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May 20, 1803-August 8, 1803.

[20. May. 1803]

London

Waldie: VIII, 2

At near 6 o'clock I went to Drury Lane Theatre and got an excellent place in the Pit. The house was very full, except the highest tier of boxes. It is a most immense, elegant, & magnificent building, but certainly too large for a theatre. -- It was to night for the benefit of Messrs. Barrymore & Wathen. The play was the Provoked Husband & was on the whole very well acted: -- I was much amused by it. Barrymore was stiff & mechanical or else ranting in Lord Townly. I don't like him at all. Downton is but dull in Sir Frances -- he is also an actor not at all to my taste. -- Palmer was excellent in Count Basset. Suett was highly diverting in Squire Richard, and Wathen a very good John Moody. Powell was very well in Manly. He seems a judicious, pleasing actor. Mrs. Glover was Lady Townly. She is animated & rather pretty, but too saucy a beauty -- her voice is very pleasant in lively scenes, but not at all adapted for the pathetic: in the first part she was excellent, but in the last act I did not feel as I felt when I saw Mrs. Kemble in the same part, who is however far inferior to Mrs.

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Glover in the airs of the Lady of Quality. Miss Decamp was a most charming Romp in Miss Jenny, & Mrs. Sparks very well in Lady Wronghead -- but Mrs. Powell in Lady Grace was enchanting. She is very beautiful, & her elegance, ease, and natural manner of acting I was highly delighted with. -- The entertainment was Lodviska. The Scenery & Music is [sic] beautiful: it is admirably acted except by Dignum who is not at all adapted for Count Floreski which is Kelly's part, but he is ill at present.

Floreski, Dignum -- Lovinski, Raymond -- Kera Khan, Barrymore -- Varbel, Wathen -- Lupanki, Powell -- & the princess Lodviska by Miss Decamp, who both sung & acted charmingly indeed. She is a beautiful girl & very pleasing in her manner. Upon the whole highly entertained: -- the burning of the castle at last is very grand.

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[21. May. 1803]

... at 1/4 past seven Mr. & Mrs. Hodgson & B[arbara] O[rmston] called on us in a hackney coach & we proceeded to the Opera House, where we arrived & got excellent places in the pit, as it was not very full: but afterwards was much crowded & the boxes made an elegant display of beauty & fashion. Nothing can have a more grand appearance than the Opera House when filled -- it is, I dare say, the most magnificent theatre in the world. The Opera was Il Fernando in Messico [sic] from the play by Piron. -- The principal performers were Mrs. Billington, Viganoni, Signor & Signora Columbati, & Signor & Signora Rovedino. --

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Mrs. Billington was truly delicious -- the music was beautiful and displayed to great advantage her astonishing powers, ease, taste, & expression. She was encored in several songs & in a duet with Viganoni which was beautiful. The rest of the singers of course after her are not worth mentioning. Viganoni would sing well if he had a voice.

The comic ballet of La Foire de Batavia, at the end of the first act of the Opera, displayed, together with some pretty scenery, the elegant dancing of Mon^r & Mad^e Coralli, St. Pierre, Mr. & Mad^e Laborie, and the elegant little Bossidel Caro -- together with the exquisite Parisot, who is really sometimes enchanting. -- The serious ballet at the

end of the Opera was Bacchus & Ariadne, and the dancing was beautiful indeed; tho' the figuranti are very poor, compared to those of Paris: -- but Parisot was truly delightful.

Hillisberg is ill, and does not appear at present. -- The Scenery of the Ballet was most beautiful. The immense size & height of the house gives the Scenery a more grand effect here than even at Drury Lane.

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[22. May. 1803]

The river here takes a sweep round the Isle of Dogs, a large peninsula on the north side -- so that it is nearer to go a cross the Isle of Dogs & cross the river, than it is to go all the way by water from Blackwall to Greenwich. By the side of the river we saw 3 Gibbets of men hung for piracy: the have hung twenty years. -- The view of Greenwich Hospital from the river is very striking and grand -- it consists of two immense wings, each of which forms a hollow square, & is built chiefly of hewn stone, tho' some parts of the interior court is of brick. These two wings in depth extend far back & form a most grand & beautiful perspective, with long rows of pillars -- parallel to the wings, & behind them to the south are the chapel & the Hall, each surmounted by a noble dome & steeple, and forming a grand termination. -- At the depth of the perspective, & forming the termination or centre of the view from the river, between the two wings, is the House of the Ranger, which is however too small for the centre of so large a building, & that is the principal fault of it -- altogether however Greenwich Hospital

is a most grand & striking object and an admirable monument of royal & private munificence & of the regard in which the disabled defenders of their country are held.

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[24. May. 1803]

... Boyes was going to see Cooke in the Man of

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the World which I could not think of seeing again, so proceeded to the Haymarket Theatre, where I was very early & got an excellent place in the pit. The house was full as usual, & the performance went off with great éclat. It was the Mountaineers -- and nothing can do justice to Elliston in Octavian -- so forcible & horrible yet affecting picture of madness I never witnessed -- in the first scene, and in that of his meeting with Floranthe, he was inimitable; I never was more affected at a play in my life -- his performance met universal approbation; the house was drowned in tears, and at the end of every scene peals of applause testified the impression he had made -- and also at the end of the play when he gave out its repetition thunders of applause shook the house which he well deserved; for his acting is nature & feeling itself. He plays perhaps too directly to the audience, but he has greater powers for stirring sympathy than any other actor. When he puts hand to heart, it is as if he struggles to keep it from bursting with sorrow. -- Mr. Archer from Worcester played very well the passionate Bulcazin Muley -- Mr. Mathews was not much adapted for Sadi but went thro' it with great spirit; J Palmer in Violet

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was very stiff & stupid. His head turned round like a peg top exactly. Holiday was too coarse in Lope Tucho. -- Denman is

a poor Killmallock. Mrs. T. Woodfall was well dressed & a good figure; but is ugly & a wretched actress -- she was very bad in Lorayda. Mrs. Goodal is the most elegant breeches figure I ever saw -- her leg is the most complete symmetry and her whole figure most lovely -- in face she is not unlike Mrs. S. Kemble but younger & fairer. She is a pleasing actress tho' possessed of no great powers. Mrs. Atkins looked & sung most charmingly in Agnes. I think I never saw her before to so much advantage. Her action rather wants the animation which shine in her countenance. Upon the whole was delighted with the play. Elliston in Octavian I shall never forget; much as I thought of him before in comedy, I had no idea his powers extended to tragedy, & in such a style of superlative excellence.

The silly interlude of the Purse succeeded the play -- Miss Kelly, a niece of Kelly the singer,

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acted with great spirit and sang charmingly in the Page -- and Mr. Trueman, a very good looking man, sung very well in Edward. Holiday is to my taste a very coarse unpleasant actor. He was Will Steady, & was dreadfully noisy.

The farce of the Village Lawyer succeeded, with which I was highly diverted, as I never saw it before & it was inimitably acted. -- A Mr. Hatton was excellent in Snarl the Draper -- & Mr. Burton tho' rather overcolored was highly ludicrous in Sheepface -- the women were nothing -- but it is impossible to do justice to Mathews in Scout. His long tall figure, most comical mouth, & roll of his eyes, & the completely ridiculous mad-scene, which he puts on when Snarl comes for his money: -- were laughable beyond every thing. I laughed as much at Scout's madness, as I wept at Octavian's, for I could not refrain from

either. I sat next some very pleasant intelligent people, very conversant in acting plays & actors. -- After a delightful evening went home to be at 1/2 past 11.

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[25. May. 1803]

... I found Boyes had called on me, and also Llewellyn who is at Jaquier's Hotel next door. Dressed & walked with my Uncle, Aunt, Barbara, Marianne & Bell to Parliament Street, where we took a coach to Mrs. Phillips's, Chesterplace, Lambeth: where we arrived at four. There were only ourselves & Mrs. & Miss & Ned Phillips; we dined there, and at a quarter past six, it was by all agreed that it would be a most pleasant lounge for the evening to go to Astley's, so we all went there in a coach except the 3 older people. -- The House was tolerably full, but not crowded. We got excellent Seats in the front boxes. The first Horsemanship was over when we got there -- but we saw the Perilous Cavern, a pantomime full of robbers, murders, battles, fire, smoke, escapes, lovers, death & fury; -- which tho' rather confused was spirited. The actors & actresses were but indifferent; the Music & Scenery both excellent & very well got up & arranged.

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We had some most capital, elegant, & astonishing feats of horsemanship -- one horse was very beautiful indeed. -- One of the men, a Mr. Smith, leaped over a high garter, and a dealboard a yard wide & very high, at full canter. -- The Marriage Contract is a comic ballet in which there is some good scenery & dancing, particularly in the grotesque style, by St. Pierre from the Opera House who is a very good dancer & seems like Vestris among the rest of them. To this succeeded the Panto-

mime of the Siver Star, with a Harlequin & Columbine. Mrs. Wybrow in the latter is most elegant indeed -- she is the finest figure I ever saw & her action is charming. The tricks of this pantomime were very ingenious & diverting -- and the amazing succession of beautiful scenes it displayed are astonishing. It is the first pantomime I have seen for a long time. There was a representation of the Installation of the Knights of the Bath, but this I thought the worst part of it. Upon the whole for once I was very well amused but it would not bear repetition.

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[26. May. 1803]

... Our box [Covent Garden] was rather high but we saw & heard very well indeed; much better than I expected -- Mr. Howard & Capt. Llewellyn joined us afterwards so we were a very large party The House was excessively crowded, & very hot. The play was the Cabinet with which, tho' I have seen it before, I was highly amused: as were all the rest of the party; it was inimitably acted and the singing exquisite. An apology was made for Mrs. H. Johnstone in Constantia, which was performed by Miss Wheatley. There is not much in the part. -- Orlando, Braham -- Peter, Munden -- Whimsiarlo, Fawcet -- Curioso, Emery -- Marquis, Blanchard -- Manikin, Simmons -- Lorenzo, Incedon -- Constantia, Miss Wheatley -- Leonora, Miss Howells -- Crudelia, Mrs. Dibdin -- Curiosa, Mrs. Mattlocks -- Doralia, Mrs. Powell -- Bianca, Mrs. Davenport & Floretta by Signora Storace; -- nothing could do justice to the acting of Munden

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Fawcet, Blanchard -- the art of the first is all in his face, the comic contortions of his countenance; of the second all in his tongue, which gabbles with dexterity; of the third all in his manner, for his whole body dangles or dances upon his lines

-- the rest as to acting were but indifferent; but in singing, Braham, Storace, & Incedon were exquisite; especially the two former. I never heard Braham to greater advantage; in his duet with Storace, in his polacca, & in "the beautiful Maid," he was encored; and I never heard any thing to the effect of the Polacca -- it is inconceivably delicious -- especially the ad libitum he introduces at the "hunter flies." --

The farce was Love à la mode. Cooke appeared in Sir Archy but was so hoarse & so drunk he could not proceed -- & was obliged to leave the part unfinished & quit the stage -- which quite spoiled the farce & is an insult to a British audience which was only tolerated thro' respect to Mr. Lewis & the other actors. -- Lewis was capital in Squire Groom, & Johnstone excellent in Callaghan -- was was Simmons in Beau Mordecai. -- Sir Theodore, Mr. Thompson -- & Charlotte, Miss Chapman.

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[27. May. 1803]

... Went with Marianne & Bell & Maria to see or hear the Invisible Girl -- in Leicester Square. She is certainly a wonderful curiosity & is undoubtedly a female voice, & of a Frenchwoman -- tho' she speaks also English & German very well, & sings tolerably, & plays on the piano; all this is perfectly close to the ear -- & she tells the age, sex, number of persons, color of their clothes &c., of all who visit her. The room is of a large size rather, & the sides of it are surrounded by stuffed birds & beasts & fossils &c. in glass cases, but they are not mirrors; there are two small mirrors in the piers between the three windows -- a square carpet is on the floor

beyond which she cannot distinguish objects -- & it does not cover all the floor. There is no hole in the ceiling and the voice proceeds from the interior of a japan Globe of no great size & with ... trumpets to the four sides of the room, diverging from it; from each of these trumpets the sound equally proceeds and evidently proceeds from the globe in the centre. --

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Above the Japan globe is a globe of glass with mercury in the inside, which reflects all the objects of the room, and above that is another, but smaller, of the same kind. These are suspended by a ribband above the japan globe but have no connection with the top of the room. The Glass globe & Trumpets & mercurial globes are all within the circumference of a square brass railing with four wooden pillars, one at each corner; This is fixed firmly in the middle of the room & this is all the apparatus. A Man & woman attend in the room. The latter asks questions of the Invisible Lady -- but is totally silent as I observed when the latter speaks or sings : -- I can conceive it all to be done by ventriloquism, except the seeing the company, which must be somehow effected by mirrors -- tho' how, it is quite impossible to guess. It is altogether a most curious experiment, -- & very entertaining; it is much on the same plan as that I saw of Robertson's, at Paris, but more curious. -- We spent near an hour there, & had much lively conversation in french & english with the Lady & then went home and

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had a luncheon -- and Bell & My Uncle & Aunt went away at 1/2 past one to dine with a Mr. Messer's, quakers in Holborn. Marianne, Maria, & I then walked to see the Shakespeare Gallery

in Pall Mall, where we spent above two hours ... and were highly gratified by the magnificent display of the scenes of that immortal bard on canvas, done by the best of the English Masters ... some of them are so capitally done as to remind one of the ... masterpieces of historic painting ... seen abroad. --

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The greatest number of good ones are done by Northcote -- but there is one by Mr. West, & one by Sir Joshua Reynolds which are even superior to the best of Northcote's. There are also a great many by Opie, Westall, & Hamilton, & Fusseli, & among these are some very good ones, tho' not so many as among Northcote's.

N^o 37. "The dark cave, the cauldron boiling, and the witches, Hecate & Macbeth" painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, is a very fine picture, tho' I think not equal to N^o 54, "Cardinal Beaufort's death bed," from Henry the 6th, which is enchanting & most forcibly depicted -- & is also by Sir Joshua.

N^o 40. -- Richard 2^d & Bolingbroke riding thro' the streets is a most interesting picture by Northcote -- it is impossible not to pity the unfortunate humbled monarch or not detest the aspiring hypocritical affability of Bolingbroke. The Horses are capital & seem to partake the different dispositions of their riders.

N^o 43. -- Painted by Westall. -- The division of the land between Hotspur, Mortimer, & Owen Glendower -- most dramatically done.

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N^o 44. Painted by Rugand. -- The Death of Hotspur. Prince Henry hanging over him & Falstaff on the ground behind -- from Henry the 4th -- capitally grouped & very interesting.

N^o 52. -- Painted by Northcote. The dying Mortimer -- & the young Richard Plantagenet -- a most beautiful contrast -- very striking -- from Henry the 6th.

N^o 55. Painted by Northcote. -- Clifford & soldiers about to stab the young Rutland, & his tutor endeavouring to dissuade them, "Ah, Clifford, murder not this innocent child" -- from Henry the 6th.

N^o 58. Painted by Northcote. -- King Edward, his Queen & children, beautiful indeed -- from King Henry the 6th.

N^o 59. Painted by Northcote from Richard 3^d. The Interview of the young Prince of Wales & Duke of York with the vile Richard, & Buckingham &c.

N^o 60. Painted by Northcote. From Richard the 3^d -- The Royal asleep -- Dighton & Forrest just lifting up the pillows to smother them -- horribly energetic and afflicting.

N^o 61. Painted by Northcote -- from Ricard 3^d -- The chaplain hiding the princes' dead bodies under the stairs of the white Tower.

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N^o 64. Painted by Westall -- from Henry the 8th. -- Cardinal Wolsey coming to die at the Abbey of Leicester is most charmingly done -- his humbled pride is at last brought down -- but even in bending with disease he looks proud.

N^o 75. Painted by Fuseli -- from King Lear. Lear, Cornwall, Albany, Goneril, Regan, Cordelia, King of France, Kent &c. -- the King banishes Cordelia -- & the sorrow of her looks & proud joy of the other daughters is capital:
but in

N^o 76. Painted by Mr. West, from King Lear -- is comprised the most affecting scene and most admirable painting. -- It

reminded me of the wonders of painting at the Louvre -- so grand, forcible, & energetic is it. Lear mad -- Kent holding him & the Fool -- Edgar disguised as a madman & Gloucester with a torch -- the composition, expression, & beauty of this picture is the first of any -- it is capital indeed.

N^o 80 from Romeo & Juliet -- painted by Northcote -- is the second picture in point of perfection. It represents the tomb

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in Romeo & Juliet. Romeo & Paris are dead. Juliet awakes & addresses the Friar who stands over her with a torch in a most grand & striking manner. It is the most affecting picture I ever saw & only inferior to the last mentioned.

N^o 81. Painted by Fuseli from Hamlet -- is capital. It represents the first interview of Hamlet & the Ghost -- the figure of the latter is grand -- surrounded by supernatural light -- while the young Hamlet is stretching after it in vain, held back by Horatio & Marcellus.

These are the principal pictures which I was struck with -- with regards to Numbers 76 & 80 -- they are so grand, I cannot be mistaken, but the rest may not be properly selected: however I admired them most, tho' there are several other very good ones.

...

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I went with the 3 young ladies to the pit of Covent Garden, where we got excellent places, tho' the house was very full indeed as it was the favorite comedy of John Bull. -- Llewellyn was to have joined us but was so long in coming he could not get in. -- We had a most pleasant evening and were highly entertained.

In the play of John Bull there is a most happy mixture of the humorous & the pathetic -- nothing can be imagined more ludicrous than the blunders & bulls of Dennis Bulgruddery -- or more completely a portrait of the insensible Bond street loungeur than the Hon'ble Tom Shuffleton -- the benevolent character of Peregrine, tho' not necessary, is very highly drawn, & Fawcett in the honest independent Brazier gives a true portrait of genuine feeling & honest disdain of vice -- it is a most interesting character. -- Mr. H. Johnstone looks the lover well: the part of Young Rockdale is more interesting than the lovers in comedies usually are. The country boy Dan is also well drawn -- & entertaining. Lord Fitzbalaam is a common proud selfish Lord -- as he is of so little consequence except as to the plot, it would have been better

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to have left him out & only referred to him. Mrs. Bulgruddery is a very common character of an unfeeling selfish landlady. Lady Caroline Braymore is a fashionable young lady of the new school & the counterpart of Tom Shuffleton, for whose wife she is well adapted, except that she is not so odious a character as he is. Mary Thornberry is a charming & interesting character. Her simplicity is the real innocence of nature & not of that affected sort which has been of late so much the rage.

No play was certainly ever so well acted -- Mr. Murray has succeeded to Mr. Cooke's part of Peregrine, and the benevolence of his countenance and the manly graceful & pleasingly gentleman-like moderation of his action make amends for the imperfection of his voice -- he is a very judicious actor & in a benevolent character of this stamp is sure to please. Mr. Fawcett in Job

Thornberry, the brazier, shewed us how much real distress has the power of moving the passions. His manly endeavours to conceal his grief for his daughter's flight proved powerfully affecting, & drew tears from every eye. -- Nothing could be more ludicrous than Lewis in Shuffleton.

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His air & manner -- his gait -- his dress -- his voice: every thing is the very image of tonish apathy. I never [saw] so highly finished, ridiculous, & diverting a portrait & so excellent a satire on the modern lounge: -- but it is impossible to describe the countenance & manners of Johnstone in the Irish landlord, Dennis Brulgruddery -- his every look is comic -- & he threw us all into roars of laughter. -- Mr. H. Johnstone, tho' certainly rather stiff & conceited, displayed some feeling & judgement in Frank Rockdale. I certainly do not admire his acting so much as many people. -- Mr. Blanchard in Sir Simon Rockdale, the father, says some good things -- but the character is a common one -- he, however, acts it admirably well. -- Emery in Dan the country boy was capital -- it was nature itself -- & tho' Yorkshire rather than Cornish, it is equally probable that there should be a Yorkshire Hostler, as an Irish landlord. Mr. Waddy has very little to do in Lord Fitzbalaam. -- Mrs. Davenport was excellent in Mrs. Brulgruddery: but the character is truly diabolical, tho' I am afraid too common -- it is however very well that one of the characters in low life is made wicked, as so many of those in high life are the same -- tho' the sentiments breathe a true spirit of liberty, they are

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at the same time in the spirit of our English constitution & altogether the play is a most admirable delineation of all the

varieties of John Bull or an Englishman's fireside. --

Mrs. H. Johnstone delineated with becoming elegance & fashionable ease, the thoughtless Lady Caroline: she looked most beautiful. Mrs. H. Siddons, whom I never saw before, is a most charming actress indeed. In the pathetic scenes with her father she touched every heart, & also when walking alone on Muckslush heath, she is relieved by the benevolent Peregrine. She is not absolutely beautiful, but there is something about her very fascinating -- she is all gentleness yet all animation -- and is altogether enchanting -- her voice is releasing, figure elegant, face expressive, action elegant & proper, & altogether she is a charming actress, for she makes nature alone her guide & is totally destitute of affectations. -- I shall not attempt to describe the plot -- it is highly interesting & novel. Altogether I never was more delighted; it is undoubtedly the best play that has [been] produced for a long succession of years, & I think, tho' not so farcically laughable, is more highly finished & more capitally done than the Heir

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at Law by the same Author.

The afterpiece, called the Tale of Terror, was a new Dramatic Romance, something in the style of the Tale of Mystery, tho' without Music -- it is very interesting and affecting -- & the situations are productive of great stage effect. There is also some fine language in it -- it was most capitally acted throughout, especially by H. Johnstone -- who is much more at home in a tyrant than a lover -- & by Mrs. H. Siddons who displayed the true Siddonian energy, animation, & grandeur: if

her delicacy allows (as she is yet only 20) she will be soon a fit successor for her great predecessor of the same name, whom I am afraid domestic calamity has driven from the stage, for ever, at least so it is reported. -- The parts were thus cast & were most admirably acted -- Valdarno, Mr. H. Johnston -- Pedro, Mr. Emery -- Lazarillo, Mr. Blanchard -- Hannibal, Mr. Murray and the two Brothers of Donna Marcia, Mr. Claremont and Mr. Williams -- Donna Marcia, Mrs. H. Siddons -- & Paulina, Mrs. H. Johnston. --

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[31. May. 1803]

...After dinner we went to the pit of Drury Lane Theatre. The House was very well filled in every part except the upper boxes, which were but thin. It was for the benefit of Mr. Wewitzer and Mr. Powell, Prompter. The play was the New Comedy of the Marriage Promise: -- in which are some excellent scenes, tho' on the whole it is but a very indifferent production -- and would not have succeeded so well, had it not been for the inimitable acting of Bannister and Mrs. Jordan. She in particular is most bewitching in Emma Hervey, and in the scene where she makes a fool of Sidney is admirable indeed.... Consolls, the old charitable stockbroker, is well done by Downton. George Howard also by Pope is excellent -- Jeffries by Caulfield decent -- Sidney by Dwyer, very well -- Merton is acted with great tone & feeling by Charles Kemble; I never saw him to greater advantage. Palmer in the Farmer is tolerable, but he is never any great favorite with me.

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Bannister in Tim. Landem is truly laughable, & gives an excellent idea of a self sufficient impudent cowardly steward. Mrs. Powell

in Mrs. Howard displays her exquisite powers to great advantage. She is a most charming woman indeed -- and her voice is harmony itself -- certainly in the scenes of natural distress & dignified sorrow, she is only inferior to Mrs. Siddons herself, & in every part in tragedy is above all other actresses except that first of all. Miss Millon looked well in Mary Woodland -- Mrs. Sparks has not a spark of real feeling & speaks too loud for Mrs. Hervey. -- but Mrs. Jordan is exquisite in Emma & it is impossible to give any idea of the fascinating graces of her manner & of the pleasure which her speaking gives: -- she is the child of nature & of Thalia.

The farce of the Jew & the Doctor was performed from Covent Garden to shew off Wewitzer in the Jew, which he acted admirably indeed. -- Changeable, Palmer -- William, Suett -- Dr. Specific, Caulfield -- Mrs. Changeable, Mrs. Harlow -- were all decent but not extraordinary.

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After the farce the Pantomime of Love & Magic was acted; Harlequin, Byrne -- Pantaloon, Bradbury -- and Clown, Grimaldi -- were admirable. Venus, Miss Hicks -- the Sprite, Miss Tyres were capital also -- but Miss B. Menage is a very inanimate stupid dancer & a poor Columbine. The scenery, machinery, dresses, & tricks & deceptions are well wrought: particularly the Cave of the Magician, and the Temple of Venus -- nothing can be more beautiful than the descent of Venus from the Clouds. -- We had a very pleasant ev.^{ng} but the Pantomime was far too long: it was quite tedious after a play and farce. After the play we took some refreshment at a pastry cook's shop, and then went home.

[2. June. 1803]

... [Drury Lane] was ... crowded in all parts of the house. It was for the benefit of Miss. B. Menage and Miss Hicks; the play was the Country Girl, which I never saw before & with which I was highly delighted: there is so much bustle & intrigue & Changes of situation in the plot, and the dialogue is so spirited, lively, & witty that neither satire nor sentiment dictate the mood, and it is most inimitably performed in the principal character by Mrs. Jordan -- the archness & playfulness of the hoyden, the cunning, & the contrivances of the girl who appears to her guardian so simple, were nature itself -- & true comedy. Every action & look is visible and she goes thro' the whole with such spirit & vivacity that it is delightful. Her face is charmingly expressive & varies with every sentence, and tho' her figure is none of the best, yet she was delightful in boy's clothes & looked so arch & happy it was impossible to help laughing. All is the same as in Wycherley's play, but Mrs. Jordan has ameliorated the immorality, being a frolicsome girl rather than a wanton wife. The comedy in itself is highly entertaining,

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and supported by her acting, is a most delicious treat -- in the scene in the park -- the scene where she writes to Belville -- the scene where she runs away before her guardian's face in Alithea's clothes -- were exquisite. I don't know when I have been so gratified: -- the other characters were all well supported -- especially Wroughton in Moody was excellent -- as was C. Kemble in Belville; Palmer in Sparkish was admirable: I never saw him to so much advantage -- he makes a most excellent fop; Barrymore in Harcourt was the worst of the whole -- his dialogue is animated, but he is so very upright & stiff that he has little

appearance of a lover. -- Miss Mellon in Alithea was very well. There is not much variety in her acting but she looks very charming, & Miss Tidswell was very well in Lucy. ...

The True Lovers Knot, a dance by Byrne, Master Byrne & Miss B. Menage, succeeded -- it was very pretty. Miss B. Menage is a much better dancer than a Columbine: -- she looked very pretty & danced a hornpipe with great spirit & grace. -- After the dance was over -- succeeded the Romance

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of Bluebeard, which I was glad to have an opportunity of seeing at Drury -- several of the parts of it have most beautiful scenery -- & on this immense stage, the march over the Mountains & grand chorus have a thrilling effect -- also the Blue chamber & the concluding scene at the turrets. Miss Decamp was most charming in Irene; nothing could equal her shout of joy at seeing the Soldiers, & her singing "I see them galloping" was delightful. Mrs. Bland in Beda was charming. The rest were but moderate. Mrs. Mountain gave up Fatima for this night only to Miss Hicks, a change much for the worse, for tho' Miss Hicks is very pretty, she is a poor singer, nothing equal to Mrs. Mountain, whom I was sorry to be deprived of seeing. Dignum in Selim was very inferior to what Kelly must be -- the latter, I imagine, chuses to be ill for some rason or other. Suett talks too much nonsense in Ibrahim. Bannister is tired of the part of Shacabac, so has given it up to Collins, another change much for the worse -- it went off very well however, & I was much pleased with it. It was not over till near 12, and I got home at 1/2 past 12, after a most pleasant evening.

[8. June. 1803]

... at four o'clock went to Jaquiers, where I found Llewellyn & where we dined. After dinner we went to the pit of Covent Garden Theatre to see the Road to Ruin -- we were just in time to get good places as it was immensely full in every part. I was highly entertained with the play, which of itself is a good one, and supported in a most capital style by Lewis, Munden, & Mrs. Mattocks; some of the other characters are also

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very well performed, but not in so superior a style as the above three. Munden in Old Dornton is at once ludicrous & affecting: the play of his features was the more effective, as he avoided the buffoonery he sometimes gives way to in farces. Nothing can be more comical, spirited, & entertaining than Lewis in Goldfinch, and Mrs. Mattocks in the Widow Warren was a complete & irresistibly laughable portrait of an old coquette.

I wish I could say much in favor of Mrs. Mills; there is some spirit in her acting but she does not enter into the character, & when she ought to cry & be miserable, she could not refrain from laughing, which quite spoiled the effect of the scene; how different is her hoyden from the charming & bewitching humor of Mrs. Jordan's romps. -- Emery looked very well in the character of Silky, but his voice & action too often betrayed his youth. Davenport was very in Sulky -- tho' he replied too fast for so sober a character. Brunton displayed both feeling & animation in Harry Dornton -- he seemed to enter into it completely; & could he get rid of some awkward habits would make a very

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good actor, tho' he frequently wants discrimination & is too animated on trifling occasions. ... Three of the characters

were admirably done -- & all the others very well indeed, except Claremont in Milford (who was very stupid) and Mrs. Mills in Sophia.

The entertainment was the Poor Soldier ... Johnstone is excellent in Patrick -- the falsetto notes of his voice are clear & sweet -- & he looks & acts the soldier extremely well. Incledon sings "Sleep on" & "The brown Jug" most charmingly in Dermot. -- Claremont is stupid in Fitzroy. Farley is a most capital Bagatelle. Waddy in Father Luke is decent: -- & nothing can be more droll & comical than Munden in Darby. He is irresistibly ludicrous. Mrs. Martyr is an excellent Kathleen -- & Miss Howells very well in Norah, tho' she might have made more of "The meadows look cheerful." Upon the whole was much amused.

[15. June. 1803]

... I got out of the coach at the end of Bond street & walked by Bond street & St. James's street to Pall Mall & along to the Haymarket. Called & selected some of Mozart's songs from his Italian operas at Monzani & Cimador's: -- I then went back to Jaquier's at four. Met the Major & Llewellyn & dined with them. At six o'clock we went to the Haymarket & got there just before the doors opened. -- The house was full as usual -- we got very good places in the pit. -- The play was the Iron Chest. -- It is interesting & supported by the admirable acting of Elliston is very impressive -- but I think it one of the worst of Colman's plays, as the Catastrophe is not satisfactory.

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Elliston in Sir Edward was admirable; every working of passion, doubt, fear, guilt, deceit, shame, & rage, were astonishingly depicted: tho' the author himself has thwarted the dramatic effects by clumsily juggling his comic and tragic plots, Elliston is nature herself & never fails to interest and delight -- his voice is harmony & his manner animation & fire, tempered by propriety -- the dignity of his action is natural, easy, & unaffected. He is a most delightful actor. The rest of the characters were well supported. Adam Winterton by Burton was very well, as was Wilford by Mr. H. Kelly, a very pleasant young actor -- Archer was excellent in Rawbold, & Mathews very good in David. Orson, Hatton -- Armstrong, J. Palmer -- Helen, Mrs. Goodall -- she is much more pleasing in men's clothes than her own dress -- she is too large for a girlish character. -- Mrs. Gibbs was charming in Blanch. Mrs. Atkins sung sweetly in Barbara, & Mrs. Harlowe very good in Judith -- upon the whole well acted: tho' they all seem nothing compared to Elliston.

The farce was the new one of Mrs. Wiggins for the seventh time. I wonder it has succeeded for it is low & silly -- tho' some parts of it are very laughable, & the plot, however absurd, is certainly new & diverting: the dialogue

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is very tame & full of stale wit. It is written by Mr. Allingham, I believe -- author of Fortune's Frolic & the Marriage Promise, but it [is] far inferior to those.

[16. June. 1803]

... After breakfast I walked to Craven street & sat a while with Captain Innes -- he played on the flute -- from thence I went to Monzani & Cimador's & bought a good deal of Mozart's Italian songs &c. ...

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... Dressed & at 1/2 past 8, got in a coach to Jaquier's Hotel, where I found Major & Richard L. waiting for me ; they got into the coach and we drove to Miss Pope's in Great Queen's Street: -- where we found a very elegant assembly ... about 1/2 and hour after we got there the music began -- a Mr. Pratel played

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... Mr. Arnold & I favored the company (which were above a hundred) with Mozart's duet of "Ah persona." I was much frightened at first, but I did not sing worse than common. Mr. Arnold has a fine bass & tenor voice, strong & sweet, but no great compass of high notes -- his taste & expression & manner are in the most finished style. We sung 2 or 3 songs alone at intervals.

[20. June. 1803]

... George B[lackburn] ... shocked me much by telling me that in today's paper is an account of the death of Miss Pope of Drury Lane Theatre, who died on Friday (the very day after I was at her house) of an apoplectic fit. In her is gone one of our best actresses, an admirable & estimable woman, and a lady in whose acquaintance I thought I had made such a promising acquisition; -- but it shews the uncertainty of human affairs -- she who was on Thursday night lively, happy, & gay, the admiration of an assembly of her friends, on Friday is a clay cold corpse. I never was more shocked by any one's death ...

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... having so lately seen her in perfect health & spirits the alternative of a grave is dreadful. --

Poor Llewellyn will, I dare say, feel truly sorry -- as she is an old friend of his.

We dined at six o'clock We sat till eight, when the postchaise came to take George B. & I down to Brandenburg House to see the Margravine of Auspach's Theatricals, for which Mr. Nixon had procured us tickets. He is one of the performers. Richard F[airfield] rode with us as far as Surrey street in the Strand. We proceeded on with great velocity till we passed Kensington & then came to a turnpike on this side of Hammersmith. Before that however, we had made a sudden stop -- going very quick -- & somebody called out to stop the carriage, which our driver did not do: We did not see the cause of the stop, as the rain poured; we had all the glasses up, which were dulled by our breath & besides were completely plastered over with yellow mud thrown up from the road.

When we came to the turnpike a gig stopped at the same time and would not allow us to go on. Two men called us all sorts of abusive names because we had when we stopped unknowingly run against a cart & horse (at least so they said) -- for my part I never saw yet what it was that stopped us so suddenly. George B., enraged at the younger of the Men, who was on his side of the chaise, got out, & made him tell his name -- while the older Man in the gig abused me -- & went on so fast, I could hardly get in a word. He harangued from the gig & I from the chaise, while the other two were talking in the dirt. The older Man's name was Smith -- the younger Harrington, both Maltsters of Brentford -- and as the younger one is to be responsible for what was said, we shall make them give an ample apology for their abuse. George B. was at first for pursuing them -- but that I would not agree too -- they were tipsy -- & we in a passion -- & it would have been difficult to find them out; besides we were dressed for a different affair, so I ordered the postillion to drive home again & gave up our expedition to the Margravine's Theatricals -- for we were now all dirty & disconcerted. ...

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[21. June. 1803]

Yesterday was a rainy day, & a day of disagreeable occurrence; nothing could be more unfortunate than our last night's dispute: -- today is a very fine day & I hope may conclude more happily. At breakfast I was happy to find by perusal of the paper, which I could not find yesterday, that George Blackburn had made a mistake in informing me of Miss Pope's death -- this relieved

my mind of a most disagreeable sensation -- it is Mrs. Pope who is dead; she was seized with a fit of apoplexy on Friday week and died of a second attack of it on Saturday last. -- She is certainly a loss to the stage but not so great a one as Miss Pope, and certainly not so much regretted by me.

At breakfast we related to Mr. Blackburn all our last night's adventure -- he shewed us we had been wrong in not stopping the carriage, after we felt we had run against something & heard somebody cry out to stop it. Had we stopped & enquired the accident no

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kick up would have taken place, and we were certainly to blame in driving so fast: -- but nothing can palliate the abusive language held toward us by Messrs. Smith and Harrington, especially the former; he however being old cannot be brought to account: and besides he was drunk; but the other must apologize for his conduct -- & must also be responsible for the words of Smith in case they will not apologize -- the alternative is dreadful: but unavoidable for both of us as we have been grossly insulted: -- I am determined however if I meet Mr. Harrington to receive his fire -- and as it is customary to fire both at once, I shall fire in the air -- for tho' I can risk my life sooner than suffer an insult, I cannot commit murder or load myself with the guilt of his blood, or even with the intention of taking it. Nothing could justify that but a real deep & deliberate injury -- to commit murder about a brawl on the highway is inexcusable; but to preserve my reputation I must if necessary stand his fire -- and must also not declare my intentions of firing in the air.

[22. June. 1803]

... As I did not doubt, Mr. Blackburn had settled our disagreeable dispute in an honorable and amicable manner; Messrs. Smith & Harrington apparently received my request for gentlemanly apology or satisfaction with some surprise.

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... I walked thro' Grosvenor Square to Mount street & called on my Taylor -- and then proceeded thro' Berkeley Square into Bond street & from thence by Vigo Lane &c. to Coventry street, thro' Leicester Square and Long acre to Great Queen Street, where I called at Miss Pope's. -- Before I got to Miss Pope's it began to rain so I was very glad to be admitted. -- I found only Miss Pope -- & had some pleasant talk with her about plays, about my accident in going to the Margravine's, where they had been, & had been highly amused: -- we were soon joined by Miss Susan Pope & Miss Jane -- & while in full talk over, a Mr. Worden came in -- from Astrop Wells, Northamptonshire, where Mr. Pope has a country house and where they all spend their summers. They leave town on Monday next for Astrop, so it is very uncertain whether I shall see them again or not, but I shall call again if possible. I staid above 2 hours -- 1/2 of which time was spent in singing Duets with Miss Jane -- or singing to her playing. -- I sung "Love & honor" -- "the Soldier tired" & "Spirit of my sainted sire" --

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[23. June. 1803]

... We dined & at six went to the play at Covent Garden. We all went in Mrs. Rawlinson's coach, and had a very good box in the lower tier. The play was John Bull -- The 48th representation & supported with as much spirit as at first. -- It was cast the same as when I saw it before -- except that Murray is ill & therefore his part of

Peregrine was acted by Siddons, who performed it with great & as usual in every speech went to the feelings directly, but it is a pity his voice is so bad -- it is that alone prevents his being a capital actor -- feeling & judgement he possesses both in a high degree. He acted Peregrine very well indeed, tho' he looked much too young for the character. Miss Waddy was substituted for Mrs. H. Siddons, who is now confined. She is a poor exchange, being cold & inanimate & without any dawn of merit. Lewis, Fawcet, Emery, Johnstone, H. Johnston, Blanchard, Mrs. Davenport & Mrs. H. Johnston were as capital as before. I was highly amused & found that it bore repetition extremely well.

After the play, it being the last night of the season, Mr. Lewis delivered a very neat speech, assuring the audience it was the close of the most successful season they had ever experienced, & hoped they soon meet again, when every endeavor should be used to merit their support. --

The farce was the Lying Valet -- Gayless, Claremont -- Sharp, Munden -- Melissa, Mrs. Mills -- Kitty Pry, Mrs. Mattocks.

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Munden & Mrs. Mattocks are most capital in the servants. Mrs. Mills looks well in men's clothes, & certainly that is her only merit. Her acting is very poor & Claremont is very stupid, as was Waddy in Justice Guttle.

[30. June. 1803]

... Mr. Blackburn was gone with Mr. Nixon to dine at the Margravine's: -- but Mr. Nixon sent three tickets for George, Richard & I. ...we arrived happily at Brand-

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enburgh house without any misfortune: & giving our tickets at the door, went in & walked thro' 2 most elegantly fitted up antichambers, & then thro' a very long semicircular Greenhouse with an elegant marble floor & full of fine plants: from thence we went thro' a room with servants, where the refreshments are given, & got to the doors of the Theatre -- there are 2 doors to the pit & two [to] the boxes above, & in the centre the whole space is occupied by the Margrave's box -- before it is the pit & the boxes on each side partly above the pit, so the pit goes below the boxes. The Orchestra is very good -- the stage rather too small -- but altogether it is a very neat little Theatre.

We being late, the first act of the first piece was over & the second begun. I soon recognized it to be a translation from the laughable farce of Le Desespoir de Jocrisse with which I was so much diverted at Paris. -- It is called the Poor Noddle -- Noddle or Jocriss was acted by the Hon'ble Keppel Craven, son to the Margravine by her first husband, Lord Craven. -- Nixon acted the drunken cousin Nicholas most admirably. -- Master Chatterley acted admirably indeed the younger brother to Noddle -- and Mr. Ker Porter acted the lover (he whom I saw yesterday at Mrs. Crespigny's).

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The old Gentleman was acted by a Mr. Hamilton & the young Lady by a Mrs. Burke -- & the Margravine acted the Chambermaid: Keppel Craven was tolerable -- Nixon & Chatterley were capital, but the rest very indifferent. -- After the play was over, all

the company left the theatre, except those in the Margrave's box, & went to the room for the refreshments -- where there were tea, coffee, orangeade, lemonade, cakes, &c., in abundance. -- The company then returned to the theatre -- & soon began the second piece -- which was a Pantomime in 3 acts, called the release of Eblis -- ... it was tolerably done -- & the scenery, dresses, & decorations were most beautiful -- painted by Nixon, Ker Porter &c. The story was stupid enough & not very intelligible. The scene lay in Persia. -- Nixon was excellent as the King's Jester ... The Margravine performed the Queen Zemronde -- Keppel Craven acted Eblis the evil spirit. -- Barclay Craven danced -- Mr. Maynard & Mr. Ker Porter were the 2 Persian Princes: & Master Chatterley, the son of Zemronde. The Margravine acts with much

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grace & elegance, & moves upon the stage very well indeed, but tho' her figure is beautiful, her face shews a little the marks of time. She must have been a most beautiful woman. She sung & in good time & tune & not without taste; but her voice is very weak & there is a hollowness about her mouth which shews her age more than anything. I believe she is above 60. Mr. Angelo gave us an excellent comic song in imitation of 2 balladsingers -- a duet between a Man & woman, & nothing could be more capitally done, with great humor & in two totally different voices.

Upon the whole the novelty of it was very pleasing, & it is conducted with so much elegance & propriety that nothing can be more amusing for once -- but it would not bear the repetition of a real theatre. The company were very elegant; boxes & pit all full of well dressed people. The Prince of

Wales, the Prince of Esterhazy, & the Countess of Poutouski, the Margrave himself, a fine looking old Man of 50 or 60, & several other beautiful & elegant women -- but only 3 or 4 men in that box. -- I saw also Miss Collarton who sung at the rout at Miss Pope's -- She looked beautiful.

[8. August. 1803] Newcastle

... People here talk of nothing but the French -- the
Invasion, & are very busy preparing for them -- when I get
home I shall fix my line of soldiering: most probably
Volunteer Infantry.