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[10. July. 1820] London

... I went to the Opera -- it was pretty full -- the house is painted very ugly -- the scenery wretched. I did not stay for the ballet -- the divertisement was poor. ... The music of the opera of Don Giovanni is always exquisite -- but it was ill sung. Miss Corri in voice is good, but has no other requisite, yet she is the best. Ambrogetti is lively but vulgar & wants voice. Leporello by a Signor Placci very dull & stupid. Angrisani in Masetto good. Signora Bellochi I recollect once seeing at Florence -- she is lively but plain & a coarse voice. Tori in Ottavio is dull & has no voice. Miss Mori vile in Donna Elvira. Altogether it is dullness itself, but the charms of the music

XLVII, 195

carry it thro'.

I forgot to say I saw a finely colored immense picture of the Entry of Christ into Jerusalem by Haydon to-day, but, tho' well conceived & colored & the ass & the faces each side good, the chief figure is poor & mean. There were some other pictures of his also, & a large gallery of old pictures for sale -- almost all very bad.

XLVII, 201

[17. July. 1820]

... Went to Covent Garden theatre, which I had not seen for 2 years -- got good place in the pit -- it was full, & the house brilliant -- the tragedy of Virginius -- ill written, much hyperbole & little poetry, much pomposity & little feeling -- some fine situations. C. Kemble in Icilius very capital -- his appeal in favor of Virginius was eloquent & his love scene admirably elegant, also

XLVII, 202

where he rushes in to save Virginia from Appius. Macready is too familiar, but in some parts of Virginius full of strong

feeling. Miss Foote is pleasing & pretty in Virginia. It was on the whole, especially in the last act, very dull -- the murder of Appius by Virginius is disgusting -- & there is a tame dullness about the secondrate actors that is terrible. Abbot good in Appius. It was followed by Harlequin & Cinderella, a most amusing lively pantomime with the story of Cinderella as its beginning -- Grimaldi is her mother & then clown -- altogether it was very good, & some capital tricks & changes.

XLVII, 203

[18. July. 1820]

... I went to the opera -- it was thin. I met Corri & had much musical talk & saw several other people I knew. The music of La Cenerentola was well performed by the orchestra, but the singing was execrable. The only good thing was the acting of Ambrogetti in Magnifico, which was a most rich treat indeed. Nothing could

XLVII, 204

be so comic -- he kept us from going to sleep. Tori in the Prince was dull & had no voice -- & for singing, bad -- stupidity & dullness. Placci excels every Italian I ever saw. He quite spoiled Dandini with his extravagance. Miss Mori sung tolerably in the Sister -- the other one was screamed out of tune by a Miss Wheatley, who is called in the bill Luigia. But what most disappointed me was Madame Bellochi, who I thought would have done it well -- but tho' she has a lively face, she sung with no effect, & it was neither good nor bad -- poor indeed after Monbelli. The part music was quite spoiled. On the whole I never saw an opera (to a good orchestra) so badly done.

XLVII, 205

[19. July. 1820]

... The 2 Kells & William & I went to the Haymarket & got good seats in the pit. We saw the Inconstant in 3 acts, the

original 1st act abandoned, as well as Oriana's scene in the Nunnery, & other parts so curtailed that little continuity of dialogue & action is left. C. Kemble was admirably elegant, feeling, lively, & amusing in Mirabel, & Mrs. C. Kemble clever in Bizarre. Oriana, Miss Leigh, poor -- & Old Mirabel, Terry, as well as Duretete, Jones, both deficient in humor, however the Kembles carried it thro'.

XLVII, 206

It was followed by Pigeons & Crows, a very silly comedy in 3 acts -- but laughable. Jones, a Capt. pursued by bailiffs -- Connor, an Irish servant -- J. Russel, a French shewman -- Mrs. Pearce, an old young lady -- her daughter by Miss Leigh -- & a chambermaid, Mrs. Jones -- all just tolerable, as was Farley in Mr. Wadd, who lets lodgings at Margate -- the only thing really superexcellent was Liston & his faces, his comicality & odd ways in Sir Peter Pigwiggen, Alderman & Pinmaker -- the part was little better than the rest, but he hade it every thing & kept us highly amused.

XLVII, 253

[4. September. 1820] Kelso

... William & I went to a sort of Mathews' Entertainment at the Cross Keys, given by my acquaintance of 3 years since, Yates, assisted by a Mr. Alexander who sung. Yates only arrived from Edinburgh to-day & goes to London to Covent Garden theatre to-morrow. I went to him between the acts & we had much chat. His Mathews' stories were capital, & his imitations of Kean, Young, Kemble, Terry, Munden, Blanchard, &c., were very fine,

XLVII, 254

& his interlude of "Cozening, or Half and hour in France," in which he gives his imitations & appears in 6 or 7 characters, is very laughable.

[25. September. 1820]

... went to the play at Kelso -- bespoke by the Duchess of Roxburgh. ... I sat with the Duchess's party -- some men were noisy & quarrelsome -- it was hot & crowded -- & the play (the Road to Ruin) very stupid. I have so often seen it performed by the best players, yet 3 or 4 actors were decent -- Calcraft in Harry, Jones in Goldfinch,

XLVII, 265

Loveday in Silky, & Mrs. Eyre in the Widow -- the rest were poor -- but altogether it was not worse than the companies we have seen at Newcastle. Mrs. Eyre, Calcraft, & Jones are of the Edinburgh Company.

XLVII, 306

[14. November. 1820]

The disgraceful bill against the Queen is abandoned, it having been carried on its last reading by a majority of 9-- the Ministers themselves -- so Lord Liverpool was obliged to rise & give it up, by a motion to read it this day six months. It is a source of triumph to all who love justice & law, & the noble speeches of Lords Grey & Erskine have greatly contributed to the result. It is to be hoped the obliquy of such disgraceful scenes as have been manufactured & exposed will rest with the Ministers, & that the sense of the Nation will be clearly shewn in petitions for their dismissal from office.

XLVII, 348

[28. December. 1820] Newcastle

... The weather is terrible, however in the evening my father & I went to the play. The theatre is lighted with gas, & very neat. The Castle of Andalusia was not ill done -- Butler & Hammond

XLVII, 349

as Pedrillo & Spado tolerable -- and Mrs. Hammond, late Miss

King, sings agreeably -- she was Lorenza -- Vittoria by Miss Halford, a neat smart girl -- & Mrs. Leonard in Catalina was capital, most lively, spirited, & clever -- Bland (nephew to Mrs. Kemble) sung agreeably in Alphonso -- Carter decent in Fernando & Thorne not a bad basso in Don Caesar. Altogether the opera went off well. It was succeeded by the Rendezvous, a comical farce in which the same 3 ladies as above, as starched Miss (Mrs. Leonard), lively Miss (Miss Halford), & chambermaid (Mrs. Hammond), were good -- also Butler & DeCamp as the old guardian & servant both cowards, & the lovers Thorne & Alexander for the ladies & Hill (a son of Hill & Mrs. Atkins) for the chambermaid were very excellent. The company is complete & has some ability in all its parts & is well kept together.

XLVII, 357

[1. January. 1821]

... We saw the Review, which is always laughable tho' not new. Decamp in Caleb Quotem, Hammond in Looney, Butler in John Lump, Thorne in Charles, Miss Halford in Phoebe, Miss Blanchard in Grace, & Mrs. Hammond in Lucy, all good -- Parsons & Alexander soso in Mr. Bull & Capt. Beaugard -- but on the whole they got thro' it uncommonly well.

XLVII, 358

[2. January. 1821]

... The Rivals was very well acted. ... We did not see much of the farce of Frightened to Death. Certainly the theatre is greatly improved by the management of Decamp -- it is more theatrical & all the departments are better filled.

[3. January. 1821]

... Called & sat some time with Mr. Decamp. ... went to the play

& was highly pleased with the 4 last acts of Othello.... The characters were all tolerably done, but the excellence of Hamblin in Othello & Mrs. Leonard in Emilia was delightful. His scenes in the 3^d, 4th, & last act admirable -- he truly plays both the art & nature of Shakespeare.-- he is like Conway, but less tall & awkward. Miss Blanchard dull in Desdemona.

XLVII, 360

[5. January. 1821]

... Went to the play, & saw the new melodrame of the Vampire, in which Hamblin as Lord Ruthven, a Vampire, dies & comes to life, & nearly gets the 2 females of the piece to feed his dreadful necessity of devouring young women. The escapes & interest are clever & well managed, & the scenery pretty. It was well got up. Butler in the drunken servant good.

XLVII, 361

Hammond was the father, Lord Ronald, & Miss Blanchard the Lady, Margaret. Effie by Miss Halford, & Robert by Mr. Thorne -- both good. Altogether it was excellent, & well acted, & more interesting than one could expect from such extreme impossibility.

XLVII, 370

[19. January. 1821]

... The play was Henri Quatre -- very dull by Moreton -- but the acting of Hamblin in Henri was dignified & pleasing, & it was well got up with good scenery, & not ill acted, & a capital procession in the last act.

Butler in Fortune's Frolic was very excellent -- he has great power & activity, & some nature, but wants humour. On the whole the company is really good.

XLVII, 374

[26. January. 1821]

... [The Clandestine Marriage] Butler as Lord Ogleby was much better than I expected, & the rest, especially Hamblin in Lovewell, good. Decamp capital in Brush.

We had next a short piece, very good, from the French of

"Le Secret" or Hole in the Wall -- by which last a husband secretes his friend & the friend's mistress & effects, while his wife is jealous, & the stupid servant, seeing all disappear, is frightened most comically. Butler in the servant and Carter & Miss Blanchard in the husband & wife were very good.

XLVII, 395

[23. February. 1821]

... Went to the play -- not a very good house. The Inconstant -- the same abrupt & mutilated version I saw at Haymarket -- in the last part of young Mirabel Hamblin was good, in the first heavy & dull. Decamp was excellent in Duretete.

XLVII, 396

Next we had Lovers' Quarrels by Carter & Miss Halford, Butler & Mrs. Leonard. Butler has no real humour -- he is only good in Yorkshiresmen -- his acting is all extravagance & effort. Carter & Mrs. Leonard were very well.

We had lastly the farce of a Roland for an Oliver, taken from the "Visite à Bedlam" -- & which I saw done by Lord & Lady Normanby &c. at Florence. It was very well done by Decamp as Highflyer, Butler as the servant, and the rest tolerable.

XLVII, 400

[2. March. 1821]

... The play was Every one has his fault -- well acted, especially by Carter in Sir Robert, who has really both life & humor -- and by Butler in Johns, tho' he was too broad. Hamblin was good in Capt. Irwin & Miss Blanchard tolerable in Lady E. The boy by Miss Stoker excellent. Bland & Mrs. Leonard so so in the Placids. The company is well managed, but they had difficulty in keeping the comedy moving and several scenes lagged.

The farce was The Warlock of the Glen -- nothing new in story: the common melodrame -- a tyrant, persecuted lady, disguised husband, and faithful follower -- some good escapes. Alexander, Miss Blanchard, Hamblin, & Decamp were good in it.

[3. March. 1821]

... Went to the play -- thin house. Saw the melodrame of The Fate of Calas, which is very interesting & taken from the French history. Hamblin in Calas was good.

XLVII, 403

[6. March. 1821]

... I went to the play -- very full -- play was over -- and the farce was Giovanni in London, which is a second part of the adventures of Don Juan, who is too bad for Hell so is sent back from thence to London. Mis Halford was very pretty in Giovanni, & Decamp not amiss in Leporello, especially where is is disguised as a Lawyer. The music is a collection of common tunes -- it is all singing.

XLVII, 409

[12. March. 1821]

... I went to the play -- and saw the tragedy of Wallace, of which a great deal might have been made -- as it is, the last act is very affecting -- and his refusal to live, with the despair of his wife &c., is fine -- but the language & ideas are poor -- yet the characters of Wallace, Douglas, & Helen are well conceived -- they were done by Hamblin, Carter, & Miss Blanchard. Hammond in Monteith stupid -- it is a bad villain's part, a Pizarro in love -- the play much resembles Pizarro in business & situations -- but is very dull till near the end. Hamblin is too rapid, yet monotonous -- yet often plays with much feeling.