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**Title**

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**Author**

Burwick, Frederick

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no.17 [ Journal 15 ]

**April 5-August 10, 1807.**

[ 13. April. 1807 ] Newcastle

... The play was the Mountaineers -- Octavian, Mr. Huddart -- in which he gave several parts with great feeling, but on the whole it failed, as his powers of voice & countenance were inadequate -- some pathetic exclamations were touching. Mrs. Galindo as Zorayda was excellent -- she is a very sensible woman. I never saw Balcazin so well played as by Harley. He gave great force & importance to it -- the rest of the characters were bad as usual. Mrs. Penson clever in Agnes but screamed dreadfully out of tune in her songs.--Huddart gave imitations of Cooke & Kemble in Richard. Nothing could be better done: it was the men, very slightly caricatured. -- The Farce was the Midnight Hour in which Harley played the General very well -- the rest were wretched except Mrs. Penson who got thro' Flora decently.

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[ 17. April. 1807 ]

... very genteel boxes, but not very crowded -- full at 1/2 price -- about £70 -- for Mrs. Galindo's benefit. Mr. Macready made a long speech after the play which had no meaning. ...

The play Such Things Are -- Huddart, Harley, & Mrs. Galindo played well in the Sultan, Haswell, & the Female Slave -- but were so unsupported that it went off very ill -- the Manager

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was vulgar as usual in Twineall -- Mrs. Penson was very good in Lady Tremor -- but the other characters were so completely murdered that it quite spoiled the play.

The farce was the Young Hussar -- a new piece of Dimond's -- of itself very poor -- it was most wretchedly acted -- Mrs. Penson as an old woman in an odd dress & Miss Greville as a

young one were barely tolerable. The rest wretched -- the music tho' common is prettily put together. Had the principal part been decently acted it might have gone off well, but the insipid coldness & pomposity of Jones was very dull. Nothing could be more flat -- & the singing by 5 or 6 at once, each in a different key, was dreadful.

We also went thro' the course of Collins Ode, Dancing, Singing, &c.

[ 22. June. 1807 ]

... The Grecian Daughter -- Evander, Mr. Swendall -- Dionysius, Mr. Seyton -- the former merely decent, very flat -- the latter well dressed & speaks well, but has too redundant action. He is a bad figure too, tho' an actor of some power. He has some resemblance to Elliston.

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m As for Philotus & Phocion, in the hands of Fawcett & Ray they were execrable, & melanthon quite comic with Holbrook. Mrs. Johnstone appeared in Euphrasia. I have seen her at Drury Lane and at Bath. She is a strong powerful woman, but omits those finer touches which give interest. Her figure & action are good for the tragic -- her voice in declamation is fine -- but in the agonies of passion, or in the pathetic power she is deficient. She played it well & on the whole it went off with decent effect.

[ 23. June. 1807 ]

... went to the play. The Soldier's Daughter -- a very capital house. ... Seyton played Malfort with feeling, but too violent. Mrs. Johnstone had no scope in Mrs. Malfort but was respectable. Swendall was respectable but too tame in the Governor. Macready was wretched in Frank: the rest very bad also,

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except the grand support of the piece, Miss Smith in Widow Cheerly. The fire of her eye, elegance of motion, correctness & animation of action, sweet, noble, & deep voice, & easy bewitching manner were delightful. I never saw her to so much advantage, having always seen her in quiet parts which are not her forte -- the speeches were capital; & there were several delicious strokes of nature. I have not been so pleased during many a long month.

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[ 24. June. 1807 ]

Very crowded house -- above £100 -- Jane Shore. Fawcett in Gloster was execrable. Swendall in Dumont was tolerable. Seyton was not perfect in Lord Hastings but played with feeling. If he is attentive he may improve in time: he gave great effect to the scenes with Jane Shore & Alicia. Mrs. Johnstone played Alicia admirably -- her wild hurried manner & face, her powerful action & her loud voice are well suited to the part. There were some parts of her acting capital, particularly her last scene with Hastings. Miss Smith played Jane Shore in a very original manner & very different from Mrs. Kemble or Mrs. Siddons -- far inferior to both -- she is not sufficiently plaintive -- instead she is agitated yet nervously constrained, & it is only by a sudden burst of feeling that she produces a great effect. I was disappointed in her scene with Gloster, but delighted with that where Hastings

insults her. Her dying scene was too violent. On the whole her Jane Shore will bear no comparison as to excellence with her Widow Cheerly -- in a sudden & violent emotion she produces a great effect, but declamation & recitation are her fort  in tragedy: in the latter she cannot be exceeded, but her voice & manner are not gifted with pathetic power -- therefore her excellence is most conspicuous in comedy, where her acting is more natural, & comes more home to the feelings: & besides the smallness of her figure is better adapted for comedy. -- On the whole I was highly gratified by the play of Jane Shore.

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[ 25. June. 1807 ]

... went to the play, which was crowded to suffocation & very hot. Got a good seat in the second row of stage box, next Blacket & behind Herons. Above £120.

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The play was Adrian & Orrilla. Mr. Seyton was respectable in Altenburg -- the rest most wretched. Miss Ray looked very pretty as Orrilla, but her acting is any thing but natural. Miss Smith in Madame Clermont was capital -- her declamation & her narrative in the last act, her concealed emotion in her first scene with Altenburg were inimitable. She displayed the highest powers of acting & stage effect -- her dress was also most becoming. I was delighted with the performance, which is the most superior of the 3 I have seen.

[ 26. June. 1807 ]

... Went to the play & sat with the Herons &c. Immense house, above 120. Very hot. I had a good place in number 2. The Jealous Wife was the play, but all the actors were so imperfect, & it requires so many good actors who were not to be had, and there was so much confusion in getting places owing to the lateness of the race, that it did not go off well at all,

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besides the Manager, always stupid, had not a word of his part off & put out Miss Smith very much. She played most inimitably -- nothing could look better or give more effect to the passion. It is just the part that suits her

The farce was Three Weeks after Marriage. The Manager made a brute of himself tonight by being stupidly drunk -- & not knowing a word of the farce. Miss Smith was most bewitching in Lady Racket -- nothing could be more elegant, easy, or fascinating. Genteel comedy & declamation are her forte: the softer feelings she has not the power to touch, but she is an original, elegant, & sensible actress.

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[ 27. June. 1807 ]

Went to the play. Sat with the Herons, Blacket, & J. Lamb. The Honey Moon. A good house, about £70 -- but nothing like the other nights. Seyton played the Duke very well -- his dress, exactly like Elliston's, made him more like, & certainly he resembles a little in person & more in manner -- he played with great effect & was very perfect, but very inferior to Elliston in spite of his study. Atkinson, who has great comic humor, was very ludicrous in the mock Duke -- the rest were wretched. Zamora by Miss Macaulay & Volante by



Miss Johnston were very bad, but Juliana by Miss Smith was capital. She was more

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natural than Miss Duncan & looked more frowardly dignified & far more ladylike. She played it with great spirit. Her countenance is so very expressive & animated that her acting cannot fail to please & her action is grace itself.

After the play she recited Collins' Ode on the Passions: in which her expression of the different passions was inimitable & her actions astonishingly appropriate & graceful. I never saw any thing so elegant: when I saw it at C. G. formerly, I was so far off, that all the effect of it was lost.

The farce was the Deserter in which there is some delightful music which was decently executed by Miss Miller & Miss Holloway with some assistance from Mr. Kettilby -- as they sung in tune the harmony was very pleasant & the Duet very pretty.

[ 2. July. 1807 ] Harrogate

... read the unlucky news of the defeat of the Russians by Bonaparte with terrible loss. Dismal tidings indeed!

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[ 9. July. 1807 ]

... Bad news in the paper. The Russians after incredible loss have concluded an armistice, & the first division of the Expedition has suffered greatly from a storm. -- but I don't mean to make this book, if I can help it, a chronicle of national disasters, so I shall say nothing till I can say something good.

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... I went to the play -- Major Elston & Mr. Bland & one or two more of ours came also -- it was the first night. The house was very thin, but is decent enough for such a place as this. The company goes to Kanresbro', Ripon, Richmond, &c. -- & is conducted by a Mr. Butler, most likely on shares. The play was the Way to Keep Him -- Sir Bashful, Mr. Butler -- Sir Brillian, Mr. Davis -- Lovemore, Mr. Jefferson -- Mrs. Belmour, Mrs. Butler -- Mrs. Lovemore, Miss Craven -- Muslin, Miss Jefferson -- all very bad except Mr. Jefferson who played Lovemore very well.

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A Mr. Watson sung the Irish Song of Kate Kearney very well indeed -- a fine tenor voice & good ear & taste, but not much knowledge of music. Saxoni the Ropedancer was to have performed but was prevented by illness: so the Weathercock was played instead -- and Jefferson in Tristram played very well indeed -- the rest wretched -- on the whole we were tolerably tired & got home soon after 10.

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[ 10. July. 1807 ]

Walked with Mr. Bland to the well & back & had a great deal of talk about Mrs. Jordan who is his niece.

[ 14. July. 1807 ] York

.... I went to the play & got a capital seat in the stage box -- the house

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brilliant in the boxes, & well filled, but not crowded. The theatre is very clean & neat, but ill constructed, old, & clumsy. I sat next a party of genteel people who were as pleased with the play as myself. The Earl of Warwick -- Edward, Mr. Phillips -- Lady Elizabeth Grey, Miss Smith -- Warwick, Mr. Cummins -- & Margaret of Anjou, Mrs. Siddons. I never saw her in this part before or saw the play at all. I was enchanted with both -- her grief at first, then her hope, & manner of working on Warwick's passions, then her transition to her husband's & child's fate -- were inimitable -- but her concluding scene when all her hopes are blasted, when she has revenged herself by stabbing Warwick was most exquisite -- such acting will never be seen again. I think it equal to any thing I ever saw her act. She is indeed inimitable. I cried delightfully -- & enjoyed it long after it was over.

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I was, however, content to be diverted a little by We fly by night, which was excellently acted by a Mr. Foster in General Bastion -- a Mr. Knight in Ferret -- Lewis (formerly at Newcastle & Mr. Lewis's son) in Humphrey, -- a Mr. Stanwix in Count Grenoville -- a Mrs. Foster in Mrs. Stubby (she sung prettily) -- the other characters were bad, particularly Miss Jones, formerly with Kemble, in Emma. On the whole, it went off very well.

Mr. Cummins who played Warwick is a strutting, stupid, noisy, affected, & unfeeling & very ugly man. Edward by Phillips was very good & in no way offensive. Miss Smith is an

elegant figure & a fine face, but has an unfeeling tone of voice & can never act in tragedy. -- The York company I can easily perceive to be a very good one for comedies & a very bad one for tragedies, for Phillips will be very good in sentimental comedy, & Cummins may play Cooke's parts & some noisy characters very well.

XV, 185

[ 15. July. 1807 ]

... I went to the play at 7 and got a good place -- the 3<sup>rd</sup> row of box next stage box. The house was more crowded than last night: & very brilliant. The play was worse acted -- as it required several good performers, & Phillips who is the best in tragedy did not act.

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Osmyn, Mr. Cummins, very bad -- Gonsalez, Mr. Foster, the same -- Garcia, Mr. Stanwix, the same -- Manuel, Mr. Williams, the same -- Almeria, Miss Smith, looked pretty, but not a spark of feeling: very poor indeed.

It is impossible to do justice to Mrs. Siddons. She acted most inimitably, even without support -- her scenes with Osmyn & her death are truly great, but I have often dwelt with pleasure on her excellence in this part.

The farce was Raising the Wind. A Mr. Wrench was excellent in Didler & Lewis in Fainwoud -- Knight capital in Sam -- & Mrs. Ward in Miss Laurelia. It went off extremely well, but I left before the end.

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[ 16. July. 1807 ]

... went to the play, where we had good seats in front row of stage box. Dull house. The play was King John, which I never saw before, & as it was got up I was much pleased with it independent of Mrs. Siddons.

Arthur, Master Benwell -- King John, Mr. Phillips -- Falconbridge, Mr. Cummins -- Hubert, Mr. Wrench -- Lewis, Mr. Powell -- King of France, Mr. Williams -- Queen Elinor, Mrs. Cummins -- Blanch, Miss Jones -- Lady Constance, Mrs. Siddons.

The dresses were beautiful. It was admirably & beautifully got up -- & the boy Arthur, Phillips, & Wrench played very well, & Cummins better than usual. We never see plays at Newcastle so well got up & so well represented.

As to Mrs. Siddons, her acting in this interesting, delightful, tho' short part, exceeded herself. After having witnessed her in many a mad scene, how astonished I was to see her agony sane & simple. Her rising despair in reiterating "I am not mad" was overwhelming. How frightening, too, that child of grief which "fills the room -- walks up & down -- & puts on pretty looks." Every eye saw her vision and wept with her. She raved -- & her eyes, her face, her actions, dishevelled hair, & the tones of her voice can never be forgotten -- a lady was carried out in hysterica. It was a complete personification of the most violent degree of grief, & all

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the house was in tears. She is a most wonderful woman: it is scarcely possible to conceive how inimitable she is in tragedy -- the more I see her, the more I am convinced her transcendent powers will never be equalled in any other individual as she unites every possible requisite & is completely resistless. With regret we saw her exit, but staid out the play -- Charlotte was most violently affected, but highly delighted & astonished.

[ 21. July. 1807 ]

Buxton

Waldie: XV, 211

... went to the play -- which we had bespoke -- the theatre is shabby -- there was a decent house. The Wonder -- & the Lying Valet. Old Ryley, once in the Newcastle set, was the only good one -- he was Don Lopez & Sharp -- his acting in the latter was truly humorous & excellent: his face & figure so well adapted & so very comical. He does not do passionate old men so well -- the dry style of humor is his forte -- & he is very clever indeed. When he attempts a jealous passion, as in that soliloquy "Was ever man thus plagued? I could swallow my dagger for madness" his motions became as abrupt & exaggerated as a Pantaloon in pantomime. Yet he is absolutely at his ease when the part calls for a gentleman of wry wit. The rest very bad -- Don Felix & Violante were played by a Mr. & Mrs. Mansel, but they were very tame & dull: & gave no effect to the excellent scenes of the play.

A Master Smalley from Drury Lane sung the Bay of Biscay -- & the Morn --

XV, 212

He is now at an age when he should not sing much as his voice is changing: but it will be a good one -- his natural voice is very fine, loud, & powerful -- but his false is poor -- he ought not to force it as he does, nor to attempt Braham's falsetto flourishes. He sings best in Incedon's style, but will never be a singer unless he attends to correctness, modulation, & articulation, & goes thro' a long course of regular practice. If that was done he might do a great deal, tho' the hiatus between the natural & false is very large: & he seems satisfied with himself as he is, so there is no chance of improvement.

[ 27. July. 1807 ]

River Derwent

Waldie: XV, 224

Got up 1/4 before six -- dressed, got coach with Maria, William, & Charlotte -- but it was near 1/2 past 7 when we got set off....

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The ride from Stoney Middleton to Chatsworth is very beautiful, though only a short distance -- we leave the striking rocky valley of Middleton and enter on a hilly cultivated country, abounding in trees, yet wild -- the road lead us to the gates of the park on the north west side, through the village of

XV, 226

Baslow. We entered the park, through which the Derwent rolls its waters most beautifully, & fine green hills with large plantations rise on all sides -- flocks of cattle, sheep, & deer abound -- all is on an extensive & magnificent scale.

XV, 234

From Chatsworth Inn, we set off & proceeded 11 miles to Matlock. The road conducted us mostly by the side of the Derwent, & nothing can be more beautifully romantic & diversified than the scenery of its banks -- we continually changed our views of hills, woods, fields, water, with the pretty village of Rosely, & every pastoral beauty of the richest kind -- fine pastures, cornfields, trees & woods -- a most delightful ride -- but at length approaching Matlock we saw in front the immense locks of High Tor rising to the skies, & soon descending along steep banks, midst woods & fields & cottages situated on little ledges of ground & perched one above another in the most picturesque manner -- forming a large village called Matlock Banks.

...

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We passed along the edge of the river & saw the astonishing height of strait craggy rocks rise perpendicular from its bed,

wich trees & shrubs hanging from their crevices, while just above us rose steep fields & graves, with rocks peeping out -- we seemed walled in on each side.

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... We took a boat & rowed down the river as far as Saxtons Hotel, nearly a mile by water -- the beauty of the overhanging rocks & woods every moment assuming

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different forms is not to be described -- sometimes we had to creep under spreading branches in our boat, & then got a grand view of rock succeeding rocks, while every turn brought fresh beauties to seduce the eye. ... We landed just above a noble view down which the river was dashing with tremendous force -- we proceeded along the Derby road, which here goes under grand rocks & woods, & admired the castle & grounds of Willersley opposite, which we were going to.

At a grand bold front of rock we entered the grounds & proceeded close under a high ledge of rock which seemed like a park wall. Here the rocks recede a little from the river, & Mr. Arkwright's road, the church of Cromford which is of itself ugly, and the lawn, fill up the space on this side of the river, & the castle on the other side. We came to a beautiful bridge which we crossed -- and began our ascent to the castle, every step

XV, 238

unfolding new beauties of prospect to our view. It is impossible to mention half the variety of charming woods, rocks, in all directions, bridge, church, river, part of Matlock, &c., which we saw in ascending under a ridge of woody rocks, thro' a lawn & shrubbery to the castle.



... catching Matlock, heights of Abraham above it, the river, High Tor, & rocks & woods at every turn,.. we next...went up a long & steep ascent which conducted us to the top of the rocks, above all the romantic scene .... At length arriving at the top of the flight of steps which leads down the craggy rocks to the river, we sat down on a seat commanding a most delicious view -- & met by chance an old Miner who had just parted with a lady & gentleman & now offered us his services as Cicerone of the rocks & caves. -- These we accepted, but before beginning with his oddities, I must say that Willersley is altogether the most romantic spot it is possible to conceive & could the Castle & Church be pulled down & more harmonious buildings erected in their place & some alterations made in the grounds, it would be one of

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the most delightful residences in the world. -- Our new Cicerone telling us he was an excellent singer, we desired him to let us hear him -- he sung the loves of Parson Whitfield & a fair lady, which as a compound of oddity in composition, music, & style of singing, I never heard equalled. He next sung about a King & a tinker -- there was a sharp clever expression about him, an energy of mind & sense, that had it been directed by education would have made him eminent, but poor Job Bratchly knew not his letters, tho' his memory is so extensive he can sing different songs for a day together; but there was a sort of sharp comic humor & hilarity about him, which, while singing how the preaching of Whitfield struck a fair lady with the dart of Cupid, it was impossible to resist. I don't know when I have laughed so much. He conducted us down

the flight of steps. We stopped at the birdcage, a covered seat commanding a fine view, half

XV, 242

way down the cliff. Just by it is the entrance to an old mine, called by our guide, who knew every stone & hollow by name, the Cavern. We sat some time in the birdcage & Job gave us another song. We descended & took leave of our guide who left us with the hearty good wishes -- he seemed to be quite in love with Charlotte & said she was a nice lady indeed -- he liked to see a lady look as if she was happy -- he was really an odd compound, & a very original one, of humor, fun, & feeling united with sense & ignorance.

[ 4. August. 1807 ]

Buxton

Waldie: XV, 303

... Hamlet -- Ryley was very comic in Polonius: the rest were truly wretched. I never saw any thing worse. Mrs. Thornhill was barely decent in Ophelia: -- but Roscius was all that is charming in Hamlet. I have seen him in it twice before, but saw a third time with delight -- he is much grown & his figure is in the awkward state of neither man or boy -- his voice is more settled into manhood & is capable of great exertion -- but still has the power of producing those affecting transitions in which he so much excels -- he was all that could be wished.

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In the scene with Horatio -- the first appearance of the ghost -- his interview with it -- he kept that slight tremble of awe in a determined voice, "I'll speak to it, tho' hell itself should gape." -- in all he was exquisite -- & admirable in the closet scene: he produced a great effect indeed -- every body was delighted. He was in capital spirits & exerted himself to the utmost. His fencing was beautiful and his dying scene inimitable: altogether he went thro' it inimitably. -- his scene where he discovers by the play the guilt of the King is beyond praise -- the only fault I find was that at times he was too rapid in the animated parts -- but as a whole it could not be excelled. We were all most delighted; but staid to look at the Weathercock in which Mr. Mansel got thro' Tristram very tolerably -- & Mrs. Thornhill was a tolerable Variella only that she sung dreadfully out of tune: -- the rest wretched -- they put in a great deal of stupid stuff of their own.

[ 5. August. 1807 ]

... Rode out, & on the ride met Roscius on a poney -- he was alone & recognised me easily. We had a great deal of talk. He is going in October to decline all professional engagements and to reside with Mr. Butler, Master of the

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School at Shrewsbury, to whom he is much attached, & who is a man of abilities -- he is only to act occasionally & to finish his education with a view to the stage. He is to play on Saturday here for his benefit, but this I shall not mention, as it may injure the house on Thursday. He looks as well as ever, but is more manly tho' elegant as ever. We rode round the side and as it was late, we parted -- after a great deal of pleasant talk.

[ 6. August. 1807 ]

... We had very good places in the pit which is let at box price, & has arm chairs for these occasions. The Mountaineers. Nothing could be worse than the acting of this play -- luckily Roscius had little to do with the rest of them. His Octavian was new to me & it suits him exactly -- the wildness, tenderness, elegance & feeling of the part he portrayed to nature -- every one almost cried -- it was nature itself -- his first scene was capital, but the perfection of his acting was where Floranthe appears -- the wildness, broken sobs, & wonderful attitude he took, all

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produced a most wonderful effect. I never saw any thing equal to his transition from the wildest frenzy of look, voice, & action, to the softness with which he, bent on one knee, cried "My best beloved Floranthe" -- it was truly delightful -- and then his gradual recovery when he finds it is really her & not a vision. His exultation of look & voice at clasping her hand, to find it real. Nature was in every word, look, & action, & it could not be exceeded. Most delighted I was with his acting -- & heard George Barnwell announced for his benefit on Saturday & Loony Macwalter in the Review. I have never seen him in either of these parts & anticipate great pleasure from the first for I never saw the play: & think it is a part the interest & feeling of which will suit him & to which he will impart dignity. The Irish part is merely a benefit clap trap.

The farce was Who's the Dupe, which is very diverting, but they made sad bungling of the

hard words. Poor Gradus could not get on at all. Ryley was a capital Old D'oyley & very comic.

[ 7. August. 1807 ]

... After breakfast went up to Scarsdales Arms to call on Young Roscius. Met him at the door, and had a walk with him and went to rehearsal -- elegance & grace and modesty & sense are all combined in him. We had a great deal of theatrical chat

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and our ideas coincided exactly. Went with him to the theatre to rehearse George Barnwell -- where I was sorry to leave him after we had rummaged about the dirty place & had a talk with Mr. Ryley.

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[ 8. August. 1807 ]

... The house was very full & we had some difficulty in getting our places which were excellent in the boxes -- at length I accomplished the point & we sat altogether in a capital box. ... It was for Roscius' benefit: -- and the play George Barnwell. I never saw the play before & was completely wrapped up in it, for tho' shocking, it is excessively interesting. Mrs. Mansel played Milwood very well -- her affected leer & conceit were not out of character. She got thro' it better than I expected.

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Shaw in Truman was tolerable -- Dyer in the short part of the Uncle: also Mrs. Shaw in Maria -- Welch shocking bad in Thoroughgood -- indeed the other characters have very little to do -- it all rests between Barnwell & Milwood.

I was the complete perfection of acting -- or rather no acting at all, for he seemed so completely to enter into

the character that it seemed like reality. I never heard such lamentations & sobs in a theatre, for all felt indeed we had been made witness to a poor man being goaded into crime. He looked the part perfectly -- his action was so elegant & so proper -- the changes of his voice & countenance so very striking; & the whole of the play marked with such an irresistible force of feeling, that it is impossible to give any idea of the effect it produced -- in the scene where Milwood plays on his generosity -- in the scene where he murders his uncle -- but in the scene, above all, where she betrays him, his anguish & horror & imploring mercy I shall never forget -- his horror on first meeting her after the murder -- his wish, expressed with so much truth, of "Hide me from myself" -- all was inimitable -- & nothing could be more pathetic & more completely affecting than the prison scene -- his taking leave was inimitable indeed. I shall never forget it.

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He played Loony McWolter in the farce of the Review -- Ryley & Shaw ere tolerable in Deputy Bull & John Lump -- rest very bad. Roscius played admirably. He was so completely disguised, he could scarcely be known as the same elegant youth we had seen in the play. He played it with very great effect & spoke the Irish in the true stupid way -- but this was all acting & merely a benefit-trap. His George Barnwell is nature itself, -- it is quite impossible for the character to be better acted -- indeed I think it one of his finest parts.

Home at 1/2 past 9. -- Supper & talk over play. I don't know when I have been in such agonies at a play. I did not recover it the whole evening.