Justice. Therefore, Jew,
Tho’ Justice be thy plea, consider this,
That in the course of Justice none of us
Should see salvation. We do pray for Mercy;
And that same pray’r doth teach us all to render
The deeds of Mercy.”——

We come now to the Representation of this Play. The length of this Piece, it must be acknowledged, is very considerable, and therefore, the omission of every thing not necessary to the progressive Regularity of the general design, will admit of some excuse; but, we think this Play is greatly injured by the omission of several Scenes, on which the general design depends. We mean the first, eighth, and tenth Scenes in the second Act.

We

We are of opinion, that the eighth Scene was omitted by the mistake of the Prompter, or the Scene Shifters, and not under the direction of the Manager, as it occasioned an unpardonable impropriety. For want of the intervention of this scene, between the seventh and the ninth, the audience are informed of *Shylock's* Distraction on the elopement of his Daughter, and of his applying to the Duke to have *Bassanio's* ship searched (which we are told is under sail) almost in the instant of *Jessica's* departure, before there is even time for *Shylock* to receive intelligence of her flight.—This mistake is so gross, and so prejudicial to Theatrical Propriety, that we hope never to see it repeated again. The tenth Scene may be omitted, but we don't see why it should, as it is not very long; but if it is, some mention should be made of the fate of the Prince of *Arragon*, which may be done very naturally by *Portia*, in the second Scene of the third Act, without giving the least hint to *Bassanio*, by which his choice may be directed.

This Play is excellently performed here, with respect to the casting of the Parts.

We cannot so far give way to general opinion, as to think no Actor now living, capable of excelling in the Part of *Shylock*, but *Mr. Macklin*. He undoubtedly looks it much better than any one, and the sullen solemnity of his deportment is admirably suited to the Character. Upon the whole, though he has not been excelled, we think he is equalled by *Mr. King* in most of those instances

42 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

instances which render him so inimitable. We do not think a comparison would shew Mr. King to any disadvantage: He seems to have a very happy conception, not unequal to the executive Part. If he fails any where (or rather, if he does not equal *Macklin*) it is in the Level Scenes, where a sententious gloominess of expression is highly requisite. Mr. *Reddish's* conceptions of the Part of *Antonio*, are just and natural, and we never saw him play any Character to greater advantage, or which intitled him to more general applause. We cannot praise Mr. *Cauterly* in the Character of *Bassanio*; he is greatly deficient in that tender flow of expression, so necessary in the delivery of those pregnant Sentiments, and beautiful Passages that frequently occur in this Part.—Mr. *Dodd* plays *Gratiano* with infinite spirit and humour.—*Old Gobbo*, by Mr. *Parsons*, is the Character Shakespeare intended; and his Son *Lancelot*, is pleasantly hit off by Mr. *W. Palmer*.—*Jessica* is not disgraced by Miss *Rogers*; and the Part of *Nerissa*, though trifling, receives additional Importance in the hands of Miss *Ambrose*.—With respect to the Part of *Portia*, we need only say, that since the death of Mrs. *Woffington*, we have never seen this Character well-played, till now. Through the whole, Mrs. *Abington* is equal to Mrs. *Woffington*, and in some particular instances, her Superior.

To which was added,

The P A D L O C K.

See Page 30.

COVENT-

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, October 4.

The PROVOK'D HUSBAND:

A Comedy, by Vanburgh and Cibber.

THE Merits of this excellent Comedy are not more singular than the circumstances that attended its first Appearance. The late Mr. *Colley Cibber* (who was an ornament to the *British* Theatre, both as an Actor and an Author) brought this Play on the Stage in the year 1727. Long before that time he had been severely handled by some of his cotemporary Critics, who were unwilling to allow him any Merit as a Dramatic Writer. This treatment was, in some measure, the effects of Envy, but principally the consequence of party Prejudice, on account of his steady attachment to those revolution Principles, which, as he himself informs us, he first set out with in Life; as it is apparent, that many of his Plays, through a course of upwards of sixty years, have constantly formed part of the Entertainment of every Season, and many of them repeatedly played with that general Approbation they undoubtedly merit.

The Piece before us was originally begun by Sir *John Vanburgh*, who died before he had finished it. What he left, was little more than those Comic Scenes relative to the *Wronghead* Family. In this state *Cibber* found it, and added the serious Part, relating to Lord *Townly's* provocations from his Wife. This serious Part was conjectured

44 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

to be *Vanburgh's*, and under this notion, highly applauded the first night, by *Cibber's* Enemies; while the part really *Vanburgh's*, was censured and condemned, on a supposition of it's being written by *Cibber*. This partial injustice obliged *Cibber* to publish his Part, and that written by *Vanburgh*, separately; when his Enemies were shamefully convinced, that the influence of their Prejudice had led them, through mistake, to applaud what they would willingly have censured: however, this gave *Cibber* a just and happy opportunity of obtaining a compleat triumph over the malice of his Enemies.

With respect to the Piece, it is so generally known from the frequent repetition of it, that it is almost unnecessary to say any thing more concerning it. The double Plot is managed with great judgment, especially as they are in themselves distinct, having no necessary dependence or connection one with the other. The Conduct is sufficiently regular, though the Unities of Time and Place are not strictly observed. The Serious and Comic Parts are happily blended; the discrimination of Character is masterly, and the Language is natural to the Characters; the Sentiments are just, and instructive; the Catastrophe is admirably brought about, and the Moral noble and important.

The learned Author of the *Elements of Criticism* is the only Writer we know of that has ventured to attack the Merit of this Piece, since the first unjust opposition mentioned above. He observes, and with great truth, that "all the Scenes that bring the
Family

Family of the *Wrongheads* into action, being ludicrous and farcical, agree very ill with the principal Scenes, displaying severe and bitter expostulations between Lord *Townly* and his Lady." Every attentive Observer must undoubtedly subscribe to this opinion; and though Variety is more allowable in Comedy than in Tragedy, yet, where a double Plot is introduced, the one ought not to vary greatly from the other, lest the Importance of both be destroyed by the connection.

Upon the whole, though some objections may be urged against the *Provok'd Husband's* pretensions to absolute Perfection, the pleasure it has always given in the Representation, and the admirable Lesson it affords, render it deserving of a very high rank in the list of Theatrical Entertainments.

Some of the Characters in this Play are well performed here, particularly the secondary ones, who having more merit than those imprudently placed above them, deserve higher commendation; while the others merit no praise above silent sufferance. The task of Criticism is never so painful, as when there is a juster occasion, for Censure than Praise.

To which was added,

CATHARINE AND PETRUCHIO.

THIS Piece is a very judicious alteration of *Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew*, brought out in the year 1756, and has been attributed to Mr. *Garrick*, which we do not think improbable, from the great judgment
so

46 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

so evidently displayed in the execution of this Undertaking, by which a Piece lost to the Stage, is rendered one of the most pleasing Farces now exhibited.

We cannot say any thing in favour of Mr. *Kniveton*, in the Part of *Petruchio*, but the other Characters are well played.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *October 5,*

The G A M E S T E R :

A Tragedy, by Mr. Moore.

THE shameful and pernicious vice of Gaming was never more violently attacked, or the destruction it frequently occasions to the welfare and domestic happiness of many a worthy Family, more strongly pointed out, than in this excellent Tragedy; and, we know of no Play, now in the possession of the Stage, more deserving of public attention. It received every advantage it possibly could, when it was first brought out in the year 1753, from the joint efforts of Mr. *Garrick*, Mr. *Mossop*, Mrs. *Pritchard*, and several other excellent Performers; who, greatly to their honour, exerted their utmost abilities to support so laudable an Undertaking; but, to the disgrace of the Times, neither the Merit of the Piece, nor the Excellence of the Dramatic Execution, could obtain success. It struck too deeply at the root of a darling Passion; the Audience felt its influence, but wanting the resolution (and we may say the virtue)

to relinquish a fashionable and favourite Folly, they withheld that applause which the conviction of their own hearts dictated, and suffered one of the best Plays the *British* Theatre ever produced, to droop and languish.—The revival of this Tragedy last Season was highly commendable, and, from the favourable reception of it this Evening, we hope to see it frequently repeated.

This Tragedy is written in Prose, but the Language is nervous, and very pathetic. The contrivance of the Plot discovers the Author's great skill in the knowledge of Dramatic Action, and the Conduct of it is free from perplexity. The Characters are well drawn, and finely supported throughout; the Incidents are very interesting, and the Catastrophe, though truly tragical, very happily produced.—*Beverley's* folly and guilt, though carried to great extremities, is sometimes beheld with an eye of favour, when we find the returns of reason and reflection discover the goodness of his heart; and we pity him as a Man disposed to be virtuous, but overpowered by a blind infatuation for a detestable Passion, which misleads his understanding, and renders him the Dupe of an artful, thorough-paced Villain.—Mrs. *Beverley* is a Character so highly drawn, and so truly exalted, that her distresses move our pity and compassion, and give birth to a tender sensibility and sorrow, almost insupportable. The Characters of *Lawson*, *Charlotte*, and *Old Jarvis*, are truly amiable; and though *Bates* and *Dawson* have been necessary to the ruin of *Beverley*

48 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Beverley and his Family, their repentance, and the part they take in discovering *Stukely's* villainy, is very laudable; and while we cannot absolutely acquit them, they are dismissed with very favourable prepossessions. The supposition of *Stukely's* being brought to punishment, is strictly just, and gives the highest satisfaction to every virtuous mind. His villainy is so atrocious, as to leave him unpitied; which was very meritorious in the Author, for it requires great judgment to draw a wicked Character, (if that wickedness is conjoined with abilities) so as to prevent its stealing upon esteem; but, we will venture to declare, that from the first Scene to the last, he is hated and despised.

We have in this Piece a strong proof, that the Distresses of private Life are at least as well calculated for the Scene, as the fate of Kings and Empires; and that the former seems to have the advantage, as they come more home to the bosoms of the Spectators, who, hereby,

“ Learn to pity woes so like their own.”

Many of the Sentiments are truly beautiful, particularly those in the mouth of Mrs. *Beverley*; but, as they are too numerous for quotation, we must refer our Readers to the Play; though there is one short Speech in the first Act, in *Bates's* Part, so well worthy notice, that we cannot refuse it a place here, and we seriously wish it was posted up in every Gaming-house throughout this great Metropolis. In a conversation between

Stukely

Stukely and *Bates*, the former, speaking of his Minions, observes, that *Darwson* "has a head to undo a Nation. But for the rest, (continues he) they are such low-manner'd, ill-looking Dogs, I wonder *Beverley* has not suspected 'em." To which *Bates* replies, "No matter for manners and looks. Do you supply them with money, and they are Gentlemen by their profession.—The passion of Gaming casts such a mist before the eyes, that the Nobleman shall be surrounded with Sharpers, and imagine himself in the best Company."

With respect to the Representation, much might be said in favour of it, had the Performers been perfect in their Parts; because the abilities of most of them are well suited to the Characters they are to represent. The alteration of *Mrs. Barry* and *Mrs. Morland*, instead of *Mrs. Baddeley* and *Mrs. Reddish*, in the Parts of *Mrs. Beverley* and *Charlotte*, is much for the better. *Beverley* is a Character within *Mr. Reddish's* power and abilities, but we are sorry to observe, that he did great injury to the last Scene, in particular, from not being perfect. The appearance of reality was greatly destroyed, by a visible hesitation and confusion, arising from want of words, in this interesting, though distressful Scene; and to speak plainly, so many instances of imperfection occurred in the course of the Play, as lead us to conjecture, that they arose in some measure for want of a proper rehearsal. *Stukely* is well represented by *Mr. Palmer*, and *Mr. Cautberley* fills the Part of *Lewson*

50 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

with justice and sensibility ; nor is *Old Jarvis*, as supported by Mr. *Aickin*, unworthy notice.

To which was added,

HARLEQUIN'S INVASION.

See Page 24.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *October 7.*

The EARL OF ESSEX:

A Tragedy.

THE Story of this Play is founded on History, on that even of our own Country, and of a period well known to every *Englishman*. We have three Plays under this Title, and all of them on the same subject. The first by Mr. *Banks*, well known as a Dramatic Writer ; the second by Mr. *Jones*, of which we mean to speak ; and the third by Mr. *Brooke*. The appearance of Mr. *Jones's* Play is so recent, and its Representation so frequently repeated, that it is only necessary for us to observe, that, tho' the Language is chaster, and the versification more harmonious and expressive, than *Banks's* Play, the Conduct is neither so well managed, nor the Incidents so affecting : So that what this has gained in one respect, *Banks's* still maintains in the other ; and we think the advantage is yet in favour of the latter. Mr. *Brooke*, whose Play appeared since *Jones's*, has great Merit in one instance, that of having varied his Conduct from the other two, by which means he is intitled

intituled to the praise. of Novelty, if there is any merit in that; not but we think he is superior to his Predecessors, with respect to spirit and energy of Language; but it must be confessed, that both *Jones* and *Brooke* are greatly obliged to *Banks*, for the hint of their Plots and Conduct, and indeed for many of their Thoughts, which are evidently copied from him. After all, the best of the three is far from being a first-rate Performance.

We wish every Character in this Play was played with half the degree of Merit with which Mr. *Ross* supports the Part of *Essex*; for though he is in many respects inferior to Mr. *Barry* in this Character, he is intitled to no inconsiderable Praise. We could have wished to have seen Mr. *Smith* in the Part of *Southampton*, instead of Mr. *Wroughton*, as that Gentleman, probably, never appeared to greater advantage in any Character, than when he played it. There is a sensibility about Mr. *Hull*, joined with such a portion of Modesty, that generally prejudices us in his favour, let the Character be what it will that he plays, and therefore we cannot be displeased with him in *Burleigh*; we wish we could say the same of his good Lady in the Part of the *Queen*, or of Miss *Miller* in the Character of *Rutland*. If Mrs. *Vincent*'s theatrical Abilities were equal to the many Virtues which adorn her private Character, and render her universally esteemed, we should think the Managers justifiable in continuing her in the Part of *Nottingham*; which, by the bye, she

52 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

never played well from the first. Her past Services intitle her to their Favour; and we think, there are many Characters in which she might render herself useful to the Theatre, more within the extent of her Powers, than that of *Nottingham*.

To which was added,

M I D A S :

See Page 34.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, OA. 8.

LOVE IN A VILLAGE :

A Comic Opera, by Mr. Bickerstaff.

THOUGH Mr. *Bickerstaff* has never brought an original Piece, of his own, on the Stage (except the Opera of *Love in the City*, which was soon banished with just contempt), he has discovered a very happy Talent, in altering the Works of other Dramatic Authors, and fitting them for the Stage in more advantageous lights, than when they first appeared: So that, this Gentleman, may be compared to a Taylor, who, though not able to make a complete new Suit of Cloaths himself, has an admirable hand at altering and amending an old one. The Piece before us, is an instance of this Sort, for it can only be considered as an Alteration of *The Village Opera*, by Mr. *Charles Johnson*, written in Imitation of the *Beggar's Opera*, and brought on the Stage the year after that celebrated Piece made its appearance.

As

As a Dramatic Piece, it hardly comes within the line of Criticism, for operatical Compositions in general, are much beneath the dignity of its Province, being a species of Drama founded on absurdity, and therefore, inconsistent and unnatural; and it is with some concern we have beheld them of late years, engage so great a share of public Attention.

With respect to the Plot of this Opera, it is simple and uniform; the Scenes are ranged in an agreeable succession, and the Incidents tolerably well connected; but, neither the Sentiments, nor Versification of the Songs deserve much commendation. The Characters are well contrasted, and the Humour, though low, is not tainted with Licentiousness. Upon the whole, we think the Author has made a very good and agreeable use of the Materials he has borrowed from *The Village Opera*, and if it is considered, as a Piece professedly designed for Music, it is not devoid of Merit.

When this Piece first appeared at *Covent-Garden Theatre*, its Fate was very doubtful for several nights, but at last, it grew into favour, was continued with success, and has ever since been repeated with approbation and applause. The Music to the Songs, is adapted with some degree of propriety and judgement, and in general, is very pleasing. It was excellently performed when it was first brought out; probably much better than it ever will be again; and though it is very seldom that a Piece of this nature is transplanted from the Theatre where it was

54 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

originally performed, to another, with any great degree of success; we think the Representation of *Love in a Village* at this Theatre, is an Exception to the above opinion, as it deserves no inconsiderable share of praise. True it is, some of the Characters are not played so well as they were originally, but there are others performed much better, so that, take the whole together, we think the two Theatres are upon an equal footing with respect to the Performing of this Opera.

Mr. *Beard* was excellent in *Hawthorn*, but we think him equalled by Mr. *Vernon*, and in some instances excelled; for it must be granted, that *Vernon's* Abilities as an Actor, are greatly superior to what Mr. *Beard* ever possessed. *Justice Woodcock*, by Mr. *Hartry*, is not devoid of Merit, though an humble imitation of Mr. *Shuter*. *Sir William Meadows*, by Mr. *Parson*, is equal to the original Mr. *Collins*. *Young Meadows*, by Mr. *Dodd*, is infinitely superior to Mr. *Mattocks*, in this Character, or his servile Copyist Mr. *Dubellamy*, as he is in every view, a much better Actor than either of those Gentlemen. *Eustace*, by Mr. *Fawcett*, is tolerable; but it must be acknowledged, that it is very difficult for any Performer to render this Character worthy notice, it being in itself very trifling and insignificant. *Hodge*, was originally well represented by Mr. *Dunfall*, but Mr. *King's* Performance in this Part, is, without doubt, greatly superior. The Part of *Madge*, does not sit easy with Miss *Pope*, and we probably shall never see

for October, 1771.

55

it performed with so much natural simplicity as it was originally by Miss *Davies*. Mrs. *Love* is insufferable in the Part of Mrs. *Deborah Woodcock* ; surely it might be much better represented by Mrs. *Bradshaw*, if propriety is worthy managerial attention. Mrs. *Scott* supported the Part of *Lucinda* with great Merit, though the first time of her appearing in that Character ; and the young Lady who performed the Part of *Rosetta*, (of whom we have made mention before, in the Part of *Leonora* in the *Padlock*) very justly merited the applause she received.

To which was added,

The MAYOR of GARRATT.

See Page 20.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Oct. 9.

The WEST INDIAN.

By Command of their Majesties.

See Page 8.

To which was added,

HARLEQUIN'S INVASION.

See Page 24.

56 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Oct. 9.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE :

A Comedy, by Shakespear.

THIS Play in the Original is greatly darkened by the Peculiarities of its Author, and the unskilfulness of its Editors, by the distortions of Phrase, or negligence of Transcription. The Scene lies at *Vienna*, and the Story is taken from *Cynthio's Novels*, Decad. 8. Novel 5. But *Shakespear* has shewn great judgement in giving Turns to this Story from what he found it in the Original; for there *Claudio* is actually executed, and the Governor sends his head in a bravado to his Sister, after he had debauched her on promise of Marriage; a circumstance of too much Horror and Villany for the Stage; And in the next Place, the Sister is afterwards married to the Governor, to conceal her disgrace, and begs his life of the Emperor, though he had unjustly been the Instrument of her Brother's death; both which absurdities *Shakespear* has avoided by the Episode of *Mariana*, a creature purely of his own Invention. The *Duke's* remaining incognito at home to supervise the conduct of his Deputy, is also entirely the Poet's Fiction. The Novel of *Cynthio Giraldi*, from whence the Fable of this Play is supposed to be taken, may be found in *Shakespear Illustrated*, with Remarks, which will assist the Enquirer to discover how much absurdity the Poet has admitted and avoided.

Dr.

Dr. *Johnson* suspects, that some other had new-modelled the Novel of *Cynthio*, or written a Story which in some particulars resembled it, and that *Cynthio* was not the Author whom *Shakespear* immediately followed. The *Emperor* in *Cynthio* is named *Maximine*; the *Duke*, in *Shakespear*'s enumeration of the Persons of the Drama, is called *Vincentio*. This appears a very slight remark; but since the *Duke* has no Name in the Play, nor is ever mentioned by his Title, why should he be called *Vincentio* among the Persons, but because the Name was copied from the Story, and placed superfluously at the head of the List by the mere habit of transcription? It is therefore likely that there was then a Story of *Vincentio*, Duke of *Vienna*, different from that of *Maximine*, Emperor of the *Romans*.—"Of this Play (says he) the light or comic Part is very natural and pleasing, but the grave Scenes, if a few Passages be excepted, have more Labour than Elegance. The Plot is rather intricate than artful. The Time of the Action is indefinite; sometimes we know not how much must have elapsed between the recess of the *Duke*, and the imprisonment of *Claudio*; for he must have learned the Story of *Mariana* in his Disguise, or he delegated his power to a Man known already to be corrupted. The unities of Action and Place are sufficiently preserved."

Notwithstanding what is said above, this is an excellent Play; and the Language and Sentiment, is equal to any thing to be met with in the Works of *Shakespear*. The

58 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

pleadings of *Isabella* with *Angelo*, for her Brother's Pardon, and *Claudio's* Arguments to persuade her to yield herself to *Angelo* for his preservation, and her Reply, are such Master-pieces of Eloquence and power of Language, as are very rarely to be met with; nor are these all the Beauties of this Play, for the *Duke's* Soliloquy on life, is truly inimitable.

Claudio tells the *Duke*, " I've hope to live, and am prepared to die;" to which the *Duke* replies,

" Be absolute for death : or death, or life,
Shall thereby be the sweeter Reason thus with life,
If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing
That none but fools would keep; a breath thou art,
Servile to all the skiey influences
That do this habitation, where thou keep'st,
Hourly afflict; meerly thou art death's fool;
For him thou labour'st by thy flight to shun,
And yet runn'st tow'rd him still. Thou art not noble;
For all th' accommodations that thou bear'st,
Are curs'd by baseness; thou'rt by no means valiant;
For thou dost fear the soft and tender fork
Of a poor worm. Thy best of rest is sleep,
And that thou oft provok'st; yet grossly fear'st
Thy death, which is no more. Thou'rt not thyself;
For thou exist'st on many a thousand grains,
That issue out of dust. Happy thou art not;
For what thou hast not, still thou striv'st to get,
And what thou hast forget'st. Thou art not certain;
For thy complexion shifts to strange effects,
After the moon. If thou art rich, thou'rt poor;
For, like an ass, whose back with ingots bows,
Thou bear'st thy heavy riches but a journey,
And death unloadeth thee. Friend, thou hast none;
For thy own bowels, which do call thee Sire,
The mere effusion of thy proper loins,

Do curse the *gout*, *serpigo*, and the *rheum*,
For ending thee no sooner. Thou hast nor youth,
nor age;

But as it were an after-dinner's sleep,
Dreaming on both; for all thy blessed youth
Becomes as aged, and doth beg the alms
Of palsied Eld; and when thou'rt old and rich,
Thou hast neither heat, affection, limb, nor beauty,
To make thy riches pleasant. What's yet in this,
That bears the name of life? yet in this life
Lye hid more thousand deaths; yet death we fear,
That makes these odds all even."

ACT III. Scene 1.

With respect to the Representation, many of the Scenes were omitted, being rather loose and trifling, and not at all necessary to the progressive regularity of the Piece; so that it is rather amended by the Omissions than injured.—The Characters of the *Duke*, *Angelo*, and *Escalus*, are very well supported by Messrs. *Bensley*, *Clarke*, and *Hull*; but we hope never to see Mr. *Wroughton* in the Part of *Claudio* again: In the distressed Scene between him and his Sister, his Sorrows rather excite laughter, than move compassion. Mrs. *Kniveton* is very so so, in the Part of *Mariana*, but the Character of *Isabella* is finely supported by Mrs. *Yates*. The Parts of the *Provost*, *Lucio*, *Barnadine*, the *Clown*, &c. are as well played as can be expected; but we cannot avoid remarking one impropriety, which wants alteration: When the *Duke* makes his Entry in the fifth Act, the Guards attending are drest in *English* Regimentals. This is an oversight, not unworthy notice in future.

60 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

To which was added,
The COMMISSARY.

See Page 7.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *Oct. 10.*

R O M E O A N D J U L I E T :

*A Tragedy, altered from Shakespear,
by Mr. Garrick.*

THE Story on which this well-known Tragedy is founded, is taken from one of *Bandello's* Novels, a translation of which may be seen in *Painter's Palace of Pleasure*. The Circumstances are related to have really happened, about the beginning of the fourteenth Century, and are mentioned by *Girolame Corte*, in his History of *Verona*. The Scene, in the beginning of the fifth Act, is in *Mantua*, during the rest of the Play in and near *Verona*.

Of the Play, in the Original, *Dr. Johnson* gives us the following Character, which we shall present to our Readers, before we speak of the Alteration. "This Play (says he) is one of the most pleasing of our Author's Performances. The Scenes are busy and various, the Incidents numerous and important, the Catastrophe irresistibly affecting, and the process of the Action carried on with such probability, at least with such congruity to popular opinions, as Tragedy requires.

"Here is one of the few attempts of *Shakespear* to exhibit the conversation of
Gen-

Gentlemen, to represent the airy sprightliness of juvenile elegance. Mr. Dryden mentions a Tradition which might easily reach his time, of a declaration made by *Shakespeare*, that *he was obliged to kill Mercutio in the third Act, lest he should have been killed by him.* Yet he thinks him *no such formidable Person, but that he might have lived through the Play, and died in his bed, without danger to a Poet.* Dryden well knew, had he been in quest of truth, that in a pointed Sentence, more regard is commonly had to the Words than the thought, and that it is very seldom to be rigorously understood. *Mercutio's Wit, Gaiety, and Courage, will always procure him Friends that wish him a longer Life; but his Death is not precipitated, he has lived out the Time allotted him in the construction of the Play; nor do I doubt the ability of Shakespeare to have continued his existence, though some of his sallies are perhaps out of the reach of Dryden, whose Genius was not very fertile of Merriment, nor ductile to Humour, but acute, argumentative, comprehensive, and sublime.*

“The Nurse is one of the Characters in which the Author delighted: He has, with great subtilty of distinction, drawn her at once loquacious and secret, obsequious and insolent, truly and dishonest.

“His Comic Scenes are happily wrought, but his pathetic strains are always polluted with some unexpected depravations. His Persons, however distressed, *have a conceit left them in their misery; a miserable conceit.*”

62 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

We think this learned Editor has been rather sparing in his Remarks on this Play; for though it is far from being the Master-piece of this great Author, it has singular Merit, with respect to the Plot, Characters, Incidents, Language, and moral Sentiments. The Catastrophe is affecting, and sufficiently Dramatic. The Characters of the unfortunate Lovers are very highly painted; and that of *Mercutio* is so boldly touched, and so truly original, as to do great honour to the inimitable Author of its Creation.

We shall now proceed to speak of the Alteration. — We have heard of five, if not of six Attempts to render this Piece more regular, and better adapted to the Stage; some of which we have seen, but as all of them fall short of Mr *Garrick's* Alterations, and as that is the only one in possession of the Stage, we shall confine ourselves to it—Mr. *Garrick* found what must be obvious to a Person so well skilled in the properties of effect as he undoubtedly is, that *Shakespear* had neglected to heighten the Catastrophe to so great a degree of distress, as it was capable of being carried. This was an Object worthy attention, in the Management of which, it is but just to observe, he has succeeded wonderfully; as *Juliet's* awaking before *Romeo's* death, and the transports of the latter on seeing her revive, overcoming even the remembrance of the very late Act of desperation he had committed, give scope for that sudden transition from rapture to despair, which make the recollection that death is approaching, infinitely

nitely more affecting, and the distress of *Juliet*, as well as his own, much deeper than it stands in the Original Play, where she does not awake till after the Poison has taken its full effect in the death of *Romeo*— Besides this material Alteration, Mr. Garrick has rendered the whole more uniform and regular, without taking any great liberties; more than restoring *Shakspear* to himself, as it were, so thoroughly has he discovered himself acquainted with the genius of this inimitable Poet.

When the Play was revived with these Alterations, the funeral Procession of *Juliet* was first introduced, the Music to which was composed by Dr. Bayce. It is a Piece of Stage Pageantry we confess, but it adds very little, in our opinion, to the importance of the Tragedy,

With respect to the Representation, nothing can well be more contemptible, if we except Mrs. Barry's playing of *Juliet*. We think Mr. Cautherley very unequal to the Part of *Romeo*, having neither figure, features, voice, sensibility, nor expression, suitable to the Character. Mrs. Barry has great Merit in *Juliet*; but we do not think her equal to Mrs. Bellamy when she first played the Character, being too much of the Woman, and consequently less an object of Love; yet probably, take her execution all together, she is the best *Juliet* now on the Stage.

To which was added,

HARLEQUIN'S INVASION.

See Page 24.

64 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *October 11.*

B A R B A R O S S A :

A Tragedy, by Dr. Browne.

THIS Tragedy met with great encouragement when it was first brought on the Stage, which probably arose from the advantages it received in the Representation, more than the Merit of the Piece itself, for it is far from being a first-rate Performance; neither can it be considered as an original Piece, for the Design seems evidently borrowed from the Tragedy of *Merope*, as may be seen on a comparison.—The Unities of Time and Place are strictly preserved, the Plot is well managed, the Characters tolerably drawn, the Incidents striking, the Catastrophe just and natural, but the Language throughout discovers more of Labour than elegance of Fancy, so that many of the Scenes are languid and tedious; and upon the whole, though it is frequently repeated with success, we think it greatly inferior to the Tragedy of *Athelstan*, by the same Author, which seems to be unjustly neglected, for we do not recollect that it has ever been played since the Season in which it was first brought out.

With respect to the Representation we shall only observe, that though we have had little opportunity of speaking in favour of Mr. *Savigny's* Abilities, we think he appears to greater advantage in the Part of *Selim* than in any Character we have yet seen him play. Mr. *Bensley* greatly mistakes his own Powers

Powers, if he imagines he is equal to the task of performing the Part of *Barbarossa* with any tolerable success, for it requires very uncommon Powers to give due force to so complicated a Character; and if the Managers were not absolutely lost to every sense of their duty, and the knowledge of theatrical Propriety, they would not think of continuing him in this Character. Mr. *Clarke* supports the Part of *Otoman* with great justice, and greatly eclipses the Reputation of the two Gentlemen mentioned above, because he is equal to the Task he undertakes, and they are not. Mrs. *Yates* contributes greatly to the support of this Play, though much inferior to the original *Zaphira*; and Miss *Misler* daudles through the Part of *Irene* with her usual constitutional insipidity.

To which was added, -

The INTRIGUING CHAMBERMAID

A Ballad Farce, by Mr. Henry Fielding.

THIS Piece is little more than a translation of the *Diffipateur*. But it is pleasing, and is generally received with applause, to which the Merit of the Performers contributes not a little.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Oct. 12.

The CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

AS we have already taken notice of this Comedy, (see Page 5.) it will only be necessary here to make a few remarks, with

66 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

with respect to the Representation of it at this Theatre.

The loss of Messrs. *Powell*, *Holland*, *Palmer*, *Yates*, and of Mrs. *Clive*, Mrs. *Palmer*, and Miss *Plym*, has rendered this Play in a deplorable state of Action here, where it made its first appearance, and received great advantage from theatrical Execution.

The late Mr. *Powell* never appeared in a more pleasing light, in Comedy, than in the Part of *Lovewell*, in this Play; which Part, however, is decently supported by Mr. *Cautberley*.—The late Mr. *Holland* made rather an awkward Figure in the Part of Sir *John Melville*, and therefore we think his loss is very well supplied by Mr. *Aikin*, who supports the Character with some degree of Merit.—Mr. *Yates* played the Part of *Sterling* inimitably, but by his removal to the other Theatre, it now falls to the lot of Mr. *Love*, who murders it without mercy! *Brush*, by Mr. *Palmer*, is no despicable imitation of the late Mr. *Palmer*.—*Fanny Sterling* was excellently played by Mrs. *Palmer*, whose figure, deportment, and expression, was well suited to this Character; and, we greatly fear we shall never see it so well played again: Mrs. *Morland* is but an indifferent substitute. The loss of Mrs. *Clive*, in the Part of Mrs. *Heidelberg*, is greatly to be lamented, because it is irreparable; for we know of no Actresses now on the Stage capable of doing justice to the Character; Mrs. *Hopkins*, who has played it since Mrs. *Clive* quitted the Theatre, possesses

esses none of that luxuriant Drollery which rendered her so exquisitely happy in Characters of this cast. The Parts of *Betty*, and the *Chambermaid*, were excellently played originally; the former, by Mrs. *Abington*, who condescended to give her assistance during the run of the Piece, but has now very justly withdrawn herself; and the latter by Miss *Plym*, who has quitted the Stage.—As these Parts are now represented here, the latter, by Mrs. *Davies*, is barely sufferable, but the former is too contemptible to merit notice.—Thus much as to the Parts not now played by the original Performers.

Mr. *King* supports the peculiarities of the singular and difficult Character of Lord *Ogleby*, with amazing Abilities and Ingenuity; his conception of this Part, leaves him unequalled—We have seen Mr. *Dodd*, on some occasion, play this Character, and likewise Mr. *Kniveton*; both are very inferior to the great Original, but the former is the best of the two.—Mr. *Baddely* displays great Merit in *Canton*, the Swiss Servant; and is infinitely superior to his Contemporary at the other Theatre; upon the whole, we do not know of any part more highly supported than this is—The Part of Miss *Sterling* still remains with Miss *Pope*, who, greatly to her praise, considerably improves this insignificant Character, which seems to have been greatly slighted by the Authors, and left very imperfect.

To which was added,

The P A D L O C K.

See Page 30.

68 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, October 14.

The JEALOUS WIFE:

A Comedy, by Mr. Colman.

THIS pleasing Comedy made its first appearance at *Drury-Lane Theatre*, in the year 1761, and met with great success, which it undoubtedly merited; but, the advantages it then received in the Representation, from the eminent Abilities of several of the Performers, were such, as probably it will never experience again. Part of the Ground-work, or rather the under Plot, is taken from the celebrated Novel, intitled the History of a *Foundling*, written by the ever memorable Mr. *Henry Fielding*, at that Period of *Sophia Western's* taking refuge at *Lady Bellaston's*. But the Characters taken from that Novel, serve only to introduce the grand design, viz. the Family Contentions between Mr. and Mrs *Oakley*, in consequence of her unjust suspicions of her Husband's Infidelity. The use the Author has made of the borrowed Characters, is very judiciously managed, and those of Mr. Mrs and Major *Oakley*, Sir *Harry Beagle*, and Capt. *O'Cutter*, are very highly delineated. The two Plots are happily blended, and the whole is conducted with great judgment, and considerable knowledge of the power and effect of theatrical Representation.

After having granted thus much, we cannot avoid taking notice of a very sensible remark on this Play, by a Gentleman as

con-

conspicuous for his perspicuity as his candour.—“The Author (says he) would have better answered his purpose, with respect to the Passion he intended to expose the absurdity of, had he made her (*Mrs. Oakley*) appear somewhat less of the *Virago*, and *Mr. Oakley* not so much of the hen-pecked Husband, since she now appears rather a Lady, who, from a consciousness of her own Power, is desirous of supporting the appearance of Jealousy, to procure her an undue influence over her Husband and Family, than one, who feeling the reality of that turbulent, yet fluctuating Passion, becomes equally absurd in the suddenness of forming unjust suspicions, and in that hastiness of being satisfied, which Love, the only true basis of Jealousy, will constantly occasion.”

The above Observation is strictly just with respect to the Play, yet, we beg leave to differ in opinion from this Gentleman, in one particular; viz. That Love is the only true basis of Jealousy. True it is, Love is the usual cause of Jealousy, but not the *only* one, as might easily be proved, had we time; but, as the discussion of this Point is rather foreign to our present business, we shall only beg leave to observe, that Jealousy is frequently founded on other Causes, as may be known from observation, and as has been sufficiently explained by some of the ablest Writers, who have taken the passion of Jealousy into consideration.

With respect to the Representation of this Comedy, we are again obliged to lament the loss of several excellent Performers,

70 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

mers, who are no more, and of others who have withdrawn themselves from the Stage. Mr. Yates, by his removal from *Drury-Lane Theatre*, still preserves the Part of Major Oakley, which he originally supported (and still continues to do) with considerable Merit. We wish to see the Characters of *Charles*, and *Harriot*, in other hands than Mr. Bensley, and Mrs. Kniveton, as the Representation here would then be intitled to no inconsiderable praise; for we think Mr. Smith, in the Part of Mr. Oakley, superior to the late Mr. Holland, who played it several Seasons; and Mrs. Yates, though inferior to the late Mrs. Pritchard, the best Mrs. Oakley we have seen since that Lady's death.

To which was added,

M I D A S.

See Page 34.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, October 15.

The O R P H A N :

A Tragedy, by Otway.

Cibber, in his *Lives of the Poets*, observes, that the celebrated Author of this well-known Tragedy, was not more remarkable for moving the tender passions, than for the variety of fortune, to which he himself was subjected. We apprehend this Remark alludes to the necessitous Circumstances of *Otway*, and probably, to his miserable end, which is differently related. One Account informs

informs us, that after experiencing many reverses of fortune, in regard to his circumstances, but generally changing for the worse, he at last, died wretchedly in a Public-House on *Tower-Hill*, whither it is supposed he retired to avoid the pressure of his Creditors. Another relates, that downright hunger compelling him to fall too eagerly upon a piece of Bread, of which, through extreme Poverty, he had been some time in want, the first Mouth-full choaked him, and instantly put a Period to his Days. He was a Buck of the first head, of the Age in which he lived, of libertine Principles and a very bad Economist; and therefore his Distresses, and fatal End, may afford a very useful Lesson to the present Generation of Bucks and Bloods, more generally known by the appellation of *Men of the Town*; who, from misconceived Ideas of manhood and gentility, and an insatiable Thirst after pleasure and dissipation, frequently prove the destruction of their own health, wealth and fame, and sometimes involve innocent and virtuous Families in the general Ruin. But, to the Play.

The Plot is founded on the History of *Brandon*, in a Novel, entitled, *English Adventures*. The Fable is familiar and domestic, and the Poet has expressed himself with amazing energy, both in the Language and Sentiments, at the same time that the Incidents are strongly affecting, and the Catastrophe truly distressful: his Talent of writing to the Heart, and skill in touching the Passions, particularly the tender Passion, has

72 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

has perhaps, never been excelled by any of our *English* tragic Writers, or equalled but by few; yet, neither the Plot, or Conduct of the Play, is wholly secure against objections, for the circumstance on which all the distresses are founded, is improbable in a considerable degree, but, it must be granted, that this, and some other defects, are greatly counterbalanced, by some of the noblest strokes of Genius that ever graced dramatic Composition.

The general Plan of the Piece is too universally known, to render it necessary for us to enumerate the particular Circumstances of it, for the purpose of referring to its merits and defects. We shall therefore, proceed to point them out, as they occasionally occur in the progress of the Drama: *but first as to the Defects.

The Love and Attachment of the two Brothers to their Father's Ward, the beautiful *Monimia*, is very happily related to the Audience; but, as *Castalio's* intentions were to make her his, in the sacred ties of Wedlock, (which for particular reasons he chose to conceal from his Brother) he seems rather faulty in being himself the Instrument of introducing him to a private conference with her, when he knew that *Polydore* intended to solicit her Love. This consent was unnatural in *Castalio*; it therefore would have been best, had *Polydore* sought an occasion of addressing *Monimia* of himself, unknown to his Brother, as it would have left her less embarrassed in giving *Polydore* an answer, and prevented that
just

just resentment she expresses to *Castalis*, in consequence of this circumstance. Again—There is certainly a great impropriety in *Monimia's* supposing *Polydore's* intentions dishonourable, before he had declared himself; and the Poet has greatly degraded the Character of *Polydore*, by the introduction of some very illiberal, and ungentlemanlike invectives against the Fair Sex in general; such, as surely do not ought to come from the mouth of a Man of *Polydore's* rank; but, this conduct is still further aggravated, by his indelicate allusion to the Brute Creation, in the Speech which concludes the Act.

In the conference between *Chamont* and his Sister, we think the Poet has hurt the Character of the young Soldier, by filling his mind with fearful apprehensions for *Monimia's* safety, on the credit of a Dream, and the canting admonition of a wandering Beggar: The Dream, it must be confessed, is fancifully conceived, and admirably related; and the picture of the wither'd Hag is inimitably described, but both are purchased at the expence of *Chamont's* understanding as a Man, and character as a Soldier, whose mind should be free from such childish fears and apprehensions.

In the third Act, the Author has committed an unpardonable blunder.—After *Acasto* recovers from his indisposition, he acquaints his two Sons, that in case of a decease, he had divided his Fortune equally between them, except a reserve of a thousand Crowns for the Orphan *Monimia*; yet, almost in the same breath, he gives a third

74 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

of it to *Chamont*, as a marriage Portion with his Daughter *Serina*.

Chamont's rude behaviour to the *Chaplain*, is another blemish in his Character; which, however, is in some measure compensated for, by the modest conduct of the *Chaplain*, who is drawn a very amiable Pattern of Meekness and Humility; only we think he rather wants Prudence, if not Fidelity, in trusting the secret of his young Lord's Marriage, with one, whose violence of temper renders him unworthy of such confidence.

We think it is rather a degradation of Character, in *Polydore*, to listen to the conversation between *Castalio* and *Monimia*, prior to their intended consummation of the Marriage Rites. This Office would more naturally have been executed by the Page, as on a former occasion. And when *Polydore* attempts to get admittance to *Monimia's* Chamber, by making use of the signal given to *Castalio*, the Poet seems to have forgot himself, by making *Florella* inform him from the window, (supposing him to be *Castalio*) that *Monimia* wondered at his unkind delay, when the Audience can hardly imagine she could have been in her Chamber long enough to be properly prepared to receive her Lord.—*Polydore's* address to his Limbs, before he goes to *Monimia's* Apartment, is very unbecoming his Dignity; and part of *Cordelio's* Discourse to *Castalio* in the immediate Scene, is too indelicate, especially as it was intended for the mouth of a Child, for by such the Page is usually represented,

The

The repulse *Castalio* meets with from the Maid, when he goes for admittance to the Object of all his Joy, is a provoking disappointment, and such as few young Gentlemen, in his situation of Mind, would bear with composure ; yet, we think, his exclamations against the Perfidy of the Fair Sex, are too vociferous and violent, and unless the Audience can be brought to suppose, the good old *Acasto* and the rest of the Family dead, what *Castalio* wished to conceal, must have been discovered by his own imprudence and folly.

It is frequently said of the immortal *Homer*, that he sometimes nodded, but we think *Otway* took a very sound nap, while he was digesting the beginning of the fourth Act, which is opened by *Acasto*, who, mentioning his restoration to health, attributes it to the happy rest he enjoyed the preceding night, and yet, the very next moment, complains of frightful Dreams, and of his imagination's having been Hag-ridden the whole time ; and, on the approach of *Monimia*, enquires if she did not hear a particular noise in the night. We are afraid the Poet was not a little Hag-ridden when he wrote this palpable contradiction.

Monimia's Complaint to *Florella*, of the supposed *Castalio's* cool manner of taking leave of her in the Morning, conveys no very modest Idea, and such as should not have received utterance from one of her imagined delicacy. And her Conduct immediately after this, is a little inconsistent, for when she perceives the approach of *Castalio*, she

76 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

she retires to her chamber—for what? Decency denies an answer!—But this is not all, Impropriety does not stop here; for when *Castalio* enters, notwithstanding the distraction of his Mind, he entertains the Audience with a very pretty, poetical, descriptive Soliloquy, at the conclusion of which, *Monimia* returns, finding *Castalio* did not chuse to follow, and flying to him with great eagerness, throws herself into his arms, which if at all consistent with female Delicacy, should have been done at first; but then the Wags will say, “We should have lost the Soliloquy.”

Castalio’s cold reception of his beloved Bride, is in some degree unnatural, notwithstanding we are privy to his provocation; but, surely, the violence of his succeeding Passion, is madness in the extreme; for it would have been acting more like a Man, to have first made some enquiry, why he was refused admittance.—The next reproachable Incident, is the behaviour of *Chamont*, to his good friend *Acasto*, in consequence of his knowledge of *Castalio*’s unkind treatment of his Sister: This, indeed, is not wholly unnatural, but it borders too much on Rudeness and Ingratitude.—*Polydore*’s hint, with respect to destroying the fruit of his usurped enjoyment of *Monimia*, if any, is horrible to nature, and as it was not necessary to the progress of the Plot, it should have been omitted; and his Speech, with which this Act concludes, is contemptible and hateful to serious reflection.

Castalio’s

Castalio's Soliloquy in the opening of the fifth Act, concludes with a very gross observation, highly unworthy of his Dignity; and we think him not a little inconsistent, when he first refuses to see *Monimia*, though at the request of his afflicted Father, who wishes to heal the breach between them, which by the bye, is maintained on the side of *Castalio*, without the knowledge of what has really happened, and afterwards, goes out resolved to bury his resentment in oblivion, and sooth her distress of mind, on the solicitation of her Maid.—*Monimia's* death by Poison, administred by herself, is a circumstance the Poet should have avoided, because it renders her at last less an object of pity than she otherwise would have been, for Suicide can never hope for pity or forgiveness; at least, it is a bad Doctrine to suppose it should. The Lines with which the Piece concludes, are contrary to the general sense of Mankind, and propagate a supposition too impious to be credited; viz. that Heaven maintains its empire from the miseries of Mankind.

The length our Remarks have already carried us to, will oblige us to postpone our Observations on the Merits of this Piece, till a more convenient opportunity offers, itself; as it will be necessary to take some notice of the manner in which it is now represented at this Theatre. And here, we wish we could drop the Pen, without forfeiting our integrity to our indulgent Readers, because one obligation to Censure, is

78 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

more painful than a thousand opportunities of bestowing Praise.

The poverty of the Stage, with respect to good Actors, was never so fully proved, in our opinion, as by the present representation of this Tragedy; for we never remember to have seen it so indifferently performed.

Mr. *Reddiss*'s Abilities are by no means suited to the Character of *Castilio*, wanting every necessary requisite to support the Poet's Intention, which is strongly marked through the whole Play. His Love wants delicate Sensibility; his Grief, Tenderness and heart-felt Distress; and his Rage, forcibility of Importance and Power — *Chamont* is a Character so singularly drawn by the Poet, as to require a very able Actor to shew it advantageously; what then can we say of Mr. *Brereton* in this Part? Nothing, with truth or justice, but that we never saw it so miserably executed before. Take him altogether, his Conception, Deportment, Voice, and Expression, are too contemptible for Criticism. His Action and Utterance, with numberless other Defects, render his Performance the highest Burlesque on the Character we ever remember to have seen. Surely the Managers must be lost to every sense of Decency, Propriety, and that Attention due to the Public, to offer such an insult to Common Sense; and therefore we will judge so favourably of them, (unless we see this instance repeated) as to suppose, Mr. *Brereton* only appeared as a Substitute for some other Performer, prevented from playing the Part, by some unforeseen accident,

dent. If so, an Apology should have been made to the Audience, which would have prevented their laughing, where we heretofore have known them weep; which, we aver, we observed repeatedly, with the utmost concern.—Mr. *Cauterley's* constitutional Insipidity, renders him incapable of representing the bold, licentious, brutal *Polydore*, as drawn by the Poet, and yet, we are glad we have an Opportunity of observing, that he rose above himself in a few instances, and while he raised our wonder, demanded the just tribute of applause.—We never remember to have seen the Part of *Acasto* well represented: Mr. *Packer* wants Consequence, and therefore makes but a wretched Apology for the Character —The Part of the *Chaplain*, though trifling, is rendered of considerable Importance, as represented by Mr. *Love*, who does great justice to it, and appears with as much advantage to himself, in this, as in any Character he plays. The *Page* is very indifferently represented; we have seen it played more naturally, with less Affectation, and yet with greater Brilliancy of Archness and Expression.—As for *Serina*, her Representative here is too contemptible for Criticism; but Mrs. *Barry's* Excellence in *Monimia* begs all Description; she seems to have united the Perfections of all her Predecessors in this Part; and except in a few instances, where we think she rather overfigures the Character, she has acquired what few Actresses ever did; viz. an equal degree of Conception, in the Passages of delicate Sensibility, with those of Rage and

80 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Distress. We acknowledge with the highest satisfaction, that the critical Pleasure we tasted on a diligent attention to her Performance, in this Character, was such, as will excite our curiosity to a Repetition, though we should be obliged to undergo a second Mortification, by seeing the other principal Characters miserably murdered.

To which was added,

The REGISTER OFFICE:

A Farce, by Mr. Reid.

THIS is by no means an unentertaining Performance; for though the Plot is exceeding simple, the principal Design is truly laudable, and many of the Characters are drawn with considerable Judgment, and some Degree of humour.—This Piece aims to expose the bad Consequences that may arise from public *Register Offices*, when the Direction of them is under the Management of wicked and designing Persons. This is so strongly pointed out, that it is more than probable, the Author had Reality in view while he wrote this Piece.—It was brought on the Stage in the year 1761, since which time it has been revived with Alterations, and the Addition of a new Character.—With respect to the Representation, the principal Characters are excellently performed, particularly the provincial ones, viz. the *Irish Spalpeen*, the *Scotch Pedlar*, the *Yorkshire Maid Servant*, Captain *Le Brush*, the *Male Slip-Slop*, and the *Pettical Lady*.

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, October 15.

KING RICHARD THE THIRD:

*An Historical Tragedy, altered from Shakespear,
by Mr. Colley Cibber.*

THIS Tragedy was originally entitled, *The Life and Death of King Richard the Third*, but very improperly; as it comprizes at most but the last eight years of his Time; for it opens with *George Duke of Clarence* being confined in the Tower, which happened in the beginning of the year 1477, and closes with the Death of *Richard* at the Battle of *Bosworth field*, which was fought on the 22d of August, 1485.

On this Play, in the Original, Dr. Johnson makes the following Remarks: "This (says he) is one of the most celebrated of *Shakespear's* Performances; yet I know not whether it has not happened to him as to others, to be praised most when Praise is not most deserved. That this Play has Scenes noble in themselves, and very well contrived to strike in the Exhibition, cannot be denied. But some parts are trifling, others shocking, and some improbable."

Cibber's Alteration is the Piece now in possession of the Stage; and, with respect to progressive Regularity, is much fitter for exhibition than the Original; and, notwithstanding *Cibber's* Enemies endeavoured to depreciate the Merit of this Work, by censuring him for mutilating some of *Shakespear's* other Plays of their Beauties, to adorn and enrich this, he has shewn uncommon judg-

82 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

ment, and a thorough knowledge of this great Poet's method and manner; and by expunging every superfluous and unnecessary Incident, and reducing it into a more regular Form, he has given its Merit immortality, which probably would have sunk almost into oblivion, for want of some such care; at the same time that he has paid a grateful tribute to the memory of the first Dramatic Author in the known World.

We cannot quit this Article without mentioning one Circumstance, which, in some measure, has contributed to render this Play more generally known and admired, than it probably would have been, had not this accidentally happened. The Circumstance we allude to, is, that the Character of *Richard*, in this Play, was the Part in which our celebrated *English Roscius* first appeared on the Stage, at the Theatre in Goodman's Fields, in the year 1741; when, as an ingenious Author relates, "like the Sun bursting from behind an obscure Cloud, he displayed, in the very earliest dawn, a somewhat more than meridian brightness." He was then only in the twenty-fourth year of his age.

With respect to the Representation of this Tragedy here, we are sorry it does not give us an opportunity of speaking much in its praise. In the midst of the present dearth of good Actors at both Theatres, we must not pretend to be dissatisfied with Mr. Smith in the Character of *Richard*; for to say the truth, if we search further we shall fare worse. He passes through this laborious Character with considerable spirit; but in
some

some places, affects a levity of behaviour, neither natural nor proper.—We hardly ever remember to have seen the Part of *King Henry* supported consistently with the Poet's intention: The Character is admirably drawn, and very highly finished, and requires the abilities of a good Actor to do justice to it; with respect to Mr. *Kniveton*, if on the one hand he does not inspire Applause, we think, on the other, he is undeserving of Censure. Mr. *Clarke's* performance in *Richmond* is very respectable. Mr. *Hull* rather wants Spirit and Activity in the Part of *Buckingham*, yet, as we have observed heretofore, he seldom fails to prejudice an Audience in his favour. As to the under Characters, the Poet has observed no particular discrimination, nor can we remark any distinction of Merit in the Representation: take them altogether, they form a wretched groupe.—The Female Characters are very indifferently represented; and we think there was some degree of justice, as well as humour, in a Remark made by a witty Wag, present at this evening's Performance, who said, “he imagined the three Ladies who represented *Lady Anne*, the *Dutchess of York*, and the *Queen*, could not possibly have been appointed to their respective Parts by the Manager, but must have quarrelled among themselves for Precedency, and had drawn lots for the Characters, in order to settle the dispute.”

To which was added,

MOTHER SHIPTON:

A Pantomime Entertainment.

84 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

WE were of opinion, when the *once* ingenious Mr. Colman commenced Manager at this Theatre, that *Pantomime* Entertainments would meet with an absolute overthrow; and that *Harlequin*, and his unnatural Adherents, would no longer be suffered to invade the just rights of the Comic and Tragic Muse: but, alas! how were we deceived, when we beheld the above execrable jumble of Mummery and Absurdity, (said to be projected by the late Mr. Miles) make its appearance, under Mr. Colman's direction! O Shame, where is thy blush!



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Oct. 16.

LOVE IN A VILLAGE.

See Page 52.

To which was added,

HARLEQUIN'S INVASION.

See Page 24.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Oct. 16.

The JEALOUS WIFE:

By Command of their Majesties.

See Page 68.

To which was added,

The COMMISSARY.

See Page 7.

DRURY-

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, OCT. 17.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING :

A Comedy, by Shakespear.

THE Title of this Piece is very aptly applied, for the Poet has produced a great deal from a small stock of Materials ; which is one proof amongst many, of the amazing fertility of his Genius. The Fable is taken from *Ariosto's Orlando Furioso*, in the Story of *Ariomant* and *Geneura*, Book 5 as far as it relates to *Claudio* and *Hero*, with the Bastard's Scheme of rendering the former jealous by the assistance of *Borachio*, and *Margaret*, the Waiting-maid ; which Story may also be found in *Spenser's Fairy Queen*, Book II. Canto 4. the rest is *Shakespear's* own.

The general suffrage has, for many years, rated this Play very highly in estimation, notwithstanding which, it has innumerable faults. — The Plot is very romantic, and the Unities are all considerably violated ; to counterbalance which, it has a just discrimination of Character ; many Scenes of high Merriment ; easy, flowing Language ; some good Sentiments ; and, though the Catastrophe is not entirely secure against objection, it is far from being unsatisfactory. Upon the whole, it is much better calculated for the Scene, than the *Closet* ; as, in the former, if well represented, it will always receive Graces, it must unavoidably lose in the latter. But, as we have declared this Piece to contain
many

86 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

many Faults, it is but just to observe, that it has many Beauties ; and we apprehend the quoting one or two, will not be disagreeable to our Readers.

Benedick, in the beginning of the Play, assumes a contempt for amorous Feelings, in consequence of which, we find him, (in the eighth Scene, of the second Act) expressing his Surprise, that *Claudio*, who, like himself, once laughed at Love, should at last fall into the snare. This leads him to enquire, whether his own Mind is likely to undergo the same change ; which he does in the following beautiful Speech.

“ I do much wonder, says he, that one Man, seeing how much another Man is a Fool, when he dedicates his Behaviour to Love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow Follies in others, become the argument of his own Scorn, by falling in Love ! and such a Man is *Claudio*. I have known, when there was no Music with him but the Drum and the Fife ; and now had he rather hear the Tabor and the Pipe ; I have known, when he would have walked ten mile afoot, to see a good Armour ; and now will he lye ten nights awake, carving the Fashion of a new Doublet. He was wont to speak plain, and to the purpose, like an honest Man and a Soldier ; and now he is turned orthographer, his Words are a very fantastical Banquet, just so many strange Dishes. May I be so converted, and see with these Eyes ? I cannot tell ; I think not. I will not be sworn, but Love may transform me to an Oyter ; but I'll take my Oath on it, till he have made an Oyfter of me, he shall never make me such a Fool : One Woman is fair, yet I am well ; another is wise, yet I am well ; another virtuous, yet I am well. But till all graces be in one Woman, one Woman shall

not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain ; wise, or I'll none ; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her ; fair, or I'll never look on her ; mild, or come not near me ; noble, or not I for an Angel ; of good discourse, an excellent Musician, and her hair shall be of what colour it please God."

There is not perhaps, in any Comedy now on the *English* Stage, a more pleasing match of Wit and spirited Repartee, than what is maintained in this, between the two fanciful Lovers, *Benedick* and *Beatrice* ; and the contrivance of making them encourage an affection for each other, after they had both equally forsworn the Passion of Love, is not only pleasingly imagined, but conducted with considerable Ingenuity. It would be too tedious to quote all the Scenes, and therefore we shall content ourselves with the most celebrated ; viz. the third Scene in the fourth Act, where *Beatrice* encourages *Benedick* to revenge the cause of her injured Cousin, *Hero*, which is a means of bringing about a declaration of mutual affection.

" *Benedick*. Lady *Beatrice*, have you wept all this while ?

Beatrice. Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

Bene. I will not desire that.

Beat. You have no reason, I do it freely.

Bene. Surely, I do believe, your fair Cousin is wronged.

Beat. Ah, how much might the Man deserve of me, that would right her !

Bene. Is there any way to shew such friendship ?

Beat. A very even way, but no such Friend.

Bene. May a Man do it ?

Beat. It is a Man's office, but not yours.

Bene.

88 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Bene. I do love nothing in the world so well as you ; is not that strange ?

Beat. As strange as the thing I know not ; it were as possible for me to say, I loved nothing so well as you ; but believe me not ; and yet I lie not ; I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing. I am sorry for my Cousin.

Bene. By my sword, *Beatrice*, thou lov'st me.

Beat. Do not swear by it, and eat it.

Bene. I will swear by it that you love me ; and I will make him eat it, that says I love not you.

Beat. Will you not eat your word ?

Bene. With no sauce that can be devis'd to it ; I protest, I love thee.

Beat. Why then, God forgive me.

Bene. What offence, sweet *Beatrice* ?

Beat. You have staid me in a happy hour ; I was about to protest, I loved you.

Bene. And do it with all thy heart.

Beat. I love you with so much of my heart, that none is left to protest.

Bene. Come, bid me do any thing for thee.

Beat. Kill *Claudio*.

Bene. Ha ! not for the wide world.

Beat. You kill me to deny ; farewell.

Bene. Tarry, sweet *Beatrice*.

Beat. I am gone, though I am here, there is no love in you ; nay, I pray you, let me go.

Bene. *Beatrice*.

Beat. In faith I will go.

Bene. We'll be friends first.

Beat. You dare easier be friends with me, than fight with mine enemy.

Bene. Is *Claudio* thine enemy ?

Beat. Is he not approv'd in the height a Villain, that hath slander'd, scorn'd, dishonour'd my Kinswoman ! O that I were a man ! What ! bear her in hand until they come to take hands, and then with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour——O God, that I were a Man ! I would eat his heart in the market-place.

Bene.

Bene. Hear me, *Beatrice*.

Beat. Talk with a Man out at a window?—a proper saying!

Bene. Nay, but *Beatrice*.

Beat. Sweet *Hero*! she is wrong'd, she is slander'd, she is undone.

Bene. *Beat*——

Beat. Princes and Counts! surely a princely testimony, a goodly Count-comfect, a sweet Gallant, surely! O that I were a Man for his sake! or that I had any friend would be a Man for my sake; but manhood is melted into courtesies, valour into compliment, and Men are only turn'd into tongue, and trim ones too; he is now as valiant as *Hercules*, that only tells a lie, and swears it: I cannot be a Man with wishing, therefore I will die a Woman with grieving.

Bene. Tarry, good *Beatrice*; by this hand, I love thee.

Beat. Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

Bene. Think you in your soul, the Count *Claudio* hath wronged *Hero*?

Beat. Yea, as sure as I have a thought or a soul.

Bene. Enough, I am engaged; I will challenge him, I will kiss your hand, and so leave you; by this hand, *Claudio* shall render me a dear account; as you hear of me, so think of me: go, comfort your Cousin; I must say, she is dead, and so farewell."

Dr *Warburton* observes, that the Poet has shewn a great deal of Address in this Scene. *Beatrice* here engages her Lover to revenge the Injury done her Cousin *Hero*. And without this very natural incident, considering the Character of *Beatrice*, and that the Story of her passion for *Benedick* was all a Fable, she could never have been easily, or naturally

90 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

naturally brought to confess she loved him, notwithstanding all the foregoing preparation. And yet on this confession in this very place depended the whole success of the Plot upon her and *Benedick*. For had she not owned her Love here, they must have soon found out the trick, and then the design of bringing them together had been defeated. And she would never have owned a Passion she had been only tricked into, had not her desire of revenging her Cousin's wrong made her drop her capricious Humour at once.

The last instance we shall give, is of a more serious Cast, but exceedingly beautiful.—We mean *Leonato's* Reply to his Brother *Antonio's* Consolation. Act 5. Scene 1.

——“ I pray thee, cease thy counsel,
Which falls into mine ears as profitless
As water in a sieve; give not me counsel,
No. let no comforter delight mine ear,
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine.
Bring me a Father, that so lov'd his Child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak of patience;
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it answer every strain for strain:
As thus for thus, and such a grief for such,
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form.
If such a one will smile and stroke his beard,
And, sorrow wag! cry, hem, when he should groan;
Patch grief with proverbs; make misfortune drunk
With candle-walters; bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather patience.
But there is no such Man; for, Brother, Men
Can counsel, and give comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion, which before
Would give perceptual medicine to rage;

Fetter

Fetter strong madness in a silken thread,
 Charm ach with air, and agony with words.
 No, no; 'tis all Mens office to speak patience
 To those that wring under the load of sorrow;
 But no Man's virtue nor sufficiency,
 To be so mortal, when he shall endure
 The like himself: Therefore give me no counsel;
 My griefs cry louder than advertisement.

Antonio. Therein do Men from Children nothing differ.

Leonato. I pray thee, peace; I will be flesh and blood;

For there was never yet Philosopher,
 That could endure the tooth ach patiently,
 However they have writ the style of gods,
 And made a pish at chance and sufferance."

The blundering Importance and solemn Buffoonery of *Dogberry* and *Verges*, is truly original and worthy of *Shakespear*, but as the Scenes in which they are produced are too extensive for Quotation, we must refer our Readers to the Play.

With respect to the Representation, the principal Characters are most of them well supported, and, as the under Parts are very immaterial in the Play, as well as in the Performance, we shall let them pass.

Mr. *Garrick* possesses a number of peculiar Excellencies, as an Actor, highly necessary for displaying the Character of *Benedick* with Advantage; such, as probably, ever have, and ever will, leave him without an equal; yet, we cannot subscribe to the general Opinion, that *Benedick* is his Master-piece in the Comic Walk; for we think there are others in which he is more eminent, as we hereafter, may have an Opportunity of proving.

Leonato

92 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Leonato, is a Character fraught with too much sensibility, and delicacy of Feeling, for Mr. *Aickin* to execute justly, and therefore, we think the Managers do this useful Actor an injury by forcing him into it. Mr. *Cautberley* labours under a similar Disadvantage in the Part of *Claudio*. The Characters of *Dogberry* and *Verges* are inimitably performed by Mr. *Parsons* and Mr. *Hartry*. Such is the Satisfaction they give, that we take our leave of them with the greatest Reluctance, and wish for a continuance of their Company. We pass Mrs. *Morland*, in the Part of *Hero*, in expectation, that she may, on some future occasion, give us an Opportunity of saying something in her Favour. Mrs. *Bradshaw* has the happy Talent of rendering herself noticed in most of the Characters she represents, and therefore her Performance in *Margaret* is in some respect interesting.—Though there is little to commend in Miss *Pope's* Representation of *Beatrice*, it is but Justice to observe, that there are fewer occasions for censure: We think Mrs. *Abington's* superior Talents, are more likely to harmonize with Mr. *Garrick's* Merit, was she to undertake the Part of *Beatrice*.

To which was added,
The ANATOMIST:
A Farce.

THIS is an Alteration of *Ravenscroft's* Comedy of *The Anatomist*, or *The Sham Doctor*; only the *Doctor* is translated into a *Frenchman*. It has little Merit, but used formerly

for October, 1771.

93

ly to afford considerable Entertainment in the Representation, from the excellent Performance of the late Mr. *Blakes* in the Part of *Mons. le Medecin* Most of the Characters are now performed with considerable Merit.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *October 17.*

The E A R L O F E S S E X:

See Page 50.

To which was added,

M O T H E R S H I P T O N:

See Page 83.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *October 18.*

The G A M E S T E R.

See Page 46.

To which was added,

The P A D L O C K.

See Page 30.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *October 18.*

C Y R U S:

A Tragedy, by Mr. Hoole.

THIS Tragedy appeared for the first time at *Covent-Garden Theatre*, the third of December, 1768. As the Author has ingenuously confessed his Obligations to that great

94 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

great *Italian* Dramatist, *Metastasio*, it will be no injury to his Reputation, to acquaint our Readers, that the Fable of this Play, is founded on the Story of *Metastasio's* Opera, intituled, *Il Ciro Riconosciuto*.—The Piece in the Original, allowing for some little Variation necessarily arising from the Plan, which the Poet was obliged to adopt in order to form an Opera, has all the Merit of a regular Tragedy; and the ingenious Translator has been very happy in the preservation of the dignity of his Thoughts, and graces of his Diction; at the same time, that he is entitled to some degree of Praise, for introducing the *Shakespear* of Italy, to the general Acquaintance of the *English* Nation.

The Tragedy of *Cyrus* will be found, on examination, to have many Beauties, and many Defects; and therefore it seems to owe much of the reputation it hath acquired, to the advantages it has received in the Representation. The Plan of this Piece opens very mechanically, is founded on improbability, and very inaccurately conducted; and the Catastrophe is by no means happily produced. Many of the Scenes are insufferably languid; and though the Language is chaste and unaffected, it evidently wants Spirit. None of the Characters are well drawn, but those of *Mithranes* and *Mandane*, which are highly finished. The Manners are repeatedly violated; for it is contrary to the custom of *Asia*, for Women of high rank to be seen by any but their Husbands, and very near Relations; nor
are

are they ever suffered to appear beyond the limits of their Palaces : But here, the principal Incidents are transacted in an open Field, and the *Princess* and *Aspasia* stroll about the haunts of danger and violence, without a single Attendant.

However, in this, as well as in some other particulars, Mr. *Hoole* will stand excused, if he only lays claim to a Translator's Merit, for these Imperfections are to be found in the Original. The principal Merit of this Piece rests with the Moral, which is truly laudable; and, in some measure atones for the Defects, as it inculcates the principles of Benevolence and Justice in the most forcible manner; and aims to prove, that the Guilty, even in the most exalted situations, cannot escape the avenging hand of Providence.—The *Scene* lies in a *Wood* on the confines of *Media*.—It is a little remarkable, that this Piece should meet with a favourable reception from the Public, as it abounds with so many Imperfections, at the same time that it bears a strong similitude to the *Merope* of *Aaron Hill*, and the *Douglas* of *Home*; but as we observed before, it derived much of its success from the graces it received in the Representation.

The Character of *Cyrus* lost its importance on the death of Mr. *Powell*, whose excellent performance gave it that dignity it ought to have received from the hands of the Author; but Mr. *Wroughton*, and his Successor Mr. *Savigny*, have reduced the Character to its original mediocrity.—*Cambyfes* owes much of his public Credit to the excellent

96 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

excellent Merit of his Representative, *Mr. Smith*.—*Astyages*, though an unnatural Character, is considerably heightened and improved by *Mr. Clarke's* assiduity and vigour.—*Mr. Hull* is in no respect behind the rest in Merit, in the Part of *Harpagus*, though his sensibility is by much too delicate for this gloomy, revengeful Character, which, it must be confessed, is not badly drawn.—*Mithranes* is a Character in which *Mr. Bensley* appears with considerable advantage to himself, and credit to the Author.

Mrs. Mattocks has great Merit in the walk Nature designed her for, but surely she steps aside, when she attempts Tragedy. However, the Part of *Aspasia* is so insignificant, that it does not require an Actress of any great Abilities.—The advantages this Piece receives from the inimitable performance of *Mrs. Yates*, in the Part of *Mandane*, are such as deserve the Author's warmest acknowledgements, and the highest applause from the Spectators; for it seems to be an agreed point, that the amazing exertion of Powers she displays in this Character, greatly exceeds her customary excellence. The Author seems to have had this Actress in view, when he wrote the Part; and it is but just to observe, that the opportunities he has given her of displaying her eminent Talents, are improved to an astonishing degree of Perfection.

To which was added,

The A U T H O R:

A Comedy of two Acts, by Mr. Foote.

THIS

THIS Piece made its Appearance in the year 1757, and met with very great Success. It has little dramatic Regularity, and the Catastrophe is strangely brought about. In short, this Piece, more than any of this Author's, seems calculated to afford him an Opportunity of displaying his own Talents for Mimickry. After it had run some time, it was suppressed in consequence of an Application for that purpose, the Ridicule being too strongly pointed at a Gentleman of Family and Fortune, (under the feigned name of *Cadwallader*) whose peculiarities of Character, though entirely inoffensive, could not escape the severity of this merciless Satirist.—As the Piece has been revived again some time, we apprehend the Gentleman is dead, and if we are not mistaken, we have been informed so — We cannot help remarking that the charge of personal Severity, so frequently brought against this Author, was never more strictly just, than in the instance of the Piece now before us.

The Parts of *Cadwallader* and *Vamp*, are played at this Theatre by Mr. *Yates*, who succeeds very well in the latter, but is by no means equal to Mr. *Foote* in the former. Mrs. *Gardner* appears to be formed by Nature for playing in Mr. *Foote*'s Pieces, and therefore, it cannot be a matter of Wonder, that she excels in the Part of Mrs *Cadwallader*, which, by the bye, is a Character extremely *outrè*. The rest of the Characters have nothing singular to recommend them, and therefore do not require any great Exertion of Abilities in the Representation.

98 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Oct. 19.

The PLAIN DEALER :

*A Comedy, altered from Wycherly,
by Mr. Bickerstaff.*

THE *Plain Dealer*, was acknowledged by Dryden, to be the most capital of all Wycherley's dramatic Pieces, but being written in an age, when licentiousness was openly encouraged by persons of the first rank, (the King not excepted) it had rather a vicious and immoral tendency, for which reason it was banished from the Stage by the public advocates for decency and good manners, of the present times.—The task of restoring this Piece to the notice of the Public, by cleansing the sterling ore from the filth and dross that obscured it's merit, was a very commendable undertaking, and had it been attempted by a person of genius and judgement, the Piece might have rose in it's consequence, but, alas ! this was a task far beyond the abilities of Mr. *Bickerstaff*.

The Original, had many excellencies, with respect to wit, humour, general satire, and character strongly marked ; notwithstanding which, some of the Scenes were insufferably tedious ; and the Piece in its present state is not improved in this particular ; for though Mr. *Bickerstaff* has tolerably well cleansed the *Augean Stable*, the substitution of his own inadequate stuff, in the place of what he has expunged, suits so lamely with the spirit of the Original, as to render the Piece still more languid and imperfect,

perfect, though, perhaps, it may be less coarse and indelicate; so that, while we acknowledge its chastity, we must lament its not being more entertaining; but the task of altering a Play written by a first-rate Genius, may be compared to that, of re-touching an excellent Picture, painted by an eminent Artist, which should never be attempted but by a very able Hand. — After all, the Piece in its altered state, is not devoid of merit: It still contains some Scenes of high Merriment, many just Sentiments, and the Language, in general, is easy and natural. Several of the Characters are too nearly similar, in their complexion and manners; and, indeed, none but those of *Manly* and *Fidelia*, are interesting, or worthy of attention. The Conduct of the Plot is managed with some degree of judgment, but, the Catastrophe is very defective and unsatisfactory, because the guilty persons are dismissed, without a single intimation of their being punished according to their deserts.

We are of opinion, that the success this altered Piece met with, when it first appeared, may be attributed, in a great measure, to the advantages it received from an excellent representation; for most of the Characters were very strongly supported; and though several of the Performers, who first played in it, are now no more, and others have quitted this Theatre, the merit of the present representation is very considerable: But we cannot quit this subject, without offering a few hints respecting some alterations.

100 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

The late Mr. *Holland* supported the Part of *Manly* with great propriety and uncommon spirit. His successor, Mr. *Aickin*, labours to maintain a similar importance, but without equal merit or equal success. He does his best, and consequently stands exempt from censure, but, surely, this Character is more suitable to the abilities of Mr. *Reddish*, and we are greatly mistaken if he would not support it with great credit to himself and the Managers. The Characters of *Freeman*, *Lord Plausible*, and *Novel*, are represented by better Performers than they deserve, but this is a circumstance in favour of managerial conduct.—The Parts of *Vernish* and *Major Oldfox* are as well supported by Messrs. *Packer* and *Lowe* as is necessary. As for *Counsellor Quillet*, it is the Author's fault, and not the Actor's, that he is unworthy notice, and we lament that Mr. *Baddeley* is obliged to support so ungracious an undertaking.—*Quillet* is a creature of *Bickerstaff's* own begetting, obtruded upon *Wycherley*, without either necessity or ingenuity. If this Gentleman cannot create beings more worthy notice than the insipid and insignificant Master *Quillet*, we beg him in mercy to common sense, not to produce any more such miserable *bantlings*.—Mr *Weston* marks the Character of *Jerry Blackacre*, with infinite simplicity and humour; nor can we quit the male Characters without observing that the trifling Part of *Oakam*, deserves notice as represented by Mr. *Wright*.

We wish Mr. *Bickerstaff* had endeavoured to render the Character of *Eliza* more important,

or that he had entirely rejected it, and contrived to introduce a new one, of more consequence to the Piece, for at present it is almost superfluous.—Though we do not desire to see the Part of *Olivia* in other hands than Miss *Pope's*, we cannot help regretting, that so good an Actress should be obliged to exert her acknowledged abilities, so greatly to her own disadvantage; for the Character is so destitute of every amiable qualification, that, from first to last, the merit of the Performer is neglected and forgot, by a just detestation of *Olivia's* hateful principles and unprecedented perfidy.

The litigious Mrs. *Blackacre* never appeared to any advantage, since she was represented by Mrs. *Clive*, whose excellence in this Character, will hardly ever be equalled.—Nothing but gross inattention, or managerial partiality, could ever think of obtruding Mrs. *Hopkins* on the public, in this Character, who would represent *Juliet* or *Belvidera* with equal propriety. We wish to see Mrs. *Bradshaw* in this Character, who, without doubt, would prove a much better substitute for Mrs. *Clive*, than Mrs. *Hopkins*.

The Spectators are always insensibly prejudiced in favour of the Character of *Fidelia*; and through the whole Piece, greatly interest themselves in her success, though her romantic conduct, and continued breach of decorum, is highly reprehensible, and in no respect worthy of imitation. We have seen several capital Actresses in this part, notwithstanding which, we think Miss *Younge* equal, if not superior, to any of them;

102 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

though this was the first time of her appearing in this Character.

To which was added,

A PEEP BEHIND THE CURTAIN :

A Farce of two Acts.

THIS Piece has been ascribed to Mr. Garrick, who has not, that we know of, publickly owned himself the Author. It contains a considerable share of innocent merriment, several good strokes of satire, pointed at Authors, Managers, and Players, with some temporary touches of humour very pleasantly expressed. The second Act introduces a supposed Rehearsal of an *English* Burletta called *Orpheus*, which is conducted with some degree of invention and ingenuity. The Music is very pleasingly set, and the Songs are not only exceedingly droll, but properly adapted to the burlesque intention of the Piece. Most of the Characters were excellently performed when it first appeared, but the representation at present, suffers greatly by the substitution of Mrs. Hopkins in the room of Mrs. Clive, in the Character of *Lady Fuz*, and of Miss Rogers in the place of Miss Pope, in the Part of *Miss Fuz*.—Mr. Vernon in the Part of *Orpheus*, as well as in every other character he plays, proves beyond all doubt, that he is the best acting Singer now on the *English* Stage.—Mr. King's droll Performance in the Part of *Glib the Poet*, contributes greatly to the support of the Piece, and the Entertainment of the Audience. The other Characters are sustained with no inconsiderable degree of merit.

COVENT-

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, October 19.

The B R O T H E R S :

A Comedy, by Mr. Cumberland.

HAD not the Author of this *Comedy*, as he calls it, plumed himself on its being an *original* Performance, and arrogantly presumed to treat his cotemporaries, not only with disrespect, but contempt and injustice ; his Piece might have escaped the censure of Criticism, as being much beneath its notice.—First, with respect to the claim of *Originality*, we think the Author is not greatly mistaken, for there is nothing that we know of, like it, among all the comic Productions of the *English* Theatre.—Secondly, as to the general invective, which he throws out against the present list of dramatic Authors, we think he is not far from the truth in this point, for there is not, at this time, in our recollection one dramatic Writer, with whom the Author of *The Brothers* can be compared with any degree of truth or justice.

Lest we should incur the charge of being unjust Censurers, from what we have remarked, it will be necessary to quote part of the *Author's* Prologue to this Piece, which will enable our Readers to judge for themselves.

“ Various the shifts of Authors now-a-days,
For Operas, Farces, Pantomimes, and Plays :
Some scour each alley of the town for wit,
Begging, from door to door, the offal bit ;

104 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Plunge in each cellar, tumble every stall,
And scud like taylors to each house of call :
Gut every novel, strip each monthly muse,
And pillage Poets corner of it's news :
That done, they melt the stale farrago down,
And set their dish of scraps before the Town ;
Boldly invite you to the pilfer'd store,
Cram you, then wonder you can eat no more.

Some in our English Classics deeply read,
Ransack the tombs of the illustrious dead ;
Hackney the Muse of *Shakespeare*, o'er and o'er,
From shoulder to the flank all drench'd in gore.

Others to foreign climes and kingdoms roam,
To search for what is better found at home :
The recreant Bard, oh ! scandal to the age !
Gleans the vile refuge of a Gallic Stage.

Not so our Bard—To night, he bids me say,
You shall receive and judge an English Play :
From no man's jest he draws felonious praise,
Nor from his neighbour's garden crops his bays :
From his own breast the filial story flows,
And the free Scene no foreign Master knows :
Nor only tenders he his work as new ;
He hopes 'tis good, or would not give it you :
True homely ware, and made of honest stuff,
Right British druggert, honest, warm, and rough,
&c. &c."

We think it was hardly necessary for the Author to inform us, that *he* wrote the Prologue, for it can hardly be supposed, any one but himself could possess so much vanity, or be guilty of such impertinence : And it seems to be more than probable, that the miserable and illiberal expedients he places to the account of cotemporary Dramatists, have been too frequently practiced by himself.

To examine, either the absurdities of the Prologue, or the Play, would be wasting Criticism

ticism upon faults too evident for detection, and too gross for aggravation; and therefore, though we can hardly recommend so unpleasing a task to our Readers, as a perusal of this flimsy Performance, we think, the slightest inspection, will sufficiently satisfy them, that the whole is badly designed, and still more wretchedly executed; that the Sentiments are trite and insignificant; the Diction in general bald, and frequently out of character; the Manners strained and unnatural; and the Characters, notwithstanding the Author's vain-glorious boasting, not intitled to the merit of Originality; and lastly, that the Fable is not only improbable with respect to single facts, but, by the inconsistency of facts taken together; at the same time that it is destitute of that grand Essential, a Moral,

The success this Comedy met with during the first run of it, (not that it was very considerable) can only be ascribed to the merit of the Performers in the Representation, which, abating a few trifling particulars, was at first, and still is, deserving the highest applause, though we cannot help regretting the loss of Mr. *Woodward* in the Character of *Captain Ironsides*, as we by no means think Mr. *Shuter* a meritorious substitute.

To which was added,

M O T H E R S H I P T O N.

See Page 83.

106 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Oct. 21.

The WEST INDIAN.

See Page 8.

To which was added,

The ELOPEMENT:

A Pantomime Entertainment.

THIS is one of those absurd jumbles of Mummery, which through folly, and a corrupt taste, contribute, in some measure, to render the *British* Theatre contemptible. It is undoubtedly superior to many Entertainments of this kind, frequently exhibited, but the principal merit of it (if Pantomimes may be allowed to have any merit) is to be set down to the account of the Carpenters and Painters; though we have heard, that the general design, is ascribed to the inventive Genius of Mr. *Messink*, who performs the Part of the *Lover*, in this very Entertainment. The Scene of the *Rejoicing-Night*, has been added since the time of its first appearance.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, October 21.

O R O O N O K O.

See Page 32.

To which was added,

MOTHER SHIPTON.

See Page 83.

DRURY-

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, O^R 22.

The M A I D OF THE M I L L :

A Comic Opera, by Mr. Bickerstaff.

THE Ground-work of this Opera, is professedly borrowed from the late Mr. *Richardson's Pamela*, and we acknowledge it by much the best Performance of any of Mr. *Bickerstaff's* Pieces. It met with a favorable reception from the Public, when it first appeared, and has been repeated every Season since, with good success ; a success far beyond what it merits. We do not mean to level our censure against this Piece in particular, but against *operatical Compositions* in general ; for though these absurd and unnatural Performances may please the unthinking and injudicious, surely, all who wish well to the credit of the *British* Theatre, must behold with concern, their unjust usurpation of the throne of public Taste ; and as this grievance may in a great measure be laid to Mr *Bickerstaff's* Charge (he having of late years been almost the only Projector of these water-gruel Performances) we hope the Champions for the Rights and Privileges of the Comic and Tragic Muse will punish this bold Invader with unremitting severity, and hence stop the propagation of these illegitimate Bantlings of the Drama, or banish them and their crack-brained Author to those distant regions, where gloomy Superstition checks the daring flights of true Genius, and Dullness with her leaden sceptre irresistibly closes the piercing eyes of Criticism.

108 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

With respect to the Piece before us, the best encomium it merits is, that it is very inoffensive, as to its tendency. The Plot is extremely simple, and the progressive Regularity of the Scenes tolerably well supported; but from first to last, we meet with little that is interesting. The Manners are not badly preserved, but the Sentiments are neither new nor elegantly expressed, and the Versification of the Songs, which are to be considered as a part of the Dialogue, is wretched beyond conception; and it seems to be very evident, that the Words were written to the Music, and not the Music composed to the Words—It contains neither Wit, nor Satire, but we now and then meet with attempts at humour, which are generally very indifferently executed:

The Representation of this Opera here, is by no means unworthy notice. The Part of *Lord Aimworth* requires a more experienced Actor, than we have yet ever seen represent the Character. In the choice of a Person to perform this Part, the attention is necessarily paid to the abilities of a Singer, and not to the talents of an Actor, so that, there is little reason to expect this Character will ever be well played. Though we see in Mr. *Davies* the unexperienced Actor, we think his Performance, taken altogether, is very respectable. Mr. *Parsons*, of this Theatre, is very little inferior to Mr. *Shuter*, in the Part of *Sir Harry Sycamore*; but we think Mr. *Hartry* greatly inferior to either. The Part of *Farmer Giles* suffers no injury from Mr. *Bannister*, who is very happy in the execution

cution of this Character.—*Fairfield* never appeared to such advantage, as he does in the hands of Mr. *Jefferson*.—*Mervin* is a very insipid Character, and has always been represented by very feeble Performers, of which Mr. *Fawcett* is a very glaring instance.—Mr. *Dibdin's* Acting, in every thing but *Mungo*, is like his musical Compositions, truly contemptible, and therefore we cannot say any thing in praise of his *Ralph*.

The Female Characters are supported with considerable merit. *Fanny*, by Miss *Pope*, deserves very high commendation. We have nothing to object to Mrs. *Scot* in *Theodosia*, her musical abilities far exceed her talents as an Actress; but the whole together, is very agreeable.—Mrs. *Bradshaw* is not the best *Lady Sycamore* we have seen, yet her Performance in this Part is not without merit. And lastly, the more we see and hear of Mrs. *Hunt's* Performance, only confirms what we thought of her at first, that when time has rendered her more acquainted with the business of a Theatre, she will be a very valuable acquisition to it. She renders the Part of *Patty* very pleasing in Representation.

To which was added,

THE ELOPEMENT.

See Page 106.

110 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Oct. 22.*

The MERCHANT OF VENICE.

See Page 35.

WITH respect to the Representation of this Play here, we think it stands on as reputable a footing as at the other Theatre.

Mr. *Macklin* is, without doubt, so imitable in *Shylock*, as to render Criticism all unnecessary. Mr. *Clarke*, though not the best *Anthonio*, is preferable to many we have seen in the Character, and displays considerable merit. Mr. *Bensley* in *Bassanio* neither disgusts nor pleases, being superior to censure and inferior to praise. *Gratiano* is pleasingly represented by Mr. *Der.* We wish Mr. *Shuter*, in the Part of *Lancelot*, would divest himself of buffoonery, and stick closer to nature, as he by no means does justice to this Character. *Old Gobbo* is very well represented by Mr. *Quick*, though inferior to Mr. *Parsons* at the other House. Mr. *Mattocks's* tameness and insipidity renders the Character of *Lorenzo* very uninteresting — We are sorry we must pass Mrs. *Baker* as unworthy notice in the Part of *Jessica*, and wish to see Mrs. *Mattocks* in this Character, as she is not only a better Actress, but a more accomplished Singer. — *Nerissa*, though a trifling Character, and only a foil to *Portia*, is rendered very respectable by Mrs. *Lessingham*. — Miss *Macklin's* person does not figure the Character of *Portia* so well as could be wished,

wished, but in every other respect her Performance is truly unexceptionable.

This Piece is performed here as at the other House, with respect to the omission of the Scenes, noticed in the first Account of this Play.

To which was added,

LOVE A - L A - M O D E :

A Farce of two Acts, by Mr. Macklin.

THIS Piece made it's appearance at *Drury-Lane Theatre* in 1760, where it met with considerable opposition, but the Party in its favour getting the better of its Opponents, (whose malice seemed to be levelled against the Author rather than the Piece) it maintained it's ground, and had a very considerable run. — It contains much useful Satire, and the Characters of the four Lovers are drawn with great spirit, at the same time that a stronger contrast cannot possibly be imagined; but the Author's partiality for his own Countrymen has led him into an error, in paying them a compliment which they are not generally supposed to deserve.

The Representation is excellent, particularly the Author's Performance in the Part of the *Scotch Baronet*, *Sir Archy Macfarquism*, and tho' we should be glad to see Mr. Woodward in the Part of *Squire Groom*, we do not think Mr. Dyer an unworthy Representative; the same degree of praise is due to the Performers in the other Characters.

112 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *October 23.*

A S Y O U L I K E I T.

See Page 26.

To which was added,

The E L O P E M E N T.

See Page 106.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Oct. 23.*

M E A S U R E F O R M E A S U R E.

See Page 56.

To which was added,

M I D A S.

See Page 34.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *Oct. 24.*

The CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE,

By Command of their Majesties.

See Page 65.

To which was added,

The D E U C E I S I N H I M:

A Farce of two Acts, by Mr. Colman.

THIS little Piece hath singular Merit, and met with deserved applause when it first appeared at this Theatre, in the year, 1763.—Its principal Aim is a Satire on Platonic Love, which is displayed in a very pleasing

pleasing manner. The Characters are strongly marked, and we know of few Farces on the *English* Stage, of this difficult kind, that are conducted with an equal degree of Judgement, Ingenuity and Correctness. The Plot is extremely simple, and it contains but few incidents; yet, the attention of the Audience is constantly kept up, through the whole Piece. The serious Parts are sententious and interesting, while others are so truly laughable, as to afford the highest Entertainment. We do not meet with any thing we wish to have omitted; on the contrary, when the Piece draws towards a conclusion, our only dissatisfaction arises from the Author's not having extended it to a greater length. The Character of *Prattle*, the Apothecary, has great pretensions to Originality; and we think Mr. King does the strictest justice to it in the Representation.—Mr. O'Brien, who originally played the Part of *Colonel Tamper*, contributed greatly to the support of the Piece. The late Mr. Palmer, who succeeded him, was much fainter in the execution, and the present Mr. Palmer, is still further on the decline; not that we think him devoid of Merit, but he does not figure the Character with that unaffected simplicity and ease, so eminently displayed by the two former Gentlemen in this Character,—Major Belford is very decently played by Mr. Packer.—Mademoiselle *Florival* does not require an Actress of any distinguished talents, and therefore she is represented by Miss Rogers with some degree of credit.—Miss Pope's spirit and vivacity has

114 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

has always contributed to the improvement of the Character of *Emily*, which is pleasingly drawn by the Poet, and inimitably performed by this Lady.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Oct. 24.

The MERCHANT OF VENICE.

See Page 35, and 110.

To which was added,

LOVE A-LA-MODE.

See Page 111.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Oct. 25.

The PROVOK'D HUSBAND.

See Page 43.

WITH respect to the Representation of this Play here, if we except four Characters, all the rest are miserably performed. In the present dearth of good Actors, Mr. *Reddish* appears to considerable advantage in *Lord Townly*: from his expression, the valuable sentiments flow with grace and dignity; but with respect to freedom and genteel deportment, we think he does not appear much of the Nobleman — *Manly* is a Character we hardly remember to have seen well represented. We are sorry Mr. *Packer* is forced into this Part, and cannot help beholding him as a man struggling with difficulties he is unable to surmount.---Mr.

Dodd

Dodd gives critical satisfaction in the Part of *Count Basset*. We wish we could say the same of *Mr. Love* in *Sir Francis Wronghead*, who does not, in the smallest degree, fill the Author's ideas in this Part, which in proper hands has always been food for much innocent merriment. *Mr. Love's* attempts at the *Yorkshire* Dialect, border too much on that of *Scotland*, with which we believe he is perfectly acquainted.---*Squire Richard* does not want a better Representative than *Mr. W. Palmer*, who having a considerable share of the natural *vis comica*, renders this Character very respectable. *John Moody* is a natural well-drawn Character but very indifferently played by *Mr. Burton*.

The Female Characters, except that of *Lady Townly*, were never worse performed in our remembrance. First, the amiable, the pleasing, the delicate, the sensible, *Lady Grace*, by *Mrs. Reddish*!—Secondly, the hitherto diverting *Lady Wronghead*, by *Mrs. Hopkins*!—Thirdly, the pert, silly, talkative, *Miss Jenny*, by *Mrs. Davies*!—Fourthly and fifthly, *Trusty*, by *Mrs. Johnston*—and *Mrs. Motherly*, by *Mrs. Gross*!—*Speſtatum admiſſi riſum teneatis amici?*—*Mrs. Barry*, in *Lady Townly*, is every thing we wiſh; her appearance and mode of expreſſion contribute greatly to the ſupport of the Woman of Faſhion; and, take her from firſt to laſt, ſhe is the moſt conſiſtent *Lady Townly*, we have ever ſeen.

To which was added,

HARLEQUIN'S INVASION.

See Page 24.

COVENT-

116 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

COVENT GARDEN THEATRE, *Oct. 25.*

R O M E O A N D J U L I E T.

WE have observed before that this Play is in a deplorable state of action at the other House, except in the particular of Mrs. Barry's playing *Juliet*; but if the merit of the Representation here is placed in the critical scale, in opposition to that of *Drury-lane*, we apprehend the balance will be nearly equal.—Mr. *Smith* is, undoubtedly, a much better *Romeo* than Mr. *Cauterley*, being a better Actor; not that we think the Character is by any means suited to his talents; but if we make the least comparison betwixt Miss *Miller* and Mrs. *Barry* in the Part of *Juliet*, the scale will greatly preponderate in favour of the latter. The principal Character deserving notice here, is the *Nurse*, as represented by Mrs. *Pitt*, who supports the petulant impertinence of the ridiculous old Gossip with considerable merit, though we confess we wish the Character could be omitted, as it rather degrades the dignity of the Piece.—Those who remember the famous contention between the two Theatres for superiority in the Representation of this Play, must view it now at either House with concern and contempt. *O what a falling off is here!*

To which was added,

M I D A S.

See Page 34.

DRURY-

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, October 26.

A M P H Y T R I O N,
Or, The Two S O C I A S :

*A Comedy, altered from Dryden,
by Dr. Hawkeſworth.*

THE Story of this Comedy is founded on the two *Amphitryons* of *Plautus* and *Moliere*, and is conſiderably altered from *Dryden's* Play, of the ſame name, with reſpect to the Omiſſion of ſome exceptionable and indelicate Parts.—The Scene lies in *Thebes*. It was revived in the year 1756, at this Theatre, with *Moliere's* Dialogue-Prologue between *Mercury* and *Night*, introduced in the firſt Scene, and the Addition of ſome new Muſic; the old being compoſed by the celebrated Mr *Purcell*—We believe the interlude between *Plutus* and *Wit*, &c. was introduced in the year 1769, and the Muſic compoſed by Mr. *Dibdin*, but of this we are not abſolutely certain.—The Story, as well as the Merit of the Piece, is too generally known, to render any Account of either neceſſary here. As it now ſtands, it is a very pleaſing Performance, and is very judiciously cleaned of thoſe looſe and indelicate Paſſages, which had for many years been the reaſon of its prohibition from the Stage.

With reſpect to the Representation, the critical Obſerver will meet with every ſatisfaction he can poſſibly wiſh for; the Characters in general being excellently performed, parti-

118 THEATRICAL REVIEW,
particularly those of *Jupiter, Mercury, Gripus,*
Socia, Phædra, Bromia, and Alcmena.

To which was added,
HARLEQUIN'S INVASION.

See Page 24.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Oct.* 26.
The MERCHANT OF VENICE.

See Page 110.

To which was added,
LOVE A-LA-MODE.

See Page 121.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *Oct.* 28.
The SCHOOL FOR RAKES,
A Comedy.

THIS Comedy has been attributed to Mrs. *Griffiths*, well known to the Public by the letters between *Henry* and *Frances*, who has also favoured the world with two Comedies, viz. *The Platonic Wife*, and *The Double Mistake*.

The Plot of this Comedy is taken from the *Eugenie* of M. *Beaumarchais*, a Piece of great reputation upon the French Stage, but the Characters are evidently borrowed from the *Clarissa Harlowe* of *Richardson*, the *Tom Jones* of *Fielding*, and several of our best Comedies, which we need not enumerate, the
copies

copies being so much like the originals as to render our prefixing names to them absolutely unnecessary. When the plan was first adopted, the Author found great difficulty in adapting it to the British Stage; for though the *French* Writer had laid the Scene in *England*, the manners were *Spanish*, and the undertaking would for this reason have been wholly laid aside, had not our *English* *Roscius*, who suggested the design, assisted also in the execution.

The Piece contains a few inaccuracies, but the Incidents are interesting, the Characters in general well drawn, and many of the Scenes calculated to afford pleasure, though rather of the serious cast, for we meet with very little to excite laughter. The Language is easy and natural, though not remarkably elegant, and many of the Sentiments are just, and forcibly expressed.—The distress of *Harriot* on hearing that *Lord Eustace* (to whom she supposes herself privately married, without the least suspicion that the marriage was fraudulent) was about to marry another, is in the highest degree unnatural and absurd, as she could have no evidence that such an event was to take place, equal to the proof of its impossibility. If the private marriage had not been thought legal, it would not have satisfied her delicacy, and nothing but the contrary notion could alarm her fears, for though it was private, as her aunt was present, there could be no difficulty in proving of it.—This circumstance is a considerable blemish in the Piece, and as it might easily have been removed, we wonder it was suffered to pass.
To

To suppose her private marriage legal and capable of undoubted proof, and to suppose her wedded Lord would marry another, implies the most childish ignorance and grossest stupidity. Had *Harriot* on the report of a second marriage; and the cautions observed to conceal the first, conceived a suspicion of fraud, her alarm would have been rational and just, and the Audience would have been interested for natural distress, but in the present state of things, her fears seem founded on such inconsistent principles as excite contempt rather than commiseration. — The Fable is conducted with some degree of regularity and œconomy, but the Catastrophe is not happily produced, for the change of conduct and sentiment in the different parties is not sufficiently accounted for : upon the whole, however, it is a Performance of considerable merit, and capable of producing the highest satisfaction to a sensible Audience.

With respect to the Representation, nothing very particular can be said in favour of it. — Mr. *Hurst* wades through the Part of *Sir William Evans* with insufferable languor, insipidity, and affected importance : this Character was much better played by the late Mr. *Holland* during the first run of the Piece. — Mr. *King* makes the most of the trifling Part of *Captain Lloyd* ; and Mr. *Reddish* supports that of *Frampton* with considerable spirit and propriety. — *Harriot* deserves a better Representative than Mrs. *Morland* ; and it is impossible to receive critical pleasure from the Character of Miss *Winnifred Evans*, as represented by Mrs. *Hopkins* : this Character was rendered

of

for October, 1771.

121

of considerable importance by Mrs. Clive.—The other Characters are very properly supported.

To which was added,

THE INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER;

OR,

ARTHUR'S ROUND TABLE RESTORED:

A Masque, in three Parts.

THE design of this *Masque* is to present the Public with a Representation of the Ceremonies at the late *Installation of the Knights of the Order of the Garter*.—The Compiler of this Performance has made use of some select Parts from the late ingenious Mr. *West's* celebrated Dramatic Poem, entitled, *The Institution of the Order of the Garter*, which, we believe, was first published in the year 1742, and has since been republished in Mr. *Doddsley's* admired Collection of Poems, Vol. II.—The selected Parts from this Poem, with a few necessary alterations and the addition of some comic Scenes, are made the Vehicle for the Ceremonies of the late Festival.—Mr. *West*, in order to give a greater variety, and to introduce some particular Characters into his Poem, has taken advantage of a licence usually allowed to Poets, of departing a little from Chronology, and postponing the Institution of the Order for a few years.---Under the sanction of this respectable authority, the Compiler of this Performance, has ventured to make use of the same poetical licence, by

122 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

throwing the Institution of the Order as many years backward, as Mr. *West* has brought it forward, having made the Black Prince nine years younger than he was when he was knighted, but this Anachronism will be excused for the sake of the application, as well as some other Liberties of less consequence, necessarily taken for the sake of rendering the whole more Theatrical. --The Scene of this Piece, as in Mr. *West's* Poem, is laid at *Windsor*, in the time of *King Edward the Third*, and the Characters being dressed in the Old *English* Habits, contribute to render it a Picture of the Age in that Reign.---The principal speaking Characters are,

King Edward III,
Edward the Black Prince,
Genius of England,
Sir Dingle, the King's Fool,
Nat. Needle, a Taylor,
Countryman,
Spirits,
Chief of the Druids,
Queen Philippa, Knights, Gentlemen, Attendants, Mob, &c. &c.

We have marked those Parts taken verbatim from Mr. *West's* Poem with one Asterisk, and those altered from it with two, that our Readers may be informed what use has been made of this Poem without a reference.

After an Overture the Curtain rises, and discovers in the first Scene three Spirits calling down other Spirits of Patriots, Bards, &c, to attend the *Genius of Britain* in his descent upon earth.

** First Spirit.*

Hither, all ye heav'nly pow'rs,
From your empyreal bow'rs ;
From the fields for ever gay,
From the star-pav'd milky way,
From the Moon's relucant horn,
From the star that wakes the morn ;
From the bow, whose mingling dyes
Sweetly cheer the frowning skies ;
From the silver cloud that sails
Shadowy o'er the darken'd vales ;
From th' Elysiums of the sky,
Spirits immortal, hither fly

** Chorus of Spirits.*

Fly and thro' the limpid air
Guard in pomp the sliding car,
Which to his terrestrial throne,
Wafts Britannia's Genius down,

** Second Spirit.*

Hither, all ye heav'nly pow'rs !
From your empyreal bow'rs !
Chiefly ye, whose brows divine
Crown'd with starry circlets shine ;
Who in various labours try'd,
Once Britannia's strength and pride,
Now in everlasting rest
Share the glories of the blest !
Peers and nobles of the sky,
Spirits immortal, hither fly !

*** Chorus of Bards and Spirits Answer.*

We fly, and charm the limpid air
While the softly sliding car
To his sea-encircled throne,
Wafts Britannia's Genius down

** Third Spirit.*

Hither too, ye tuneful throng,
Masters of enchanting Song,

124 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Sacred Bards ! whose rapt'rous strains
 Sooth the toiling Hero's pains,
 Sooth the Patriot's gen'rous cares ;
 Sweetly thro' their ravish'd ears
 Whisp'ring to th' immortal mind,
 Heav'nly visions, hopes refin'd ;
 Hopes of endless peace and fame,
 Safe from envy's blasting flame,
 Pure, sincere, in those abodes,
 Where to throngs of list'ning Gods,
 Hymning Bards, to Virtue's praise,
 Tune their never-dying lays.
 Sweet Encomiasts of the sky,
 Spirits immortal, hither fly !

After the above Speeches are spoken by the Spirits, and the intervening Chorusses sung, the Scene opens and discovers a Prospect of *Windsor-Castle*, and the *Genius of England* descending, attended by *Spirits* and *Bards*, who sing the following Chorus :

We wake our harps to *Britain's* weal,
 Our bosoms glow with heav'nly love,
 The bliss that spotless *Patriot's* feel,
 Is kindred to the bliss above.

After the Chorus, the *Genius* solicits their assistance with the *Druids* (who come forward as the Spirits retire) to influence the King's choice, as much depended on making the first Election. The Chief *Druid* approves of the request, and they retire with the *Genius* to execute the purpose, while the *Bards* remain and sing the following Semichorus and Song, in order to drive all Demons and evil Spirits away, lest they should counteract their sacred operations. The Dialogue between the *Genius* and the Chief *Druid* may be found in Mr.

West's

West's Poem, though not exactly in the form in which it is spoke, being altered for the sake of brevity, but the Song is taken literally.

* * *Chorus of Bards.*

Gentle Spirit, we obey,
Thus we charm the silent air;
Fiends and Demons shall not stay,
Raptures of the blest to share.

* S O N G.

First Bard.

I.

Ye southern gales, that ever fly
In frolick April's vernal train,
Who, as you skim along the sky,
Dip your light pinions in the main,
Then shake them, fraught with genial show'rs,
O'er blooming Flora's primrose-bow'rs.

II.

Now cease awhile your wanton sport,
Now drive each threat'ning cloud away;
Then to the flow'ry vale resort,
And hither all its sweets convey;
And ever, as you dance along,
With softest murmurs aid our Song.

Chorus repeated : *Gentle Spirit, &c.*

After the *Bards* have exerted all the Powers of their Music, the Scene changes and discovers the *Chapel* of *St George* with the Knights elected in their Stalls : *King Edward* comes forward and meets the *Prince of Wales*, who is presented with the Robe, Garter, and Chain while the King speaks.

* * Edward, approach, below'd and noble Son,
In whom my heart more joys, and glories more,
Than in the highest pride of sovereign pow'r :
Last I admit thee, Edward, Prince of Wales ;

126 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Thus to compleat the number of our Order,
 In evidence whereof—receive this Robe
 Of heavenly hue, ennobled by the Shield
 And ensign of our faith—about thy knee
 Be bound that mystick Garter ; to denote
 The Bond of Honour, that together ties
 The Brethren of St. George in friendly league,
 United to maintain the cause of truth
 And Justice only——“ May propitious Heav’n
 Grant that thou may’st henceforth wear it to his
 praise,

“ The exaltation of this noble Order,
 “ And thy own glory.”——With like reverence,
 “ My Son, receive and wear this golden Chain,
 “ Graced with the image of Britannia’s Saint,
 “ Heav’n’s valiant Soldier, Cappadocian George ;
 “ In imitation of whose glorious deeds,
 “ May’st thou triumphant in each state of life,
 “ Or prosperous, or adverse, still subdue
 “ Thy spiritual and carnal Enemies ;
 “ That not on earth alone thou may’st obtain
 “ The guerdon of thy valour, endless praise,
 “ But with the virtuous, and the brave above,
 “ In solemn triumph, wear celestial palms,
 “ To crown thy final noblest victory.”

[*Embraces the Prince.*]

Prince Edward.

Accept, my sovereign liege, my grateful thanks,
 That thou hast thus vouchsaf’d to place thy Son
 So near thyself upon the roll of fame :
 And may thy Benediction, gracious Lord,
 May thy paternal vows be heard in heav’n !
 That he whom thou hast lifted in the cause
 Of truth and virtue, never may forget
 His vow’d engagements, nor defraud the hopes,
 By foiling with dishonourable deeds
 The lustre of that Order, which thy name
 Shou’d teach him to respect and to adorn.

Chorus,

shall be admitted, at a certain wicket, to partake of the remainder of the feast. This gives general satisfaction, and they all retire huzzaing to the wicket.---The Scene now opens, discovering a prospect of *Windsor-Castle* from within the gate, with *St. George's Chapel* on one side, and the Poor Knight's houses on the other. Here the Procession of the King and Knights to *St. George's Hall*, with which the second Part concludes.

The *third part* opens with a view of *St. George's Hall*, where the Knights are discovered feasting at the *Round Table*. After some martial Music, the *King* drinks to the Knights, and the Prince's Titles being called over, a number of Warriors enter, and perform several exercises with the spear, sword, &c. before the illustrious Company, at the conclusion of which, *Sir Dingle* enters and informs the *Knights*, &c. that the Mob are waiting with the utmost impatience for the remainder of the feast, whereupon the *King* gives the word for their entrance, and this Scene closes. The comic Characters have a Scene in an other apartment of the Hall, and after making a violent and confused noise, they enter through the door of a Gothic Chamber, disputing with one another for the different things they have taken from the feast: among the rest *Nat. Needle* enters drunk, and being quarrelsome in his cups challenges *Sir Dingle*, however the affair is soon made up, and they all go off together on friendly terms.

The Scene then changes to a *Garden*; soft Music is heard at a distance, while the *Gemius*

130 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

of *England* leads on *King Edward*, who seems surprised at his being brought there, and says,

* What art thou, Stranger, and why thus apart
With looks of sweet benevolence and love,
To these delightful shades, with which my eyes,
If mem'ry fails not, ne'er were charm'd before;
Draw't thou our steps by some resistless pow'r?

Genius.

* Behold the guardian Genius of this Isle,
Descending from the realms of cloudless day!
Invisible I've watch'd thy glorious deeds,
But on this solemn day I have vouchsaf'd
To manifest my presence; to declare
Not in those whispers, which have often spoke
Peace to thy conscious heart, but audibly,
And evident to all, th' assent of heav'n
To the great business, which hath gather'd here
This troop of worthies from all Nations round:
Know that those actions which are great and good,
Receive a nobler sanction from the free
And universal voice of all mankind,
Which is the voice of Heav'n, than from the
highest,

The most illustrious act of regal pow'r.

This noble sanction, Edward, in the name,
Not of this age alone, but latest time,
Here do I solemnly annex to each
Of thy great acts, but chief to this most wise,
Most virtuous institution, which extends
Wide as thy fame, beyond your empire's bound,
A prize of virtue publish'd to the world.

Ye registers of Heav'n record the deed!

[A Chorus of Bards, Druids and Spirits unseen,
repeat it]

Ye registers of Heav'n record the deed!

Edward.

** 'Tis wond'rous all! my heart expands beyond
Its mortal bounds to more than earthly bliss!

Genius.

Genius.

More wonders are prepar'd for thee, O king!
 Behold what precious fruit the tree shall bear,
 Thy hand has planted in this happy isle!
 Visions of glory strike his raptur'd sight!
 Ye unborn ages, croud upon his soul!
 Spirits, attend!—unfold futurity!—
 Now, Edward, taste that bliss, which ever flows
 From royal virtues, has flow'd, and shall flow
 From thee, Friend, Guardian, Father of thy
 people.

Here a *Vision* descends, in which appear
Britannia, Mistress of the World, crowned
 with Laurel, *Neptune* at her feet offering his
 Trident, the four Parts of the world submitting
 to her Dominion, with *Peace*, *Plenty*, and
 the *Arts* attending; on the sight of this, the
 King says,

“ This is too much for human strength to bear,
 “ Hold, hold my heart—th' excess of joy o'er-
 whelms me!”

The *Genius* now orders the Spirits to ascend;
 the *Vision* rises supported by the Temple of
Victory. The *King* appearing surprized at
 what he has beheld, the *Genius* says,

“ Astonishment seas up his lips—his heart
 Runs o'er with gratitude—thy God-like mind
 Exalts thee, Edward, above human-kind;
 And from the realms of everlasting day,
 Calls down celestial Bards thy praise to sing;
 Calls a bright troop of Spirits to survey
 Thee, the great miracle on earth, a Patriot King!

The *Bards*, *Druids*, and Spirits now enter,
 and conclude the whole with the following
 Chorus,

132 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

* Hail mighty Nation, ever fam'd in war !
Lo, heav'n descends, thy festivals to share ;
Celestial Bards in living lays shall sing,
Britannia's glories, and her matchless King.

Having given our Readers as circumstantial an account of this Entertainment as is necessary, we shall proceed to make a few observations as to its general merits and defects.

We are informed in a printed Advertisement prefixed to the book of the Songs, Chorusses, and serious Dialogue, in this Masque, that the eager and almost universal curiosity, which the late *Installation of the Knights of the Order of the Garter* excited in the Public, seemed, in a manner, to command the attention of the Managers, and to justify their endeavours to exhibit a Representation of it in the Masque now before us. This jesuitical insinuation is as contemptible as it is false. The Public was too wofully cloyed last Season with Mr. Garrick's Hobby-horse, the *Jubilee*, to wish for any thing similar to it again so soon : besides, though the Public probably never saw any thing like the *Jubilee* before, (and, we doubt not, never wish to see such a trumpery Performance again) *The Installation of the Knights of the Order of the Garter*, is not a new thing ; and consequently, the Ceremonies of this Festival are not unknown to the Public—It is well known from experience, that to satisfy the curiosity of the Public, is not the object of Managerial Attention in cases of this nature, but the gratification of
their

their own avaricious views. For, though the producing one of these illegitimate Bantlings of the Drama, is attended with a considerable expence, it has ever been the custom, during the shameful and unprecedented run of these Raree-shew Performances, to obtrude the most insipid Plays and contemptible Actors on the Public; by which means, the expence of three or four new Plays, (which ought to be brought out every season) with large Salaries to good Actors, is saved, which will more than defray the expence of a Pantomime, or a Jubilee, six times over.

We are told in the printed Advertisement mentioned above, that it was impossible to bring Mr. *West's* celebrated Poem of *The Institution of the Order of the Garter* on the Stage, as it was originally written, because, though rich in Machinery, it was little more than a Poem in Dialogue without Action. This we readily admit, but surely, a better use might have been made of this elegant Poem, than what is now offered to the Public?—Might not the different Candidates for the Honour of the Garter, in Mr. *West's* Poem, have been introduced in the Masque? It is true, the Speeches in which they declare their pretensions are long, and would have rendered the Performance tedious, unless reduced, but this might easily have been executed, so as to have given spirit and variety to the whole.—As it now stands, the Poem is miserably mutilated, and discovers neither taste nor judgement in the alteration. Had the different Candidates been introduced, their Speeches would have afforded an address to the understanding.

134 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

standing, far preferable to the *Vision*, which is at best but a Pantomimical Trick, and very indifferently executed.

With respect to the *comic* Scenes, the first is tolerable, but owes much of its success to the eminent Abilities of Messrs. *King*, *Weston*, and *Parsons*. The second is intolerable, and beneath the dignity of *Sadler's Wells*, or a Booth in *Bartholomew Fair*, though supported by those eminent Performers. —

The View of St. George's Chapel, and the Ceremony of the Installation in the first part is as well as could be expected; the Procession of the *Knights* to St. George's Hall, in the second part, is showy, and so is the Feast of the *Knights* at the *Round Table* in the third part, but neither of these *grand* spectacles, as they are stiled, have any thing interesting, especially as the same Characters are seen in each of them, and, in short, seem only calculated for the meridian of the Upper-gallery. Some of the Scenes are well executed as far as the Painters are concerned, but others are deserving of very little praise, particularly the first Scene, which appears to be very indifferently finished, and was considered as such by the greatest part of the Audience, on the first night's Representation. The form of the vehicle in which the *Genius* of *England* descends, appears to be oddly constructed, and the Clouds round it are so coarsely represented, as to destroy the appearance of reality. The *Vision* Scene is well imagined, but when that rises, the manner in which the *Temple* of *Victory* is dragged up after it, produces a very odd effect.

The

The Dresses of the *Spirits, Druids, Bards, &c.* are well fancied, but we think if those of the *Spirits* had been a little longer, they would have been more consistent with decency than they now are—With respect to the Music, no Part, except the Overture, is worthy notice, for all the rest is tame and insipid, consisting chiefly, as to the Melodies, of hackneyed Passages from other Composers, unaccompanied with harmonious Combinations. The unavoidable Langour ever attendant on such exhibitions as these, should always be assisted with the most forcible and spirited Music: But, we apprehend the Managers have private reasons for employing Mr. *Dibdin*, notwithstanding they inform the Public in their printed Advertisement, that *no expence has been spared, or any object of attention overlooked.*

What the Compiler has introduced of his own, is a very indifferent specimen either of his taste or his judgement, the Song sung by Sir *Dingle's* Gentleman Usher, in the second part, is contemptible in the highest degree, but the last Stanza is a true description of this *wonderful* Performance, and renders all further Criticism unnecessary.

O the glorious Installation!
 Happy Nation!
 You shall see the noble Knights!
 Charming fights!
 Feathers wagging,
 Velvet dragging,
 Trailing, sailing on the ground;
 Loud in talking,
 Proud in walking,
 Nodding, ogling, smirking round—
 O the glorious, &c.

From

From such Poetry mercy deliver us.—Besides the Author has made a very considerable blunder in the eighth line—*Loud in ta'king*—the Procession being all dumb shew. There is such an evident sameness in all Processions, and in every Exhibition of this nature, as unavoidably renders them tedious and insupportable; and when we consider how uninteresting, and how destitute of moral instruction they are, we confess we cannot behold them with critical pleasure, at the same time that we greatly fear they contribute too powerfully towards the indulgence of that passion for folly and extravagance, which seems to be the characteristic of the present Age: what may be the consequence of this extravagance in future times, is a circumstance horrible to serious reflection!—After all, however happy the Compiler of this Performance may be, and however he may exult on the ingenuity and masterly execution of his plan, we think we may justly title it,

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING :

By David Garrick, Esq.

As many of our Readers may not understand, on what ground, the Feast of the *Knights at Arthur's Round Table* is introduced, it will not be superfluous to inform them; that *King Edward* being engaged in a war with *France*, for the obtaining that Crown, in order to draw into *England* great multitudes of Foreigners, with whom he might negotiate either for their personal service, or aid of troops to assist him in that undertaking, ordered, during the truce that then subsisted between

tween the two Crowns, publication to be made of a great tournament, to be held at *Windsor*; an expedient, says *Rapin*, which could not fail of success, because it was intirely agreeable to the Taste of the Age. Accordingly, many persons of distinction came over, to all of whom he gave an honourable reception, caressing them in such a manner, that they could never sufficiently admire his politeness, magnificence, and liberality. To render these Entertainments the more solemn, and to free himself also from the ceremonies, to which the difference of rank and condition would have subjected him, he caused a circular hall of boards to be run up at *Windsor*, two hundred feet in diameter. There it was that he feasted all the *Knights* at one table, which was called the *Round-Table*, in memory of the great *Arthur*, who, as it is pretended, instituted an Order of Knighthood by that name. Next year he caused a more solid building to be erected, that he might continue yearly the same diversions. During that time he treated with several Lords about the aids, wherewith each could furnish him, in proportion to his forces. His rival King *Philip* could not see without jealousy, *Spaniards*, *Italians*, *Germans*, *Flemings*, and *Frenchmen* themselves, flock to *England* to assist at these tournaments. He suspected some hidden design in these entertainments, and to break *Edward's* measures, caused the like to be published in his Dominions; which meeting with success, proved a countermine to *Edward's* main design, so that he did not long continue to keep up his *Round-Table*. From thence however,

138 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

it is generally agreed, he took the hint of instituting the *Order of the Garter*; which was first solemnized, on the 23d. of *April*, 1350, being *St. George's Day*, which Saint is made the Patron of the Order. But as his purpose in erecting this Order was very different from that, which had induced him to revive *Arthur's Round Table*, as he had in this no private views, no ambitious scheme of engaging such as should be admitted into this Fraternity to assist him in his wars, he thought proper, in order to obviate the like jealousies and suspicions as had alarmed King *Philip*, to signify by his Motto the purity of his intentions, and to retort shame upon all those who should put any malignant construction upon his design in instituting this Order. This therefore, seems to be the true meaning and import of the famous Motto, *HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE*. The not understanding of which gave rise, in all probability, to that vulgar Story of the *Countess of Salisbury's* Garter, rejected by all the best Writers.—When *Edward* had communicated his intention of instituting this Order to the great Council of the realm, and it received their approbation, he dispatched his Heralds to several parts of *Europe*, to invite all that were eminent for military virtue, &c. to be present at its Institution. And his Queen *Philippa*, on her part, assembled a train of three hundred of the fairest Ladies to grace the solemnity, and add to its magnificence. Besides the great Persons of our own nation, that have been admitted to this Order, the names of *Charles V. Emperor* of

of Germany; of Francis I, and Henry IV. Kings of France, and of Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, may be found in the annals of the Garter.

After what has already been observed, we cannot help making a few remarks on the inconsistent Conduct of the Acting Manager at this Theatre.

This Gentleman is known to have a happy talent for catching at local and temporary circumstances, for the purposes of indulging his own avarice. But, alas! how few are the instances he has of late given, of an attention to that importance for which a Theatre was first established; and, which, ought to have been his peculiar care, as a grateful return for repeated, and, we may say, unprecedented instances of Public Favour? There was a time, when this Gentleman exclaimed against *pantomimical mummeries* with remarkable severity, and professed himself a Champion for the credit and honour of the *British* Theatre, with a degree of ardour bordering upon enthusiasm. How did he once labour to recal the public taste from folly and absurdity, to an admiration for the works of our immortal *Shakespeare*? — Have we not been taught by this Gentleman, to

“ Become Old Britons, and admire Old Ben?”

Can it be supposed we have forgot the following ironical lines in his Epilogue to the Tragedy of *Barbarossa*, wherein he meant to ridicule the corrupt taste of the age, for those incongruous Medleys called *Pantomimes*?

“ Send

- " Send o'er your Shakespeares to the Sons of
 France,
 " Let them grow grave—Let us begin to dance!
 " Banish your gloomy Scenes to foreign climes,
 " Reserve alone to bless these golden times,
 " A Farce or two—and Woodward's Panto-
 " mimes.

The Public saw the importance of the reformation this Gentleman aimed at, and with a laudable spirit, gave him encouragement and support, not doubting, but they should soon see

- " *Scenic Virtue form the rising age,*
 " *And Truth diffuse her radiance from the Stage.*"

Justice obliges us to acknowledge, that for a time, the proposed Reformation was pursued with unabating industry. The works of our most celebrated Dramatic Poets were revived; while many Plays, in a few particulars exceptionable, were judiciously altered, and restored worthy of Public notice, which otherwise, had sunk into oblivion, and been totally lost to the *British* Theatre. The purity of the Stage, was, also, for a time, carefully attended to, by the banishment of such Plays as had an immoral tendency, and did not aim to promote the cause of Virtue and Morality.

After all this, how shall we account for this Gentleman's giving encouragement to those extravagant and absurd Entertainments he once so justly condemned? What a change of Conduct! What an affront to common Sense! What a despicable compliment to the public Taste of one of the most respectable Nations in Europe!—Can it be supposed, that in this
 polished

for October, 1771.

141

polished age, when an almost universal Knowledge prevails, the public Taste can demand such unmeaning and uninstruative Entertainments, as *Pantomimes*, *Jubilees*, and *Installations*?—No—Public Taste, and even Common Sense, condemns them; but public Spirit lies dormant, or hesitates in the forming its resolutions to suppress these pernicious Innovations.—Rouse *Britons*, rouse from your Lethargy, lest you render the disease incurable, by not administering a remedy till it is too late.—Shew your contempt of *Pantomimes*, *Jubilees* and *Installations*; give encouragement to Genius, by demanding a choice of new Plays every season, that the *British* Theatre, may be restored to its pristine importance and glory, and common sense no longer be wounded by the usurpations of Folly and Absurdity.— But more of this hereafter.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Oct. 28.

The BEGGAR's OPERA.

See Page 1.

WITH respect to the Representation, Mr. *Mattocks* is very feeble and inexpressive through the whole Part of *Macbeth*.— We wish to see Mrs. *Mattocks* in the Character of *Lucy* instead of *Polly*, not that we think her devoid of merit in the latter. *Peacbum* and *Locket* are very well supported by Messrs. *Yates* and *Dunfall*, and we are glad to have an opportunity of speaking favourably of Mrs. *Kincent*, whose Performance in the Character of

142. THEATRICAL REVIEW,

of Mrs. *Peacum* is very respectable. The other Characters are supported with no inconsiderable share of merit.

To which was added,

M O T H E R S H I P T O N.

See Page 83.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Oct. 29.

The CONSCIOUS LOVERS:

A Comedy, by Sir Richard Steele.

THIS well known Comedy, was first performed at *Drury-Lane Theatre*, in the year 1721, where it met with prodigious success; and, when printed, it was dedicated to King George I. who made the Author a Present of five hundred Pounds.

The Ground-work of this Piece, is evidently borrowed from the *Andrea* of Terence—The folly of Duelling, and the pernicious absurdity of what is falsely called the *Point of Honour*, is here exhibited in very strong colours: A Design so noble, and praise-worthy, as must ever recommend this Play to the notice of the sensible and thinking Part of Mankind. This interesting particular seems to have been the Author's principal Aim, and, indeed, Sir *Richard*, acknowledges as much, when he declares, that his whole intention in writing this Comedy, was to introduce the Scene betwixt *Young Bevil* and *Myrtle*, in the fourth Act—It has been asserted, but we know not with

with what truth, that the Author was assisted by Mr. Colley Cibber, who is supposed to have added the Characters of *Tom* and *Philis* to this Piece, who hold a very considerable share in it, and afford a very happy contrast to the other, more grave, Characters, being very naturally drawn, and exquisitely finished—The general Design and Execution of this Piece, is masterly; the Conduct of the Plot is regular; the Incidents afford a pleasing perplexity, the Characters are natural, and have sufficient variety; the Language is free and polite; the Sentiments instructive, and the Moral excellent. It is not an admired Piece with the multitude, but, has always met with a favourable reception from a sensible and polite Audience.

With respect to the Representation of this Comedy here, in the present dearth of good Actors; Mr. *Reddish*, stands foremost in the Part of *Young Bevil*, and in some of the Scenes, will not fail of giving pleasure to the critical Observer—Mr. *Jefferson*, is no way displeasing in *Myrtle*, but wants volubility and variety for the support of the Character, which, on this account, is but faintly represented by this Gentleman. *Sir John Bevil*, is rather an insipid and inconsistent Character, but does not suffer any injustice from Mr. *Burton*'s Performance. *Sealand*, is a Character, into which, Mr. *Aickin* seems to be forced by Managerial Authority, without either his own consent, or the consent of Nature, and being unsuitable to the Genius of his Abilities, is not well

144 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

well figured by him. *Cimberton*, is not badly represented by Mr. *Love*, who would hit off the singular vein of humour in this Character with considerable credit, could he divest himself of his accustomed dryness, and pedantic indolence. There cannot surely, be a greater instance of Managerial Inattention, than the appointing Mr. *Waldron*, to the Part of *Daniel*, when it might be excellently played, either by Mr. *Weston*, or Mr. *W. Palmer*—*Tom*, that pleasing party-coloured Coxcomb, was never more naturally, or more happily represented, than by Mr. *King*, whose just and animated Performance in this Character deserves the highest tribute of praise. The same degree of respect is due to Miss *Pope*, in the Part of *Phillis*. Miss *Younge* affords critical satisfaction in the Part of *Indiana*; her conceptions are just and natural, and her whole Performance is correct, pleasing, and interesting.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 141.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Oct. 29.

The MERCHANT OF VENICE.

See Page 35, and 110.

To which was added.

LOVE A - L A - M O D E.

See Page 121.

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Oct. 30.

D O U G L A S :

A Tragedy, by Mr. Home.

THE Public is indebted to this *Caledonian* Bard, for four Dramatic Pieces, all Tragedies, viz. *Douglas*, *Agis*, *The Siege of Aquileia*, and *The Fatal Discovery*; though we do not believe this Gentleman publicly owned the last, but it was generally understood to be his during the run of the Piece—As *Douglas* was the first Play produced by this Author, so it is, undoubtedly, the best. The Story is founded on the history of the disputes and contentions between the Families of *Douglas* and other of the *Scots* Clans. It was first performed at *Edinburgh*, and afterwards in *London*, and, at both places, met with considerable applause.

The Plot of this Piece is not strictly regular, but the Unities are strictly adhered to; it abounds with some Pathos, but the Incidents are few, and though some of them are pleasingly affecting, we meet with others of very little importance. The Sentiments are moral though common; the Language in general is easy and chaste; many of the Descriptions are picturesque, and truly poetical; it is supported with few Characters, and these are not well chosen, though they do not want variety; the Catastrophe is not very happily produced, nor do we think it just; and the whole is rather tedious than interesting; notwithstanding which we think it entitled to a considerable degree of praise.

146 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

We cannot quit this Article, without acquainting our Readers that the Author, being a Clergyman belonging to the established Church of *Scotland*, was severely persecuted by the bigotted Elders of the *Kirk*, and other rigid and zealous Religionists of that persuasion; who carried their resentment so far, as to expel Mr. *Home* from their Communion, and deprive him of his ecclesiastical preferments, for the crime (as they called it) of first writing a Play, and afterwards suffering it to be represented. This unprecedented and unmerited persecution, procured Mr. *Home* many powerful friends among Persons of the first Distinction, who recommended the Author, (a Man of an irreproachable Character) and his sufferings, to his present Majesty, then *Prince of Wales*, who nobly relieved his distresses, by generously granting him a Pension; thus did this injured Gentleman, reap an unexpected advantage from the illiberal and malevolent attacks of ecclesiastical Tyranny.

Excepting the Characters of *Douglas* and *Anna*, the representation of this Play here, has considerable Merit. But why will the Managers expose Mr. *Brereton*, by suffering him to play the pleasing Character of *Douglas*? We are sorry we are obliged to notice this shameful instance of managerial Inattention, for fear it should injure a young Performer; but it is no disgrace, nor can it be prejudicial to any Actor, to remark, that a particular Character is not suited to his Abilities; for even the most general Player, has not an equal degree of Merit in all the Characters

acters he represents. The filial and social Sentiments ; the Ideas of Glory ; and the pleasing Narratives, in the part of *Douglas*, suffer great Injury from Mr. *Brereton*, and the least we can say on this head, is, that we really pity his situation, when we behold him in this interesting Character. When next this Play is performed, we hope to see Mr. *Reddish* in the part of *Douglas*.—Lord *Randolph* never appears to greater Advantage than in the Hands of Mr. *Jefferson*, nor has Criticism a wish beyond what it beholds in his Performance of this Character.—Mr. *Palmer*, is not destitute of Merit in *Glenalvon* ; but we think he has not sufficiently conceived the Poet's intention. We are of opinion, that this Gentleman has Abilities to render his Performance much more respectable. if he would study this subtle and spirited Character with greater attention, than he at present appears to have done. *Old Norval* is a pleasing and interesting Character, and has no claim upon Mr. *Packer* for want of Attention, Propriety, or Sensibility.—*Lady Randolph* is very finely represented by Mrs. *Barry* ; her performance in this Character, is powerfully expressive, affecting, and satisfactory to critical Examination.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.

148 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Oct. 30.*

The M I S E R :

A Comedy, by Henry Fielding, Esq.

By Command of their Majesties.

THIS Comedy is founded on the *Avare* of Moliere, being, indeed, little more than a translation of that celebrated Play. It is frequently acted with good success, but though the Work of this justly admired Genius, we think it, upon the whole, a very indifferent Performance.—We have nothing to Remark, with respect to the representation of this Comedy here, the Characters in general being well supported, only we wish Mr. Shuter, in the Character of the *Miser*, (and indeed in all the Parts he plays) would endeavour to imitate Nature with more exactness, and be less of the Buffoon. He sports with propriety, and departs from chastity, either from incorrectness, inattention, or a foolish desire of rendering himself agreeable to the *Canaille*.

To which was added,

The K N I G H T S :

A Comedy of two Acts, by Mr. Foote.

THIS is a very laughable Performance, containing some Scenes of high Merriment. The Characters are drawn with great spirit, and a degree of accuracy which would render them worthy of appearing in a more regular and complete Comedy.—Some exceptions may be made to the Conduct of the
Drama,

for October, 1771.

149

Drama, notwithstanding which, it will ever afford considerable Entertainment in the Representation.—It is excellently performed at this Theatre, particularly as to the principal Characters.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Oct. 31.

THE WAY TO KEEP HIM:

A Comedy, by Mr. Murphy.

THIS pleasing Comedy made its first appearance, as a regular Piece of five Acts, in the year 1761, having been brought on the Stage, the year before, as a *Petit Piece* of three Acts only. The favourable Reception it met with, in its first form, probably encouraged the Author, to give it a larger Extent, by the additional assistance of two new Characters, which has rendered it a very pleasing, and spirited Performance; and as at first, so it still continues, a favourite Piece with the Public. The Author's principal Aim is truly laudable, and the Execution of it, is pleasingly and happily executed. His Characters are in general strongly marked; the incidents intricate, but natural; the Sentiments lively, discovering strength of judgment and knowledge of life; and the whole Conduct of the Piece is judiciously contrived to produce a pleasing and natural Catastrophe, in which the Author has shewn himself a perfect Master of Theatrical Action, and its Effects.

150 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

This Gentleman has suffered heavy charges of Plagiarism, from some of the wou'd-be Critics, who seem to envy his Merit and his Success; but abuse is a tax generally levied upon Genius. True it is, he has collected some of his Materials from the French, but he has generally improved what he has taken from others with such pleasing advantages, as to give it the air and spirit of Originality; which discovers Talents deserving a degree of Praise infinitely superior to that of a dull Copyist: to this we may add, as a general Character of this Gentleman's dramatic Pieces, that his aim seems to center in the production of something useful; and therefore his Deficiencies, which, in our Opinion, are but trifling, do not ought to be treated with critical Severity.

The truth of this last Remark, is sufficiently verified in the Piece now before us, the Design of which, is to convince the married part of the female Sex, how mistaken they are in their Conduct, and how much unhappiness they frequently Occasion, even to themselves, by neglecting, after Marriage, to make use of the same arts, the same assiduity to please, not only in the decoration of their Persons, but as to complacency of temper and behaviour, to preserve the affections of the Husband, as they had before it, put in practice to awaken and engage the passions of the Lover. This Doctrine is, here, so strongly and pleasingly enforced by Precept, and illustrated by Example, that we doubt not but it has frequently

for October, 1771.

151

quently been productive of that Reformation it is intended to promote.

The Representation of this Play here, is very respectable; the principal Characters being very well performed. We remember Mr. Yates in the Character of *Sir Bashful Constant*, who had considerable Merit, but the loss of this Performer, here, in this Part, is very advantageously supplied by nature's own Comedian, Mr. King, whose animated Performance in this Character, is highly pleasing and satisfactory. Mr. Reddish gives critical Pleasure in *Lovemore*; Mr. Dodd supports the Part of *Sir Brilliant Fashign*, with propriety and spirit; the under Characters, Male and Female, are exceedingly well play'd, Miss Younge's Performance in Mrs. *Lovemore*, though the first time of her appearing in this Character, was expressive and perfectly correct; and lastly, that natural vivacity Mrs. Abington so abundantly possesses, renders her agreeable to critical Examination in the Part of the *Widow Belmour*; she seems to fill the Author's intention very perfectly.

To which was added,

THE INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, OCT. 31.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

See Page 110.

To which was added,

LOVE A-LA-MODE.

H 4

DRURY.

152 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *November, 1.*

THE WEST INDIAN.

See Page 8.

To which was added,

THE INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Nov. 1.*

LOVE IN A VILLAGE.

See Page 52.

WITH respect to the Representation of this Opera here, it is in some instances better performed, and in others much worse, than at the other House, so that, on the whole, we think the two Houses stand on an equal footing as to merit, in this particular. A comparison will clearly prove this.—Mr. Skuter, in the Part of *Justice Woodcock*, is infinitely superior to Mr. Hartry; but then Messrs. Reinhold, Mattocks and Saunders, in the Characters of *Hawthorn*, *Young Meadows*, and *Sir Wm Meadows*, fall very short of Messrs. Vernon, Dodd and Parsons, in these Characters; the latter three being much better Actors. We prefer Mr. Dyer in *Euface*, to Mr. Fawcett. Mr. Dunstall, (who was the original *Hodge*) has considerable Merit, yet he is very faint to Mr. King, and plays the Character with less humour, and considerably less spirit.—Miss Valois, is as much below Miss Pope, in *Madge*, as Miss Pope is below

below what Miss *Davies* was, who originally played this Character ; and though but an indifferent Actress, was singularly happy in it, and afforded the highest critical Satisfaction.—Mrs. *Pitt* soars very high above Mrs. *Love*, in the Part of Mrs. *Deborah Woodcock*, not that we think her equal to the Original. We prefer Mrs. *Scott* to Mrs. *Baker*, in *Lucinda*, who, though not so good an Actress, is a much more accomplished Singer. Lastly, Mrs. *Mattocks*, justly deserves the Preference of Mrs. *Hunt*, in *Ro-tta*, being both a better Singer and a better Actress.

To which was added,

The C O M M I S S A R Y.

See Page 7.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 2.

The RECRUITING OFFICER :

A Comedy, by Farquhar.

MR. *Farquhar*, having, in one part of his Life, been in the Army, seems, in this Play, to have availed himself of the observations of Life and Character, which the Army undoubtedly was able so amply to supply him with ; the principal Characters being naturally drawn and very highly finished. The Scene is laid at *Shrewsbury*, at which Place, it is said, the Play was written, the Author having resided there, some time, in the military Capacity of a

154 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Recruiting Officer; and, it is supposed, he drew the Character of *Captain Plume*, as a portrait of himself.

The success of this Piece, at first, and the frequent repetition of it every season, makes it almost unnecessary to enter into a critical account of it. The Subject is very happily chosen, and pleasingly embellished with a variety of Characters; but neither the conduct of the Plot, incidents, or sentiments, are wholly secure against objection. The first being vague and unconnected, the second in some respects improbable, and the last frequently reprehensible. The Dialogue is natural and unaffected, the Wit spirited and genuine, but not such as would gain ground on critical Examination, being frequently loose and indelicate, and founded on reproachable Circumstances. Upon the whole, the Piece discovers the Author to have been a man of a lively imagination, and not unacquainted with the nature of dramatic Action, and its effects. Were we to point out the Defects of this Piece, they would be found to be considerable, notwithstanding which, it has singular Beauties, and cannot fail to give great pleasure in the Representation. The indelicate Speeches, frequently to be met with, are rather too gross for the morality of the present times; and as they might be omitted without injury to the Piece, we think the Stage reprehensible for continuing to use them. Some of these, are calculated to raise very offensive ideas, and therefore should either be softened or entirely omitted; and the Author was guilty of an unpardonable Error, by

by throwing some of them into *Sylvia's* Part, as they are very improper in her mouth, and highly inconsistent with the Character of a young Lady, who, from her rank in life, must be supposed to have had a polite and virtuous Education. But *Farraguar* seems to have aimed at Entertainment, more than Instruction, in most of his Pieces; for we seldom meet with the trace of a Moral in any of them. In the Piece before us we find none, nor is the Catastrophe just; for *Sylvia's* Conduct is highly censurable, and yet we find her indulged at the conclusion, in the completion of her wishes. How far this example may influence other young Ladies to hazard their virtue, in expectation of the same indulgence and happiness, we will not pretend to say.

The Representation of this Play here, excepting a few particulars, is very respectable.—How the Managers could think of shoving Mr. *Cauterley* into the Part of *Captain Plume*, is, to us, a matter of surprize; they surely must have forgot what kind of Character *Plume's* is. This Part requires Elegance, Vivacity, and the easy deportment of an accomplished Gentleman. We never remember to have seen this Character more completely performed, than by Mr. *Smith*, at *Covent-Garden Theatre*, (who is every thing Criticism can wish) nor much worse, than by Mr. *Cauterley*, who does not possess one requisite for the Character, and is the effeminate and insipid School-boy throughout the whole. To this we may add, that he was not perfect, and made a great mistake

156 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

mistake, by coming in where he should not, which obliged him to retire again. This was an unpardonable Fault, though it was the first time of his appearing in this Character. There is not much in the Character of *Justice Balance*, for any Actor to shew himself, and, therefore, it does not require any very extraordinary Talents.—Mr. *Packer* is uniform, and preserves the Author's Ideas with some degree of Sensibility and Correctness.—*Worthy* is an insipid Part, in no degree interesting, but, he is rendered more despicable than the Author intended him, by Mr. *Davies's* Representation.—Mr. *Bransby* figures *Serjeant Kite* very well, with respect to his Person, but he wants ease and volubility to render this Character pleasing, and therefore is rather heavy through the whole.—We have always considered the Character of *Captain Brazen*, as a difficult Part to perform agreeable to the Author's Intention. Mr. *King* enters into a true idea of this Part ; his precipitate snip-snap Mode of utterance marks the Character strongly, and is inimitable ; and we never remember to have seen this military Coxcomb, this ridiculous compound of Folly, vanity and whim, more pleasingly, or more faithfully represented : In short, Criticism is so perfectly satisfied as to have nothing to wish for.—The Characters of *Bullock*, and the two *Recruits*, are pleasingly performed, by Messrs. *Moody*, *Parsons* and *Weston*.—In Miss *Rogers's* Performance of *Rose*, we think there is an evident faintness, and want of
Spirit

Spirit and Vivacity, in her execution.—*Melinda* is a disagreeable Character, to the Actress who represents her, and likewise to the Audience, for which reason, no Performer is seen in a favourable light; though we confess she meets with an adequate Friend in Mrs. Reddish.—Mrs. Barry renders *Sylvia* highly agreeable, notwithstanding the Absurdities in this Character, and the repeated instances of indelicacy, almost bordering on licentiousness; so powerful are the charms of Elegance and Vivacity, of animated Expression, and Gentility of Deportment.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.

WE were not a little pleased, to observe, this Evening, that Mr. King, in the Character of *Sir Dingle*, omitted the Parody on the lines with which the third Act of *Otway's Orphan* concludes. But we think the introducing a chine of *Roast Beef*, decorated with a *flag*, to be carried off in triumph by the rabble, accompanied, from the Orchestra, with the music of the old song of that title, is a pitiful addition to the Performance, and intended only as a sacrifice to the caprice of the riotous inhabitants of the Upper-Gallery. Had this Entertainment been exhibited at a *French Theatre*, it would have had some claim to Merit. This seems to be a piece of Stage policy, arising from a consciousness, that the whole Performance is too

con-

158 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

contemptible to meet with countenance from any, but the Sons of Riot, for which reason they are bribed to support it, by this notable Trick.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 2.

The FAIR PENITENT:

A Tragedy, by Mr. Rowe.

THE Ground-work of this well known and justly admired Play, is founded on the *Fatal Dowry* of *Massinger*. The Plot is familiar and domestic, the progressive Regularity of the Scenes natural, the Characters well drawn and happily supported, the Incidents interesting, the Language strictly chaste, the Versification elegant and harmonious, the Sentiments instructive, the Catastrophe affecting and just, and the Moral excellent. It was first performed at the Theatre in *Lincoln's Inn Fields*, in the year 1703, with great success, has been constantly repeated every season since, and stands to this day in very high estimation, with all Lovers of beauty and elegance in dramatic Composition.—Were we to quote the innumerable beautiful Passages in this Play, we should extend our Paper beyond its usual limits, and therefore, we must refer our Readers to the Piece itself. Some have deemed the title of this Tragedy, a Misnomer, because it has been urged, that *Calista* cannot be considered in the light of a Penitent, as all her anguish even to the last, seems more to
arise

arise from the sense of shame than guilt: This objection is not strictly just, but, if it was, a lapse in title is no very considerable error. Pride, and her unhappy passion for *Lothario*, are her ruling Principles, we confess; but we met with some Passages, wherein she discovers sensible remorse, and resolute contrition. The greatest objection Criticism can fix on, is, the dangerous Tendency of *Lothario's* Character; evidently, a professed Libertine, without one single Virtue, or one shadow of merit in his whole Composition; and yet, he is exhibited, from first to last, in a pleasing light. This is, undoubtedly, an unpardonable error, particularly in an Author, who, in every other instance, was chaste and moral, and appears to have had instruction constantly in view.

The Representation of this Play, here, is not unworthy notice. Mr. *Smith* figures *Lothario* very pleasingly, and through the whole Part, displays executive powers, deserving praise: Though in some few instances, we think he wants Elegance, and in others emphatic Vivacity. In the present dearth of good Actors, we must not be displeased with Mr. *Bensley*, in the Part of *Horatio*, though, we are compelled to observe, that his Performance in it, does not afford the least critical Satisfaction. *Altamont*, has for some years, been represented by Mr. *Dyer*, at this Theatre. but this seems to be an unpardonable error in the Managers; for though he is very respectable in many Characters, in this, he is by no means adequate to what might be wished and expected. Mr.
Ros

160 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Ross does great credit to the Character of *Sciolto*; he carries every line to the heart, and leaves Criticism nothing to wish for.— With respect to *Lavinia* and *Calista*, we think Mrs. *Bulkley* renders the former very respectable, and marks the Author's Intention with Justice and Sensibility.—Mrs. *Yates* displays great Merit in the latter, particularly in the imperious and passionate Scenes, but we think she is very defective in those of deep distress; however, there is no Actress at this Theatre, capable of doing the Character half the justice she does.

To which was added,

THE DEUCE IS IN HIM.

See Page 112.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *November 4.*

T A M E R L A N E:

A Tragedy, by Mr Rowe.

WHAT we have already said of the *Fair Penitent* may be applied to this Play, for the general Merit is much the same, though it is generally agreed, that this is superior to the former, in the importance of the Plot, and correctness with which the whole is conducted. It was written in compliment to *King William III.* whose Character the Poet intended to display in that of *Tamerlane*. On this account it is generally play'd on the 4th of *November*, which was the birth-day of that Monarch; and, of late years, it has also been

been performed on the 5th, which is the anniversary of his landing in *England*. The Character of *Tamerlane* is drawn so truly amiable and exalted, that the exhibiting him as a portrait of *King William*, was paying that prince as high a compliment, as the invention of Man could possibly conceive. The Beauties of this Piece are numerous, but it is not wholly free from errors and inaccuracies. The double Love-plot is injudicious and unnecessary; the frequent execrations are highly censurable; and the repeated occurrence of Rhymes at the end of many of the Scenes, is very offensive; yet, notwithstanding these Faults, it is a first rate Performance, and justly claims a higher rank than that of being only used as an anniversary Play.

This Tragedy is, at present, in a deplorable state of action here, as will be evident, on a bare perusal of the list of Performers employed in the Representation.

The Part of *Tamerlane* was performed by a Gentleman whose name is *Owenfon*, being his first Appearance in that Character. This Person made an attempt, the Summer before last, to force himself on the Public in the Capacity of a Singer, at one of the Public Gardens, but met with no success; since which time, he has occasionally commenced Actor, in an itinerant Company in the *West of England*. From an apprehension that necessity has forced this stalking *Hibernian* on the Stage, we should gladly pass him over unnoticed, were we not conscious, that, as a new Performer, some account of his Abilities are expected from us; at the same time that

that our Integrity to the Public, obliges us to contradict an exaggerated account of this Person's Performance, in one of our daily Papers, which is as contemptible as it is unjust.

This Gentleman's Figure is pleasing, if unusual height is a perfection; but, being rather slight, it contributes to his awkwardness. His features are contracted and peevish, his deportment falsely consequential, and his action so mechanically extravagant, as to put us in mind of a pasteboard figure, whose arms and legs are moved with wires: Add to this, that his voice is so buried, and so constantly unharmonious, as to render his recitation laborious to himself, and disagreeable to an Audience. Nature seems to have denied him all those essential qualifications which constitute a theatrical Genius. His countenance is perpetually displeasing, exhibiting that of a man tortured with the perturbations of a guilty conscience, or scared at the appearance of some Spectacle of horror; nor has he the least idea of varying his features, according to the different passions of the Part he acts; for from first to last, he preserves the same face without any variety, or alteration. His elocution is execrable, and he mouths *Rowe's* golden Sentences, as "*Curs mouth a horse*," not having the art of giving variety to his tones, or flexibility to his modulation; and his deportment is as awkward and void of grace, as his utterance is harsh and disagreeable. To conclude, his Character, we are of opinion, that having neither the accent of a Christian, nor the gait of a Christian, he must have

have been made by some Journeymen of Nature, and that very carelessly too, he imitates Humanity so wretchedly. In short, the appointing such an Actor, to represent so capital, and so exalted a Character as that of *Tamerlane*, is one of the grossest insults upon common Sense, we ever remember to have met with, at a *Theatre Royal*.

We are sorry Mr. *Smith* is obliged to represent *Bajazet*, it being a Character, to which his Powers are unequal; we consequently find him very deficient in extent and variety of voice, essential fire, and contemptuous aspect: but the inequality of the other Performers, is an advantage to him, and renders him worthy some respect. *Moneses* meets with a very inadequate friend in Mr. *Wroughton*; and we are surprized, that managerial Partiality, or Inattention, should withhold this Character from Mr. *Ross*, who has Abilities to render it eminently respectable. Mr. *Hull* gives critical Pleasure in *Axalla*, not, that we think he perfectly fills the Author's intention. Mrs. *Mattocks* figures *Selima* very pleasingly, but though a trifling Character, it is not happily adapted to the confined sphere of her Talents for Tragedy. Nothing but partial managerial Favour, could ever think of giving the Part of *Arpasia* to Miss *Miller*, who wades through it, from first to last, without either spirit or sensibility,

To which was added,

The A U T H O R.

See Page 96.

DRURY-

164 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 4.

T A M E R L A N E.

See Page 160.

THE Representation of this Play, here, is in some instances more respectable, and in others much worse, than at the other House. We do not think Mr. *Aikin* equal to the Character of *Tamerlane*, though infinitely superior to Mr. *Owen*, as he wants the essential placidity, and fails in his attempts at Importance and Dignity; but after what we have seen at the other house, we must be satisfied with this Gentleman, who does his best to give satisfaction, and has some pretensions to the Character of an Actor, and merits that praise from his industry, which must be denied to his Genius. Mr. *Reddish* figures *Bajazet* better than Mr. *Smith*, though their acting Merit in this Character is nearly equal, but this being Mr. *Reddish's* first appearance in the Character, we think him entitled to some indulgence, as well as some respect. As this was Mr. *Cauterley's* first appearance in *Moses*, too, we shall only observe, that we hope he is too sensible of the advantages of Public esteem to continue to repeat an attempt, in which he must for ever prove unsuccessful. Why Mr. *Packer* must continue to murder the Part of *Axalla* we know not, for it is by no means suitable to his Talents, and therefore we wish to see it in abler Hands. We think Miss *Hayward* very inferior to Mrs. *Mattocks* in *Selima*; but, as it was the first time of her appearing
in

for November, 1771. 165

in the Character, there are some hopes of her amendment. Mrs. Barry's Performance in *Arpasia*, gives great importance to the Representation, and makes a considerable atonement for the insignificance of some of the other Characters, at the same time, that this one circumstance renders this Play more respectable here, than at the other House. We hardly ever remember to have seen any Character more justly represented, or that left Criticism more perfectly satisfied.

To which was added
The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.
See Page 121.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 5.
T A M E R L A N E.
See Page 160.

To which was added,
The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.
See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 5.
J A N E S H O R E.
A Tragedy, by Mr. Rowe.

THIS excellent Tragedy is not more universally known than admired, and stands to this day in estimation at least equal to any but those of *Shakespeare*. The
Author

166 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Author has adhered, in a great measure, to the history of this unfortunate lady, and displayed, in the strongest Colours, the fatal effects of female indulgence in lawless love. The Scene lies in *London*, and the Piece is said to be written in imitation of *Shakespeare's* Style, but it has very little resemblance; and we do not see what motive induced the Author to publish this hint, since the Piece exhibits a regular Plot, Scenes well arranged, and Characters happily delineated, to give it the stamp of a first-rate Performance, and the flowing harmony and smoothness of numbers in his own natural Language, rendered the hint unnecessary for the support of his Reputation as a dramatic Writer.

Upon the whole, this Play is in a very respectable state of action here, the Parts of *Hastings*, *Shore*, *Gloster*, and *Belmour*, being supported with considerable Credit, by Messrs. *Smith*, *Bensley*, *Clarke*, and *Hull*; who do not, it is true, afford any extraordinary critical Satisfaction, neither, do they display any instances of inattention or impropriety worthy critical severity. Miss *Miller* affords but a very faint idea of *Alicia's* Character, and wades through it very injudiciously; while Mrs. *Yates*, in *Jane Shore*, looks, moves, speaks, and feels up to the highest degree of Criticism, when compared with Miss *Miller*; who appears to be placed in *Alicia*, as a mere foil, in order to render Mrs. *Yates's* excellence the more resplendent.

To which was added,

The P A D L O C K :

See Page 30.

Messrs.

for November, 1771.

167

Messrs. Reinbold and Dubellamy, are very faint Copies of Mr. Bannister and Mr. Vernon, at the other House, in the Characters of *Don Diego* and *Leander*.—Mr. Quick succeeds in the Part of *Mango*, with great credit to himself and the Piece; and Mrs. Green and Mrs. Mattocks afford critical Satisfaction in the Parts of *Ursula* and *Levora*. Upon the whole, we seldom see a Piece, so greatly dependent upon dramatic Action, so reputably transplanted from the Theatre where it first appeared, as this is.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 6.

The D R U M M E R ;

O R,

The H A U N T E D H O U S E :

A Comedy, by Addison.

THIS pleasing and simple Comedy has two excellent Properties, viz. Humour and Novelty; but though in these, and some other particulars, it has great Merit, yet it is not wholly secure against critical Objection; the Plot being founded on Improbability, and the under Characters drawn with more strength, and rendered more important than the principal ones.—Some have imagined this Piece was not written by Mr. Addison, because it was not discovered to be his till after his death, when the Manuscript Copy was found among his Papers. But it is more than probable, the unfavourable reception the Piece

168 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Piece met with when it first appeared, inclined the Author to conceal himself. However, when it was declared to be Mr. *Addison's*, some time after his death, it was revived with considerable success, and grew into public Favour, which will serve to shew, on what principles public Taste is too often founded, and how little regard is to be paid to public Decisions respecting Merit.

This Play is pleasingly represented, if we take the whole together, without entering too minutely into particulars. *Tinsel* does not want a better representative than he meets with in Mr. *Dodd*; and *Vellum* has no claim upon Mr. *Parsons* for impropriety or inattention, but we think this Gentleman does not fill the Author's idea so justly as we have seen Mr. *Macklin*, who supported the whimsical importance of this Character with a dryness of humour and quaintness of expression, which will hardly ever be equalled. Sir *George Trueman* does not require a better Performer than Mr. *J. Aickin*, and the three Characters of the Servants are pleasingly and naturally supported by Messrs. *Love*, *Weston*, and *Meady*. We do not mean to be ironical when we say that Mr. *Packer* is a good *Fantom*. Mrs. *Hopkins* is not a very pleasing representation of *Lady Trueman*; and though Miss *Pope* has considerable Merit in *Abigail*, we have seen this Part much better play'd by several Actresses, and particularly by Mrs. *Macklin*.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.

for November, 1771.

169

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 6.

T A M E R L A N E.

See Page 160.

To which was added.

The DEVIL to PAY.

If we except the Part of Sir John Lowerule, the other Characters are better performed, here, than at *Drury-Lane*.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, November 7.

The G A M E S T E R.

See Page 46.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE. November 7.

EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR:

A Comedy, by Ben. Jonson.

THIS excellent Comedy, is one of the *Chef d'Oeuvres* of this great Writer, who was one of the most considerable dramatic Poets of the last Age. The Plot is perfectly original, and the Piece is very highly finished, both in point of Language and Character; yet, there is an unimpassioned coldness in the Language, and a laboured stiffness in the general Conduct, that renders

170 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

the whole uninteresting, notwithstanding the Author has exerted great Correctness, and displayed considerable Erudition. And, for this reason, it is highly probable, it will afford more pleasure to the real Critic in the Closet, than in the Theatre, where it receives advantages from dramatic Execution, which proves, that it is easier to write to the judgment, than to the feelings of the heart. —It seems pretty evident, that the Character of *Strieland* in *The Suspicious Husband*, was taken from that of *Kitely* in this Play, which, however, is a very faint resemblance of this great Original. —It had been laid aside for a great number of years, when Mr. *Garrick* revived it in 1749, with some judicious Alterations, and an additional Scene of his own, by which it is considerably improved. On this occasion it was received with the highest applause, and has ever since been frequently repeated at both Theatres, every season, with great success.

This Play, is in an reputable State of Action here, notwithstanding that some of the under Characters are very indifferently performed; but those of *Kitely*, *Bobadil* and *Master Stephen*, as represented by Messrs. *Smith*, *Woodward* and *Shuter*, cannot fail giving critical Satisfaction. The infinite humour displayed by the two last, must unbend the most rigid brow.

To which was added,

The P A D L O C K.

See Page 30.

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 8.
EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR.

See Page 169.

MR. Garrick's original excellence in the Part of *Kitey* is universally known, and generally admired. Abstracted from this particular, we think the Performance here is, on the whole, more respectable than at the other House, the under Parts being well supported. We have acknowledged the great Merit of Messrs. *Woodward* and *Shuter*, in the Parts of *Bobadil* and *Master Stephen*, notwithstanding which, we think, these Characters are represented with an equal degree of Merit by Messrs. *King* and *Weston*; though the latter appeared this Evening for the first time in the Character of *Master Stephen*: and in one respect, they are highly praise-worthy, viz. that of playing from their own Ideas and Feelings, without discovering one single trace of endeavouring to imitate the above-mentioned Performers, who may be considered as the Originals, having played the Characters ever since the revival of the Play.

To which was added,

MISS IN HER TEENS:

A Farce of two Acts, by Mr. Garrick.

THIS Piece contains some good strokes or Wit and Satire; and though the Characters may be drawn a little beyond the bounds of Nature, yet, perhaps, were they less *outrè*, they would fail of giving the pleasure

172 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

sure the Representation of this Piece has done for a great number of years; not that we think any Character here is carried beyond what may be allowed in Farce.—It made its first appearance at this Theatre in the year 1747, when the Characters of *Fribble* and *Flash* were inimitably supported by Messrs. *Garrick* and *Woodward*. The present Performers in these Characters are very faint resemblances of the above-mentioned Gentlemen.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 8.

The MAID OF THE MILL:

See Page 107.

THE Representation of this Opera here is very respectable, though somewhat inferior to what it was during the first run of the Piece, several very good Performers being now absent from this Theatre, who contributed greatly to the support of it when it first appeared.

To which was added,

The U P H O L S T E R E R :

A Farce of two Acts, by Mr. Murphy.

THE great success of this Piece, when it first appeared in the year 1758, and the frequent repetition of it every Season since, make it almost unnecessary to give any very particular Account of it in this Place. It contains several Scenes truly laughable, with some genuine strokes of Wit, and poignant

poignant touches of Satire. Its principal aim is to ridicule and expose the absurdity of that curiosity and impatience for News, and that general folly so peculiar to the good People of *England*, of indulging a ridiculous anxiety for the Concerns of the Public, and the political System of *Europe*, even to the neglect and ruin of their own domestic Affairs, and private Family-Interests. The Design is truly laudable, and is conducted with great ingenuity and humour. The Characters of the *Bankrupt-Upholsterer*, the *Bedlamite Barber*, and the *Hireling Author*, are drawn with considerable spirit, though it must be confessed, that in these Portraits, Nature seems rather a little too much caricatured; but this will admit of some excuse, when we consider how necessary it is to point at such prejudicial Follies, as are here satirized, in the strongest manner.

The three principal Characters are excellently performed, and afford the highest critical Satisfaction; viz. the *Upholsterer*, the *Barber*, and the *Author*, by Messrs. *Dunfall*, *Woodward* and *Shuter*.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 9.

H A M L E T:

See Page 10.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.

174 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 9.

GEORGE BARNWELL.

See Page 25.

To which was added,

The INTERLUDE of TRUE BLUE;
Or, The PRESS-GANG:

A N D

The COMMISSARY.

THE Interlude of *True Blue*, is a pleasing Representation of the humour (if we may be allowed the expression) of a Press-Gang. It was performed last season with great propriety, during the impressing of Seamen for the service of the Navy, when a war with *Spain* was expected to take place.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, November 11.

The M I S E R.

See Page 148.

THE principal Characters are performed here with considerable Merit. We acknowledge Mr. King's Performance in the *Miser*, to be highly pleasing, uniform, and satisfactory. Mr. *Shuter* has heretofore rendered this Part very respectable, but at present, is too luxurious, and wants Diligence, and Correctness, to preserve Chastity of Character. Exaggeration is expected in the *Miser*, but, still, let even the excess have its bounds

for November, 1771.

175

bounds. Mr. King is more cautious, and more attentive to fill the Author's Idea in this Character. True it is, he frequently adds to the Scene, by strokes of bye-play not prescribed by the Poet, but these are regulated with judgement, and therefore, we meet with nothing but what is proper and natural; which renders his Performance more chaste than that of Mr. Shuter's, and consequently preferable.

To which was added,

THE INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 11.

T I M A N T H E S :

A Tragedy, by Mr. Hoole.

THIS strange Piece, which cannot properly be called a Tragedy, is little more than a Translation of *Metastasio's* Opera of *Demofbeon*. The Fable is absurd, the Incidents improbable, the Characters very indifferently drawn, the Sentiments trite, the Language unharmonious, and the whole a very flimsy, tedious, and insipid Performance. Were we to attempt to point out the Defects and Absurdities of this Piece, it would oblige us to quote the whole Play, and therefore, we must refer our Readers to it; though we are apprehensive, they will think our recommending a perusal of this Play to them, as paying a very bad Compliment

176 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

pliment to their Understanding — The fixing on *I/mena* to be a victim to the Gods, without drawing lots as was the Custom in *Thrace*, is a fault, too obvious for Criticism; though too unpardonable to escape Censure; and the introducing an unnecessary *Procession* and dismal *Dirge*, is an errant Stage-trick, arising from a consciousness, that the Piece wanted the assistance of Show and Music, to render it, in the smallest degree, supportable. The success it met with (which however was but trifling) when it first appeared, seemed entirely owing to the advantages it received from a respectable Representation, all the principal Characters being excellently performed. The present Representation, is supported by the same Performers, excepting in the trifling Character of *Orcanes*.

To which was added,

The INTERLUDE of TRUE BLUE;

WITH

The APPRENTICE:

A Farce of two Acts, by Mr. Murphy.

THIS Piece made its appearance in the year 1756, and met with considerable applause, and is still played with success. The Design of it is to expose and ridicule the absurd and pernicious Passion so prevalent amongst the Youth in this commercial City; of attempting to become Actors, without either Education, Genius, or Judgment, to the neglect of their business, and the frequent loss of that most valuable article, to their welfare and happiness, their reputation.

178 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

than that of *Jemmy Twinkle* in the *Trip to Scotland*. There probably, never was an instance of the three last mentioned Characters being so wretchedly represented, at a *Theatre Royal*. But let the Dissatisfied recollect, that they were *favoured* with that grandest of all Exhibitions, that ever was exhibited, *The Institution of the Garter*, &c.—Mrs. *Bavry's* figure, and deportment render her very respectable in the Part of *Calista*; for though she may be, and certainly is, fainter in the pathetic Parts than the late Mrs. *Cibber*, and, in some instances, less vindictive than Mrs. *Yates*, yet with respect to uniformity, she is superior to either.

To which was added,

THE INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 12.

The M I S E R.

See Page 148.

To which was added,

The FAIRY PRINCE:

A Masque, in Three Parts.

THIS Masque is made the Vehicle for introducing to public view a Representation of the principal Solemnities at the late *Installation* of the *Knights* of the *Garter*.—We are informed in an Advertisement prefixed to the Book of the Masque, that the greater part is borrowed, with some variation, from *Ben Jonson*. The same liberty has been taken with a few passages of *Shakespeare*,

for November, 1771, 179

spear, and a Chorus of the late Gilbert West, Esq; but the final Chorus is from Dryden.

We apprehend, what is taken from Ben. Jonson, is from Oberon the Fairy Prince, a Masque of Prince Henry's, by this Author.

The Characters are as follow :

Silenus,	Mr. Reinhold.
First Satyr,	Mr. Mattocks.
Second Satyr and Echo,	Mr. Du-Bellamy.
Third Satyr,	Mr. Phillips.
Fourth Satyr,	Mr. Baker.
Fifth Satyr,	Mr. Fox.
Sylvan,	Mr. Owenfon.
Principal Fairies,	Two Children.
Nymphs,	Mrs. Baker,
	AND
	A Gentlewoman.

Dance of Nymphs and Satyrs, by Messrs. Fisher, Aldridge, Mad. Manefiere, &c. &c.

The Music composed by Dr. Arne.

The Scenes painted by Messrs. Cipriani, Dall, and Richards.

After an Overture, the Curtain rises, and discovers a wild Country ; the whole Scene dark, 'till at one corner, the Moon rising, a Satyr is seen (by her light) to come forth and call.

R E C I T A T I V E.

First Satyr.

Chromis, Maafil! none appear ?

See you not who riseth here ?

You were carousing late, I fear :

I'll prove if this can reach your ear.

[He Winds his Cornet, and thinks himself answer'd, but is deceiv'd by the Echo.]

180 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

A I R.

O, you wake, then: come away;
Times be short, are made for play!
The hum'rous Moon too will not stay.

R E C I T A T I V E.

What doth make you thus delay?
Hath the tankard touch'd your brain?
Sure, they're fall'n asleep again!
Or I doubt it was the vain
Echo, did me entertain.
Prove again. [*Winds a second time.*]
I thought 'twas she.

A I R.

Idle Nymph, I pray thee be
Modest, and not follow me;
I not love myself, nor thee.
[*Winds the third time, and is answer'd
by another Satyr.*]

R E C I T A T I V E.

Ay, this sound I better know:
Wou'd their faces they might shew!

Here other *Satyrs* enter, and amongst
them a *Silenus*.—The *Satyrs* enquire the
reason of their being called forth, and are
informed by *Silenus*, that,

—————These are Nights,
Solemn to the shining rites
Of the Fairy Prince, and Knights;
While the Moon their orgies lights.

They then ask, if they will come abroad;
if they shall see the Prince; and whether he
is what he had been described? To which
Silenus answers in the following Air:

A I R.

A I R.

Satyrs, he doth fill with grace
 Every season, every place ;
 Beauty dwells but in his face :
 He's the height of all our race !
 Our *Pan's* Father, God of Tongue,
Bacchus, though he still be young,
Phæbus, when he crowned sung,
 Nor *Mars*, when first his armour rung,
 Might with him be nam'd that day :
 Lovelier than the Spring in May.

C H O R U S.

O ! that he would come away !

It is agreed to bid farewell to *Bacchus*, in order to serve young *Oberon* the *Fairy Prince*. After a Dialogue, in which the *Satyrs* enquire what the Prince will do for them, they sing a Chorus, " O, that he so long doth tarry !" — After this *Silenus* informs them, that the Rock will quickly open and discover what they wish to see.

The Rock immediately opens, and discovers the *West Front* of *St. George's Chapel*, at *Windſor*. — This Scene is decorated with a pleasing representation of a Figure, intended, as we imagine, for the Genius of *England*, enveloped with Clouds, displaying the *Inſignia* of the three Orders, Garter, Thistle, and Bath. Before the gates lay two *Sylvans*, armed with their clubs, and drest in leaves, asleep. At this the *Satyrs* wondering, *Silenus* says,

Mark, my Satyrs, what a show !
 Look ! does not this Temple glow
 Like another sky of lights ?
 Yonder ſit the creſted Knights,

Once

182 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Once the noblest of the earth,
 Quicken'd by a second birth;
 Who, for Prowess, and for Truth,
 There are crown'd with lasting youth;
 And now hold, by Fate's command,
 Seats of Bliss and Fairy Land.
 But their Guards ! strange watch they keep !
 Rouze 'em, Satyrs, from their sleep !

The *Satyrs* call to the *Sylvans*, but finding them insensible, they propose different methods of waking them, which is opposed by *Silenus*, who bids them strike a charm into their ears ; whereupon, they sing the following *Catch* :

Buz, quoth the blue flie,
 Hum, quoth the bee :
 Buz and hum they cry,
 And so do we.
 In his ear, in his nose,
 Thus do you see ?
 He eat the Dormouse,
 Else it was he !

[*The two Sylvans start up amazed, and betake themselves to their Arms.*]

Silenus praises the *Sylvans*, ironically, for their attention ; but the *first Sylvan* informs him and his train, that their expectation is too soon, as the Gates will not be open before the second crowing of the Cock. Hereupon the first *Satyr* asks *Silenus* if they may sport, to make their expectation short. To which he replies,

Do, my Wantons, what you please ;
 I'll lie down, and take mine ease.

[*Exit.*

First

First Satyr.

Brothers, sing then, and upbraid
 (As we use) yond' seeming maid. —
 But hold! The Woodland Nymphs, my Boys,
 Appear, and promise greater joys!

*Enter WOOD-NYMPHS.**First Nymph.*

Sylvans, Fauns, and Satyrs rude,
 Pan's Train, and all that multitude,
 Now dance in wilder rounds about,
 And cleave the air with many a shout!

A I R.

See, see, O see, who here is come a-maying;
 The Master of the Ocean
 With his darling Orian:
 Why left we our playing?
 To gaze, to gaze,
 On them that all amaze,
 Whose like were never seen.
 Up, Nightingale, and sing
 Jug, jug, jug, jug, &c.
 Raise, Lark, thy note and wing;
 All birds their Music bring;
 Sweet Robin, Linnet, Thrush,
 Record from every bush
 The welcome of the King,
 The King and Queen!

After the Song, a Dance by the *Wood-*
nymphs, &c. is introduced, which is inter-
 rupted by the return of *Silenus*, who says,

Stay! the cheerful Chanticleer
 Tells you that the time is near;
 See, the Gates already spread!
 Nymphs and Satyrs, bow the head!
 See St. George's Fane! where now
 Lives Knighthood with a crowned brow.

184 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Scene opens, and discovers a Vision of the inside of St. George's Chapel, at Windsor, with the original Knights in their several Stalls.

CHORUS,

Hail, fair Knighthood; let our Lays
Vindicate thy antient Praise!
Thou too, *Windsor*, shalt be sung;
Mansion of Princes, haunt of Gods,
Who shall quit their bright abodes,
To view thy walls with trophies hung;
Walls by *Arthur* first renown'd,
Seat of Chivalry and Fame!
By *Edward* with new Honours crown'd;
His BIRTH, his GARTER, and his NAME.

This Chorus is taken from Mr. *West's* celebrated Poem of the *Institution* of the Order of the Garter, but considerably altered.— After the Chorus the second *Nymph* recommends variety to their shews, and sings the following Air:

AIR.

Let us play, and dance, and sing!
Let us frolick, let us sport,
Turning the delights of Spring
To the graces of a Court.
From air, from cloud, from dreams and toys,
To sounds, to sense, to love, and joys!

After the Song, the first Part concludes with the following

DUET AND CHORUS:

Whilst all the air shall ring,
And every trembling string,
With every varied voice,
In union sweet rejoice,
To sound and sing,
LONG LIVE THE KING!

The

for November, 1771. 185

The second Part opens and discovers a Scene of the *Lower Court of Windsor Castle*, with a View of the *Round Tower*, the outside of *St. George's Chapel*, &c.

The *Fairy King* and *Queen* enter, attended by a Troop of *Fairies*. Here an Eulogium on the *Prince* and his *Brother*, in which is introduced the following Duet :

Seek you Majesty to strike ?
Bid the world produce their like.
Seek you Glory to amaze ?
Here let Nations stand at gaze !
Seek you Wisdom to inspire ?
Touch then at no other fire !
Seek you Piety to lead !
In their footsteps only tread.
Every grace of Queen and King,
And of all in them we sing.

The *Fairies* receive orders to perform some Ceremonies in the *Castle*, and all disperse but the *King* and *Queen* ; then the following Air is sung :

Melt earth to sea, sea flow to air,
And air fly into fire,
While we in songs to *Arthur's Chair*
Bear *Oberon's* desire !

After the Song, the *Procession* to *St. George's Chapel*, of the *Sovereign*, *Knights Companions*, *Knights Elect*, &c. &c. &c. which closes the second Part.

The third Part opens, and discovers a Scene of *Windsor Park*, with a View of the *Castle*.—The *Fairies* enter, singing and dancing in honour of the Day, and the advance-

386 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

vancement of their Favourites to the Companionship of the Order. The following Duett is sung by the principal *Fairies*:

Nay, nay,
 You must not stay,
 Nor be weary yet;
 This is no time to cast away;
 Or for Fairies to forget
 Their nimble, nimble feet.
 Knotty joints, and limbs of clay
 Seek for ease, or love delay.
 Merrily, merrily, we should fare,
 Whose being's a shadow, whose bodies are air.

Here a characteristic Dance succeeds, after which the *Fairies* vanish, and the Scene changes to *The Inside of St. George's Hall*, with the *Throne, Tables, &c.* as at the late *Installation*. The *Knights-Companions* enter in Procession, and range themselves on the outside of their Table; they uncover and bow as the Sovereign passes: After the Ceremony of the Dinner, the calling over the Titles of the two young *Princes*, the Creation of a *Knight*, &c. the whole is concluded with the following Chorus:

GRAND CHORUS.

Renown, assume thy Trumpet,
 From Pole to Pole resounding
 Great GEORGE's Name!
 Great GEORGE's Name
 Shall be the Theme of Fame
 Record the GARTER's Glory!
 A badge for Heroes, and for Kings to bear;
 For Kings to bear!
 And swell th' immortal story
 With songs of Gods, and fit for Gods to hear;
 For Gods to hear!

- In the above Scene, after the *Sovereign* and *Knights* are seated, a transparent Painting is discovered suspended from the cieling of the Hall, of *St. George* combating with the *Dragon*.

It is impossible to examine the Merits of this Entertainment by any critical Rules, relating to the Drama, because it is not founded on any. As a *Raree-Show* it is splendid, but, notwithstanding all the parading Accounts in the Public Prints, prior to the Exhibition, we think, upon the whole, that it cannot boast any superiority over the *Institution of the Garter*, at the other Theatre; for though in many respects it is preferable, in others it is greatly inferior. It is true, that here the Manners of the present Times are preserved, and the Ceremonies at the late *Installation* more exactly represented than at *Dewy-Lane Theatre*.—

With respect to the contrivance of the Action of the Fancied Characters, there is some ingenuity, and the Painting of the Scenes is executed in a masterly manner. The two Transparencies, of the *Genius of England* with the *Insignia* of the Orders, and the Representation of *St. George*, are finely designed, as to the Drawing, but not very highly finished as to the Painting. With respect to the Music, which is the most meritorious part of this Performance, it has greatly the advantage of Mr. *Dibdin's* flimsy Composition at the other House.—It is probably equal to any thing the invention of the most celebrated Composer could have produced on the occasion. The Overture is

188 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

is spirited and pleasing; the Recitative Accompaniments of the Dialogue naturally and intelligently expressed; the Songs and Duets discover taste and invention; and the Chorusses are grand and harmonious. The Echo Song, in particular, is pleasingly executed; and the *Catch*, by the *Satyrs*, very happily conceived. In short, the whole discovers a strength of Imagination, and a retention of Judgment, equal to any thing composed by Dr. *Arne* in the meridian of his glory; and on this account we not only congratulate the Managers on his success, but think they are intitled to some praise, for giving encouragement to so distinguished a Genius.

The painted Scene of *St. George's Chapel*, is greatly inferior to the Representation of the *Chapel at Drury-Lane*; besides, that the Ceremony in the *Chapel* is omitted, but indeed it is here stiled a Vision only. The Procession is not so well conducted, nor is the last Scene of *St. George's Hall*, either so splendid or so entertaining, as at the other House. The Dresses of the Fancied Characters are well imagined; but those of the Sovereign, Knights, &c. are not more showy than at *Drury Lane*.

The Gentlewoman, that appeared in the Character of one of the *Nymphs*, has a pleasing Figure, and a Voice superior to any thing we have met with for some time: She has extent of Compass, great Powers, volubility of Expression, and rapidity of Execution; and we doubt not, but she will shortly prove a very capital Vocal Performer. The
two

for November, 1771. 189.

the two Children, in the Parts of the principal *Fairies*, acquitted themselves in a very satisfactory manner: Their Voices are pleasing, and their Execution exceeds what is to be expected from Children, especially as this was their first Appearance.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 13.

RULE A WIFE AND HAVE A WIFE:

A Comedy, by Beaumont and Fletcher.

THIS pleasing Comedy is very deservedly held in estimation, and considered, as an Ornament to the present List of acting Pieces. It is not wholly secure against objection, as it contains some Irregularities; notwithstanding which, the Plot is ingenious and interesting, the Characters very strongly marked, and the Dialogue natural and sprightly. Some of the Scenes are beautiful, and truly comic, and such as have not been excelled, or, indeed, hardly equalled, by any of our modern Writers of Comedy.

This Play is in a very respectable state of action here, abstracted from Mr. Garrick's inimitable Performance in the Part of *Leon*, as most of the principal Characters are justly and pleasingly represented. Those of the *Copper Captain*, *Cacafogo*, and *Estifania*, as performed by Mr. King, Mr. Love, and Mrs. Abington, afford the highest critical satisfaction, while some of the under Parts are supported with great Propriety, and deserve considerable praise. In short, take the whole together,

190 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

together, expectation is so perfectly satisfied, that Criticism is left without a wish.

To which was added,

The P A D L O C K.

See Page 30.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *November 13.*

The E A R L of E S S E X.

See Page 50.

To which was added,

The F A I R Y P R I N C E.

See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *Nov. 14.*

L O V E F O R L O V E:

A Comedy, by Congreve.

CONGREVE has been generally celebrated, for having studied Correctness and Regularity to a great degree, in most of his dramatic Pieces; yet, in the Comedy now before us, he has been frequently faulty in a very material point, viz. that of suspending the Action to make way for a display of wit; many of the Scenes being merely conversation Pieces, without any consequence. It is no justification, that such Scenes help to display Characters, if they do not produce some incident relative to the Catastrophe, or ultimate event; because, a Play ought

ought to consist of a chain of connected facts, or incidents, of which every Scene should make a link. Notwithstanding what has just been noticed, the Plot of this Comedy is contrived with great ingenuity, and is pleasingly intricate; the Characters are strongly drawn; the Language is masterly; and the Wit brilliant; but through the whole, we discover a vein of licentiousness, so dangerous in its tendency, and so unsuitable to the present professed chastity of the times, that, it is the wish of Humanity, and of Virtue, that this Play was consigned to oblivion, with all its merit, on account of this particular.—However severe this remark may appear at first sight, the justice of it will be seen to be indisputable, on serious reflection—That we may not be thought to be alone in this opinion, we shall beg leave to give the Sentiments of the learned Author of *The Elements of Criticism*, on this subject.

“ The licentious Court of *Charles II.* (says he) among its many Disorders, engendered a Pest, the virulence of which subsists to this day. The *English* Comedy copying the manners of the Court, became extremely licentious, and continue so with very little softening. It is there an establish'd rule, to deck out the chief Characters with every vice in fashion, however gross. But as such Characters viewed in a true light, would be disgustful, care is taken to disguise their deformity under the embellishments of Wit, Sprightliness and good Humour, which in mixt Company make a capital figure. It requires

requires not time, nor much thought, to discover the poisonous influence of such Plays. A young man of figure, emancipated at last from the severity, and restraint of a College-education, repairs to the capital disposed to every sort of excess. The Play-house becomes his favourite amusement; and he is enchanted with the gaiety and splendour of the chief Personages. The disgust which Vice gives him at first, soon wears off, to make way for new notions, more liberal in his opinion, by which a sovereign contempt of Religion, and a declared war upon the chastity of Wives, Maids, and Widows, are converted from being infamous Vices to fashionable Virtues. The infection spreads gradually through all ranks, and become universal. How gladly would I listen to any one who should undertake to prove, that what I have been describing is chimerical! but the dissoluteness of our young People of birth will not suffer me to doubt its reality. Sir *Harry Wildair* has compleated many a rake; and in the *Suspicious Husband*, *Ranger* the humbly Imitator of Sir *Harry*, has had no slight influence in spreading that Character. Of the fashionable Women tinctured with the Playhouse morals, who would not be the sprightly, the witty, though dissolute *Lady Townly*, before the cold, the sober, though virtuous *Lady Grace*? How odious ought those Writers to be, who thus spread infection through their Country, employing the talents they have from their Maker most traiterously against himself, by endeavouring

to

to corrupt and disfigure his Creatures! If the Comedies of *Congreve* did not rack him with remorse in his last moments, he must have been lost to all sense of Virtue. Nor will it afford any excuse to such Writers, that their Comedies are entertaining, unless it could be maintained, that Wit and Sprightliness are better suited to a vicious than a virtuous Character: The direct contrary of which holds true in Theory; and is exemplified in practice from the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, where we are entertained with the conduct of two Ladies, not more remarkable for mirth and spirit, than for the strictest purity of manners."

We cannot quit this Play, without mentioning a circumstance that renders it remarkable, viz. that it was the Piece with which the Theatre in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields* was first opened. And it was performed in the year 1709, for the Benefit of Mr. *Betterton*, who, had some time before quitted the Stage, but on this occasion, played the youthful Part of *Valentine*, though then upwards of seventy years of age; and the Parts of *Angelica*, Mrs. *Frail*, and *Ben*, were played by Mrs. *Barry*, Mrs. *Bracegirdle*, and Mr. *Dogget*, who had all quitted the Stage at that time, but generously gave their assistance towards the support of this theatrical Veteran, in the last stage of life, and in gratitude to one who had conferred many obligations on them. On this occasion also, Mr. *Rowe* wrote an *Epilogue*, which was spoken by the two Ladies, who supported between them, this once powerful Supporter

164 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

of the *English* Stage. We are also informed that the profits of this Benefit, amounted to upwards of 500 l. the Prices having been raised to the same that the Operas are at present:

With respect to the Representation of this Play, the Characters in general, are well supported; and though some few particulars might be pointed out as censurable, there are many more circumstances worthy of commendation.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 14.

EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR.

See Page 169.

To which was added,

The FAIRY PRINCE.

See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, November 15.

A L M I D A :

A Tragedy, by a Lady.

WE are informed by an Advertisement, that, "The *Tancrede* of Mr. de Voltaire. is the Model from which the Tragedy of *Almida* was taken. Its Author has translated

lated her Original like a Poet, not like an Interpreter. Judging that the Dialogue in the *French*, however elegant, would appear too long to an *English* Audience, she has taken the liberty of shortening some of the Speeches. Her Friends flatter themselves that the spirit of *Voltaire* has been preserved, and that this great Author will not disdain his *English* Dress." Thus much saith the Lady for herself, or some one for her.—We are of opinion, that the Lady and her Friends have presumed too much; for we believe it is generally thought, that the spirit of the Original is very indifferently preserved, and therefore, it is highly improbable that this great Author will be pleased with his *English* Dress.—We will not undertake to answer for *Voltaire*, but, we declare for ourselves, and many others, that the Piece has not afforded critical satisfaction, in the perusal, nor on the Stage, where it has received considerable advantages from Managerial Conduct, and Theatrical Embellishment.—The Story of this Piece is not new, and therefore generally known; and as to the Form in which it is now represented, we shall only observe, that the whole is insufferably languid, wearisome, and uninteresting. Its Defects are innumerable, and were we to point them out, we must censure almost every Scene in the Piece, at the same time that it would be wasting Criticism upon faults too evident for detection, and too gross for aggravation.

With respect to the Representation, it is intitled to considerable praise, abstracted

196 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

from Mrs. *Barry's* excellence in the Character of *Almida*, which alone, is sufficient to render this Piece worthy notice on the Stage, and seems to have been its principal support there.

To which was added,
The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.
See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Nov.* 15.
The JEALOUS WIFE:
See Page 68.

To which was added,
The FAIRY PRINCE.
See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *Nov.* 16.
The WEST INDIAN.
See Page 8.

To which was added,
The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.
See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Nov.* 16.
The BUSY BODY:
A Comedy, by Mrs. Centlivre.

THIS lively Comedy has some pretensions to Originality, though several hints are borrowed from the Comedy of the *Devil's an*

an Ass, by *Ben. Jonson*. It cannot be considered as a first rate Performance, either with respect to Plot, Incident, Sentiment, or Language; yet, there is nothing remarkably exceptionable in any of these; for though the Plot is not wholly free from improbability, there is little but what may be admitted; and while we allow that the Incidents are rather whimsical than natural, it certainly will be granted, that the Characters are well chosen. The Sentiments, we confess, have not much merit, neither has the Language much purity to boast of, yet in the former there is nothing censurable, and the latter is pleasing, though not important. Upon the whole it is not devoid of merit, and when well supported in the Representation, cannot fail to afford considerable Entertainment.

We have little to object to the Representation of this Play here, the Characters, in general, being admirably well supported. *Mr. Shuter* is rather too luxuriant of his humour in the Part of *Sir Francis Gripe*, for which reason, we apprehend, that *Mr. Yates* would afford more critical pleasure in this Character.—*Mr. Smith* is every thing we wish in *Sir George Airy*.—We have seen many capital Performers in the Part of *Marplot*, and though several of them displayed great merit, (particularly *Mr. Garrick* and *Mr. King*) we do not hesitate in giving *Mr. Woodward* the preference of the best of them; for we never remember to have seen any Character played more strictly to an Author's

198 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Intention, or more Satisfactory to the wishes of a Spectator, than this of *Marplot* as represented by Mr. *Woodward*.—The Female Characters are all pleasingly supported, and with respect to that of *Miranda*, as represented by Miss *Macklin*, we will venture to assert, that Criticism is left without a wish.

To which was added,

The FAIRY PRINCE.

See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 18.

Z A R A :

A Tragedy, by Aaron Hill.

THIS excellent Piece, is taken from the *Zaire* of *Voltaire*, but Mr. *Hill* has made it so much his own, that it is difficult to determine, whether the Original or the Translation has the most Merit. It contains many noble Sentiments, and though founded upon the principles of religious Party, it is free from that air of Enthusiasm and Bigotry, with which Pieces on similar subjects too generally abound. The Plot is simple, and regular, the Incidents are interesting and affecting, the Characters are well supported, the Sentiments are instructive, and the Language is poetical. This Piece is in one instance remarkable; that of the late celebrated Mrs. *Cibber*'s having made her first attempt in Tragedy, in the Character of *Zara*.

Mr.

for November, 1771. 199

Mr. *Garrick's* eminence in the Part of *Lufignan*, is too generally known, and admired, to render any Account of his Performance necessary here. In the present dearth of capital Actors, we must not find fault with Mr. *Reddish* in the Part of *Osmen*, though we think his feelings very inadequate to the Character. We are sorry Mr. *Packer* is forced into the Part of *Nerestan*, and we mean to pity, rather than censure him, when we observe, that his talents are not adapted to the Character. Mrs. *Barry* affords such critical satisfaction in the Part of *Zara*, that no idea of perfection can well go beyond her execution.

To which was added,
HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS.
See Page 4.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 18.
The STRATAGEM.
See Page 20.

To which was added,
The FAIRY PRINCE.
See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 19.
The CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE,
To which was added,
The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.
K 4 COVENT-

200 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 19.

THE WAY TO KEEP HIM.

See Page 149.

WITH respect to the Representation of this Play here, we are sorry we are obliged to remark, that it is greatly inferior to what it is at the other Theatre ; for tho' we have nothing to object to Mr. *Smith*, in the Part of Mr. *Lovemore*, or to Mr. *Yates*, in the Character of Sir *Bashful Constant*; the other Male Characters afford very little, if any critical satisfaction, as they are represented here. And with respect to the principal Female Characters, they are much better represented at *Drury Lane Theatre* than here. Mrs. *Bulkley* is not devoid of merit in the Part of Mrs. *Lovemore*, but this Character is more justly, and more pleasingly represented at the other Theatre, by Miss *Younge*; in as much as she is a better Actress than Mrs. *Bulkley*. We acknowledge that Miss *Macklin* has great merit in most of the Parts she plays, and is, in many instances, a very spirited and a very just Performer, but in the Part of the *Widow Belmour*, she wants that true comic Spirit, and unaffected natural Pleasantry, which renders Mrs. *Abington* so agreeable and important ; so that, the latter's superiority in this Character, is too obvious to require any explanation.

To which was added,

The FAIRY PRINCE.

See Page 178.

DRURY-

for November, 1771.

201

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *November 20.*

The D R U M M E R ;

O R,

The H A U N T E D H O U S E.

By Command of their Majesties.

See Page 167.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *November 20.*

B A R B A R O S S A.

See Page 64.

To which was added,

The F A I R Y P R I N C E.

See Page 178.



DRURY LANE THEATRE. *November 21.*

J A N E S H O R E.

See Page 165.

THIS Play, upon the whole, is supported in the Representation here, with considerable credit. Mr. Barry, and Mr. Reddish afford much critical satisfaction in the Parts of *Hastings* and *Shore*; and we never wish to see the Character of *Jane Shore* and *Alicia* better represented, than they are by

202 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Miss *Younge* and Mrs. *Barry*. In the present Dearth of capital Performers, we shall meet with very few instances, where the principal Parts of a Play, are so reputably supported.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE. Nov. 21.

The ENGLISH MERCHANT:

A Comedy, by Mr. Colman.

THE ground-work of this Piece is borrowed, if we are not mistaken, from *Voltaire's La Caffé ou L'Ecoiffaise*. The Plot is simple and domestic, and the Conduct of it sufficiently regular. It contains some interesting Scenes; many good Sentiments: and the Dialogue is easy and natural. These, it must be confessed, are the Properties of a first rate Performance, in which light, however, we cannot consider the Piece now before us; for there is a something wanting not easily to be expressed, to relieve the langour of many of the Scenes. To this we may add, that some of the Characters are not well drawn, and, that that of *Spatter* is far from being natural. Few Men of literary Abilities can be reduced to such wretched shifts for a support, as are hinted at in this Character; and we are sorry to observe, that the bare supposition, that such meanesses are practised, is too illiberal for the pen

pen of a Gentleman, and discovers a malignity of disposition deserving the highest Censure. Upon the whole, it is greatly inferior to some of this Author's Pieces, tho' preferable to any he has written since the time of this Comedy's being brought out at *Drury-Lane Theatre*.

The Representation of this Piece is very respectable here, though greatly inferior to what it was during the first run of the Piece, when the Parts of *Spatter*, *Lord Falbridge*, *Sir William Douglas*, *La France*, *Molly*, *Amelia*, and *Lady Alton*, were admirably supported by Mr. King, the late Mr. Powell, Mr. Havard, Mr. Baddeley, Miss Pope, Mrs. Palmer, and Mrs. Abington—Mr. Yates, who plays the Part of *Freeport*, the *English Merchant*, played it originally at *Drury-Lane Theatre*, but we never thought it a Character in which he distinguished himself with any great degree of Credit.

To which was added,
The FAIRY PRINCE.

See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 22.

The PROVOK'D WIFE:

A Comedy, by Sir John Vanburgh.

THOUGH the *British Theatre* is indebted to this witty Writer, who, in his life-time, contributed towards its reputation, when it had in reality been sinking for many

204 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

years, we cannot avoid wishing, for the sake of Decency and good Manners, that this Comedy was consigned to oblivion ; for tho' it contains many very fine Scenes, there are others full of the grossest obscenity and licentiousness. The Character of *Sir John Brute* is very naturally drawn, and very highly finished ; and we confess, that the Plot is regular, and the Scenes well disposed, yet the Language, as well as the whole Conduct of the Piece, seems calculated to corrupt the Morals of an Audience. It is not now performed as it stood in the Original, where its libertine Author, had adopted the Character of a Clergyman, for the most riotous and scandalous purposes ; but we think it is so slightly improved with respect to purity, that Mr. Garrick is highly censurable for continuing it on the Stage, merely for the sake of displaying his talents in the Part of *Sir John Brute*.—We cannot help remarking, that Mr. Garrick's fondness for this Character, gives occasion for drawing conclusions not greatly in his favour. If it will be granted, that there is danger, lest wickedness conjoined with abilities should steal upon esteem, it may reasonably be supposed, that when immoral Characters are represented on the Stage, in a pleasing light, either from their situations, or the unrivalled merit of a favourite Actor, they are capable of producing the most pernicious effects. But while Vanity and Avarice are the ruling Principles of theatrical Managers, every hope of improvement will be abortive.

Messrs. *Cautberley* and *Aickin*, fill the Author's

thor's Idea of *Constant* and *Heartfree* very faintly indeed, but the rest of the Characters are well supported, particularly those of *Lady Fanciful* and *Lady Brute*, by Mrs. *Abington* and Miss *Youngs*.

To which was added,

A T R I P T O S C O T L A N D :

A Farce of two Acts, by Wm. Whitehead, Esq.

THIS singular Production hath great Merit, and is highly calculated to afford Entertainment, at the same time that the moral to be drawn from it is no bad lesson for the young Ladies of *Great Britain*. The episode of *Southerton* and *Dolly Flack* does not add to the Merit of the Piece, and there are some Parts of the Dialogue rather too nearly bordering on indelicacy. Upon the whole, it is extremely pleasing, to which the Merit of the Performers in the Representation contributes greatly. This little Piece is introduced with a Prologue spoken by *Cupid*, representing a *Post Chaise Boy*, in which a similitude is drawn between his whip, his spurs, his shoulder-knot, and the bow, arrows, and wings of the God of Love; with some lively satirical Strokes upon the present fashionable mode of eloping to *Scotland*.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 22.

The B R O T H E R S.

See Page 103.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.
DRURY-

206 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 23.

K I N G L E A R :

A Tragedy, by Shakespear.

AS this celebrated Play has been the subject of much consideration and criticism, with the Ingenious and the Learned, we shall endeavour to render this Article as intelligent and entertaining as possible, by laying before our Readers, the Sentiments of various Commentators, as well respecting the merit and defects of the Play, as originally written by *Shakespear*, as the Alterations it has undergone; to which we shall add such Remarks of our own, as naturally present themselves, in the progress of this undertaking.

“ The Tragedy of *Lear*, (says Dr. Johnson) is deservedly celebrated among the Drama's of *Shakespear*. There is perhaps no Play which keeps the attention so strongly fixed; which so much agitates our passions and interests our curiosity. The artful revolutions of distinct interests, the striking opposition of contrary Characters, the sudden changes of fortune, and the quick succession of events, fill the mind with a perpetual tumult of indignation, pity and hope. There is no Scene which does not contribute to the aggravation of the distress, or conduct of the action, and scarce a line which does not conduce to the progress of the Scene. So powerful is the current of the Poet's Imagination, that the mind which once ventures within

within it, is hurried irresistibly along. — On the seeming improbability of *Lear's* Conduct, it may be observed, that he is represented according to Histories at that time vulgarly received as true. And, perhaps, if we turn our thoughts upon the barbarity and ignorance of the Age to which this Story is referred, it will appear not so unlikely as while we estimate *Lear's* manners by our own. Such preference of one Daughter to another, or resignation of dominion on such conditions, would be yet credible, if told of a petty prince of *Guinea* or *Madagascar*. *Shakespeare*, indeed, by the mention of his *Earls* and *Dukes*, has given us the idea of times more civilized, and of life regulated by softer manners; and the truth is, that though he so nicely discriminates, and so minutely describes the Characters of Men, he commonly neglects and confounds the Characters of Ages, by mingling customs, ancient and modern, *English* and *Foreign* — Mr. *Warton*, who has very minutely criticised this Play, remarks, that the instances of cruelty are too savage and shocking, and that the intervention of *Edmund* destroys the simplicity of the Story. These objections, may, I think, (continues Dr. *Johnson*) be answered, by repeating, that the cruelty of the Daughters is an historical fact, to which the Poet has added little, having only drawn it into a series by dialogue and action. But I am not able to apologize with equal plausibility, for the extrusion of *Gloucester's* eyes, which seems an act too horrid to be endured in dramatic exhibition, and such as must
always

208 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

always compel the mind to relieve its distress by incredulity. Yet let it be remembered, that our Author well knew what would please the Audience, for which he wrote.—The injury done by *Edmund* to the simplicity of the action, is abundantly recompensed by the addition of variety, by the art with which he is made to co-operate with the chief design, and the opportunity which he gives the Poet of combining perfidy with perfidy, and connecting the wicked *Son* with the wicked *Daughters*, to impress this important moral, that villainy is never at a stop, that crimes lead to crimes, and at last terminate in ruin. But though this Moral be incidentally enforced, *Shakespeare* has suffered the virtue of *Cordelia* to perish in a just cause, contrary to the natural ideas of justice, to the hope of the Reader, and, what is yet more strange, to the faith of *Chronicles*. Yet this Conduct is justified by the *Spectator*, who blames *Tate* for giving *Cordelia* success and happiness in his alteration, and declares that, in his opinion, the *Tragedy has lost half its Beauty* "—The passage alluded to, is in one of *Mr. Addison's* Papers, where he considers the errors of the modern Writers of Tragedy, and we apprehend, the quoting the whole of it will not only be acceptable to our Readers, but be necessary to our present purpose.

"The English Writers of Tragedy (says he) are possessed with a notion, that when they represent a virtuous or innocent person in distress, they ought not to leave him till they have delivered him out of his troubles,

OR

or made him triumph over his enemies. This error they have been led into by a ridiculous Doctrine in modern Criticism, that they are obliged to an equal distribution of rewards and punishments, and an impartial execution of poetical Justice. Who were the first that established this Rule, I know not; but I am sure it has no foundation in Nature, in Reason, or in the Practice of the Ancients. We find that good and evil happen alike to all men on this side the grave; and as the principal design of Tragedy is to raise commiseration and terror in the minds of the Audience, we shall defeat this great end, if we always make Virtue and Innocence happy and successful. Whatever crosses and disappointments a good man suffers in the body of the Tragedy, they will make but small impression on our minds, when we know that in the last Act he is to arrive at the end of his wishes and desires. When we see him engaged in the depth of his afflictions, we are apt to comfort ourselves, because we are sure he will find his way out of them; and that his grief, how great soever it may be at present, will soon terminate in gladness. For this reason the ancient Writers of Tragedy treated men in their Plays, as they dealt with them in the world, by making Virtue sometimes happy, and sometimes miserable, as they found it in the Fable, which they made choice of, or as it might affect their Audience in the most agreeable manner. *Aristotle* considers the Tragedies that were written in either of these kinds, and observes, that those which ended unhappily, had

210 THEATRICAL REVIEW

had always pleased the People, and carried away the prize in the public disputes of the Stage, from those that ended happily. Terror and commiseration leave a pleasing anguish in the mind; and fix the Audience in such a serious composure of thought, as is much more lasting and delightful than any little, transient starts of joy and satisfaction. Accordingly we find, that more of our English Tragedies have succeeded, in which the Favourites of the Audience sink under their calamities, than those in which they recover themselves out of them. At the same time I must allow, that there are very noble Tragedies, which have been framed upon the other Plan, and have ended happily; as indeed most of our good Tragedies, which have been written since the starting of the abovementioned Criticism, have taken this turn. I must also allow, that many of *Shakespeare's*, and several of the celebrated Tragedies of Antiquity, are cast in the same form. I do not therefore dispute against this way of writing Tragedies, but against the Criticism that would establish this as the only method; and by that means would very much cramp the English Tragedy, and perhaps give a wrong bent to the Genius of our Writers."

Dr. *Johnson* observes on what is remarked above by Mr. *Addison*, that, "a Play in which the wicker prosper, and the virtuous miscarry, may doubtless be good, because it is a just representation of the common events of human life: But since all reasonable Beings naturally love justice, I cannot easily be

be persuaded, (says he) that the observation of justice, makes a Play worse; or, that if other excellencies are equal, the Audience will not always rise better pleased from the final triumph of persecuted virtue. In the present case, the Public has decided. *Cordelia*, from the time of *Tate*, has always retired with victory and felicity. And, if my sensations could add any thing to the general suffrage, I might relate, that I was many years ago so shocked by *Cordelia's* death, that I know not whether I ever endured to read again the last Scenes of the Play, 'till I undertook to revise them as an Editor. — There is another controversy among the Critics concerning this Play. It is disputed whether the predominant image in *Lear's* disordered mind, be the loss of his Kingdom, or the cruelty of his Daughters; Mr. *Murphy*, a very judicious Critic, has evinced by induction of particular Passages, that the cruelty of his Daughters is the primary source of his distress, and that the loss of royalty affects him only as secondary and subordinate evil; he observes, with great justness, that *Lear* would move our compassion but little, did we not rather consider the injured Father than the degrading King."

With respect to *Tate's* alteration, we cannot help being of opinion with Dr. *Johnson*, that, the happy change in the catastrophe, if not more natural, is abundantly more pleasing. Mr. *Addison* was not always successful as a Critic, to which we may add, that like others, he was not proof against being misled by interest; for he is charged with

212 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

with having denied the expediency of poetical Justice, because his own *Cato* was condemned to perish in a good cause.—*Dennis* has remarked, that, “to secure the favourable reception of *Cato*, the Town was poisoned with much false and abominable Criticism, and that endeavours had been used to discredit and descry poetical Justice.”

Tate's alteration is adapted at this Theatre, greatly to the praise of the Managers, and the wishes of humanity. And though we think the Piece might have been more considerably improved, by reducing many of the irregularities still retained, the alterations to be placed to his account are so very respectable, as to do him considerable credit. What mind is so pleased with melancholy Ideas, or the struggles of injured virtue in distress, as not to receive much heart-felt satisfaction, in the last Scene, where *Edgar* and *Cordelia*, surmounting all difficulties, are made happy in each others love, as a reward for their loyalty and virtue.—The Character of the *Fool* is entirely omitted, in this alteration, and the under Plot of the loves of *Edgar* and *Cordelia* is wholly *Tate's*. For which, and the happy change in the catastrophe, though brought about by probable circumstances, he has been severely censured, by those who determine with great boldness, upon the various degrees of literary Merit, but too frequently give their opinion without much knowledge of the cause before them.

At *Covent Garden Theatre*, Mr. *Colman*, has introduced another alteration of this Play.

Play, in which he has availed himself of some of *Tate's* errors, or rather over-sights, omitted the episode of the loves of *Edgar* and *Cordelia*, and considerably heightened the distress of the catastrophe; but we doubt, very much, whether humanity will give him her voice in preference to *Tate*. In some future Number, we may have an opportunity of examining Mr. *Colman's* Performance at large; but, at present, it is rather foreign to our design; which was only to speak of the Play in its original state, and of Mr. *Tate's* alteration as represented at this Theatre.

The Scene lies in *Britain*, and mostly in *Kent*, and the Story, except the Episode of *Edmund*, which is derived from *Sidney*, is taken originally from *Geoffry of Monmouth*, whom *Hollingshead* generally copied, But Dr. *Johnson* apprehends it was immediately taken from an old historical Ballad. His reason for believing that the Play was posterior to the Ballad, rather than the Ballad to the Play, is, that the Ballad has nothing of *Shakespeare's* nocturnal Tempest, which is too striking to have been omitted, and that it follows the Chronicle; it has the Rudiments of the Play, but none of its Amplifications: It first hinted *Lear's* madness, but did not array it in circumstances. The Writer of the Ballad added something to the History, which is a proof that he would have added more, if more had occurred to his mind, and more must have occurred if he had seen *Shakespeare*.—The greater part of the Ballad mentioned here, may be seen at the

214 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

the end of the Play, in Dr *Johnson's* Edition of *Shakeſpear's* Works; to which we muſt refer our Readers, the length of it being too conſiderable to have a place here.

It has been remarked, that in *Shakeſpear's* beſt Plays, beſides the Vices that ariſe from the ſubject, there is generally ſome peculiar prevailing folly, principally ridiculed, that runs through the whole Piece. Thus, in the *Tempeſt*, the lying diſpoſition of Travellers, and in *As you like it*, the fantaſtic humours of Courtiers, is expoſed and ſatirized with infinite pleaſantry. In like manner, in this Play of *Lear*, the Dotages of judicial Aſtrology are ſeverely ridiculed. Dr. *Johnson* imagines, that, was the date of its firſt Performance well conſidered, it would be found that ſomething or other happened at that time which gave a more than ordinary run to this deceit, as theſe words of *Edmund's*, in the ninth Scene of the firſt Act, ſeem to intimate.

“I am thinking Brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what ſhould follow theſe eclipses.”

However this be, an impious cheat, which had ſo little foundation in Nature or Reaſon, ſo deteſtable an Original, and ſuch fatal conſequences on the manners of the People, who where at that time ſtrangely beſotted with it, certainly deſerved the ſevereſt laſh of Satire. It was a fundamental in this noble Science, that whatever ſeeds of good diſpoſitions the infant unborn might be endowed with, either from Nature, or traductively from its Parents, yet, if, at the time of its birth,

birth. the delivery was by any casualty, so accelerated or retarded, as to fall in with the predominancy of a malignant constellation, that momentary influence would intirely change its Nature, and bias it to all the contrary ill qualities. So wretched and monstrous an opinion did it set out with. But the *Italians*, to whom we owe all this, as well as most other unnatural crimes and follies of these latter ages, fomented its original impiety to the most detestable height of extravagance; of which enumerable instances might be produced were it necessary. But to return to *Shakespeare*. — So blasphemous a delusion, therefore, it became the honesty of our Poet to expose. But it was a tender point, and required managing. For this impious Juggle had in his time a kind of religious reverence paid to it. It was therefore to be done obliquely; and the circumstances of the Scene furnished him with as good an opportunity as he could wish. The Persons in the Drama are all Pagans, so that as, in compliance to custom, his good characters were not to speak ill of judicial Astrology, they could on account of their Religion give no reputation to it. But in order to expose it the more, he, with great judgement, makes these Pagan fatalists; as appears by these words of *Lear*.

“ By all the operations of the orbs,

“ From whom we do exist and cease to be.”

For the doctrine of fate is the true foundation of judicial astrology. Having thus discredited it by the very commendation given

216 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

given to it, he was in no danger of having his direct satire against it mistaken, by its being put (as he was obliged, both in paying regard to custom and in following nature) into the mouth of the Villain and Atheist, especially when he has added such force of reason to his ridicule in the words of *Edmund's* first speech in the 8th Scene of the first Act.

" This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune (often the surjeits of our own behaviour) we make guilty of our disasters, the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, &c."

Edgar's description of Dover Cliff, has been much admired, and is considered as one of the Beauties of this Play.

—————" How fearful
And dizzy 'tis, to cast one's eyes so low !
The crows and choughs, that wing the midway air,
Shew scarce so gross as Beetles Half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire ; dreadful trade !
Methinks, he seems no bigger than his head.
The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,
Appear like mice ; and yond tall anchoring bark,
Diminish'd to her cock, her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight. The murmuring surge,
That on th' unnumb'ed idle pebbles chafes,
Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more,
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong."

Act IV. Scene 6.

This description has been much admired since the time of *Addison*, who has remarked with a poor attempt at pleasantry (says *Dr. Johnson*) that, "*he who can read it without being giddy, has a very good head, or a very bad one.*" The description is certainly very pleasing, though
it

it is far from being wrought to the utmost excellence of poetry. He that looks for a precipice finds himself assailed by one great and dreadful image of irresistible destruction. But this overwhelming idea is dissipated and enfeebled from the instant that the mind can restore itself to the observation of particulars, and diffuse its attention to distinct objects. The numeration of the crows and choughs, the samphire Man and the Fishers, counteracts the great effect of the prospect, as it peoples the desert of intermediate vacuity, and stops the mind in the rapidity of its descent through emptiness and horror.

As we have already extended this article beyond our usual length, we shall close this Account with a few Remarks on the Representation here.

We know not a Character more perfectly drawn, in any of *Shakespeare's* Plays, than that of *Lear*, nor do we ever remember to have seen any Character more correctly, or more originally supported in the representation, than this was when Mr. *Garrick* play'd it; and, probably, for this reason, because Mr. *Garrick* had more fire, than, it is likely, any Actor in the world ever possessed; and there are many passages in this part, that require the utmost fire, understanding and sensibility, human nature is capable of expressing; for one instance we shall quote the following passage, where *Lear* exclaims against his ungrateful Daughters.

—————“ No, you unnat’ral Hags,
I will have such revenges on you both,

218 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

That all the world shall—I will do such things,
What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be
The terrors of the earth—you think, I'll weep—
This heart shall into a thousand pieces
Before I'll weep——”

The broken Sentences in this Speech (when the occasion of their being uttered is considered) require the utmost spirit, force and violence, in order to fill the Idea of the Poet, and support the dignity of the Character, that he may be *every inch a King*.

Mr. Barry is a very faint apology for *Lear*, when compared with Mr. Garrick's superior Merit; but though there is much to condemn, it is but just to observe, that there is something to commend.—Mr. Reddish's Merit in *Edgar*, is very respectable, and we are greatly mistaken, if this is not his Master-Piece. He seems to have availed himself of the Merit of the late Mr. Ryan, and Mr. Haward, who were both very great in this Character; and who had the good judgment not to pay the principal attention to the mad Part of it only: they made that a foil to the serious, and truly passionate Parts, and in this particular, Mr. Reddish appears to follow them; or, if he plays from his own perceptions, his Merit is still greater.—Our imaginations, says an ingenious Author, have been tickled with the freaks of the mad *Edgar*, but our hearts are pierced, when we see him assuming reason, and tell the dear object of his wishes,

“ My Father seeks my life, which I preserv'd
In hopes of some blest'd minute to oblige
Distress'd Cordelia.”

We shudder when he tells her, that this hope, and this intent, had weighed with him,

“ To feed on offals, and to drink with herds,
To combat with the winds, and be the sport
Of Clowns ; of what's more wretched yet, their
pity.”

But when he requests her to retire to rest, and tells her he will prepare the necessary means of it,

“ Then fierce and watchful as th' Hesperian Dragon,
Will watch beside her, and protect her sleep,”

We reverence the noble constancy, and glorious resolution. In this view, we see how different *Edgar* is from himself, in the different Circumstances ; nor is there a Character in the *British* Theatre of more variety and extent than this, or that requires more attention in a Performer.—We shall pass over the rest of the Characters, except that of *Cordelia*, because most of them are so wretchedly represented as to be unworthy notice ; but as this is a fault to be charged on the Managers, rather than the Actors, we shall notice it among others, in a Paper set apart for that purpose.—Mrs. *Barry* affords much Satisfaction in *Cordelia*, though she rather over-figures the Character, and is too much of the woman. It is a Character, in which an unmixed tenderness is to be expressed, and indeed, Mrs. *Barry* speaks and feels it—to the utmost wish of Criticism, particularly where, distinguishing at length her

220 THEATRICAL REVIEW,
faithful *Edgar*, in the disguise of the Mad-
man, she tells him,

“ These hollowed rags of time, this naked Virtue,
To me are dearer than the richest pomp
Of purple Monarchs.”

To which was added,
The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.
See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 23.

C Y R U S.

See Page 93.

To which was added,
The FAIRY PRINCE.
See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE Nov. 25.

The SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND:

*A Comedy, by Dr. Benjamin Hoadley, the Phy-
sician, and Son to the late ever-memorable
Bishop of Winchester.*

THE great Success this Play met with
when it first appeared on the Stage, and
the frequent repetition of it since, renders a
particular Account of it superfluous and un-
necessary, at the same time that any Criti-
cism, not in favour of the Piece, may be
considered as the effect of Ill-nature, or a dispo-

disposition prompt to censure; yet, it is certain, that the applause with which this Comedy is generally received, greatly overrates the merit of it; for it is evidently defective with respect to design, Character, Wit, Sentiment and Language. The Incidents, we confess, are numerous and pleasing, and the Dialogue is full of vivacity. The Design is rather trifling, but it is pleasingly, though not accurately conducted; and the Denouement is very highly wrought up.—It has been asserted, that the Character of *Ranger* is well drawn, but we think it rather farcial, for which reason Mr. *Woodward* deserved applause when he degraded him into a *Harlequin*.—In short, this Character, is culpably licentious throughout the Piece, and of a most pernicious and immoral Tendency; and we doubt not, from the favourable light in which *Ranger* is placed by the Poet, but he has contributed to the completion of many a Rake.

The *Doctor* has been accused of copying the Character of Mr. *Strickland*, from that of *Kitely*, in *Ben Jonson's* Comedy of *Every Man in his Humour*. This charge is too evident to be denied, but the copy is so greatly inferior to the original, that the liberty taken may pass without condemnation. Upon the whole, the Piece is not absolutely devoid of Merit, nor is it secure against critical objection on account of its irregularities.—The Applause with which it is generally received, is a proof, that it gives satisfaction on the Stage; but, if it is a pleasing Piece, it is far from being a striking one; and, we

are of opinion, that, on a critical Scrutiny in the Closet, it will be discovered to merit censure, from its want of instruction.—We have been informed by one of the *Doctor's* most intimate friends, that the first design was to have entitled this Piece, *The Temple Rake*, but, it was changed to that of *The Suspicious Husband*, before it appeared in Public, from an apprehension that the former title would have given offence to the juvenile Members of the *Temple*.

With respect to the Representation, if we take the whole in the gross, without entering too minutely into particulars, it is entitled to considerable Applause. To praise Mr. Garrick in the Character of *Ranger*, or to draw a comparison betwixt his Merit and that of some others who have attempted to play the Part, would, in the first place, be only observing that gold is gold; and in the second place, that gold is preferable to copper. Mr. King, however, has given much critical Satisfaction in *Ranger*, and though inferior to the great original, he rises high, very high, above every other contemporary Competitor. We are not very well pleased with Mr. Aickin, in the Part of *Frankly*, and think it would have been more respectably performed by Mr. Reddish, or Mr. Palmer; *Frankly*, is a gay young fellow, susceptible of the tender passions, and sincerely in love with *Clarinda*, who is the sole object of his wishes, and whom he pursues with the most honourable intention, and disinterested affection; we, therefore, think it a Character out of Mr. Aickin's walk, who

would

would render that of Mr. *Strickland* very respectable, which is now lamentably represented by Mr. *Love*.—We have little to object to Mr. *Packer*, in the Part of *Bellamy*, but we think it might with more propriety have been given to Mr. *Cauterley*, who, as a younger Man, would figure the Character better, and there is nothing in it, but what he might execute with credit to himself, and the Representation. *Jack Maggot* has no claim upon Mr. *Dodd*, for inattention or injustice; and honest *Tester* never had a better representative than Mr. *Weston*, the favourite child of simplicity. The Female Characters are pleasingly represented, and according to the Author's Ideas, though we think Miss *Pope* greatly inferior to the late Mrs. *Pritchard* in the Part of *Clarinda*, with respect to that freedom and fire of expression so essential to the support of this Character. Miss *Younge* affords every Idea of *Jacintha*, and greatly heightens the Character with respect to importance, and by a peculiar grace renders it more conspicuous than we ever saw it before. *Lucetta* by Mrs. *Love*, who—O fye!—

To which was added,

H O B I N T H E W E L L :

A Ballad Farce of two Acts.

THIS little Piece, is an Alteration of *Dogget's* Comedy intituled *The Country Wake*, by Mr. *Cibber*.—The Songs are adapted to old, well-known Airs, in the manner of those in the *Beggar's Opera*, and, as a Ballad

224 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Farce, it is no very despicable Performance. The principal Characters are very well played, particularly that of *Hob*, by Mr. *Moody*.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Nov. 25.*

KING RICHARD THE THIRD:

See Page 81.

To which was added,

The FAIRY PRINCE.

See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *Nov. 26.*

The CARELESS HUSBAND:

A Comedy, by Cibber.

WHEN this Comedy first appeared, its Merit was so evident, that *Cibber's* Enemies were unwilling to believe him the Author; and some of them through envy, attributed it to the Duke of *Argyle*, some to Mr *Manwaring*, and others to Mr. *Daniel Defoe*, the celebrated Author of *Robinson Crusoe*. But, as it has never positively been proved to be any ones but *Cibber's*, in the course of seventy years, we think we may justly ascribe it to him, and pay that grateful tribute of praise to his Memory, which was unjustly denied him when living.—
The *Careless Husband* is an excellent Comedy;

dy ; the Plot seems to be entirely the Author's own ; the Characters are well drawn, and the Language is remarkably elegant. There is a luxuriance of fancy in his Thoughts, and a purity in his Sentiments, which renders this Piece, infinitely preferable to the more masterly strokes of Wit and Genius, in the licentious Comedies of *Vanburgh* and *Congreve*. It must, indeed, be confessed, that the Piece before us is not so lively and full of business as many other of his Plays ; yet, the Author has shewn great ingenuity in the union of the two Plots, which are finely connected, and have only so much variety as to resemble shades of colours harmoniously blended together ; and perhaps, there never was a more perfect picture of the manners of Persons in real high-life than what this Play exhibits : In short, this Comedy is superior to all *Cibber's* other Pieces, and not greatly inferior to those of any other English dramatic Writer, *Shakespear* excepted.

The Representation of this Piece here is very respectable, the principal Characters being admirably well supported.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.

226 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 26.

The F O X :

A Comedy, by Ben Jonson.

BEN JONSON, as a Dramatic Writer, seems, by some, to have been unjustly placed in Competition with the immortal *Shakespear*. The number of his Pieces is, indeed, very considerable, and some of them deserve a very high rank in literary Fame; but his Comedies are infinitely superior to his Tragedies. Of the former his *Alchymist*; *Every Man in his Humour*; *Epicæne*, or the *Silent Woman*; and *Volpone*, or the *Fox*, are the most capital, and, indeed, the only ones now in possession of the Stage. Of these *Volpone* has been generally considered as the principal, in point of Merit; and certain it is, that with respect to Character and Language, it is very highly finished. The Plot is perfectly original; in the Conduct of which, the Author has discovered great Erudition and Correctness. The circumstance of *Volpone's* taking advantage of the depravity of human Nature in others, yet suffering himself to be duped and overreached by the subtilty of *Mosca*, (a Creature of his own raising) is happily imagined, and executed in a very masterly manner. But, with all these perfections, it seems better calculated to afford pleasure in the Closet, than on the Stage, as there is an evident deficiency of incident, and interest in the Catastrophe, which renders it incapable of giving that satisfaction in the Representation.

presentation, it undoubtedly must afford on a perusal. It is only for real Genius to taste that redundance of inexpressible beauties, which appears through the whole, and which must render it, as *Hamlet* says, "*Caviare to the Multitude*"—After all, though the Piece before us will not produce those pleasing sensations on the Stage, arising from the Flashes of Nature, Passion and Genius which the Plays of *Shakespear* never fail to bestow, the present lamentable dearth of good Comic Writers, will sufficiently justify the revival of it. And if instances of this Nature were more frequent, they, probably, might give a check to the temporary rage of false taste, which has had its foundation in managerial Avarice, and which has betrayed the ignorant and injudicious into a foolish admiration of the absurd extravagance of *Pantomimes*, *Jubilees*, and ridiculous Raree-show Pageantries. But, as these innovations cannot long stand the brunt of critical indignation, it is to be hoped, the time is at hand, when reason and common sense will again re-assume their empire, so unjustly usurped by the representatives of the disordered Inhabitants of Bedlam.

We are aware, that our Wishes to see some of the best dramatic Pieces of the last age revived, will draw upon us, the resentment of the present Writers of those insipid, declamatory Pieces, falsely called Comedies; and it may be urged, that the manners of many of them do not prevail at present. To this, we cannot make a better reply, than in the words of an ingenious Gentleman,

228 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

who very lately published some critical Reflections on the old English Dramatic Writers.

“ Is it displeasing or uninstruative, (says he) to see the manners of a former age pass in Review before us : or is the mind undelighted at recalling the Characters of our Ancestors, while the eye is confessedly gratified at the sight of the Actors dressed in their antique Habits ? Moreover, fashion and custom are so perpetually fluctuating, that it must be a very accurate Piece indeed, and one quite new and warm from the anvil, that catches the *Damon* or *Cynthia* of this minute. Some Plays of our latest and most fashionable Authors are grown as obsolete in this particular, as those of the first Writers ; and it may with safety be affirmed, that *Bobadil* is not more remote from modern Character, than the ever admired, and every-where-to-be-met-with *Lord Foppington*. It may, also, be further considered, that most of the best Characters in our old Plays, are not merely fugitive and temporary ; they are not the sudden growth of yesterday or to-day, sure of fading or withering to-morrow ; but they were the delight of past ages, still continue the admiration of the present, and (to use the language of true poetry)

—————“ *To ages yet unborn appeal,
“ And latest times th’ eternal nature feel.*”

The truth of the above remarks, is too evident to be disputed, and is sufficiently verified in the instance of the Piece now before us ; in which, most of the Characters are perfect

perfect originals, all set forth in the strongest colours, and apparent likenesses of many well known existents in real life.

As this Comedy is now represented, most of the obsolete Passages, and many blameable intrusions upon delicacy of idea, and expression in the original, are sensibly omitted, the latter being unsuitable to the professed chastity of the present age; and some Scenes are transposed, and others omitted as superfluous, by which judicious alteration, the appearance of new Characters, and the quicker succession of incidents, contributes more agreeably to heighten and promote the progress of the main design.—The *Scene* is laid at *Venice*; and it was first played in the year 1605, the principal Characters being performed by those old celebrated Players, *Burbadge*, *Hemings* and *Condel*.—It may not be amiss in this place, to inform our Readers, that a licence was granted under the Privy seal in 1603, the first year of king *James's* reign, to the above named Players, in conjunction with *Shakespear* and the celebrated *Fletcher*, authorising them to act Plays, not only at their usual House, the *Globe* on the *Bank-side*, but in any other part of the Kingdom, during his Majesty's pleasure.—*Burbadge* was the *Betterton* of the age, and the original *Richard the Third*; in which Character, we are informed, he greatly distinguished himself.—*Hemings* was most capital in the Walk of Tragedy, and *Condel* in Comedy: but the two last are better known for being the first Editors of *Shakespear's* Works in folio, in the year 1623, seven years after his death.

With

230 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

With respect to the Representation of this Play, the principal Characters, viz. *Volpone*, *Mosca*, *Voltore*, *Corvino*, *Corbachio*, and *Bernaris*, are well performed by Messrs. Smith, Bensley, Hull, Clarke, Shuter, and Wroughton, so well, that they appear to fill the Author's Ideas very pleasingly and very justly, except, that Mr. Hull, who is generally natural and correct in his playing, rather over-acts his Part in the capacity of the *Advocate*, in the Scenes before the *Avocatori*, in the Senate. With respect to Mr. Shuter, in the Character of *Corbachio*, we are glad to remark, that his Performance throughout, is chaste and attentively correct, without the least taint of that over-strained luxuriancy of humour, he too frequently displays, and which almost perpetually runs into buffoonery. His strokes of Bye-play, of endeavouring to hasten the death of *Volpone*, (whom he supposes to be sick, and near his end, on the Couch) by pressing his stomach with his cane, while *Mosca* is engaged with *Voltore*, are well imagined, when we consider, that in this Character, Nature is rather caricatured, which is the general, tho' only fault of this Author, in his Comic Writings. In this particular, without naming many others, *Jensen* is greatly inferior to *Shakespeare*, the latter having excelled all the ancients and moderns, in the knowledge of human Nature, and, therefore, it is, that all his Characters are naturally drawn, as is conspicuous by the delicate propriety of his Sentiment and Expression. In the delineation of the passions also, he is superior to all other Writers. In short, it is difficult to say, in what

what Part he excels most; whether in moulding every passion to peculiarity of Character, in discovering the Sentiments that proceed from various tones of passion, or in expressing properly every different sentiment; he never disgusts with general declamation and unmeaning words, too common in other writers. His Sentiments are adjusted, with the greatest propriety, to the peculiar Character and Circumstances of the Speaker; and the propriety is not less perfect between his Sentiments and his Diction, as will be evident to every observer of taste, upon comparing him with other writers in similar passages. This is a rare and wonderful faculty, and of the greatest importance in a dramatic Author; and it is this faculty which makes him surpass all other Writers in the Comic, as well as Tragic vein.—We are aware, that it may be urged, upon some occasions, he falls greatly below himself, in those Scenes where passion enters not; by endeavouring, in this case, to raise his Dialogue above the style of ordinary conversation, he undoubtedly sometimes deviates into intricate thought and obscure expression: and sometimes, to throw his language out of the familiar, he employs rhyme. But may it not in some measure excuse *Shakespear*, we shall not say his Works, that he had no pattern in his own, or in any living Language of Dialogue fitted for the Theatre? At the same time, it ought not to escape observation, that the stream clears in its progress, and that in his latter Plays he has attained the purity and perfection of Dialogue; an observation that,
with

232 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

with greater certainty than tradition, will direct the arrangement of his Plays, in the order of time. This ought to be considered by those who exaggerate every blemish, that is discovered in the finest Genius for the Drama, the world ever enjoyed. They ought also, for their own sake, to consider, that it is easier to discover his blemishes which lie generally at the surface, than his beauties, which cannot be truly relished, but by those who dive deeply into human Nature.—Thus much we thought necessary to observe in this place, in opposition to those who have ranked *Ben Jonson* upon an equal footing with *Shakspear* as a Dramatic Writer.

To which was added,

The FAIRY PRINCE.

See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 27.

The HYPOCRITE:

A Comedy, altered from Cibber,

by Mr. Bickerstaff.

THIS is an Alteration of *Cibber's Nonjuror*, the Ground-work of which was taken from *Moliere's Tartuffe*;—The Satire in *Cibber's* Piece being levelled against a set of men whose Principles are but little known in these days, and, who are themselves almost extinct, it had, for some years past, been laid aside, and probably might entirely

ly have sunk into oblivion, had not Mr. *Bickerstaff* restored it to public Notice, by giving a new turn to the Satire.

In the Piece before us, Mr. *Bickerstaff* has restored one of *Moliere's* Characters, viz. that under the denomination of *Old Lady Lambert*; and added a new one of his own, viz. that of *Maw-worm*.—*Dost* *Wolf*, the non-juring priest, in *Cibber's* Piece, is here metamorphosed into a *Methodist Preacher*; a Character, full as obnoxious in these days, as that of *Wolf's* was when *Cibber* wrote his Piece. For though *Wolfe's* principles were most likely to prove dangerous to the cause of protestantism, and the political interests of the state, *Cantwell's* are equally pernicious; as the tenets of the sect he represents, are too mysterious for reason and common-sense, when viewed in the most favourable light, and only tend to propagate superstitious and enthusiastick notions in the minds of the ignorant, to the prejudice of true religion, founded on the most rational principles, and supported on the authority of holy-writ; not to say any thing of the mischiefs and ruin, frequently brought into private families, by the self interested artifices of these pretended zealots, who have been detected in the most atrocious practices, disguised under the cloak of religion.—In this particular, the *Hypocrite* has greatly the advantage of the *Non-Juror*. For non-juring principles may be, and, in fact, are, extinguished, but false zeal and religious hypocrisy, must exist, while there are fools in the world for knaves to practice their cheats upon.

upon. And, as it may be difficult for our laws to punish sanctified knavery, or stop the increase of religious folly and madness, the Stage appears to be the only place where the villainy of the former, or stupidity of the latter can be effectually exposed and ridiculed.—*Maw-worm*, as we observed before, is a new Character, and though he has no concern in the dramatic Action, and must be viewed as a figure in the back ground, yet, he gives life to the original Piece, which was rather languid, for want of some such assistance. When he talks of his wife's goodness in cutting him down, when he had hanged himself through melancholy, and adds, that he does not believe there is a woman in the parish that would do so much for a husband, it is impossible for a Puritan to preserve the gravity of his countenance; and we cannot help observing, that laughter feels some injury from not having a little more of him.—*Mr. Bickerstaff* has not improved the defects of *Gibber*, with respect to the Manners, or the diction, which might have been done with no very great labour or difficulty; however, upon the whole, the Piece is considerably altered for the better, and stands fair for being held in estimation by the lovers of theatrical Amusements.

It is well supported in the Representation; and while we acknowledge that *Mr. Bickerstaff* has touched the Character of *Maw-worm* with a masterly Pencil, it is but just to observe, that *Mr. Weston* heightens it most agreeably by his inimitable Performance. *Dr. Cantwell* was, this evening, played by
Mr.

for November, 1771. 235

Mr. *Moody*, on account of Mr. *King's* illness, and, as we apprehend, it was undertaken on a short notice, we think he executed it with great propriety and justness. *Old Lady Lambert* is pleasingly represented by Mrs. *Bradshaw*; and the truly original and elegantly spirited *Coquette, Charlotte*, (who differs very little from *Cibber's Maria*) was never better figured, or more pleasingly supported, than on the present occasion, by that truly comic Actress, Mrs. *Abington*.

To which was added,
The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.
See Page 121.



COYENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 27.
The F O X.
See Page 226.

To which was added,
The FAIRY PRINCE.
See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 28.
The S T R A T A G E M.
See Page 20.

THIS Play is very well supported in the Representation here, only we cannot say any thing in praise of Messrs. *Packer* and *Burton*, in the Characters of *Simwell* and *Sutlen*,

236. THEATRICAL REVIEW,

len, and think these Parts should have been given, the former to Mr. *Palmer*, and the latter to Mr. *Aikin*, as their talents are more likely to do justice to the Author's Ideas. *Boniface* is well represented by Mr. *Love*. Mr. *Garrick* is admirable in *Archer*, but we think his merit equalled by Mr. *Weston's* *Scrub*.

To which was added,

The MILLER OF MANSFIELD :

A Ballad Farce, by the late Mr. Dodslley.

THIS little Piece cannot fail of affording high Entertainment to those who are pleased with natural Simplicity, good Sentiment, and innocent Merriment.—It is very well supported in the Representation.



GOVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 28.

The CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

See Page 5.

To which was added,

The FAIRY PRINCE.

See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 29.

The WEST INDIAN.

See Page 8.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

COVENT-

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 29.

The F O X.

See Page 226.

To which was added,

The FAIRY PRINCE.

See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Nov. 30.

The PROVOK'D HUSBAND.

See Page 114.

MR. Barry is not without considerable merit in *Lord Townly*, though greatly inferior to what he is in many other Characters.—Miss *Jenny* is a Character well suited to the abilities of Miss *Rogers*.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Nov. 30.

The B U S Y B O D Y.

See Page 196.

To which was added,

The FAIRY PRINCE.

See Page 178.

239 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Dec. 2.

THE TEMPEST:

A Comedy, by Shakespear.

THE greatness of *Shakespear's* Genius does no where so much appear, as where he gives his Imagination an entire loose, and raises his Fancy to a flight above mankind, and the limits of the visible world. Such are his attempts in the Play before us, which is one of the noblest efforts of that sublime and amazing Imagination, peculiar to this great Poet, which soars above the bounds of nature without forsaking sense: or, more properly, carries Nature along with him beyond her established limits.—This is what *Mr. Dryden* calls the *Fairy way of writing*, which, is, indeed, more difficult than any other that depends on the Poet's Fancy, because he has no pattern to follow in it, and must work altogether out of his own invention; for which reason his productions are not capable of being criticised by any laws, but what they themselves establish.—There is a peculiar turn of thought required for this kind of writing, and it is impossible for a Poet to succeed in it, who has not a particular cast of Fancy, and an imagination romantically fertile. These *fairy writings* raise a pleasing kind of horror in the mind, and amuse the Imagination with the strangeness and novelty of the beings that are represented in them.—If we are pleased with surveying the different habits and behaviours of foreign Countries, how much more must we be delighted and surprised when we are led,

led, as it were, into a new creation, and see the persons and manners of another race of beings? Men of cold Fancies, and philosophical Dispositions, object to this kind of Poetry, and assert, that it has not probability enough to affect the Imagination. But to this, it may be answered, that it is generally believed, there are many intellectual beings in this great world besides ourselves, who are subject to different laws, and æconomies from those of mankind; for which reason, therefore, when we see a species of beings represented different from ourselves, we do not look on the representation as altogether impossible.

Among all the Poets of this kind, the *English* are by much the best; nay indeed we have but few instances of Fancy-writing but in *England*, that are carried to any great degree of perfection. *Shakespear* has excelled all others. That noble extravagance of Fancy, which he had in such great perfection, thoroughly qualified him to touch the Imagination, and made him capable of succeeding where he had nothing to support him but the strength of his own Genius. There is something so wild, and yet so solemn in the language and manners of his imaginary beings, that we cannot forbear thinking them natural, though we have no rule by which to judge of them, and are ready to confess, that if there are such beings in the world, it is highly probable, that they talk and act as he has represented them.

We are informed by very good authority, that the *Tempest*, is founded on an Italian,

240 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

lian chemical Romance, called *Oralis* and *Isabella*; in which, it is said, there is a spirit like *Ariel*; but we know not whether this has ever been fully proved; nor that it is unlikely, for the Chemistry of the dark ages was full of these spiritual agents. Be this as it may, we think the Piece under consideration, is a strong proof of *Shakspear's* creative faculty, who, as an ingenious writer observes, "sometimes seems wantonly, as if tired with rumaging in Nature's storehouse for his Characters, to prefer the forming of such as she never dreamt of, in order to shew his power of making them act and speak just as she would have done had she thought proper to have given them existence. One of these is *Caliban* in this Play; than which nothing surely can be more *Outre*, and at the same time nothing more perfectly natural." *Ariel* is another being of *Shakspear's* own creating, unless taken from the Romance mentioned above. This Character is amazingly contrasted to that heavy, earth-born Clod, *Caliban*; all his descriptions, and indeed every word he speaks appearing to partake of the properties of that light and invisible element of which he is an inhabitant. And it is also observed, that his *Miranda* is not less deserving of notice: Her simplicity and natural sensations under the circumstances he has placed her in, being such as no one since, though many Writers have attempted an Imitation of the Character, (the great *Dryden* in particular) has ever been able to arrive at.

Mr. *Rowe* says, that the *Tempest* seems to be as perfect in its kind as almost any thing we have

have of *Shakespear's*. "One may observe, (says he) that the unities are kept, with an exactness uncommon to the liberties of his writing: though that was what, I suppose, he valued himself least upon, since his excellencies were all of another kind. I am very sensible that he does in this Play, depart too much from that likeness to truth which ought to be observed in these sort of writings; yet he does it so very finely, that one is easily drawn in to have more faith for his sake, than reason does well allow of. His magic has something in it very solemn and very poetical: and that extravagant Character of *Caliban* is extremely well sustained, shews a wonderful invention in the Author, who could strike out such a particular wild image, and is certainly one of the finest, and most uncommon grotesques that ever was seen." — To which it may be added, that the Characters are finely discriminated and admirably sustained; that the language is highly poetical, learned and natural; the solemn Parts are elegant and sublime; and the comic Scenes not only familiar, but productive of innocent Merriment

None but *Shakespear*, unless we except *Milton*, would have dared to have forsaken the beaten path; to have thrown off the fetters imposed by tyrannic laws; to have gone in search of new beings, and of new worlds. A genius like his, disdained perpetually to follow the footsteps of those who had gone before him: His all-creating fancy penetrated beyond the circumscribed bounds of human Nature, and led him to call forth new beings into existence; such as do not appear to be

142 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

the mere phantoms of a giddy imagination, but such as are wise, intelligent and rational; acting in every thing consistent with their nature and character. So that the Spectator has nothing to condemn, but becomes at once familiarized to, and perfectly satisfied with them. Things of this nature are almost beyond the reach of human Capacities, and therefore are not even attempted but by few, and scarcely brought to perfection by any. So that, with respect to this Play, what was heretofore said of *Milton*, may very truly be applied to *Shakspeare*; "That his sublime and unbounded Genius, equalled a Subject, that carried him beyond the limits of the world."

That the Character and Conduct of *Prospero* may be understood, something must be known of the system of enchantment, which supplied all the marvellous, found in the Romances of the middle ages. This system seems to be founded on the opinion that the fallen spirits, having different degrees of guilt, had different habitations allotted them at their expulsion; some being confined in hell, some as *Hooker*, who delivers the opinion of our poet's age, expresses it, "dispersed in air, some on earth, some in water, others in caves, dens, or minerals under the earth." Of these some were more malignant and mischievous than others. The earthy spirits seem to have been thought the most depraved, and the aerial the least vitiated. Thus *Prospero* observes of *Ariel*,

—Thou wast a spirit too delicate
To act her earthy and abhor'd commands.

Over

Over these spirits a power might be obtained by certain rites performed, or charms learned. This power was called the *Black Art*, or *Knowledge of Enchantment*. The Enchanter being, as King James observes in his *Demonology*, one who commands the Devil, whereas the Witch serves him. Those who thought best of this art, the existence of which was, I am afraid, (says Dr. Johnson) believed very seriously, held that certain sounds and characters had a physical power over spirits, and compelled their agency; others who condemned the practice, which in reality was surely never practised, were of opinion, with more reason, that the power of charms arose only from compact, and was no more than the spirits voluntarily allowed them for the seduction of man. The art was held by all, though not equally criminal, yet unlawful; and therefore *Causaban*, speaking of one who had commerce with spirits, blames him, though he imagines him one of the best kind who dealt with them by way of command. Thus *Prospero* repents of his art in the last Scene. The spirits were always considered as in some measure enslaved to the Enchanter, at least for a time, and as serving, with unwillingness, therefore *Ariel* so often begs for liberty; and *Caliban* observes, that the spirits serve *Prospero* with no good will, but hate him rootedly.

Dr. Warburton observes, that *Shakespeare* hath very artificially given the air of the antique to the language of *Caliban* the Monster, in order to heighten the grotesque of his Character. And it was a tradition, it seems, that Lord Falkland, Lord C. J. Vaughan, and

244 THEATRICAL REVIEW.

Mr. *Seldon*, concurred in observing, that *Shakespeare*, had not only found out, a new Character in his *Caliban*, but had also devised and adapted a new manner of Language for that Character.

“ Whence these Critics derive the notion of a new Language appropriated to *Caliban*, I cannot find, says Dr. *Johnson*. They certainly mistook brutality of sentiment for uncouthness of words. *Caliban* had learned to speak of *Prospero* and his daughter, he had no names for the Sun and Moon before their arrival, and could not have invented a Language of his own without more understanding than *Shakespeare* has thought it proper to bestow upon him. His diction is indeed somewhat clouded by the gloominess of his temper, and the malignity of his purposes; but let any other being entertain the same thoughts, and he will find them easily issue in the same expressions.”

With respect to the Language put into the mouth of *Prospero*, there are many Passages truly sublime, enriched with the finest images, and dressed in the most nervous expression, which time will not permit us to cite; but there is one instance which sets a few objects before the eye, without much pomp of Language, yet it is truly beautiful: It operates its effect, by representing these objects in a climax, raising the mind higher and higher till it feels the emotion of grandeur in perfection.

The cloud-capt tow'rs, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea all which it inherit, shall dissolve, &c.

The cloud-capt tow'rs produce an elevating emotion, heightened by the gorgeous palaces, and the mind is carried still higher and higher by the images that follow. Successive images, making thus stronger and stronger impressions, must elevate more than any single image can do.

As on the one hand no means directly applied, have more influence to raise the mind than grandeur and sublimity; so, on the other, no means indirectly applied have more influence to sink and depress it; for in a state of elevation, the artful introduction of an humbling object, makes the fall great in proportion to the elevation. The above Passage is a beautiful example of this observation. The elevation of the mind in the former part of it, makes the fall great in proportion, when the most humbling of all images is introduced, that of an utter dissolution of the earth and its Inhabitants.

The above mentioned celebrated Speech is inscribed on *Shakespear's Monument in Westminster-Abbey*; but the famous soliloquy in the Tragedy of *Hamlet*, viz. *To be or not to be*, was intended to be placed on his Monument, only it was objected to by the Clergy as improper.

This Play is in a very deplorable state of action at this Theatre, as must be evident, on a bare perusal of the list of persons mentioned, to perform the Characters, for after excepting *Vernon* in *Ferdinand*, *Baddley* in *Trinculo*, *Mrs. Scott* in *Ariel*, and *Miss Rogers* in *Miranda*, it is almost impossible to give an instance, where so many Performers have been

246 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

placed in one Play, in Characters, in which their talents are so obviously inadequate. And though we have excepted Mrs. Scott, we do not think her at all proper for *Ariel*, for though she undoubtedly does justice to the Songs, she is otherwise insufferable thro' the whole, and by no means figures the Character. Mr. Love used to give great satisfaction in *Caliban*, but we apprehend Mr. King's Illness was the reason of his quitting that Character for *Stephana*.

To which was added,
The INSTITUTION of the GARTER.
See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 2.

The F O X.

See Page 226.

To which was added,
The FAIRY PRINCE.
See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Dec. 3.

The A L C H Y M I S T:

A Comedy, by Ben Jonson.

WE have already hinted our Sentiments of Ben Jonson as a Dramatic Writer, and we have also endeavoured to prove him greatly inferior to the immortal *Shakespeare*.
These

These two justly celebrated Poets, are confessedly the greatest Writers the English Nation could ever boast of in the Drama. *Shakspear* owed all to his prodigious natural Genius; and *Jonson* a great deal to his art and learning; by which he sometimes strained himself to an uncommon pitch, when at all other times, he unbent and played with his subject, and, then having nothing to support him, it is no wonder he wrote so far beneath himself. But *Shakspear*, indebted more largely to Nature, than *Jonson* to acquired talents, in his most negligent hours could never so totally divest himself of his Genius, but that it would frequently break out with astonishing force and splendor. True it is, that both were the Authors of works very unworthy of them, but with this difference, that in *Jonson's* bad Pieces we do not discover one single trace of the Author of the *Fox*, the *Silent Woman*, or the *Alchymist*; but in the wild extravagant notes of *Shakspear*, we every now and then encounter strains that recognize the divine Composer.

The Comedy of the *Alchymist*, is not more universally known than admired; and we think it little inferior either to the *Fox*, or the *Silent Woman* of the same Author. When we consider the age in which this Play was written, the Design is noble, viz. to lash the then prevailing passion for Alchymy, and to point out how easy it is for mankind to be imposed on, where some darling folly lends its aid to the imposture. The ingenious Editor of *Gayton's Festive Notes on Don Quixote*, compares this Comedy to the Adventures of *Don*

248 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Quixote, with respect to the similarity of importance to the different Countries in which they were written. "I cannot avoid remarking," says he, "that though no Author ever excelled the inimitable *Cervantes*, in satirizing the madness and folly of his Countrymen, for their absurd passion for Knight-errantry; yet, I think it will be acknowledged, that the celebrated *Ben Jonson*, with equal merit, and equal success, finely ridiculed and exposed the folly and roguery of the Pretenders to Alchemy of his days; nor do I know which is most laughable, *Don Quixote's* encountering the Windmill, or *Sir Epicure Mammon's* credulity and pleasurable enjoyment of the lies imposed on him by *Subtle* and *Face*."—In this age, however, the *Alchymist* seems to owe much of the applause it receives, from the inimitable Performance of our celebrated *English Roscius*, in the Character of *Abel Drugger*.—Nature is greatly caricatured in this part, but it is the exaggeration of *Drugger's* folly that charms us; for it is to the placing it in a good light that we owe half the beauty of the Exhibition. In this particular, *Mr. Garrick* stands unrivalled, and it is very unlikely we shall ever see this Character so well played when this great Actor ceases to perform it. *Mr. Weston* has attempted it with great success, but not with equal excellence.—*Subtle* is one of the few Characters, in which *Mr. Burton* exhibits any tolerable degree of merit. The late *Mr. Palmer* rendered the Part of *Face* very respectable; and the present *Mr. Palmer* is not far behind his predecessor. *Sir Epicure Mammon* is well represented by *Mr. Love*; and the

the under Parts of *Swry, Ananias, Tribulation, and Dapper*, are very well supported by Messrs. *Baddley, Parsons, Hartry*, and Mr. *W. Palmer*. As to the Female Characters, they are of but little importance to the Piece, and it is well they are not, unless they were better supported in the Representation.

To which was added,

POLLY HONEYCOMB.

A Dramatic Novel, by Mr. Colman.

THIS little Piece made its first appearance on the Stage in 1760, the Design of which, is to expose the passion for reading Romances, and those trumpery and pernicious histories generally manufactured for the use of circulating libraries, under the denomination of Novels; and which employ too much of the time and attention of the *British Females* of the present age. It is very imperfect, particularly, with respect to the Catastrophe, which is inconclusive and unsatisfactory; however, the Characters of Mr. and Mrs. *Honeycomb* are pleasingly drawn, nor is that of *Polly Honeycomb* without merit. With all its imperfections, it is capable of affording considerable Entertainment, when the Characters are well performed, as they were, when it was first brought out; to which, in some measure, the great success it then met with may be attributed.

At present, it is well supported in the Representation, except in the Character of Mrs. *Honeycomb*, which is now, as indifferently, as it was at first excellently performed.

250 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 3.

J A N E S H O R E.

See Page 165.

To which was added,

The F A I R Y P R I N C E.

See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Dec. 4.

T I M O N O F A T H E N S:

A Tragedy, altered from Shakespear.

THE Story of this Piece may be found in *Lucian's Dialogues*, and almost all the Scenes in the fourth and fifth Acts are taken from the *Timon of Lucian*.—Dr. *Johnson* observes, "that this Play is a Domestic Tragedy, and therefore, strongly fastens on the attention of the Reader.—In the Plan, says he, there is not much art, but the Incidents are natural, and the Characters various and exact. The Catastrophe affords a very powerful warning against that ostentatious liberality, which scatters bounty, but confers no benefits, and buys flattery, but not friendship."

This Tragedy, as we have it from *Shakespear*, is extremely faulty in point of Regularity; many of the Passages being very perplexed, while others appear to have been corrupted through the ignorance, or inattention of Transcribers. It contains many beautiful Passages; but, upon the whole, it is not one of those Plays, in which either the extent of

Shak:-

Shakspear's views, or elevation of his fancy is fully displayed, for he has not exerted much invention in the Conduct of his Plot; tho' it must be confessed that he has diversified his Characters, so as to make a very pleasing and interesting variety, and preserved most of them with great exactness.—The most remarkable Character in the Piece, is that of *Apemantus*, which is, probably, as highly finished, as any thing to be met with, in the whole of *Shakspear's* Works; and must be allowed to be a Master-Piece of Ill-nature, and satirical Snarling. Some of his Strokes discover great knowledge of Men and Things, and afford many useful hints to the vain, the extravagant, and the profligate.—The Scene lies at *Athens*, and in the Woods not far from it.

With respect to the Alteration of this Play, it is the Work of Mr. *Cumberland*, the Author of the *Brothers*, and the *West-Indian*, of whose abilities, as a Dramatic Writer, we have made mention in some former Numbers.—As the Piece now stands, some of the original Scenes are omitted; others considerably reduced, for the sake of brevity, and many of the Speeches stripped of those obsolete and indelicate Passages, with which they too frequently abounded. The Omissions having greatly reduced the Piece, with respect to length, it became necessary to add somewhat to fill up the *Hiatus*, which these Omissions had occasioned. With this view, Mr. *Cumberland* has rejected the Characters of *Phrynia* and *Timandra*, the Mistresses of *Alcibiades* (who only appeared in one Scene, in the fourth Act,) and by giving *Timon* a Daughter,

252 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

viz. *Evanthe*, he has interwoven a Love-Plot between her and *Alcibiades*, in order to give a further extent to the Piece.

With respect to the Omissions, some of them are commendable; but, we by no means approve of the Banquetting Scenes being rejected, in the first Act, it being absolutely necessary to the Plan, in order to heighten the succeeding ingratitude of *Timon's* false friends; besides, that it is one of the principal Scenes, in which *Apemantus* appears. In the room of this we are presented with a Dance, and the Banquet is only spoke of.—The new Character of *Evanthe*, is not badly drawn; she is a good example of filial piety, tho' of but little service to the main Design of the Piece.—And we do not think Mr. *Cumberland* has greatly improved the Character of *Alcibiades*, except, that it is more laudable for him to marry a virtuous woman, than to keep two mistresses. But, tho' this may be more moral, we are afraid, it is departing from the truth of History, for we do not recollect, that any of the Authors who have spoke of him, make the least mention of his being married. He was a man of libertine principles, who, indeed, became reclaimed in the latter part of his life, through the instruction of *Socrates*.

Mr. *Cumberland* has shewn himself but a very feeble hand in writing Love-Scenes, and the event of *Alcibiades's* union with *Evanthe*, though with the consent of *Timon* in his last moments, as a reward for his services, is brought about in a strange bungling manner. He has made a great part of the fourth and fifth Acts his own, but we think he has left them

them full as languid as they were originally; though perhaps he imagines the humour thrown into the Character of the Soldier, in the fifth Act, will in some measure remove this disagreeable circumstance; but, we cannot help thinking, he will find himself mistaken, for his attempts to be witty are very despicable. The Pun (or whatever else he pleases to call it) on *Timon's* name, is the most contemptible one we ever remember to have met with, and is beneath the dignity of *Wapping* or *St. Giles's*.

Upon the whole, as far as we were able to judge of the Piece in its altered state, from the first night's Representation, we do not think the Improvements very important. There still seems to be somewhat more wanting than the Mutilations mentioned above, or than these Additions, to render this Play what we could wish it to be. And, as we think Mr. *Cumberland's* Additions very inadequate to the Sterling of *Shakespear*, we cannot help wishing, that some Writer of sufficient ability would think it worth his while, once more to revise this Tragedy; and, by treating it with a more sparing hand than Mr. *Cumberland* has done, and improving it upon *Shakespear's* original plan, render it sufficiently interesting; which would entitle it to an equal immortality with the best of this celebrated Author's Pieces. This would be paying a pleasing, and a grateful tribute to the memory of the greatest Dramatic Writer, the world ever produced.

The new Scenes are well executed, and the Dresses are pleasingly imagined; nor is the Illumination

254 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

lumination in *Timon's* hall inconsistent with that ostentatious *Athenian's* extravagance and love of splendour. The truth and perfection of Theatrical Representations, in a great measure, depends on proper Decorations; otherwise all that the Player can inculcate will prove ineffectual. In this particular, even *every* must allow, Mr. *Garrick* has generally discovered great judgment; and, we recollect few instances of his erring with respect to this point; which is more than we can say of any other Manager within our knowledge.—Scenery and Decorations are very important auxiliaries, to the keeping up the illusion, and carrying on an appearance of reality in Theatrical Representations. But, it requires great knowledge to introduce them properly; because they should never engross that attention in an Audience, which is primarily due to the Player.

Mr. *Cumberland* has prefixed an Advertisement to the printed Play, in which, he says, he wishes he could have brought this Play upon the Stage with less violence to its Author, and not so much responsibility on his own part. “New Characters, continues he, of necessity require some display. Many original Passages of the first merit are still retained, and in the contemplation of them my errors, I hope, will be over-looked or forgiven: In examining the brilliancy of a diamond, few People throw away any remarks upon the dullness of the foil.”—In the printed copy, the lines marked with commas are additional.

As we have already mentioned the Particulars of the Alterations, we shall only give our Readers a few Specimens of Mr. Cumberland's Language in the additional Scenes.

In the fifth Act, when *Alcibiades*, before the Gates of *Athens*, demands *Evanthe*, and she appears, he says,

—————"Hah, she comes,—
Hail, loveliest, dearest maid;
Ob, grant thy Soldier to repay his toils
With this one fond embrace.

Evanthe. Thus, on my knees,
I thank the Gods and thee, and thus beseech thee,
O spare thy Country, spare the reverend Senate,
Spare this repentant City."

And after *Alcibiades* has brought the *Abonians* to submit, she says,

"'Tis done! my Country can demand no more;
Now, Nature, I am thine.

Alcibiades. What means *Evanthe*?

Evan. I've sav'd a City; grant me now, kind
Gods,
To save a Father. Give me instant convey
To the lone wilds where wretched *Timon* haunts,
And with the howling savages consorts
The exile of mankind.

Alcib. See, where the Senate
Expect us at their gates: enter with me,
And all due terms of reconciliation ended,
Myself will be your guide.

Evan. Forbid it heaven!
Too much already have I given to *Athens*:
My heart is gone before to *Timon's* cave,
And I must follow it.

Alcib. Yet ere we part,
The hope, to which your looks, your words, gave
life,
Bid it grow up and multiply within me:

Oh,

256 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Oh, take from piety a moment's truce,
And once again with soft consenting smiles
Tell me *Evanthe* will be only mine.

Evan. O covetous in love; possessing all
Which my fond heart can give, dost thou require
That I shou'd tell it to thee o'er and o'er,
While with a miser's transport thou enjoy'st
The contemplation of thy own success?
Yield to the time; a Father claims me now;
Sacred to him let me preserve this hour,
Nor take from Nature what I give to thee.

In the next Scene, we have a Specimen of
a less serious cast. *Lucius* an *Athenian*, and
one of *Timon's* false Friends enters muffled, as
the *Soldiers* of *Alcibiades* are carrying *plate*,
treasure, &c. taken as spoil, to *Timon*. He
says,

"How now, what's here? O poison to my sight!
Those are my treasures—Lost, undone for ever.
See, see another yet, and yet another——
By heavens the very cup which I did worship
More reverently than the Gods—It was the work
Of antique *Melidorus*, fit to bear
Celestial *Nectar* from the ministring hand
Of *Hebe* to the lips of *Cretan* Jove.
Swallow me, earth—Oh, the unholy Villains,
They pause for breath; they'll kill me if I speak
to'em.

But soft! this man seems of a gentler sort;
He is a stranger of the General's train,
And knows me not. I may accost him safely.
The good hour to you, Sir.—I pray you now,
Whence are these riches?

Soldier. Do you live in *Athens*,
And ask that question? Know you not one *Lucius*?

Lucius. I've seen the man.

Sold. Then you have seen a villain,
A most dissembling, base, unmanly villain.
Wou'd I cou'd meet him——

Luc.

Luc. Wou'd you slay him then?

Sold. No, but the sight of these his treasures
wou'd:

We've stript the knave to the skin; he did deny
Lord *Timon* certain vile and sorry drachms
In his distress; now *Timon's* star prevails,
And justice wrings those treasures from the gripe
Of that perfidious, that ingrateful *Lucius*.

Luc. Men in all ages have been found ingrateful.

Sold. But none like him; society bleeds for it.

Luc. Hath *Athens* then a law to try the heart?

Sold. The order of the General is our law.

Luc. But is there nothing fav'd?

Sold. All, all is swept,

To the last drachm; pictures; statues, coins,
Rich hangings, couches, vestments wrought with
gold,

And robes of *Tyrian* dye, plate, jewels, gems—
Is't not a pleasant jest? why laugh you not?
You only seem of all men to be sad.

Luc. I cry you mercy; I am wondrous merry—
(*seigns a laugh.*)

I've heard he had a ring, a most rare jewel,
Is that gone to?

Sold. Behold! (*showing the ring.*)

Luc. Ay, 'tis the same.

Sold. Mark, what a play! 'tis a most perfect
stone.

Luc. Wou'd 'twere a basilisk! (*aside*)—must
this away

To *Timon's* with the rest?

Sold. Yes, and 'tis time

That it were there—Good morrow, gentle Sir.

Luc. Curse on your country. (*aside*)

Sold. I'm glad you like

The ring so well: If you should meet the knave,
Tell him the prize we've got, and gird him well,
I know 'twill give you pleasure: All men loath him.
Be sure you wring him to the quick—remember.

[*Exit.*]

Luc.

258 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Luc. Remember! yes: no fear but I'll remember.

You've giv'n me cause; the Gods, who deal in vengeance,

Reward you for it! I could dash my brains,
For that way only can I 'scape remembrance.

O Nature, what a luckless piece of work was man!
[Exit.]

We have already delivered our opinion of Mr. Cumberland's Alteration of *Shakespeare's Timon of Athens*, and therefore, we shall not resume the subject; but submit the above quotations, from the additional parts, to the consideration of our Readers. We have ventured to deliver our sentiments very freely, we confess, respecting this mighty performance; which has been puffed upon the Town, in the old assuming strain, but had we treated it with the contempt it deserves, we should have been much more severe with Mr. Cumberland, than he has been with his Brother Authors; though his abuse of contemporary Writers, in his illiberal *Prologue* to his Comedy of *The Brothers*, is scarcely to be out-done, either with respect to severity or scurrility.

We have little to object to Mr. Barry in the Part of *Timon*, though we confess he did not fulfil our expectations; but as some allowance is due to age and infirmities, humanity must abate the severity of Criticism. Mr. Bannister supports the cynical Character of *Apeantus* with great propriety, and, therefore we wish Mr. Cumberland had not curtailed this part so much as he has.

With respect to the new Performer, in the Character of *Alcibiades*, (whose name we are informed

informed is *Crofts*) after making every allowance for a person labouring under the usual disagreeable circumstances of a first Appearance, we think ourselves obliged to declare, that this Gentleman, by no means answered the expectations we had formed, from the accounts we had heard of him.—His voice is not bad, though it is not much above the level of common conversation;—his deportment is aukward and void of grace to an extreme; and he labours under the disadvantage of having a face destitute of expression. His gestures are extremely ungraceful, and the whole of his execution is glaringly untutored, and misconceived. His Person is very ill formed, and therefore it makes greatly against him; especially as he is the Representative of *Alcibiades*, who was the handsomest man in all *Athens*, and we never remember any one's attempting to set out as a capital Performer, with so few requisites for the support of such an undertaking, as this Gentleman appears to have.—We wish the Part of *Alcibiades* had been given to Mr. *Reddish*, or if Mr. *Palmer* had played it, instead of the Part he now holds, there is no doubt but every expectation would have been satisfied. The under Parts in this Play, are very respectably supported, and Mrs. *Barry's* Performance in the new Character of *Evanthe*, gave infinite satisfaction.

To which was added,

THE MUSICAL LADY.

A Farce, by Mr. Colman.

THIS

260 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

THIS pleasing little Piece made its appearance at *Drury-Lane Theatre*, in the year 1762, and met with great applause. Its principal aim, is to ridicule the folly of the Fair Sex of the present age, of affecting a passion for Music and a taste in Composition, without having the least knowledge of the Science, and thereby suffering themselves to be dupes to fashionable absurdity, and an easy prey to the designing and interested views of foreign Fiddlers and *Italian* Impostors, to the neglect of real and superior merit in our *English* Performers; by which folly, they are not only seduced into the utmost extravagance, but become the sport and ridicule of the very harpies they so idolize and encourage.—The Design is truly laudable, the Characters are all very highly finished, and the whole together, is one of the most pleasing little Pieces now on the Stage, and probably, the most perfect of any of Mr *Colman's* Dramatic Works.

The principal Characters are very pleasingly and justly represented.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Dec. 4.*

LOVE MAKES A MAN;

OR,

The FOP's FORTUNE:

A Comedy, by Cibber.

NOTwithstanding this Piece is founded on the highest Improbabilities, and is extremely irregular, yet there is such a happy mixture of truly comic humour through the whole

whole Piece, as will always give pleasure to an Audience in the Representation, on account of the numerous incidents and variety of business which it contains; but, then, it must be to such as are pleased with being amused only, without examining into the cause of that which afforded them the entertainment; for tho' the Dialogue is sprightly, we meet with very few touches of wit; and many of the Sentiments convey very gross Ideas, neither does the moral inculcate any instruction. The Plot is taken from two Plays of Beaumont's and Fletcher's, viz. *The Custom of the Country*, and *The Elder Brother*, which is worked up in a very pantomimical manner, and with less correctness than Cibber usually displayed in his Pieces; on which account, we are of opinion that the great success it met with at first, was owing to the Characters of the sprightly *Clodio*, the sensible *Carlos*, and the testy *Don Lewis*, which are all well drawn, and very pleasingly finished.

Upon the whole, this Play is in a respectable state of action here, some few particulars excepted.—Mr. Bensley gives but a very faint idea of *Carlos*, except that the make of his person, with respect to leanness, gives an idea of his having led a studious life, as *Carlos* is said to have done, Mr. Woodward supports the Part of *Clodio* with infinite spirit and humour; it is a Character which gives this Gentleman an opportunity of making use of some of those Theatrical manœuvres, and strokes of *Outré*, in which he so much delights.—Mr. Sbuter, as he generally does in most of his Characters, displays too much of his luxuriance.

262 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

luxuriance of humour and buffoonry, in the Part of *Don Lewis* to give critical satisfaction. Mr. *Yates* used to play this Character very correct. The under Parts are very well performed, and we think Mrs. *Vincent* and Mrs. *Bulkley* do as much in the Parts of *Elvira* and *Angelina*, as can be expected, for the Author has not rendered these Characters very important. Mrs. *Gardner* rather strains the Author's intention too far, in that contemptible Character *Louisa*; this is a Fault that should be carefully avoided, where the Picture exhibits Nature in a depraved state.

To which was added,

The FAIRY PRINCE.

See Page 178.

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Dec. 5.

C Y M B E L I N E.

WE have already given an Account of this Play (see Page 15.) ; but, as we profess, in the course of this Work, to point out the beauties in the Works of our celebrated Dramatic Poets, we cannot pass this Article, without quoting a few Passages, for the entertainment of our Readers.

The Conversation between *Imogen* and *Pisania*, after the departure of *Posthumus*, for *Italy*, is worthy notice.

Imogen. I would, thou grew'st unto the shores
o' th' haven,
And question'dst every sail : if he should write,
And

And I not have it, 'twere a paper lost
As offer'd mercy is. What was the last
That he spake with thee?

Pisano. 'Twas, "His Queen, his Queen!"

Imogen. Then wav'd his handkerchief?

Pis. And kiss'd it, Madam.

Imo. Senseless linen, happier therein than I!
And that was all?

Pis. No, Madam; for so long
As he could make me with this eye, or ear,
Distinguish him from others, he did keep
The deck, with glove, or hat, or handkerchief,
Still waving, as the fits and starts of's mind
Could best express how slow his soul sail'd on,
How swift his ship.

Imo. Thou should'st have made him
As little as a crow, or less, ere left
To aster eye him.

Pis. Madam, so I did.

Imo. I would have broke mine eye-strings;
crackt 'em, but
To look upon him; 'till the diminution
Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle;
Nay, followed him, 'till he had melted from
The smallness of a gnat, to air; and then
Have turn'd mine eye, and wept.—But, good

Pisano,
When shall we hear from him?

Pis. Be assur'd, Madam,
With his next vantage.

Imo. I did not take my leave of him, but had
Most pretty things to say: ere I could tell him,
How I would think on him, at certain hours,
Such thoughts and such; or, I could make him
swear,

The She's of *Italy* should not betray
Mine interest, and his honour; or have charged him,
At the sixth hour of morn, at noon, at midnight,
To encounter me with orisons; for then
I am in heaven for him; or ere I could
Give him that parting kiss, which I had set

264 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Betwixt two charming words, comes in my father;
And, like the tyrannous breathing of the north,
Shakes all our buds from growing.

ACT I. Scene 5.

Betwixt two charming words.—There is an inexpressible prettiness in the whole of this idea. The image is taken from a gem set between two others of a different kind. “But what were these *two charming words*, between which the kiss was set?” says Dr. Warburton. “This, says he, may be thought too nice an enquiry. If we consider, *Shakespeare* as having only the vague idea of two fond words in general, the *douceurs*, with which lovers are used to entertain one another, the whole force and beauty of the passage will be lost. Without question, by these *two charming words*, she would be understood to mean, *Adieu, Posthumus*, the one Religion, made so; and the other *Love*.”

In the *sixth* Scene of the *second* Act, the absurd conclusions of Jealousy are admirably painted and exposed, in the belief of *Posthumus*, on the return of *Jachimo* from *Britain*, that he had enjoyed his wife.—When *Jachimo* produces the bracelet, *Posthumus* had given to *Imogen*, as a proof of her infidelity, *Philario* observes, that she might have lost it, or that one of her women might have been corrupted to steal it from her, and *Posthumus* considers it as no proof, and therefore, desires *Jachimo* to render him some corporal sign about her, more evident than this, for this, says he, was stole. To which *Jachimo* replies,

“By *Jupiter*, I had it from her arm.”

Post.

Posthumus. "Hark you, he swears; by *Jupiter* he swears.

'Tis true—nay, keep the ring—'tis true; I'm sure; She could not lose it; her attendants are All sworn and honourable. They induced to steal it!

And by a stranger!—no, he hath enjoyed her."

On the credit of the bracelet, and an oath of the party concerned, he rashly judges against all appearances from the intimate knowledge of his wife's honour, that she was false to his bed; and grounds that judgment, at last, upon much less appearances of the honour of her attendants. "Now common-sense, says *Dr. Warburton*, from his belief of the honour of his wife's attendants, should either have made him conclude in favour of hers; or, if he rejected the much stronger appearances of honour in her, he should, at the same time, have rejected those much weaker in her attendants. But *Shakespear* knew at what distance *Reason* and *Love* are wont to be, and has, therefore, made them keep their distance here."

The next *Scene*, where *Posthumus* reflects on *Imogen's* Infidelity, is worthy notice.

"Is there no way for men to be, but women Must be half-workers? We are bastards all; And that most venerable man, which I Did call my father, was I know not where, When I was stamp'd. Some coiner with his tools Made me a counterfeit; yet my mother seem'd The *Dian* of that time; so doth my wife The nonpareil of this—Oh vengeance, vengeance Me of my lawful pleasure she restrain'd, And pray'd me oft, forbearance; did it with A pudency so rosy, the sweet view on't

266 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Might well have warn'd old *Saturn*—that I
thought her
As chaste, as unsunn'd snow.

The last five lines give a beautiful picture of *Imogen's* Delicacy; which the Poet has introduced with great art, in order to heighten the colour of the crime she is supposed to have committed.—We have omitted the six succeeding lines, as they tend to raise very gross ideas; and shall proceed with this Speech, where *Posthumus* rails against the Fair-sex in general.

————— Could I find out
The woman's part in me! For there's no motion
That tends to vice in man, but, I assure,
It is the woman's part; be't lying, note it,
The woman's; flattering, hers; deceiving, hers;
Lust, and rank thoughts, hers, hers; revenges,
hers;
Ambitions, covetings, change of prides, disdain,
Nice longings, slanders, mutability:
All faults that may be nam'd, nay, that hell
knows,
Why, hers, in part, or all; but rather all.—For
even to vice
They are not constant, but are changing still
One vice, but of a minute old, for one
Not half so old as that."

In the *third* Scene of the *third* Act, the Conversation between *Bellarius*, *Guiderius* and *Arviragus* is inimitable. The former endeavours to instruct the two young Princes in a contempt for the busy world; to which *Guiderius* replies,

"Out of y^r proof you speak; we, poor, unfledg'd,
Have never wing'd from view o'th' nest; nor
known not
What

What air's from home. Haply, this life is best,
If quiet life is best : sweeter to you,
That have a sharper known ; well corresponding
With your stiff age ; but unto us, it is
A cell of ignorance ; travelling a-bed ;
A prison for a Debtor that not dares
To stride a limit."

To which *Arviragus* adds,

—————" What should we speak of,
When we are old as you ? when we shall hear
The rain and wind beat dark December ? How
In our pinching eave, shall we discourse
The freezing hours away ? &c."

This dread of an old age, unsupplied with matter for discourse and meditation, is a Sentiment natural and noble. " No State, says Dr. *Johnson*, can be more destitute than that of him who, when the delights of sense forsake him, has no pleasures of the mind."

The next Speech, in the same Scene, is admirable ; where *Bellarius*, points out the danges attending a connection with the world ; at the conclusion of which, *Shakespear* has made him, very beautifully, compare the reputation and honour he acquired in his youth, to a tree full of fruit.

—————" How you speak !
Did you but know the city's usuries,
And felt them knowingly ; the art o'th' court,
As hard to leave, as keep, whose top to climb,
Is certain falling, or so slipp'y, that
The fear's as bad as falling ; the toil of war,
A pain, that only seems to seek out danger
I'th' name of fame and honour, which dies i'th'
 search,
And hath so oft a sland'rous epitaph,

268 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

As record of fair act ; nay, many time,
Doth ill deserve, by doing well : what's worse,
Must curt'sy at the censure. Oh, my boys, this
story

The world may read in me : my body's mark'd
With *Roman* swords ; and my report was once
First with the best of note ; *Cymbeline* lov'd me,
And when a soldier was the theme, my name
Was not far off ; then was I as a tree,
Whose boughs did bend with fruit, but in night,
A storm, or robbery, call it what you will,
Shook down my mellow hangings, nay, my
leaves,
And left me bare to weather."

In the *fourth Scene* of this Act, the Poet has displayed great art ; where *Imogen* supposes *Posthumus* to be false. — When *he* thought her so, he unjustly scandalized the whole sex, as may be seen above ; but *Imogen* under the same impressions of his infidelity, attended with more provoking circumstances, acquits his sex, and lays the fault where it was due. " The Poet here paints from Nature, says *Dr. Warburton*. This is life and manners. The man thinks it a dishonour to the superiority of his understanding to be jilted, and therefore flatters his vanity into a conceit that the disgrace was inevitable from the general infidelity of the sex. The woman, on the contrary, not imagining her credit to be at all affected in the matter, never seeks out for so extravagant a consolation ; but at once eases her *malice* and her *grief*, by laying the crime and damage at the door of some obnoxious coquet.

—————" Some Jay of Italy,
Whose mother was her painting, hath betray'd
him, &c."

And

And afterward—she says—

“Some Roman Curtezan”—

We shall close this Article, with a beautiful Soliloquy, with which the *fifth* Act opens; when *Posthumus* enters with the bloody handkerchief, sent by *Pisanio* to deceive him, and, supposed to be stained with the blood of *Imogen*.

“Yea, bloody cloth, I’ll keep thee; for I wisht,
Thou should’st be colour’d thus. You married
ones,

If each of you would take this course, how many
Must murder wives much better than themselves,
For wrying but a little? Oh *Pisanio*!

Every good servant does not all commands;
No bond, but to do just ones.—Gods! if ye
Should have ta’en vengeance on my faults, I ne’er
Had liv’d to put on this; so had you sav’d
The noble *Imogen* to repent, and struck
Me, wretch, more worth your vengeance. But
alack,

You snatch some hence for little faults; that’s love,
To have them fall no more; you some permit
To second ills with ills, each elder worse,
And make them dread it to the doer’s thrift.

But *Imogen*’s your own. Do your best wills,
And make me blest t’obey!—I am brought hither
Among the *Italian* Gentry, and to fight
Against my lady’s kingdom. ’Tis enough,
That, *Britain*, I have killed thy mistress. Peace!
I’ll give no wound to thee. Therefore, good
heav’ns,

Hear patiently my purpose. I’ll disrobe me
Of these *Italian* weeds, and suit myself
As does a *British* peasant; so I’ll fight
Against the part I come with; so I’ll die
For thee, O *Imogen*, even for whom my life
Is, every breath, a death; and thus unknown,

270 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Pitied, not hated, to the face of peril
Myself I'll dedicate."

Dr. *Johnson* observes, that, this is a Soliloquy of Nature, uttered when the effervescence of a mind agitated and perturbed spontaneously and inadvertently discharges itself in words. The Speech throughout all its tenor, if the last conceit be excepted (which conceit we have omitted) seems to issue warm from the heart. He first condemns his own violence; then tries to disburden himself, by imputing part of the crime to *Pisanio*; he next soothes his mind to an artificial and momentary tranquility, by trying to think that he has been only an instrument of the Gods for the happiness of *Imogen*. He is now grown reasonable enough to determine, that having done so much evil he will do no more) that he will not fight against the Country which he has already injured; but as life is not longer supported, he will die in a just cause, and die with the obscurity of a man who does not think himself worthy to be remembered.

To which was added,

HARLEQUIN'S INVASION.

See Page 24.



COVENT - GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 5.

B A R B A R O S S A.

See Page 64.

To which was added,

The FAIRY PRINCE.

DRURY-

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Dec. 6.

The SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.

See Page 220.

To which was added,

THOMAS AND SALLY.

A Musical Entertainment ;

• *Written by Mr. BICKERSTAFF, and set to
Music by Dr. ARNE.*

THIS is a very pleasing Performance, with respect to the Drama, as well as the Music ; the former being simple and natural, and, the latter enchanting, from that taste and elegance displayed throughout, and which is so peculiarly natural to the Compositions of Dr. Arne. The Incident, of Sally's withstanding the tempting solicitations of the Squire, and preserving her integrity to her absent Lover, affords this very useful Lesson to the Female Sex, viz. that, plighted Faith should ever be preserved inviolate, and that Virtue in an humble station, is more noble and exalted, than Vice in the palaces of the rich and opulent.

With respect to the Representation, the Part of *Thomas*, is well supported by Mr. *Vernon*, who, in this instance, evinces what we have observed before, that he is the best acting Singer now on the Stage. Mr. *Davies* appeared, for the first time, in the Character of the *Squire*, and discovered no inconsiderable degree of merit.—*Dorcas* by Mrs. *Lovs*.—This Character is better played here by

272 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Mrs. *Dorman*, but neither of these Ladies render this Part so pleasing, as when it was represented by Mrs. *Thomson*, at *Covent-Garden Theatre*. Mrs. *Scott* does great justice to the Songs in the Part of *Sally*, being a very accomplished Singer, but as an Actress, she is insufferably insipid and inanimate.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Dec. 6.*

The I N C O N S T A N T:

A Comedy, by Farquhar.

THIS pleasing Comedy appeared in the year 1703, and met with very indifferent success, though it vastly excels several of this Author's Pieces, in point of intrinsic merit. This failure must appear strange, after the great reputation Mr. *Farquhar* acquired, but three years before, by his Comedy of the *Constant Couple*, which was played fifty-three nights in the season, in which it first appeared. But it has been accounted for, by an ingenious Author, who attributes it to the inundation of foreign Entertainments of Music, Singing, and Dancing, &c. which at *that time* broke in upon the *English Stage* in a torrent, and seemed, with a magical infatuation, at once to take possession of *British* taste, to the total neglect of the more valuable and intrinsic productions of our own Countrymen.

The *Scene* is laid in *Paris*; and the main Design is taken from the *Wild-Goose Chase*, of *Beaumont* and *Fletcher*: But, it has been
asserted

asserted that the Catastrophe in the *fifth* Act, where *Mirable's* life is in danger, at the house of *Lamorce*, the Courtezan, and of his being rescued by Captain *Duretete*, on the information of his danger, thro' the vigilance of *Oriano*, who attended him, disguised as his Page, had its foundation from a circumstance of the same nature, which the Author had some concern in, when acting abroad in his military capacity.—Some of the incidents are hardly supported on probability, notwithstanding which, we cannot help thinking it, a very lively and entertaining Comedy.

The Representation of this Play here, is very respectable, the principal Characters being, in general, well supported; and those of *Young Mirable*, *Old Mirable*, and *Captain Duretete*, in particular, are admirably sustained.

To which was added,

The FAIRY PRINCE.

See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Dec. 7.

The WEST INDIAN.

THE Part of *Belcour*, is very pleasingly represented by Mr. *Reddish*, and though it was originally given to Mr. *King*, and has been undertaken by Mr. *Reddish*, on account of Mr. *King's* indisposition, we think the Character is not injured much by the exchange; for it never appeared to us, that

274 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Mr. *King* displayed any great excellence in it; and, indeed, it contains nothing but what may be executed, by a Performer of inferior abilities to what either of the above Gentlemen possess.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 7.

The BEGGAR's OPERA.

See Page 1.

MRS. *Woodman*, (of whom we have made mention, in the Character of one of the *Wood-Nymphs*, in the *Fairy-Prince*) played the Part of *Polly*, this evening for the first time.—Her figure is pleasing, and well suited to this Character.—As an Actress, her powers, appear, at present, to be rather faint, and her deportment untutored; but, as a Singer, her voice is enchanting; and her execution natural, distinct, and correct; and, we do not doubt, when time and experience have rendered her more familiar to the business of the Stage, she will prove a very valuable acquisition to it.

To which was added,

The ENGLISHMAN in PARIS;

A Comedy, of two Acts, by Mr. Foote.

THIS Piece met with great success when it first appeared in the year 1753; the general

ral Design of which, is to expose the absurdity of our young Gentlemen of fortune, who, by travelling abroad, learn the follies and vices of other countries, before they have acquired either taste or judgement to relish the valuable excellencies of their native country; generally equal, if not superior to what they meet with abroad. This Design, is truly laudable, but, it is greatly injured by the inconsistent Portrait, which the Author has given us of the *Englishman*, and, which, in a great measure, destroys the merit of the intention.

The principal Characters are well performed here, particularly those of *Buck* and *Lucinda*: The former by Mr. *Woodward*, who excels in *Ontré* Characters; and the latter by Miss *Macklin*, who played the Character when the Piece first appeared, which was for her father's benefit.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Dec 9.

TIMON OF ATHENS.

See Page 250.

To which was added,

The REGISTER OFFICE.

See Page 80.

276 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 9.
The RECRUITING OFFICER.

See Page 153.

To which was added,

The FAIRY PRINCE.

See Page 178.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Dec. 10.
TWELFTH NIGHT:

A Comedy, by Shakespear.

"THIS Play, says Dr. *Johnson*, is in the graver part elegant and easy, and in some of the lighter Scenes exquisitely humorous. *Ague-cheek* is drawn with great propriety, but his Character is, in a great measure, that of natural fatuity, and is therefore not the proper prey of the Satirist. The Soliloquy of *Malvolio* is truly comic; he is betrayed to ridicule, merely by his pride. The marriage of *Olivia*, and the succeeding perplexity, tho' well conducted to divert on the Stage, wants credibility, and fails to produce the proper instruction required in the Drama, as it exhibits no just picture of life."

We acknowledge ourselves of the Doctor's opinion, with respect to the last particular, but we think he has been somewhat sparing of praise in his general Character of this pleasing Comedy. It is true, it does not exhibit a just picture of life, and, on this account,

account, fails to produce instruction, which should be the grand aim of the Drama; but, as all amusements do not professedly unite themselves with instruction, tho' it is best when they do; surely, a Piece full of exquisite entertainment, founded on innocent circumstances, displaying Characters inoffensive in themselves, and Dialogue untainted, either with licentiousness or obscenity, is entitled to a considerable degree of approbation.—The Plot of this Piece is well contrived, and the Incidents, in general, are sufficiently probable to be pleasing. The Characters are numerous, and marked with great variety; and, tho' some of them are not exact portraits of nature, they are not so much on the extreme, as either to disgust, or be unpleasing. A more innocent set of beings, were, probably never grouped together. If any one of them can be said to be reprehensible, it is *Olivia*, whose sudden love for *Viola* in man's attire, and precipitate marriage with *Sebastian*, thro' the mistake of dress, is not altogether consistent with a woman in her exalted situation; and, yet, we frequently meet with instances of this sort, in real life, which derive their origin from chaste love, and have their foundation in the principles of honour and virtue. She could not entertain a passion for the *Duke*, tho' she was assured of his love; but, this is no uncommon case; and his repeated solicitations form some excuse, for the sudden choice of an object which appeared, to her, to be lovely, and worthy of her esteem and affection. *Shakspear* seems to have been aware,

278 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

aware, that *Olivia's* hasty love for the disguised *Viola*, would be considered in an unfavourable light, when he put the following lines into her mouth.

————— "How now?
Even so quickly may one catch the plague!
Methinks, I feel this youth's perfections,
With an invincible and subtle stealth,
To creep in at mine eyes."

Thus much of *Olivia*.—With respect to the Character of *Sir Toby Belch*, it may be objected that he is a drunkard. This we acknowledge, but in other respects, he is inoffensive. What is observed above, of *Sir Andrew Ague-cheek*, is undoubtedly just; and *Malvolio*, is drawn rather in the extreme, yet, surely, tho' there is something singularly ridiculous in this fantastical Character, it is rather deserving of applause than censure; and the trick played him by *Sir Toby*, and *Maria*, exhibits such contrivance, and contains so much true humour, as cannot fail of affording exquisite entertainment to the Spectators.—*Clowns* were Characters in which *Shakespeare* delighted; and tho' there was hardly a Play wrote in that time without one, he has varied the *Clown* in this Play, with considerable distinction, from those in his other Pieces.—*Viola*, is a very pleasing Character, yet her conduct is very singular, and unaccountable. She forms a deep design, with very little premeditation. She is thrown by shipwreck on an unknown Coast, hears that the Prince is a Batchelor, and resolves to supplant the Lady whom he courts. This is not a little extraordinary, and the only excuse to be made,

made, is, that her resolution was necessary to *Shakespear's* Plan.

If it be agreed, (and surely it may) to excuse the few inaccuracies and imperfections, mentioned above, for the sake of the real and intrinsic beauties, with which this Play abounds, we think, the Piece now before us, does not fall greatly short in point of merit, of the best of *Shakespear's* Comedies, the *Merry Wives of Windsor* excepted; for a greater variety of original Characters is not exhibited in any of his Pieces; all admirably furnished and proportioned to the employments designed them, and each differing from the other.—How are they all dressed from the stores of his luxurious imagination, without being the Apes of mode, or borrowing from any foreign wardrobe; for each of them are the standards of fashion for themselves.

The Scene lies in a City on the Coast of *Valaria*, and the main design seems (to have been of the Poet's own invention; but the mistakes arising from *Viola's* change of habit, and true resemblance of her Brother, are said to owe their Origin to the *Menæchmi* of *Plautus*.—This Play used formerly to be represented annually on *Twelfth Night*, to which Period, however, it has no kind of reference in any thing but its name.

This Play opens in a beautiful manner. The curtain rises and discovers the Love-sick Duke, *Orsino* seated in a thoughtful posture, soft Music playing. On which he says:

“ If Music be the food of Love, play on;
Give me excess of it; that surfeiting—

The

280 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

The appetite may sicken, and so die.
That strain again ;—it had a dying fall ;
O, it came o'er my ear, like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour, &c.

Among the Beauties of this pleasing Similitude, its exact Propriety is not the least. For, as a South-wind, while blowing over a Violet-bank, wafts away the odours of the flowers, it communicates its own sweetness at the same time ; so, the soft affecting Music, here described, though it takes away the natural, sweet tranquility of the mind, yet, at the same time, it communicates a new pleasure to it. Or, it may allude to another property of Music, where the same strains have a power to excite pain or pleasure, as the state is, in which it finds the Hearer. Hence the great *Milton* makes the self-same strains of *Orpheus* proper to excite both the affections of mirth and melancholy, just as the mind is then disposed. If to mirth, he calls for such Music.

“ That *Orpheus*’ self may heave his head
From golden slumbers on a bed
Of heapt *Elysian* flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of *Pluto*, to have quite set free
His half regain’d *Eurydice*.”—L’ALLEGRO.]

If to Melancholy.—

“ Or bid the soul of *Orpheus* sing
Such notes as warble to the string,
Drew iron tears down *Pluto*’s cheek,
And made Hell grant what Love did seek.”

IL PENSEROSO.

Immediately after the Speech just cited, *Curia*, asks the *Duke* if he will hunt? The
Duke

Duke asks what ? To which *Curio* answers,—
 “ The hart.” The *Duke*’s reply is beautiful.

“ Why, so I do, the noblest that I have :
 O when my eyes did see *Oliuia* first,
 Methought, she purg’d the air of pestilence ;
 That instant was I turn’d into a hart,
 And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,
 E’er since pursue me.”

This image evidently alludes to the story of *Aæon*, by which *Shakespear* seems to think men cautioned against too great familiarity with forbidden beauty. *Aæon*, who saw *Diana* naked, and was torn in pieces by his hounds, represents a man, who, indulging his eyes, or his imagination, with the view of a woman that he cannot gain, has his heart torn with incessant longing. An interpretation, as *Dr. Johnson* observes, far more elegant and natural than that of *Sir Francis Bacon*, who, in his *Wisdom of the ancients*, supposes this story to warn us against enquiring into the secrets of Princes, by shewing, that those who knew that which for reasons of State is to be concealed, will be detected and destroyed by their own servants.

Shakespear’s images, are in general, exceeding beautiful : He always places his object in a strong point of view ; so, that, the thing he would represent appears full before us, and we possess every part of it : A stronger instance of this cannot be quoted, than what we meet with in the sixth Scene of the second Act of this Comedy :

————— “ She never told her love,
 But let concealment, like a worm i’th’ bud,
 Feed

282 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Feed on her damask cheek : She pin'd in thought,
And sat like *Patience* on a monument,
Smiling at *Grief*."

This is as strong and uncommon as any thing to be met with. What an image is here given ! and what a task would it have been for the artists of *Greece* and *Rome* to have expressed the Passions designed by this sketch of statuary !

With what humour does *Shakespear*, in one single Speech of the *Clown*, in the third Scene of the fourth Act banter the rules established in the schools ; that all reasonings are *ex præcognitis & præconcessis*, which lay the foundation of every Science in these maxims, *Whatever is, is ; and it is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be ;* with much trifling of the like kind. The passage we allude to is to follows.

Clown. "*Bonus dies ; Sir Toby ;* for as the old hermit of *Prague*, that never saw pen and ink, very wittily said to a niece of King *Gorboduck*, that that is, is : so I being *Mr. Parson*, am *Mr. Parson* ; for what is that, but that ? and is, but is ?"

In the third Scene of the fifth Act, *Shakespear* has made the *Duke* allude to a story not generally known, when he says to *Olivia*,

" Why should I not, had I the heart to do't,
Like to the *Egyptian* thief, at the point of death
Kill what I love."

As a particular story is presupposed, it ought to be known, otherwise, the justness and propriety of the comparison is lost.—The story alluded to is taken from *Heliodorus's Æthiopics*. This *Egyptian Thief* was *Thyamis*, who

who was a native of *Memphis*, and at the head of a band of robbers. *Theagenis* and *Chariclea* falling into their hands, *Thyamis* fell desperately in love with the Lady, and would have married her. Soon after, a stronger body of robbers coming down upon *Thyamis's* party, he was in such fears for his Mistress, that he shut her into a cave with his treasure. It was customary with those Barbarians, when they despaired of their own safety, first to make away with those whom they held dear, and desired for companions in the next life. *Thyamis*, therefore surrounded with enemies, raging with love, jealousy, and anger, went to the cave; and calling aloud in the *Egyptian* tongue, so soon as he heard himself answered towards the cave's mouth, by a *Grecian*, making to the person by the direction of her voice, he caught her by the hair with his left hand, and, (supposing her to be *Chariclea*) with his right hand, plunged his sword into her breast.—To this story *Shakaspear* was evidently indebted for the above allusion.

Having taken some notice of the Beauties in this Play, we cannot quit this Article without expressing our wish, that the Poet had not ventured so near Profaneness, as he has done in several Passages. One instance will suffice to justify this.—In *Sir Andrew's* Challenge to *Viola*, supposed to be *Cesario*, he says, “Fare thee well, and God have mercy upon one of our souls: He may have mercy upon mine, but my hope is better,” &c.—It is true, all that is here meant, is, that he may be slain, and therefore, *God may have mercy on his soul*, but his hope is better; that is,

284 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

is, that he shall slay *Cesario*, and in that case, have no occasion for God's mercy.—We think this Passage and some others should be altered in the Representation.

With respect to the Representation of this Play here, it is probably as well supported, take the whole together, as a Play with so many Characters as this contains ever was.—Criticism has not a wish beyond what it meets with in the Characters of *Malvolio* and *Sir Andrew Ague-cheek*, as performed by Mr. King and Mr. Dodd. These Characters so admirably supported as they are, must be rich Entertainment for the gravest mind, and must unbend the most rigid brow.—Mr. Love fills the Poet's Ideas in the Part of *Sir Toby Belch*, to a considerably degree of critical Pleasure, and we know of no Character in which he gives equal satisfaction, unless we except his *Boniface*, *Cacafogo*, *Falstaff* and *Sir Epicure Mammon*.—There is nothing in the Part of *Sebastian*, which requires or can shew great abilities, and therefore it is not too important for Mr. *Cauterley*, who should never soar above Parts of this stamp; because, in such as this, he is capable of giving satisfaction to an Audience, and of acquiring reputation to himself.—The humour of the *Clown* is exquisitely hit off by Mr. *Vernon*, who marks the meaning of this Character very strongly. He is extremely pleasant, without indulging that censurable extravagance, too frequently practised by some of our Comedians in Characters of this cast. Indeed, this Gentleman is generally very chaste and correct, in
whatever

whatever he plays, and always displays a singular attention to propriety.—The under Parts are very properly supported. And with respect to the Female Characters, it is but just to observe, that Mrs. Egerton displayed much spirit and humour in *Maria*; and the Characters of *Viola* and *Olivia*, were supported with great sensibility and elegance, by Miss Younge and Mrs. Abington, though their first appearance in these Characters.—The original Song, with which the Play is concluded, is very happily set to Music, and was sung by Mr. Vernon, with infinite spirit and humour, which may justly entitle him to the great applause he received.—We shall quote his Song for the Entertainment of our Readers, and so quit this Article.

The C L O W N's S O N G.

When that I was a little tiny boy,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain:
A foolish thing was but a toy,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came to man's estate,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain:
Guinst knaves and thieves men shut their gate,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came, alas! to wive,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain:
By swaggering could I never thrive,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came unto my beds,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain:
With toss-pots still had drunken heads,
For the rain it raineth every day.

286 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

A great while ago, the world begun,
With hey, ho, and the wind and the rain :
But that's all one, our Play is done,
And we'll strive to please you every day.

To which was added,
The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.
See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 10.
The BEGGARS OPERA.
See Page 1.

To which was added
The UPHOLSTERER.
See Page 172.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, December 11.
TIMON OF ATHENS.
See Page 250.

To which was added,
The GUARDIAN :
A Comedy of two Acts, by Mr. Garrick.

THIS is a very pleasing and a very elegant little Piece ; the Plot is simple and natural ; the Characters are well drawn ; and the Dialogue easy and sentimental. It is principally taken from the celebrated *Pupille* of Mr. Fagan, but admirably well adapted to the *English* Stage, and extremely well supported in the Representation.

COVENT-

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 11.

Z O B E I D E.

A Tragedy, by Mr. Craddock.

THIS Piece is taken from *Voltaire's* Tragedy of *Les Scythes*, which he left unfinished as he informs us in the Preface to it, where he styles it a *feeble Effort*, and intimates a wish that it might be compleated by some other hand.—The Characters are as follow :

M E N.

Athamond,	Mr. Smith.
Indater,	Mr. Savigny.
Seyfel,	Mr. Hull.
Hermodon,	Mr. Clarke.
Hafan,	Mr. Owenfon.
Scythian Chiefs	{ Mr. Gardner.
	{ Mr. Thompson.

W O M E N.

Zobeide,	Mrs. Yates.
Sulma,	Mrs. Vincent.

*Priests, Singers, Officers, &c.*The Scene lies in a Canton of *Scythia*.

In the first Act, we learn, from a conversation between *Hermodon*, (the Prince of the Republic) and his Son *Indater*, that *Seyfel*, an ancient General, having been banished from *Persia*, had sought for refuge with his Daughter *Zobeide*, in this Country. *Indater* solicits his Father to give them an hospitable reception, which is granted. The General is then introduced, who relates the Story of his banishment. The charms of *Zobeide* having instantly kindled the passion of love

in

288 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

in the bosom of young *Indater*, he desires permission of *Hermodon* to marry her, which is granted, and likewise obtains the consent of *Seyfel*, on condition that it met with the approbation of *Zobeide*. Flushed with the hope of success, *Indater* retires to *Zobeide*, who yields to his sollicitation, and preparations for the solemnization of the nuptials are immediately ordered by *Hermodon*.

In the second Act, we learn, from a conversation between *Zobeide* and *Sulma*, her Confidante, the motive which induces the former to yield her hand to *Indater*, viz. the supposition that the perfidy of *Athamond*, a Prince of *Persia*, her former Lover, had been the occasion of her fall from the summit of grandeur.—A Procession to the Altar is next introduced, and the following Epithalamium is sung by the Priest and Attendants.

EPITHALAMIUM.

FROM Imaus' proud top, great Vesta hear,
Propitious Goddess of the fruitful year.
For thee behold our purest victims bleed,
The spotless heifer and the milk-white steed.
Hear Vesta, hear thy humble suppliant's pray'r,
And pour thy blessings on the plighted pair.

A I R.

Mild Goddess hear their mutual vow,
And smile upon their nuptial hour;
Here all thy richest gifts bestow,
And strew their path with ev'ry flow'r.

C H O R U S.

Hear VESTA, hear thy humble suppliant's pray'r,
And pour thy blessings on the plighted pair.

While the marriage rites are performing,
Athamond, with *Hasan*, an Attendant, arrivè

in *Scythia*, in pursuit of *Zobeide*, she having fled from him with her Father. This unexpected circumstance breaks in upon the rites, and occasions *Zobeide*, and all present at the ceremony, to retire, so suddenly on his approach, as to render it doubtful to *Athamand*, whether *Zobeide* was of the party ; on which account he resolves to delay the execution of his intended measures.

In third Act, *Athamand* is informed by *Hasan*, of the particulars of *Zobeide*'s marriage with *Indater*. This unexpected stroke rouses the alternate passions of Love and Resentment, and he resolves to rescue her by force of arms, and carry her back to *Persia*. With this intention, he waits her return from the marriage, discovers himself, and intreats her to renounce her engagements to *Indater*, and return with him.—In order to win her to his purpose, he exculpates himself of being the cause of *Seyfel*'s banishment, by assuring her that it was done by order of *Cyrus*, King of *Persia*, his uncle, who, being since dead, she might return with her father in safety.—On this information, *Zobeide* reflects on the consequence of her vow to *Indater*, but resolving not to break it, she rejects his proposal, and retires accordingly. This disappointment creates the highest distraction in the mind of *Athamand*, which is natural.

The fourth Act commences with a meeting between *Athamand* and *Indater*.—The former reflects with great haughtiness and contempt, on the inferior condition and situation of the latter. This treatment rouses

290 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

the indignation and resentment of *Indater*, and they resolve to decide their dispute by combat, and retire for that purpose; but not unobserved by *Hermodon* and *Seyfel*, who express their apprehensions on the consequences likely to succeed, and the event proves as they foreboded, for *Athamand* soon returns, and acquaints them of his having killed *Indater* in the combat, and thereby satisfied his vengeance. This accomplished, he pursues his intention of forcing *Zobeide* to return to *Persia*. A Battle ensues between the troops *Athamand* had brought with him, and the *Scythians*, in which *Athamand* is taken, while he is endeavouring to carry *Zobeide* off.

In the fifth Act, *Zobeide*, is informed, that according to the laws of *Scythia*, she is obliged to sacrifice the murderer of her husband, with her own hands, to his manes. This horrid injunction awakens compassion, and rekindles the latent sparks of her former love for *Athamand*; and when enjoined by the *Scycian* Chiefs, to the performance of the sacrifice, she takes an equivocal oath; in which she promises to slay a victim with her own hand, as by the law required. *Athamond* is now brought bound, to the altar, who, addressing himself to *Zobeide*, declares his innocence with respect to the banishment of her and her father; and assures her of his love, by the relation of what he had suffered during her absence from *Persia*. Here, all her former affection is kindled up again, and she openly avows her attachment for him. However, being pressed by the *Scythian* Chiefs to perform her vow, that justice may be satisfied,

fiel, she resolves to fulfil it, which she does, by stabbing herself instead of *Atbamand*, having first obtained a promise of free pardon for all the *Persians* taken prisoners, by the victory of the *Scythian* army over the troops of *Atbamand*.—The sacrifice being made by the death of *Zobeide*, *Atbamand* is set at liberty, who fully proves the sincerity of his professions by putting an end to his own life, with the same dagger with which the unfortunate *Zobeide* had fixed the period of all her troubles, preferring death to the survival of so generous and faithful a lover; which finishes the catastrophe.

These are the outlines of the Story, which is well chosen for theatrical Representation, and the Conduct of it is sufficiently regular with respect to the unities. The incidents are interesting and important, and the situations truly pathetic. *Zobeide's* Character is well drawn, and appears to have been purposely written for Mrs. Yates, as it gives her an opportunity of displaying all her theatrical Powers to their utmost extent in the different Passions of Grief, Rage, and Despair. With respect to the Language, it is truly poetical, and contains many good Sentiments.

The Author has greatly altered the Original in the three first Acts, and still more so in the fourth, and the fifth may, in fact, be considered as entirely his own; and as the deviations from the Original Piece are evidently for the better, we have not a doubt but M. *Voltaire's* wishes are perfectly compleated. *Zobeide's* account of the grandeur

292 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

from which she had fallen, in the second Act, is finely described; and the different opinions of *Albmand* and *Indater*, respecting the merits of poverty and grandeur, in the fourth Act, are extremely well contrasted. Upon the whole, though it is not a first-rate Performance, it is greatly superior to many of our late Tragedies; and, as the Author has succeeded so well in his first attempt, he gives us reason to hope, that he will rise to superior excellence, should he chuse to renew his acquaintance with the Tragic Muse. Were we disposed to examine this Piece with the utmost critical attention, we could point out many improprieties; and some circumstances rather bordering on improbability; but, we are unwilling to exercise severity on a first attempt, especially as the Author has not produced this Piece on motives of advantage; for being a young Gentleman of fortune, we are informed, he has generously assigned the emoluments arising from it, to Mrs. *Yatts*. Just censure is undoubtedly the prerogative of criticism, but, to censure merely with a view to find fault, is an entertainment that humanity never relishes, and is only practiced by the envious and illiberal. The Public is to judge, and the Public hitherto, have decided in favour of this Piece, but time is the only infallible touchstone of taste. With respect to our opinions, though we acknowledge this Piece to have some defects, we think its merits preponderate in its favour; not that we have the presumption to justify our decisions either on this, or any other occasion; for that point must be

be extremely clear, which admits not of variety of opinion. The sudden passion of *Indater* for *Zobeide*, and her consent to yield to his wishes, is rather too precipitate; and we think, the Author has erred a little in the second Act, where *Athamond* first enters, who though he sees *Zobeide* at the altar, is not supposed to know her, though she does not quit the Stage, till he enters.

In the second Act, while the Marriage is preparing, *Indater*, says to *Zobeide*,

“Canst thou, contented, view this rustic shrine,
The sacred monument of ancient worship?
Here do our fathers pay their grateful off-rings,
Not such as useless smoke in prouder climes,
But Nature's gifts, fair emblems of their hearts.”

Zobeide's reply is worthy notice.

“That mind must surely err, whose narrow
To *scope*,
Confines religion to a place or clime;
A power unknown, that actuates the world,
Whose eye is just, whose every thought is wisdom,
Regards alone the tribute of the heart:
Pride in his awful sight shrinks back appall'd;
Humility is eldest born of virtue,
And claims her birth-right at the throne of
heav'n.”

This Act concludes with four beautiful lines, which the Poet has given to *Athamond*.

A Prince is but a man, and man may err;
But when forgetting his ennobled rank,
He makes due reparation for his faults,
From heaven he pardon hopes, from man de-
mands it.”

We have before remarked, that the Scene in the fourth Act, where *Athamond* and *In-*
dater

294 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

later discourse on the merits of Poverty and Grandeur is finely supported, and their Sentiments are extremely well contrasted; we therefore, shall quote part of it, for the entertainment of our Readers.

Athamand. Know'st thou in whose presence thou appearest?

Indater. 'Tis said a city owns in thee its master,
Which they call Echatan; from Taurus' mount
We view its haughty ramparts, rais'd by Cyrus;
'Tis said, (but there I think report's too big)
That thou can'st raise as many splendid troops
As we can boast of peaceful citizens.

Atham. 'Tis true, I have beneath me troops
Invincible;

The meanest Persian in our awful ranks,
Is richer, greater, more respectable,
Than any whom thou'lt seen in these domains,
Where heaven levels all by indigence.

Ind. We envy none the glitt'ring toys of
greatness;
Nature lavishes her richest stores;
Earth grants us food, we drink th' unsullied springs;
Our caves yield shelter, and our rocks protection.
Daughter of heav'n thou truly rich—Content!
Still show'r thy blessings who possessest all;
No pow'r on earth can take of bliss without thee.

Ath. Thy heart then owns no interested views?
But glory sure—

Ind. My life to attain it!—
Ath. Be greatly daring then—led on by us,
Glory shall spread her flatt'ring pissions round thee,
And fan the gales of godlike emulation.

Ind. Can I descend to own thee for a master?
Ath. 'Tis glory sure to own a generous master,
Who sets the noblest price on noblest actions:
Beneath our arms, what might not be achiev'd?
I've 'mong my warriors Scythians like to thee.

Ind. Thou hast none.—I know that th' unworthy
Scythians, Who

Who border on thy climes, are not unlike us ;
Avarice has canker'd their imprison'd minds,
And lust of gold has blinded them to justice.

Ath. Seek to advance thy Countrymen to glory !
To shelter only suits the languid soul ;
Here honour withers—justice ye have none—
Come on, with me learn justice, for thou need'st it.

Ind. Learn justice ?

Ath. Ay, justice, impious Traitor !
Render to me the treasure thou hast stolen ;
Render an honour'd subject to her Monarch ;
A good no mortal shall deprive me of,
And which, with justice, cannot be withheld.
Give up, this instant, *Zobeide*.

Ind. Hah ! to thee !
To that high menace, and that haughty air !
She is thy subject ! dar'st thou then pretend,
That the unhappy race in *Media* born
Have not the common rights of human kind ?
That man may be a Slave in *Media's* realms
I well consent—in *Scythia* he is free.
From that blest moment *Zobeide* sought for shelter
On the bleak margin of these drear domains,
Liberty and peace, their sure associates,
Happy equality, all life's golden blessings,
Blessings which *Persia* ravish'd from mankind,
Blessings, by others lost, by us redeem'd ;
Were Nature's claims, th' inheritance of *Zobeide*.

Ath. The treasure I contend for is so great,
I would dispute my title with the world ;
None but a King can hold the least pretence.

Ind. Shall Kings controul th' eternal rights of
Nature ?

The free born mind is royal of itself,
Nor asks vain glosses from exterior grandeur.

Ath. Thou can'st but have a feeble, low idea
Of all the fury that inflames my soul ;
I would forego an empire to obtain her ;
And can'st thou think to treasure such a blessing ?
The treasure's mine—renounce her, fell barbarian.

296 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Ind. Imprudent stranger ! the fury of thy words
Excites my pity, more than my resentment;
Rude and untutor'd, new from Nature's hand,
I simply spoke my love, and *Zobeide* chose me :
Fly from these blest abodes, thou feeble man !
Thy rank, thy fortunes, give thee no protection ;
Offend not mortals ev'ry way thy equals ;
Thou art no monarch here." &c.

The fifth Act contains several beautiful passages in the true spirit of pathos and poetry.
—After *Zobeide* has resolved to sacrifice herself to save the life of *Athamand*, she says in the violence of rage,

" Let Death stalk uncontroll'd till Taurus' high
He heap on heap piles mountains on the slain.
What means this frantic rage ? vain, vain regrets ;
These imprecations serve but to distract me ;
O, Rage ! what art thou ? flatterer of a moment,
A short-liv'd passion, preying on thyself,
I sink thy slave—I feel thy deadly pow'r,
Thou fixt eternal foe to steady virtue."

Further on, she says, on hearing solemn Music at a distance,

These solemn sounds proclaim th' eventful hour,
And summon me to more than death—trembling
I stand the shock—revisit mortal clime
Spirits of good ! if when in fleshly mould,
Something ye knew of what I now endure,
Aid my firm labours—in a righteous cause,
'Tis yours to succour ;—and if your suppliant acts
Obedient to your wills—reward the deed ;
Twine round my brow the wreaths of brightest
fame,
Laurels which fade not, gems which can't decay."

In another place after she openly avows her secret love for *Athamand*, and he declares he shall die content, *Hermodon*, says,

" What

——— 'What means this frantic woe?
Nature herself is sick at thy lamentings.

She answers in the following beautiful lines,
which in part are addressed to *Atbamand*.

“ When *Scythians* fall no stars withdraw their
blaze,

An atom sinks unheeded — unregarded —
But O ! thy fate drinks dry a Nation's eyes,
All *Persia* sinks one great stupendous ruin,
And I become the Murderer of the world.”

Throughout the whole of this Play, the Sentiments are noble, and in many places the Language is poetical, but we frequently meet with instances, where the Author has not been so attentive to harmony of Numbers as we could wish ; which seems to be the principal defect of the Piece.

This Tragedy is well supported in the Representation, except in the Characters of *Hasan* and *Sulma*; for neither Mr. *Owenfon*'s person, which is respectable, nor the elegant dress he has for the Part can reconcile us to his awkward gestures, and raven-like croaking in his pronunciation ; and though we are pleased that the Managers have not discarded Mrs. *Vincent*, whose private Character entitles her to public esteem, and whose former services as an Actress ought to be held in grateful remembrance, yet; we think the Managers made a very improper choice of this Gentlewoman, to appear in a new Character. — The Music is extremely pleasing and characteristic, and does considerable credit to the ingenious Composer, Mr. *A. Fisher*, who, on some former occasions, has distinguished himself very highly, and encouraged us to

298 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

expect much entertainment in future from the labours of his inventive Genius.

The Prologue spoken by Mr. *Quist*, in the Character of a *Sailor*, is very happily applied to the situation of a young Author about to exhibit his first Performance in the Dramatic Way; which is written by Dr. *Goldsmith*. The Epilogue is spoken Mrs. *Yates*, with infinite spirit and humour, and contains some very pleasing strokes of Wit and Satire, admirably well pointed. This is written by Mr. *Murphy*, whose merit as a Dramatic Writer, is sufficiently known, and justly admired.

P R O L O G U E.

IN these bold times, when learning's sons explore
The distant climate, and the savage shore;
When wise *Astronomers* to India steer,
And quit for *Venus* many a brighter here;
While *Botanists*, all cold to smiles and dimpling,
Forake the fair, and patiently—go simpling;
When ev'ry bosom swells with wond'rous scenes,
Priests, cannibals, and hoity-toity queens:
Our Bard into the general spirit enters,
And fits his little-frigate for adventures:
With *Scythian Stores* and Trinkets deeply laden,
He this way steers his course in hopes of trading—
Yet ere he lands he's as ordered me before,
To make an observation on the shore,
Where are we driven? Our reck'ning sure is lost!
This seems a barren and a dangerous coast.
Lord what a sultry climate am I under!
Yon ill-foreboding *Cloud* seems big with thunder
(Upper Gallery)
There mangroves spread, and larger than I've seen
'em— (Pit)
Here trees of stately size—and turtles in 'em—
(Balconies)
Here

Here all condition'd oranges abound— (Stage)
And apples (*takes up one and tastes it*) bitter apples
srew the ground.

The place is uninhabited I fear,
I heard a hissing—there are Serpents here!
O there the natives are—a dreadful race!
The men have tails, the women paint the face!
No doubt they're all barbarians—Yes, 'tis so,
I'll try to make palaver with them though;

(*making signs*)

'Tis best however keeping at a distance,
Good savages, our Captain craves assistance;
Our Ship's well stor'd;—in yonder Creek we've laid
her,

His Honour is no mercenary trader;
This is his first Adventure, lend him aid,
And we may chance to drive a thriving Trade.
His goods he hopes are prime, and brought from far,
Equally fit for gallantry and war.

What no reply to promises so ample?

—I'd best step back—and order up a sample.

E P I L O G U E.

WELL fare the Man, peace to his gentle shade,
The Bard who first made Epilogues a trade;
Else what a life an Actress must pursue?

To weep and rave is all she'd have to do;

Upon the Stage with warring passions sore,

“To fret her hour and then be heard no more.”

Now, after poison, daggers, rage, and death,

We come again to take a little breath,

Banter the Pit, set Belles and Beaux at odds,

And be a mere free-thinker to the Gods;

(*Upper Gallery.*)

Chat in familiar Strain; the Boxes maul;

—An Epilogue, like Gaming—levels all.

Not e'en poor Bayes within must hope to be
Free from the lash;—His Play he writ for me

'Tis true—and now my gratitude you'll see.

Why ramble with Voltaire to Eastern climes,

To Scythian laws, and antiquated times?

300 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Change but the names, his Tragedy, at best,
 Slides into Comedy and turns to jest.
 As thus—A Statesman, old, and out of place,
 Sour, discontented, malice in his face,
 (In these blest days, we but suppose the case)
 Flies from St. James's to his own estate;
 To chew the wisdom of each past debate.
 How in the House he made a glorious stir,
 "With, Sir, I move—and Mr. Speaker, Sir!"
 Zobeide's his daughter Sophy;—Oh! farewell
 For her each haunt that charms a modern Belle;
 Adieu Almack's! Cornelly's! Masquerade!
 Sweet Ranelagh! Vauxhall's enchanting shade!
 Squire Groom makes love; rich? yes; a vast domain;
 Well bred?—the Savage Scythian of the plain!
 The match is fix'd, deeds sign'd, the knot is ty'd;
 Down comes my Lord in all his glitt'ring pride.
 And will my Angel, chuse this rust'c plan?
 "Oh cuckold him by all means; I'm your man."
 Now mark our Author's ignorance of life!
 What not elope? Is that a modish Wife?
 Poor fool! she doubts; says no; the Husband dies;
 Now stab yourself, says Bayes; but nature cries
 How! sacrifice myself for vain renown!
 John put the horses to, and drive to town.
 That would be life; the manners, painted high!
 But our Bard makes,—to moisten ev'ry eye,
 A Widow with a Prince refuse to fly.—
 Yet, after all, excuse him, Ladies, pray;
 For sure there is some nature in his play.
 A first attempt let no keen censure blight,
 Hereafter he may soar a nobler flight;
 Drop one kind tear; give him that slender token;
 And hither come 'till the Pantheon open."

To which was added

The COMMISSARY.

See Page 7.

DRUM-

for December, 1771. 301

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *December 12.*

TIMON OF ATHENS.

See Page 250.

To which was added,

HARLEQUIN'S INVASION.

See Page 24.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Dec. 12.*

Z O B E I D E.

To which was added,

The DEVIL TO PAY.

See Page 21.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *Dec. 13.*

TWELFTH NIGHT.

See Page 276.

To which was added,

The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Dec. 13.*

Z O B E I D E.

To which was added,

The UPHOLSTERER.

See Page 172.

DRURY-

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Dec. 14.

TIMON OF ATHENS.

See Page 250.

To which was added,

A M E L I A:

A Musical Entertainment, of two Acts.

THIS Piece is nothing more than the Comic Opera, entitled the *Summer's Tale*, written by Mr. Cumberland, reduced into two Acts. The Original Piece was a most despicable Performance, and met with the contempt it merited, when it was first brought out at *Covent-Garden Theatre*, some few years since. The Songs in the *Summer's Tale*, were adapted to pleasing Airs, from the works of the best German, Italian, and English Composers; though the Compiler discovered very little judgment in the application of his borrowed Music.

The unfavourable reception of the *Summer's Tale*, ought to have prevented the Managers of this Theatre, from attempting to force it a second time on the Public, unless they could have added somewhat to it, to have justified such a proceeding; but, this is not even attempted, unless they consider their rejecting some of the original Tunes, and having the Songs new set by Mr. Dibdin, is a sufficient improvement to justify the liberty they have taken with the Public. It is true, any attempt to render the *Summer's Tale* worthy notice, would have failed of success, because it contained neither wit, humour,

nor

nor sentiment ; and therefore, the writing a new Piece, was a much easier task than any attempt to alter so despicable an Original. We do not think the Piece is improved by Mr. *Dibdin's* Music ; nor can we avoid remarking that, this Gentleman's repeated plagiarisms, and evident want of knowledge in the Science he professes, render most of his attempts at Composition very, very contemptible.—With respect to the Piece now before us, we are obliged to observe, that Mr. *Cumberland*, and the Managers, must be lost to all sense of Shame, as well as that respect they owe to the Public for past favours, by attempting to obtrude such a wretched Performance on the Town.

We confess, we pitied the situation of the Performers, who all exerted their utmost efforts to support it in the Representation ; but, it is not the eminent abilities of a *Vernon*, a *Parsons*, a *Hunt*, or a *Fitzgerald*, that can render a Piece worthy notice, which has nothing interesting in it, and is absolutely devoid of merit.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 14.

Z O B E I D E.

See Page 287.

To which was added,

The A P P R E N T I C E.

See Page 176.

304 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *Dec.* 16.

RULE A WIFE AND HAVE A WIFE:

See Page 189.

To which was added,

A M E L I A.

See Page 302.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Dec.* 16.

KING RICHARD THE THIRD.

See Page 81.

To which was added

The P A D L O C K.

See Page 30.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *Dec.* 17.

A S Y O U L I K E I T.

See Page 26,

To which was added,

T H O M A S A N D S A L L Y.

See Page 27.

for December, 1771. **305**

and the following

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 17.

ROMEO AND JULIET.

See Page 216.

To which was added,

THE INTERLUDE OF TRUE BLUE;

AND

CATHARINE AND PETRUCHIO.

See Page 45.

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Dec. 18.

TWELFTH NIGHT.

See Page 276.

To which was added,

THE PADLOCK:

See Page 30.

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 18.

EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR.

See Page 169.

To which was added,

A LITTLE MORE

A Dramatic Satire of two Acts, by Mr. Garrick.

THIS little Piece made its first Appearance at the Theatre in *Goodman's Fields*, under the Title of *Æsop in the Shades*; and was revived at *Drury-Lane Theatre*, in the year 1748, with

306 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

with considerable Alterations; and has since been revived with the Addition of a new Character, viz. that of *Lord Chalkstone*. It is a very pleasing Performance, containing some strokes of keen Satire, pointed at the reigning follies of the age. The Music to the Songs, was composed by Dr. *Boyce*, who has shewn great taste and judgement.

It is well played here, only we wish to see a better Performer in the Part of *Æsop*. Messrs. *Woodward* and *Shuter* are very pleasing in the Characters of the *Fine Gentleman* and *Lord Chalkstone*.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Dec. 19.
TIMON OF ATHENS.

See Page 250.

To which was added,
HARLEQUIN'S INVASION.
See Page 24.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 19.

LOVE MAKES A MAN,

OR
The FOP'S FORTUNE.

See Page 260.

To which was added,
M I D A S.
See Page 34.

DRURY-

WEDNESDAY December, 1771. 307

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Dec. 20.

TWELFTH NIGHT.

See Page 276.

To which was added,
The INSTITUTION OF THE GARTER.

See Page 121.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 20.

O R O O N O K O.

See Page 32.

To which was added,

The P A D L O C K.

See Page 30.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Dec. 21.

The T E M P E S T.

See Page 238.

To which was added,

The REGISTER OFFICE.

See Page 80.

OF THE THEATRE, COVENT-GARDEN, LONDON, 1771.
Printed by J. DODD, at the Theatre, COVENT-GARDEN.

308 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 21.

O T H E L L O :

A Tragedy, by Shakespear.

AS this celebrated Play has been the subject of much Criticism, we shall endeavour to give our Readers a particular Account of it : For which purpose, we shall consult the best Authors who have taken it under consideration, and add whatever shall appear necessary to render the whole intelligent and entertaining.

“ The Beauties of this Play, says Dr. Johnson, impress themselves so strongly upon the attention of the Reader, that they can draw no aid from critical illustration. The fiery openness of *Othello*, magnanimous, artless, and credulous ; boundless in his confidence, ardent in his affection, inflexible in his resolution, and obdurate in his revenge ; the cool malignity of *Iago*, silent in his resentment, subtle in his designs, and studious at once of his interest and his vengeance ; the soft simplicity of *Desdemona*, confident of merit, and conscious of innocence, her artless perseverance in her suit, and her slowness to suspect that she can be suspected, are such proofs of Shakespear's skill in human Nature, as, I suppose, it is vain to seek in any modern Writer. The gradual progress which *Iago* makes in the Moor's conviction, and the circumstances which he employs to inflame him, are so artfully natural, that, though it will perhaps not be said of him as he

he says of himself, that he is *a man not easily jealous*, yet we cannot but pity him when at last we find him *perplexed in the extreme*.

“ There is always danger lest wickedness conjoined with abilities should steal upon esteem, though it misses of approbation; but the Character of *Iago* is so conducted, that he is from the first Scene to the last hated and despised.

“ Even the inferior Characters of this Play would be very conspicuous in any other Piece, not only for their justness but their strength. *Cassio* is brave, benevolent and honest, ruined ~~only~~ by his want of stubbornness to resist an insidious invitation. *Roderigo*’s suspicious credulity, and impatient submission to the cheats which he sees practised upon him, and which by persuasion he suffers to be repeated, exhibit a strong picture of a weak mind betrayed by unlawful desires, to a false friend; and the Virtue of *Æmilia* is such as we often find worn loosely, but not cast off, easy to commit small crimes, but quickened and alarmed at atrocious villanies.

“ The Scenes from the beginning to the end are busy, varied by happy interchanges, and regularly promoting the progression of the story; and the narrative in the end, though it tells but what is known already, yet is necessary to produce the death of *Othello*.

“ Had the Scene opened in *Cyprus*, and the preceeding incidents been occasionally related, there had been little wanting to a Drama of the most exact and scrupulous regularity.”

310 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

The Fable of this Play, is founded upon one action only, which is conducted with great skill ; and if, from the distress of the Catastrophe, it is not the most pleasing of *Shakespear's* Tragedies, it is, undoubtedly, the most perfect. All the Characters are admirably drawn ; the Sentiments, where it is required, are sufficiently elevated ; and the Moral is excellent ; viz. enforcing, in the most natural, yet powerfull manner, the fatal effects of indulging the pernicious and ungovernable passion of jealousy. — Some Critics have been disgusted with the distresses and unhappy fate of the virtuous and innocent *Desdemona*, because, say they, she had not been guilty of the least fault or failing, and therefore, her fate is too horrible to be born. To this we answer, that though she is, from first to last, an object of pity, and her fate greatly to be lamented, yet, her misfortunes, are owing to a cause extremely natural, and not at all uncommon, viz. the jealousy of her husband.

Others have objected greatly, to the Character of *Iago* ; particularly, the learned Author of the *Elements of Criticism*, who says, that, not even *Shakespear's* masterly hand can make the picture agreeable ; and, that it is so monstrous and satanical, as not to be sufferable in the Representation. This opinion, however, has been sufficiently proved to be too far strained, by the applause with which the Play has always been received, whenever it is performed. *Iago* never fails to engage the attention of an Audience, though his Character is so conducted, as to render

render him detestable; in which the Poet has shown great judgement.

Rymer, the Critic, who ventured to censure this Play with great security, remarks on the Character of *Iago*, that, *Shakespeare*, "in order to entertain the Audience with something new and surprizing; against common Sense and Nature, would pass upon us, a close, dissembling, ungrateful Rascal, instead of an open-hearted, frank, plain-dealing Soldier; a Character constantly worn by them for some thousands of years in the world."—*Dr. Warburton* observes, that, tho' *Rymer* had neither vigour of imagination to make a Poet, nor strength of judgement to make a Critic, there is some appearance of Sense in this remark, being founded on that rule of Nature and *Aristotle*, that each Character should have manners convenient to the age, sex, and condition. But how has our Critic applied it, says the Doctor? According to this rule it is confessed, that a Soldier should be brave, generous, and a man of honour. This is to be his Dramatic Character. But either *one* or *more* of any order may be brought in. If only one, then the Character of the order takes its denomination from the manners of that *one*. Had therefore, the only Soldier in this Play been *Iago*, the rule had been transgressed, and *Rymer's* censure well founded. Further, this *eternal Villain* must have given the Character of the Soldiery; which had been unjust and unnatural. But if a *number* of the same order be represented; then the Character of the order is taken from the manners of the majority; and this, according

312 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

cording to Nature and common Sense. Now, in this Play, there are many of the order of the Soldiery, and all, except *Iago*, represented as open, generous and brave. From these, the Soldier's Character is to be taken; and not from *Iago*, who is brought as an exception to it, unless it be unnatural to suppose these could be an exception: or that a Villain ever insinuated himself into that corps. And thus *Shakespear* stands clear of this impertinent Criticism, which, says the Doctor, is almost the only remark of *Rymer*, on *Shakespear*, deserving an answer.—

If there is any fault in the Character of *Iago*, it is that of his grounding his resentment against *Othello*, on very trifling circumstances, viz. his having set a younger Officer over his head on a particular and singular vacancy, notwithstanding he himself still stands most high in his esteem and confidence, and consequently in the fairest light, for being immediately preferred by him to a post of equal if not greater advantage. To this, indeed, is added a slight suspicion, which he himself declares to be but bare surmise, of *Othello's* having been too familiar with his wife, a particular which *Othello's* Character and cast of behaviour seems to give no authority to; and on these slight motives, he involves in the ruin he intends for the General, three innocent persons besides, viz. *Cassio*, *Roderigo* and *Desdemona*.

—We are aware, that it may be said in answer to this, that the more trifling the motives of his resentment, the greater is the art of the Poet in working them up to such

an amazing height ; But this, we believe, will not bear a very strict examination ; for the greater his resentment is heightened, on trifling circumstances, the more unnatural it certainly must be.

With respect to *Othello*, his military Character is admirably sustained ; but, though his jealousy is finely wrought up by the machinations of the designing and plausible villain *Iago*, yet, from first to last, it is raised by trifles, *viz.* the loss of a paultry handkerchief which *Desdemona* knew not was of value, and her pleading for *Cassio's* forgiveness, who had been cashiered on a most trivial fault. These are all the circumstances which corroborate the vile insinuations of *Iago* against the innocent *Desdemona*, and produce so fatal a Catastrophe. *Othello*, therefore, is drawn rather too credulous, and forfeits by such conduct some of our pity.

The Story is taken from *Cynthia's* Novels, and the Scene for the first Act in *Venice* ; during the rest of the Play in *Cyprus*. — This Piece contains many beauties, and some particulars worthy notice.

In the first Act, *Brabantio* accuses *Othello* of having corrupted *Desdemona*,

“ By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks.”

Rymer, whom we have mentioned before, has, among other particulars, ridiculed this circumstance as unbecoming, both for its weakness and superstition, the gravity of the accuser, and the dignity of the tribunal. Dr. *Warburton* observes, that his criticism only exposes his own ignorance. The circum-

314 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

stance, says he, was not only exactly in Character, but urged with the greatest address, as the thing chiefly to be insisted on. For, by the *Venetian* law, the giving love-portions was very criminal, as *Shakspear*, without question, well understood. And therefore, in the preceding Scene, *Brabantio* calls them,

—"Arts inhibited, and out of warrant."

Othello's account to the Senate, of the manner in which he gained the love of *Desdemona* is finely described, and the aptitude of pity to produce love beautifully illustrated.

"Her father lov'd me, oft invited me;
Still question'd me the story of my life,
From year to year, the battles, sieges, fortunes,
'That I have past.
I ran it through, e'en from my boyish days,
To th' very moment that he bid me tell it:
Wherein I spoke of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field;
Of hair-breadth 'scapes in th' imminent deadly
breach;
Of being taken by the insolent foe,
And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence,
And 'portance in my travels history:
Wherein of antres vast and desarts idle
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills, whose heads
touch heav'n,
It was my hint to speak; such was the process;
And of the cannibals that each other eat,
The *Antropophagi*; and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders. All these to hear
Would *Desdemona* seriously incline;
But still the house affairs would draw her thence,
Which ever as she could with haste dispatch,
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse, which I observing,
Took

Took once a pliant hour, and found good means
 To draw from her a pray'r of earnest heart,
 That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
 Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
 But not intently. I did consent,
 And often did beguile her of her tears,
 When I did speak of some distressful stroke
 That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,
 She gave me for my pains a world of sighs;
 She swore, "In faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing
 strange,

'Twas pitiful, 'twas wond'rous pitiful"—
 She wish'd, she had not heard it;—yet she wish'd,
 That heav'n had made her such a man.—She
 thank'd me,
 And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,
 I should but teach him how to tell my story.
 And that would woo her. On this hint I spake,
 She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd,
 And I lov'd her, that she did pity them:
 This only is the witchcraft I have us'd."

In this beautiful instance, it will be observed, with what great art the Poet has endeavoured to make *Othello* prove, that Admiration concurred with Pity to produce Love. Dr. Warburton remarks on this passage, that discourses of this nature made the subject of the politest conversations, when voyages into, and discoveries of, the new world were in vogue. So when the Bastard *Faulconbridge*, in *King John*, describes the behaviour of upstart greatness, he makes one of the essential circumstances of it to be this kind of table-talk. The *fashion* then running altogether in this way, it is no wonder a young Lady of Quality should be struck with the history of an Adventurer. So that *Rymer*, who professedly ridicules this whole circumstance,

316 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

and the noble Author of the *Characteristicks*, who more obliquely sneers it, only expose their own ignorance.—To this we may add, what Dr. *Johnson* observes; Whoever, says he, ridicules this account of the progress of love, shews his ignorance, not only of history, but of nature and manners. It is no wonder that, in any age, or in any nation, a Lady, recluse, timorous, and delicate, should desire to hear of events and scenes which she could never see, and should admire the man who had endured dangers, and performed actions, which, however great, were yet magnified by her timidity.—The effect was certainly very natural, and the relation of it is so inimitable, that we do not wonder at the observation of the *Duke*, who says, on the conclusion of it.

“ I think this tale would win my daughter too.”

In the fifth Scene of the third Act, *Iago*, speaking to *Othello* of *Desdemona*; by way of working up the Moor's jealousy, says,

“ She did deceive her Father, marrying you;
And when she seem'd to shake, and fear your
looks,
She lov'd them most.”

This insinuation is very artfully inforced; and, as Dr. *Johnson* very justly observes, it is an argument which ought to be deeply impressed on every Reader. Deceit and falshood, says he, whatever conveniences they may for a time promise or produce, are, in the sum of life, obstacles to happiness. Those who profit by the cheat, distrust the Deceiver, and the act by which kindness

was sought, puts an end to confidence.—The same objection may be made with a lower degree of strength against the imprudent generosity of disproportionate Marriages. When the first heat of passion is over, it is easily succeeded by suspicion, that the same violence of inclination, which caused one irregularity, may stimulate to another; and those who have shewn, that their passions are too powerful for their prudence, will, with very slight appearances against them, be censured, as not very likely to restrain them by their Virtue.

No Writer ever discovered a more accurate or extensive knowledge of the emotions and passions of the human mind, than *Shakespear*. We shall quote one instance, wherein the passion of anger is admirably exhibited, and finely painted; and that, in an uncommon appearance. In the eight Scene of the third Act, *Iago*, by dark hints, and suspicious circumstances, had roused *Othello's* jealousy; which, however, appeared too slightly founded to be vented upon *Desdemona*, its proper object; on which account, the perturbation and distress of mind thereby occasioned, produced a momentary resentment against *Iago*, though supposed innocent, considered as occasioning the jealousy.

Othello. " Villain, be sure, thou prove my love
a whore:

Be sure of it: give me the ocular proof,
Or, by the worth of mine eternal Soul,
Thou had'st better have been born a Dog,
Than answer my wak'd wrath.

318 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

Iago. Is't come to this ?

Othello. Make me to see't; or, at the least, so
prove it,

That the probation bear no hinge, nor loop,
To hang a doubt on : or woe upon thy life !

Iago. My noble Lord——

Oth. If thou dost slander her and torture me,
Never pray more ; abandon all remorse ;
On horror's head horrors accumulate ;
Do deeds to make heav'n weep, all earth amaz'd ;
For nothing canst thou to damnation add,
Greater than that."

In the tenth Scene of the same Act, *Othello*
tells *Desdemona*, that,

—— " The hearts of old, gave hands ;
But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts."

On which passage, Dr. *Warburton* has
given us a very judicious and acute historical
observation, well worthy the notice of our
Readers.

The expression of *new heraldry*, says he,
was a satirical allusion to the times. Soon
after *James* the First came to the crown, he
created the new dignity of *Baronets* for mo-
ney. Amongst their other prerogatives of
honour, they had an addition to their pater-
nal arms, of a *HAND gules* in an escutcheon
argent. And we do not doubt but that this
was the *new heraldry* alluded to by our Au-
thor ; by which he insinuates, that some then
created had *hands* indeed, but not *hearts* ;
that is, *money* to pay for the *creation*, but no
virtue to purchase the *honour*. But the finest
part of the Poet's address in this allusion, is
the compliment he pays to his old mistress
Elizabeth. For *James's* pretence for raising
money

money by this creation, was the reduction of *Ulster*, and other parts of *Ireland*; the memory of which he would perpetuate by that addition to their arms, it being the arms of *Ulster*. Now the method used by *Elizabeth* in the reduction of that kingdom was so different from this, the dignities she conferred being on those who employed their *steel*, and not their *gold* in this service, that nothing could add more to her glory, than the being compared to her successor in this point of view; nor was it uncommon for the Dramatic Poets of that time to satirize the ignominy of *James's* reign.

In the first Scene of the fourth Act, *Iago* works up the jealousy of *Othello* to so high a pitch, that his passions are overpowered, and he falls in a trance. The starts and broken reflections in the Speech before he swoons, have something very terrible in them, and shew the mind of the speaker to be in inexpressible agonies.

“ Lie with her! Lie on her! We say, lye on her, when they belie her. Lie with her! that’s tulsome. Handkerchief—confessions—handkerchief—hankerchief—I tremble at it—Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passions without some instruction. It is not words that shake me thus.”——

Othello finds himself just going to fall into a swoon; and, as is common for people in that circumstance, feels an unusual mist and darkness accompanied with horror, coming upon him. This, with vast sublimity of thought, is compared to the season of the Sun’s eclipse, at which time the earth becomes shadowed by

320 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

the *induction* or bringing over of the Moon between it and the Sun. Dr. *Warburton* supposes this to be the allusion; and whether right or wrong it is a noble conjecture.

But the ingenious Mr. *Reynolds* thinks Dr. *Warburton's* conjecture is too forced and far-fetched. *Othello*, says he, alludes only to *Cassio's* dream, which had been invented and told him by *Iago*, when many confused and very interesting ideas pour in upon his mind all at once, and with such rapidity, that it has not time to shape or digest them, if the mind does not relieve itself by tears, which we know it often does, whether for joy or grief, it produces stupefaction.—*Othello*, in broken sentences and single words, all of which have a reference to the cause of his jealousy, shews, that all the proofs are present at once to his mind, which so overpowers it, that he falls in a trance, the natural consequence.

Dr. *Johnson*, remarks on this passage, that there has always prevailed in the world an opinion, that when any great calamity happens at a distance, notice is given of it to the sufferer by some dejection or perturbation of mind, of which he discovers no external cause. This is ascribed to that general communication of one part of the universe with another, which is called sympathy and antipathy; or the secret monition, *instruction*, and influence of a superior Being, which superintends the order of Nature and of life. *Othello* says,

“Nature could not invest herself in such shadowing Passion without *instruction*. It is not words that shake me thus.” By

By which he means—This Passion which spreads its clouds over me is the effect of some agency more than the operation of words ; it is one of those notices which men have of unseen calamities.

Othello's Soliloquy on the opening of the sixth Scene in the fifth Act is very beautiful ; though the whole is rather too dreadful to be endured. He enters Desdemona's bed-chamber, while she is asleep, with a light and a sword, resolved to punish her supposed Adultery with death ; and says,

“ It is the cause, it is the cause, my Soul ;
Let me not name it to you, you chaste Stars !
It is the cause.——yet I'll not shed her blood,
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,
And smooth as monumental alabaster.

[Lays down the Sword]

Yet she must die ; else she'll betray more men.
Put out the light, and, then——Put out the light ?
If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,
I can again thy former light restore,
Shou'd I repent : but once put out thy light,
Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,
I know not where is that *promethean* heat,
That can thy light re-lumine.——

[Sets down the Taper]

When I have pluck'd thy rose,
I cannot give it vital growth again ;
It needs must wither.——I'll smell it on the tree ;

[Kissing her]

O balmy breath, that dost almost persuade
Justice to break her sword !——One more ; one
more.

Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee
And love thee after——One more ; that's the last.
So sweet, was ne'er so fatal ! ”

322 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

This Soliloquy begins rather abruptly, which abruptness, as Dr. Johnson very justly observes, makes it obscure; but he explains the meaning thus, in which he is, without question, right.—“ I am here, says Othello, in his mind, everwhelmed with horror. What is the reason of this perturbation? Is it want of resolution to do justice? Is it the dread of shedding blood? No; It is not the action that shocks me, but it is the cause, it is the cause, my soul; let me not name it to you, ye chaste stars! It is the cause.

“ Put out the light, and then — Put out the light?”

This Passage is thus explained by Theobald. — Othello, says he, struck in part with remorse at the murder he is going to do, thinks it best to do it in the dark; this compunction of Nature, in the hurry and perturbation of thought, and those remains of tenderness still combating in his bosom, strikes him into an instant reflection, that if he puts out the light he can rekindle it, but if he once puts out the light of *her* life, that will be extinguished for ever. While he is busied in this contemplation, he throws his eyes towards her; and then, soothed with her beautiful appearance, sets down the light to go and kiss her. Upon this Desdemona wakes; and they continue in discourse till he stifles her.—Dr. Warburton, says, the meaning is, “ I will put out the light, and then proceed to the execution of my purpose. But the expression of *putting out the light*, bringing to mind the effects of the extinction of the light of life, he breaks short, and questions himself

himself about the effects of this metaphorical extinction, introduced by a repetition of his first words, as much as to say, But hold, let me first weigh the reflections, which this expression so naturally excites."

We shall here close our Account of this celebrated Play; in which, we have been more attentive to throw into one view, the observations and explanations of some of the most respectable Commentators on *Shakspeare*, on several important Passages in this Tragedy, than to add much of our own; except were we found it necessary, from their not having been noticed by others. The entertainment of the Public, being, always, the principal object of our attention, we think, we can never accomplish this design better, than by taking a review of the opinions of others to corroborate our own sentiments, since this method bids the fairest for furnishing intelligence and entertainment; and therefore it is, that we think it no degradation of our merit, to consult the opinion of others.

With respect to the Representation of this Play, at *Covent-Garden Theatre*, little can be said in favour of it.—The length of periods and extravagance of passion in the Character of *Othello*, is ill suited to Mr. *Ross*'s accustomed negligence, which, we are sorry to observe, renders him inattentive to conception as well as execution. Mr. *Barry* once filled the Author's intention in this Character, to the highest with of Criticism. The harmony of his voice was admirably adapted to tell such a tale as *Othello* describes; his figure answered

324 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

the Character; and he not only appealed to the hearts of the Audience, but wore the passion with nature and grace. Mr. *Bensley* is heavy and laborious in *Iago*, and, at the same time, greatly deficient in design; but, it is a Character so complicated, and difficult to execute, that we do not wonder he does not exceed in it. *Brabantio* requires a better Performer than Mr. *Gardner*; but this Character has been generally consigned to inferior Players; which, though trifling, deserves more respect. *Cassio* and *Roderigo*, have no complaint against Messrs. *Clarke* and *Dyer*, who do them justice.—The *Duke*, by Mr. *Morris*—tolerable.—*Montano*, Mr. *Lewes*—tolerable. *Lodovico*, by Mr. *Owen*—intolerable. The gentle *Desdemona* does not require any very great abilities in an Actress, and therefore, the part is not improperly given to Miss *Miller*.—*Æmilia* does not require a better representative than Mrs. *Green*.—This Play being performed for the Benefit of the *Westminster New lying-in-Hospital*, a *Prologue* suitable to the occasion written by Mr. *Samuel Bayse*, was spoken by Mr. *Hull*.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *December 23.*

H A M L E T.

See Page 20.

To which was added,

THOMAS AND SALLY.

See Page 271.

COVENT-

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE. Dec. 23.

The BEGGAR'S OPERA.

See Page 1.

To which was added,

M A N A N D W I F E:

A Comedy, by Mr. Colman.

THE circumstance of the late *Jubilee* at *Stratford-upon-Avon*, in honour of *Shakespeare*, furnished the hint of this Piece. — The Story is extremely simple, and seems only calculated to give the Public an Idea of that famous festival. The Author has interwoven a Love-plot, which, at first was absolutely necessary, in order to introduce the exhibitions at *Stratford*. The Piece is not devoid of merit, nor can any thing very particular be said in its praise. The Character of *Kitchen*, is indeed, well drawn, strongly marked, and may be said to be original, except, that the hint is taken from the *Connoisseur*, a Paper written some years since, if not solely by Mr. Colman, intirely, under his direction. The Tea-table conversation between Mr. and Mrs *Cross*, is no bad picture of the comforts of matrimony; and in the Character of *Marcourt*, we have the Fop of the present time, so universally insignificant, under the title of *Macaroni*—The Scene is laid at *Stratford upon-Avon*, and the principal Characters are admirably supported in the Representation.

326 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

DRURY LANE THEATRE, Dec, 26.

The C O M M I T T E E ;

OR THE

FAITHFUL IRISHMAN :

A Comedy, by Sir Robert Howard.

THE Design of this Piece was to expose the *Round-Head* Party, and their proceedings, to public Censure ; and, being written soon after the Restoration, it very probably produced the effect intended ; but, now, that every spark of party fire, as to that part of the *English* History, is absolutely extinct, we think, this Play unworthy notice ; for, it is poorly written, and, therefore, has very little pretensions to maintain a footing on the Stage, at this period. Indeed, we confess, there is much drollery in the Character of the *Irishman*, and the Author has given a strong picture of absurd Fanaticism and indecent Pride, in the Characters of Mr. and Mrs. *Day*, and *Abel*, which, at present, are the whole support of the Piece ; but as few such Characters, if any exist in these days, we cannot think the Managers intitled to any praise, for suffering such a Piece to remain on their list. Though, indeed, we find, by woeful experience, that they think any *Trash* will go down, provided it is coupled with a *Jubilee*, an *Installation*, or an absurd *Pantomime*.

Most of the Characters in this Piece are well performed here ; particularly those of the *Irishman*, Mr. and Mrs. *Day*, and *Abel*. Mr. *Moody* is the best *Teague* we ever remember to have seen, and probably, the best the Stage

Stage ever produced ; at least, he stands far before any other Competitor. Mr. *Baddeley* and Mrs. *Bradshaw* afford much satisfaction in Mr. and Mrs. *Day*, and Mr. *W. Palmer* supports the Part of *Abel* very pleasingly, and with great propriety ; and, it is but just to say, that the other Characters are supported with an equal degree of merit.

To which was added,

The WITCHES ; or a TRIP to NAPLES

A Pantomime Entertainment.

THIS in one of those *Mummeries*, in which the *Carpenters*, *Painters* and *Taylors*, belonging to the Theatre, are the principal projectors ; who torture their dull brains to furnish out a most contemptible species of entertainment, for the indulgence of folly, without the least shadow of instruction, to the corruption of weak minds, and the disgrace of the *English Stage*. This—what shall we call it,—made its first Appearance some years since, under the title of *The Witches* ; but was now revived with Alterations, and the Addition of two new Scenes, viz. two Views of *Mount Vesuvius* ; the first of which, represents that *Vulcano* burning at a distance, and is reflected by the water in the *Bay of Naples*. The second, is a nearer Land-View of the Mount, and represents the manner in which the *Lava* is thrown out whenever an eruption happens ; the torrents of the *Lava*, like a river of liquid fire, falling into a cascade from a rock. As far as the *Carpenters* and *Painters* are concerned, these additional Scenes seem to be well executed ;
but

328 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

but whether the resemblance is exact, we cannot pretend to say ; though, we suppose it is. Be this as it may, we cannot help thinking, the terrific ideas these Scenes naturally raise in the mind, must defeat every intention of giving pleasure, and, consequently afford less satisfaction to curiosity than a written Account of that *Vulcano*, or any descriptive drawing of it.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *Dec. 26.*

The M I S E R.

See Page 148.

To which was added,

M O T H E R S H I P T O N.

See Page 83.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, *Dec. 27.*

T W E L F T H N I G H T.

See Page 276.

To which was added,

The W I T C H E S.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, *December 27.*

The B R O T H E R S.

See Page 103.

To which was added,

M O T H E R S H I P T O N.

DRURY-

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, Dec. 28.

TIMON OF ATHENS.

See Page 250.

To which was added,

The WITCHES.

See Page 327.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 28.

The BEGGAR'S OPERA.

See Page 1.

To which was added,

MOTHER SHIPTON.

See Page 83.



DRURY LANE THEATRE, Dec. 30.

The COUNTRY GIRL:

A Comedy, altered from Wycherley.

THIS Play made its first Appearance in the year 1766, at *Drury-Lane Theatre*, and is only an Alteration of *Wycherley's* Comedy of *The Country Wife*, the hint of which was taken from *Moliere's Ecole des Femmes*, or *The School for Wives*. The original Play as left by *Wycherley*, is equal to most of the Pieces of his time, for Character, Incident, and easy Dialogue; and he seems to have a strong resemblance in his manner to two very celebrated *French* Writers, viz. *Moliere* and *Renard*, who undoubtedly, stand foremost

330 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

foremost among the *French* Comic Poets. Nor do we think it any way lessens the merit of *Wycherley*, that he was beholden to *Moliere* for the hint of this Play; for, if it will not be allowed, that the *English* Poet has excelled the *French* one, we will venture to pronounce him his equal, with respect to this Piece — After saying thus much, how greatly is it to be lamented, that this Author wrote in the licentious age of *Charles the Second*, and, consequently was obliged to subscribe to the temper of the time? Or, that sterling Wit, high Character, and nervous Language should not be found sufficient to support a Play upon the Stage, without indelicacy and immorality? — This Play had been long thrown aside, and very justly, on account of its vicious tendency, but was revived as above-mentioned, under the direction of Mr. *Garrick*, to whom the alterations have been ascribed, and we believe very justly.

The Editor of this Piece informs us, in a printed Advertisement, prefixed to it, that “there seems indeed an absolute necessity for reforming many Plays of our most eminent Writers; for no kind of wit ought to be received as an excuse for immorality: nay it becomes still more dangerous in proportion as it is more witty.” After this, will not our Readers be surprized to be informed, that though many obscene Passages in the original Play are omitted, this chaste, reforming Gentleman has ventured to retain many others? — We know what reply will be made to this charge. Had the Gentleman expunged the whole, he knew it would not
answer

answer his avaricious views. Without a little *smut*, the Piece would have been too insipid for the *Bucks* of the *Town*, who would have banished it from the Stage, unless the vacancies could have been supplied with something more important than the dull Genius of the Editor ever hit upon.—In another part of the Advertisement we are informed, that “without such a reformation our *English* Comedies must be reduced to a very small number.” This insinuates that the greater part of our *English* Comedies are immoral. The falsity of this assertion is too notorious to be controverted. But, admitting this to be the case, why don’t this Gentleman give encouragement to the Dramatic Writers of this Age? It is not impossible, nor even improbable, but in this Age of learning, Men of genius might be induced to write good Plays, could they be assured of meeting with proper encouragement.—But this will not answer the vain and avaricious views of the acting Manager at this Theatre; who cannot be content with being acknowledged the best Actor in the Kingdom, but he must acquire fame as an Author also.

When the Piece was first revived, in the year 1766, the Manager was conscious that he had exposed himself to the censure of the judicious, and, therefore, endeavoured to apologize for himself, by assuring the Public that the desire of showing Miss *Reynolds* to advantage was the *first* motive for attempting an Alteration of *Wycherley’s Country Wife*.—This Miss *Reynolds*, was a raw, inexperienced

332 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

experienced girl, destitute of every qualification essential to the forming a good Actress.—But the stale Artifice of a *new* Title to the Play, and a *new* Actress to perform the principal Character, was thought a sufficient allurement to bring a few good houses, at a small expence; as the Manager undertook to alter the Play, and *Miss* was to have but a small salary till she could gain the favor of the Public, through this important stroke of friendship from the Manager. The Play, however, met with no very great success, notwithstanding the many artful attempts to force it on the Town; and, the young Lady never rose to any importance.

We are told, that “near half the Play is new written.”

The Original Play, we confess, is *greatly* altered, for when the Editor expunged some of the obscene parts, he also stripped it of a great part of that luxuriant Wit, with which it abounded. Some of the Original Characters are endeavoured to be disguised under new Names, but are so plundered of their Original Merit, as scarcely to be known. *Mrs. Pinchwife* is unmarried, and only under the guardianship of *Pinchwife*, once her husband, by the name of *Peggy*; but, we venture to declare, that she is robbed of a great part of that simplicity which rendered her so respectable in the Original. Some of the Characters are rejected, but none of those retained heightened in the least. In short, as it now stands, many of the Scenes are insufferably tedious and insipid, and the whole apparently confused

fused and insignificant. What praise it might receive in its Original State from the Wits of the last age, we know not, but, in its altered state, we cannot wish to see it often, nor can we, as its Moral is still very vague, and its tendency still vicious, recommend the perusal of it.

It is well supported in the Representation, take the whole in the gross, without examining too minutely into particulars. Mrs. *Abington's* Performance in the Character of the *Country Girl*, was truly spirited and characteristic, and it is but just to observe, that in this Part she stands far before any competitor. Mrs. *Abington* is a favourite Actress, and she merits the applause she constantly receives, and this, no doubt, induced the Managers to exhibit her in *boy's cloaths*, for the amusement of the youth in this great Metropolis in the Christmas holidays.

To which was added,

The W I T C H E S.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 30.

K I N G L E A R :

*A Tragedy, altered from Shakespear,
by Mr. Colman.*

WE must refer our Readers to our former Account (see Page 206), which, we flatter ourselves, will afford considerable entertainment, as the Play is there examined with great care and attention, and many of its beauties pointed out, on which account
we

334 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

we have only to observe here, that *Mr. Colman* has made several very judicious alterations, at the same time, that we think his having restored the original distressed *Catastrophe*, is a circumstance not greatly in favour of humanity or delicacy of feeling, since it is now, rather too shocking to be borne; and the rejecting the Episode of the loves of *Edgar* and *Cordelia*, so happily conceived by *Tate*, has, beyond all doubt, greatly weakened the Piece, both in the perusal and representation: However, with respect to this particular, we only speak from our own feelings, being aware, that though we dissent from the judgment of *Mr. Colman*, it is equally probable, that others may subscribe to it.

With respect to the Representation, *Mr. Ross* appears to be very unequal to the task of supporting the Character of *Lear*, agreeable to the Poet's intention; at the same time, that this Gentleman appears, in many Scenes, to be unequal to himself; on which account, we cannot avoid remarking, that his Performance in *Lear*, greatly sinks the importance of the Piece, and destroys part of the effect of one of our most capital Drama's; which, when properly represented makes a powerful appeal to the passions. But it must be confessed, that *Mr. Garrick's* unrivalled excellence in the Character of *Lear*, will undoubtedly sink any other Performer very low in the comparison. *Mr. Smith's* Performance in the Part of *Edgar* is deserving of much commendation. *Mr. Hull's* sensibility, and that great attention

tion he always pays to the design of his Author, renders him very respectable in the Character of *Gloster*. Mr. *Bensley* never appeared to greater advantage in any Character than he does in that of *Edmund* in this Play, his conceptions being just, his expression is consequently perfectly adequate. We never desire to see the amiable *Kent*, better supported than by Mr. *Clarke*, who enters into the true spirit of the Poet's intention. We hope to see Messrs. *Owenson* and *Cushion*, brought to condign punishment for the barbarous murder of *Albany* and the *Gentlemen-Usur*;—the Female Characters are tolerably well supported by Mrs. *Vincent*, Miss *Pearce*, and Miss *Miller*.

To which was added,

M O T H E R S H I P T O N.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, December 31.

The W O N D E R :

A Comedy; by Mrs. *Gentliwre*.

THIS is one of the best of Mrs. *Gentliwre*'s Pieces, for besides, that the Plot is pleasingly intricate, the Conduct and Catastrophe is managed with considerable ingenuity, and the Language is more chaste and correct than in any of her other Comic Pieces. To which we may add, that most of the Characters are justly drawn, and finished with a considerable degree of judgment; which proves her to have been perfectly acquainted with life, and thoroughly intimate

336 THEATRICAL REVIEW,

intimate with the minds and manners of mankind. The circumstances, however, of *Isabella's* concealment, the fidelity of *Violante*, and the interrelling perplexities arising therefrom, are evidently taken from *Lord Digby's Elvira*. The Scene is laid at *Lisbon*, and it was first performed in the year 1714; but it is now played as it was revived some years since by Mr. *Garrick*, who made some considerable Alterations, by which the Piece is greatly improved; and his inimitable Performance in the Part of *Don Felix*, throws such a lustre upon the Representation as justly entitles it to the applause it constantly receives whenever it is performed. If we except the Characters of *Don Pedro*, *Frederrick*, *Gibby*, and *Isabella*, the others are admirably supported in the Representation. Mr. *Jebuston's* Performance in the Part of *Gibby*, is so contemptible, as to raise critical indignation; and we are surpris'd at the Manager's inattention, or partiality to this Gentleman, to suffer a Character so very highly drawn, to be so wretchedly represented:

To which was added,
The MAYOR of GARRATT.



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, Dec. 31.

The F O X.

To which was added,
MOTHER SHIPTON.