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no.14 [Journal 11]

March 12, 1805-September 27, 1805.

[13. March. 1805]

... I saw the 2 last acts of Hamlet in which Ophelia's Madness by Mrs. Kemble is inimitable, & truly touching. Also Betterton in Hamlet in the closet scene with the Queen was capital & also the last act. Mrs. Mason made as much as possible of the Queen, & Liston was an excellent Gravedigger -- the rest but poor. The pantomime of Don Juan followed, in which Richer as Don Juan displayed astonishing elegance & grace -- & took several high leaps. -- Miss Kemble & Mrs. Jefferson sung very sweetly the fishing duet. Miss Jones squalled a hunting song out of tune & nearly deafened me. Liston a most diverting Scaramouch; the rest poor -- it was highly diverting, & well acted, also by Miss De Camp in Donna Anna, but the Devils, Hell &c., were ill got up.

XI, 12

[22. March. 1805]

... In the evening we all went to the play. Richer's Benefit. Above 100...-- The Stranger, Betterton -- very inferior to Siddons -- Mrs. Kemble, charming as ever as Mrs. Haller -- but I have seen it so often. Liston very well in Steinfort, & also Pritchard in Soloman, & Chippendale in Peter, and Mrs. Mason in Countess Wintersen. Richer displayed more wonderful excellence than ever. He leapt over two men. & performed the Manual Exercise & fired. Most astonishing tonight. The pantomime of Alonzo & Imogine followed -- which was well got up, well acted, & easily understood. The story well contrived & very interesting.

XI, 14

[25. March. 1805]

... Sat a while with ... Fanny Kemble

... who is more & more delightful

The Suspicious Husband. Very flat & ill got up. Mrs. Kemble flat as Mrs. Strickland, Mrs. Mason in Clarinda so unwell as to have an apology made for her. Betterton in Ranger but indifferent, & the rest very poor. -- Of age tomorrow we have very often seen. Fanny Kemble is the charm of it to me -- she looked & acted beautifully. Liston very amusing also. On the whole a dull night.

XI, 18

[29. March. 1805]

... Venice preserved went off with great eclat. Nothing can exceed Mrs. Kemble in Belvidera. She was really touching, & at times produced astonishing effect. It could not be acted in a manner more pleasing, tender, & affecting. Betterton in Jaffier not so high as usual, & so much better -- he was very well & in some parts excellent. It is one of the best tragedy parts I have seen him act. -- Colonel Mundy appeared to great advantage in Pierre -- which he played with great correctness & with more animation than Macbeth. The play is beautiful & went off extremely well. -- The farce of Catherine & Petrucchio followed. Colonel Mundy bustled thro' Petrucchio with far more spirit than I had expected -- &

XI, 19

Mrs. Mason an excellent Catherine -- Chippendale a very good Grumio -- but Liston in Taylor I shall never forget. His face, figure &c. ... & the battle between him & Grumio was irresistibly ludicrous. ...

Here ends my Journal at Newcastle. Tomorrow will commence my Journey to London.

[1. April. 1805]

London

Waldie: XI, 32

... then home to York Hotel -- where met Mosman. We went to call on Llewellyn and all 3 dined at a tavern near Drury Lane, a very good place. Mosman & I went to Covent Garden to Storace's Benefit, where we got into the pit, tho' with a most dreadful squeeze.

The Curtain drew up & the first chorus went on well -- but after that all was noise & confusion on Braham's appearance & the clamour continued two hours -- he was hissed & applauded: -- all this confusion arose from his having written a note to the Manager to withdraw from the theatre, & his reason for doing so was that he thought he had a right to introduce any songs on a benefit night he chose -- which has always been the custom: & was never objected to before. Mr. Kemble & Braham were

XI, 32[a]

at length each allowed to tell their story, & Braham's appeared perfectly reasonable, & Mr. K's very much the contrary -- as Braham certainly had a right at a benefit to introduce any songs he chose (more especially those of which he was the original singer and composer) and it has always been the custom & was never before objected to. Owing to the clamor we lost all the Music of the 1st act -- but were repaid after by most ecstatic strains from Braham, Storace, & Mrs. Second -- a delightful singer. Out of place was the farce, a new piece in which Braham, Storace, & Fawcet & Hill all appear to great advantage. The Siege of Belgrade was quite spoiled by the tumult at first, but Braham in "Love in Honor" and Storace in "Blithe were the hours" I shall never forget.

[2. April. 1805]

... Called on Llewellyn. Went with him to the Pope's. Had a most gracious reception from them. Miss Pope as easy and good humoured as ever & Miss Jane charming. She played & sung & I sung. Llewellyn left me there. -- I walked to Drury & met Hounson & Mosman. We dined -- & at 1/4 past 6 went to Drury Lane to see The Wheel of Fortune & Of age tomorrow. -- The King, Queen, & 5 of the Princesses were there -- most splendid -- we saw them enter & exuent. God save the King twice sung & Rule Brittania once.

XI, 34

Most delightful sight. Nothing could be more enlivening. The house very full, but we had excellent seats just opposite the Royal party, but in the tier above them.

Elliston in Penruddock excellent, tho' far inferior to Mrs. Powell who is enchanting in Mrs. Woodville -- every tone reaches the heart. -- De Camp & Barrymore well enough in Capt. Woodville & Sydenham -- Miss Mellon charming in Emily. -- D wton & Suett made as much of Governor Tempest & Weasel as possible.

In the farce, Bannister performs Frederick with great spirit, but not so much to my mind as Liston. Miss De Camp far inferior to Fanny Kemble in Maria, but Lady Brumbac, Piffleberg, Sophia, & Molkus -- by Mrs. Sparks, Suett, Miss Wentworth, & Wewitzer were excellent.

XI, 35

Llewellyn joined us at the play. We then went to an Oyster Shop & had oysters, but we happened to get into a place which seemed from what he heard to be a place of assignation for any one so disposed. -- It was near one when we got home.

[3. April. 1805]

... At the Adelphi -- took leave of Llewellyn who goes to Bath this afternoon in his way to join the 28th R.^t at Fermoy Ireland. I hope I may see him there if I go, & it will be an additional inducement.

XI, 37

[4. April. 1805]

... Edward [Blackburn] & I went in a coach to Drury Lane & got excellent places -- play just begun. -- Hamlet -- by the Young Roscius whom I have so long wished to see. -- King, Powell -- Queen, Mrs. Powell -- Ophelia, Mrs. H. Johnston -- Polonius, Dowton -- Laertes, De Camp -- Horatio, Barrymore -- Ghost, Wroughton -- and Gravedigger, Suett.

Mrs. H. Johnston far inferior to Mrs. Kemble in Ophelia -- the rest all excellent. --

XI, 38

but to do justice to Roscius in Hamlet is impossible. His scene with the Ghost in the first was doubt & faltering fear mastered by determination, & he shewed well his humor & his earnest passion in the players scene & the Closet scene -- the only part of it I did not so much admire was his behaviour to Laertes, which was too haughty; but where the King feels the play -- & Hamlet cries, coming to the finest climax I ever heard, "Let galled Jade wince, our withers are unwrung." -- I shall never forget him -- his unvaried attention, his passionate interest in the scene, his expressive face & musical voice are so enchanting that his figure is forgotten. -- He was in full powers and in excellent spirits -- Hamlet is reckoned one of his most unequal parts -- but in it he displays beauties which I thought it impossible for him or any one to reach -- his feigned madness was astonishing. I shall

never forget his acting on this night. -- It was heavenly.

The farce was the Liar

XI, 39

which was admirably performed by Elliston, as was Miss Grantham by Miss Mellon -- & the rest of the characters, especially Papillion by Wewitzer, very good.

[5. April. 1805]

... after dinner to the pit of Covent Garden to the Oratorio. It was very full -- but we got in without difficulty & had an excellent place near the stage. It was a Grand Selection -- chief singers -- Braham, Mrs. Ashe, Mrs. Bland, Miss Munday, & Mr. Miller. -- Braham I shall never forget in Comfort ye, Deeper & deeper, & in To Arms -- it was exquisite. Mrs. Ashe in Angels ever bright --

XI, 40

Mrs. Bland in He was despised -- & Miss Munday in The Silver Clarion -- Mr. Miller sung Honor & Arms well, but he is not equal to Bartleman or Elliot. -- Braham was astonishing: such execution, taste, & expression I had before no idea of -- indeed it is quite beyond conception & must be heard to be understood. Several choruses &c. were encored; also Braham in his last & best song. The Choruses were well supported -- about 200 were on the stage altogether. It was grand & the stage being arranged like an orchestra in a room had a most magnificent effect.

XI, 41

[6. April. 1805]

... Walked to York Hotel & thence to Russel Street where I dined & after dinner went to the door of Drury Lane -- to the pit -- terrible crowd -- nearly squeezed to a jelly -- women squalling and half suffocated -- got in among the first

& got an excellent seat in the 5th row of the pit very near the centre. Sat next a pleasant young Man, who was very conversible.

I was most amply rewarded for all my pains by Barbarossa, than which nothing could be more delightful -- I never saw it before, & it is a most interesting play. -- Roscius in Achmet does not display such astonishing powers of conception & judgement as in Hamlet -- but he is more interesting, & in his scenes of tenderness, filial love, & dissembling with the tyrant, is Nature itself. -- Nothing sure was ever so natural -- one quite forgets he is acting & fancies it real, so much does he enter into the spirit of the character.

XI, 42

In the last scene of the 4th act where he & his Mother are torn from each other, nothing could be so heartrending. I don't know when I've wept so much, but the whole house was in tears. -- Mrs. Powell charming in Zaphira -- her tenderness & maternal love were very affecting & an admirable support to Roscius. Miss Boyce has a good figure & acted Irene well, but her voice is not quite equal to so large a house. Barrymore very well in Othman. Barbarossa was played by Raymond. He looked the tyrant well, but is a mere fretting, strutting actor. I was highly delighted. Richard Coeur de Lion followed -- the scenery is pretty -- & dresses elegant -- the music by Grétry quite french, but very good, & such as is very uncommon here -- depending entirely on the harmony which is exquisite; the choruses, duets, trios, &c. are capital: & Mrs. Mountain in "O Richard, oh my love," sung

XI, 43

divinely. She looked beautiful & acted capitally -- she is

indeed a most charming woman and quite the support of the piece. Kelly in Richard sung tolerably -- Dignum very poor in Sir Owen-- Mrs. Bland sung sweetly in Antonio -- & looked good humored, gay, & clumsy -- a child, a Miss Bristow, danced prettily & it went off well, tho' without so charming a Matilda as Mrs. Mountain it would be but a dull concern.

Got home soon after 11. Sat a while with Issac Cookson -- & talked over matters -- he shewed me the sword, hilt of gold, & gold Necklace & medal sent him by his brother from India -- the spoils of Jippoo at Seringapatam.

XI, 62

[17. April. 1805]

... We got easily in to the pit of Drury Lane -- and arrived 1/4 of an hour before the play began. -- The Honey Moon -- most admirably acted. Elliston in the Duke is capital. Miss Duncan is no beauty, but has an expressive face -- & is very animated -- the worst is that her figure is rather vulgar -- but her acting is most truly excellent -- nothing can exceed the point of it. Bentley is stupid in the Count -- Wroughton very well in Balthasar -- Collins inferior to Liston in the sham Duke -- Miss De Camp looked & acted charmingly

XI, 63

in Egenia -- & Miss Mellon was most bewitching -- the part is very good -- and was truly amusing in her hands -- her figure & face & all about her were most attractive -- I never admired her to any height before. -- Bannister capital in Rollando -- but Elliston & the 3 Ladies have certainly the first places in the piece -- it is an excellent play & I was highly pleased.

Ned Phillips & I paid 1/ each & got a ticket for the boxes after the play -- when we walked about the lobbies & saw what was going on -- & then got good places, tho' the house was

very full.

Richard Coeur de Lion -- Mrs. Mountain being out of town, Miss De Camp was Matilda & acted as well, tho' far inferior in the songs. She looked & acted uncommon well all night. -- Kelly & Mrs. Bland sung well & it went off with eclat -- the piece itself is very heavy, but the music delightful.

[18. April. 1805]

XI, 64

... went to Drury Lane in a coach to

XI, 65

the second tier of boxes, where we had front seats & saw perfectly & heard distinctly but were too far off to enjoy it much.

Douglas. -- Norval by Roscius: admirable, but in my opinion not equal to Hamlet or Achmet. The play suffered much by the substitution of Mrs. Ansell for Mrs. Powell in Lady Randolph. She performed tolerably -- but far inferior in feeling to Mrs. Powell. Wroughton very well in Old Norvel. Barrymore stiff as usual in Glenalvon. Holland stupid in Lord R. Miss Boyce looked well in Anna.

A very pretty dance called the United Britons followed -- in which Byrne, Mrs. Sharpe, & little Oscar Byrne danced admirably.

The Citizen next. Old Philpot, Suett -- Young Philpot, Bannister -- Young Wilding, De Camp -- Maria, Miss Duncan -- she does not look it well but gets it admirably -- especially the idiot scene -- she introduced "Within a mile of Edinburgh" which she sung charmingly. She has a delightful voice -- very sweet but uncultivated.

2 terzettos & a duet -- she exceeds any thing of taste, execution, power & feeling, of which I could have formed an idea -- surely there never was such a singer of all the varieties of the Italian style -- perhaps in the solemn majestic strains of Handel, Madame Mara may be superior -- but in confusa abbandonata, her execution is incredible & truly delicious -- & in Site perdo -- the tenderness, taste, & expression as well as the brilliancy of her execution I shall never forget. I shan't be able to stay from the opera when she & Braham sing.

XI, 78

[25. April. 1805]

... At 6 we all went to the play at Covent Garden -- very full house -- we had an excellent box in the

XI, 79

dress tier. -- Zara -- I never saw it before -- & do not much admire the play -- the plot good & a fine distress, but language & sentiments poor -- too much declamation -- too little passion. The 2 last acts are, however, highly interesting, & were most admirably supported.

Lusignan by Hargrave -- a very forced & unnatural personification of the old King: -- his artificial style of acting much injured the pathetic discovery of his children in the 2^d act -- which was admirably performed by C. Kemble & Mrs. H. Siddons. -- Mrs. H. Siddons reminds me much of Mrs. Kemble. She performed the character in a manner the most pleasing, graceful, & feeling. C. Kemble made as much as possible of Nerestan. Unfortunately, their crucial scene in Act 3 has neither the life nor the language natural to a brother's encounter with his long lost sister. Roscius has too much declamation in the 1st & 3rd acts -- but amply makes it up in the 2 last -- his

conflict of contending passions on receiving the letter in the 4th act is capital, & the whole of the horrid catastrophe was inimitable. He is indeed a charming boy & appears in

XI, 80

this part with great success -- upon the whole much more pleased with Osman than with Douglas -- tho' less so than with Hamlet & Achmet -- this however is more the fault of the play than the actor.

Rosina the farce -- Rosina, Mrs. Atkins -- her voice thin but sweet & has much execution -- her figure is spoilt & she looks ill -- her talents will not encounter time. Mrs. Martyr, tho' much older, was all air & life in Phoebe & sung delightfully. Simmons very comic in William. Our old favorite Rock a capital Irishman of course. Hill sung the hunting song well tho' it does not suit him. Incledon in charming voice -- and Her mouth with a smile exactly suits him -- he is much improved & sung with less noise & more taste than he used. His conclusion was admirable.

XI, 81

[26. April. 1805]

... we went to the pit of Drury Lane where we got standing room -- & seats after the epilogue; very good places. It was Elliston's Benefit, & the house, tho' good, not so good as he deserves -- the Venetian Outlaw, a play from the Bravo of Venice by Elliston -- in which he acts

XI, 82

the chief part. Mrs. H. Johnston spoke the Epilogue well & it was very entertaining, but of the play we saw little or nothing. Having secured a most excellent place, we saw

Matrimony, which in London is really a treat: how different! Miss De Camp is capital in Donna Clara -- nothing can be more happy -- she is a most charming actress, & tho' inferior to Fanny K. in Maria is much superior to Mrs. K. in this part. Elliston is most capital in the husband -- nothing can be better. Downton makes as much as possible of the Governor -- & Johnston of course is an excellent Irishman -- & sings the songs well -- but for singing Mrs. Bland in the Waiting Maid is truly enchanting: her voice is so admirable & her expression so easy & arch -- in simple songs she will be ever unrivalled -- I shall never forget her in them, especially the last. I must allow her superior to Fanny.

XI, 87

[29. April. 1805]

... after dinner went to the play at Drury Lane. -- Got there just before the doors opened -- a crowd, but not violent. Got in with a little squeezing. -- Bannister's benefit -- house very full -- above 500. -- The Country Girl -- Moody, Wroughton -- He is too noisy. Harcourt, Barrymore -- too stiff. Belville, Holland -- too insipid, tho' the part affords but little scope. Sparkish, Bannister -- uncommonly droll & clever. Alithea, Miss Mellon, who looked well -- Lucy, Miss Tidswell, & the grand attraction, Mrs. Jordan in Miss Peggy. It is her first appearance for 4 months & she is much thinner, & looked charming. As to her acting, it is at once so easy, natural, masterly, & pointed -- and at the same time so truly comic & diverting, that it exceeds all praise. In the first scene she is admirable -- but the grand part is the letter-writing scene in the 4th act -- where she screams with passion at her guardian -- it is nature itself: indeed the crying after he leaves her, & the arch joy

of the deceit which she imagines are incomparable.

She seems to be completely in her own character throughout, & it is the most laughable altogether of any thing I ever saw. I don't know when I've laughed so much: -- Her manner of speaking the verses at the end is truly fascinating.

A very pretty dance by Oscar Byrne & others succeeded.

After that a most amusing piece, translated from a french proverb -- called Personation, to which Bannister spoke a most ingenious prologue of which every last word of the lines ended with ation. It was entirely performed by Bannister as Lord Henry -- & Lady Julia, Miss De Camp: -- & consists of his disguising himself to outwit her, & she, knowing it, disguises herself & outwits him completely. Her disguise as a french housekeeper -- her dress, burr in the throat, sing song at the end of a clause, & rapidity of utterance were truly french.

Highly comic

& most admirably performed. Her acting is wonderful -- indeed her abilities are so delightful & so diversified that she is a treasure to the theatre.

She spoke an epilogue alluding to the variety of her own performances with great effect & in a charming way. -- Bannister sung an excellent song, imitating the various sorts of beggars.

Comus ... the choruses are beautiful, but of the songs only one by Kelly as chief Bacchante was remarkable, except that of Sweet Echo, which was sung by Mrs. Bland in so clear & exquisite a manner, as to be really like an echo -- with the oboe accompaniment & her charming voice & shake, & sweet cadenza, nothing

could be more charming. Elliston looked well in Comus & made as much of it as possible-- Euphrosyne, Miss De Camp -- Lady, Miss Boyce -- Sabrina, Mrs. Sharp -- Pastoral Nymph, Miss Holloway -- Bacchants, Kelly, Dignum, Cooke &c. -- Brothers, Bartley, Holland, & De Camp.

XI, 90

It was half past 11 before it finished, but on the whole I don't know when I've been so amused. The scenery in Comus is very elegant, & the stage filled with Bacchants has a fine effect.

[30. April. 1805]

... Went to Covent Garden theatre after dinner. Most dreadful squeeze in getting in -- effected it at last, & got a good place -- near the centre of the pit, near the stage, but if any thing

XI, 91

too near the King's box. The Royal box very elegant -- but it is in the 2^d tier -- & all in one box -- & has not near so grand a look as at Drury Lane, but as they all stood up & bowed at entrance & exeunt, & as they leant over most part of the performance, I had a most capital view of their countenances & manner. The King & Queen in the centre -- on the right of the King were Princesses Augusta & Amelia -- & on the left of the Queen were Elizabeth & Sophia. They all seemed highly amused & I heard the Queen say to the King, "that is little Simmons" -- Elizabeth seemed delighted & indeed they all laughed most heartily. Opposite side -- were the Duke of Gloucester, Prince William & Sophia of Gloster -- also the Duke of Sussex, & above him the Duke of York.

The play was Who wants a guinea, with which, as I did not half see it before, I was much pleased -- & laughed heartily at Lewis, Munden, Simmons, Fawcett, Emery -- the 2 Kembles & Mrs. Mattocks

XI, 92

also excellent. Mrs. Gibbs very flat -- the part should belong to Mrs. H, Siddons -- the play went off delightfully & was preceded by God save the King, in full chorus. Was much better pleased with seeing the Royal party here than at Drury Lane, as I was quite close to them & saw how they understood & relished the play & farce.

Lock & Key -- the farce -- Munden in Brummagem is irresistibly comic -- & Fawcett excellent in Ralph -- his song of "What is a woman like" is admirable & was encored. Inledon sung well in Cheerly. Farley in Capt. Vain. Fanny, Mrs. Martyr, very well -- Laura, Mrs. Atkins, but tol lol -- upon the whole highly entertained & delighted with the evening.

XI, 93

[1. May. 1805]

I finish to day the 24th year of my age & enter into my 25th. -- I am getting old in years but I am afraid not improving in wisdom.

XI, 100

[4. May. 1805]

... Called at Miss Pope's -- for a few minutes. -- Elliott came at 3 o'clock -- & staid above an hour -- he will, I think, improve me much -- we sung the scale, distances, & 1 or 2 songs. Dined with Miss Kell & Mrs. Brough. & soon after 6 went to the private theatre in Berwick street -- where met the 2 Miss Popes, Miss Jane, Mr. Hammond, & some other ladies & gents with them. -- The play was Venice Preserved -- the theatre was full but

not crowded. It was very dirty & stinks of train oil insufferably. A Mr. Shakespear (son of the Member & nephew to Sir M. W. Ridley) & a Mr. Scotland are the chief actors, & perform uncommonly well --

XI, 101

especially the latter, who is a remarkably genteel young Man & seems both to feel & understand what he performs. He is not too violent. Shakespear performed Pierre with great effect & propriety, & Scotland Jaffier -- the rest were truly ludicrous, except Bevidera, who, tho' far indeed inferior to what I have seen, & very ugly, went thro' the part with great éclat & applause. The Old Maid followed -- Shakespear was much too farcical & not at all feminine in the Old Maid. Scotland was a very elegant Clerimont -- and the man who acted Capt. Cape was not devoid of humour -- but it was very poor & they were very imperfect -- the play was really worth seeing, but for the farce it was execrable.

Got the Popes into a coach, took leave of them & soon got home, thro' a slight rain, & heartily tired of seeing private theatricals. As we came out Miss Jane P. talked with Shakespear & introduced me to him -- very genteel young Man. Sat a while with the ladies & to bed at 12.

[11. May. 1805]

... Miss Pope having sent two tickets for the Beggars Opera tonight at their theatre -- I could not send to any body it was so late -- so I offered to take one of the ladies with me -- & after some botheration, Mrs. Brough & I went -- we got a front seat in the stage box of the 2^d tier -- & saw & heard excellently.

Peachum, Downton -- Lockit, Wewitzer -- Filch, Collins -- Capt. Macheath, Kelly -- Mrs. Peacham, Mrs. Sparks -- Lucy Lockit, Miss De Camp -- Polly Peachum, Mrs. Mountain -- capitally acted -- highly entertained & delighted with the music, which is charming. Kelly I never heard sing so well -- he displayed taste & judgement, & executed far better than I had supposed he could do.

XI, 113

Miss De Camp as usual sung & acted with the highest spirit: -- but it is impossible to do justice to Mrs. Mountain -- the chief weight of the piece is with her & her acting is truly elegant & charming -- but her singing is every thing that is exquisite. In "Can Love be controuled" in "Alas poor Polly," and in "Cease your funning" I shall never forget her -- in the last 3 distinct peals of applause to each time of her singing it. She sung it twice in the most exquisite manner, & I could have heard it twenty times -- her voice, cadences, shake, & simplicity as well as science, made her quite irresistible. -- I was so highly entertained at the theatre I was sorry to leave it -- but Mrs. B. & I walked home after the play as I was going to the opera -- I got my cocked hat & walked there & got in just as Viganoni is carrying off to Execution -- in the beginning of the 2^d act. He sung well as usual but close to the orchestra I did not hear him. After that was the delicious song by

Mrs. Billington of "Si te perdo," which was of course encored -- and the 2^d time her singing in it was beyond conception exquisite. Her half notes ascending I shall never forget.

XI, 114

I was in hopes the Duchess would have been there, but no such person -- from which I suppose Mr. Bellenden is still confined. It was very full -- but I did not see any of my acquaintance. The ballet of La Belle Laitiere was very suddenly concluded as they are now obliged to end before 12. -- I was not sorry, we having seen Parisot & Laborie's dances, & also that of Mons^r & Madame Dehayes.

[12. May. 1805]

... I dressed and went to the Duke of R[oxburgh]'s to dinner. I set down Mrs. Brough

XI, 115

in Burlington street in my way. -- I found the Duchess, & Dr. Wolcot & the Duke soon came in. There were only us 4 at dinner, Mr. Bellenden being gone out for the first time to a friend's. -- Most agreeable day indeed, the Duke & Duchess in excellent spirits. We had a great deal of talk. Dr. Wolcot, alias Peter Pindar, is amazingly clever -- and is really a most entertaining Man -- he clothes his thoughts in such uncommon language that it is highly diverting -- the same daedal & eccentric ideas of his writings, appears in his conversation. He is very fond of eating & drinking, & is a little thick short man with a scratch wig, all awry -- he was dressed all in black & altogether as odd a figure as could be seen. -- He told some excellent stories and is full of anecdote -- but very vain I can see. He & I had a long musical conversation. He understands all about it -- & we agreed in general very

well -- tho' he would not allow sufficient merit to our present great singers. I sung -- & he said if I worked hard I should get on well, having good materials to go upon.

We came away together at near 12 and I put him into a hackney coach in Berkley street, which drove him to Camden town.

XI, 116

[13. May. 1805]

... After dinner Col. & Miss Mackenzie came, & they & I went to Drury Lane theatre. It was Miss De Camp's benefit & a very full house -- we were early so got good places in the pit. The play -- All in the wrong -- Sir John Restless, Wroughton -- Beverly, Elliston -- Belmont, Holland -- Lady Restless, Miss De Camp -- Belinda, Mrs. Jordan -- Clarissa, Mrs. Southey -- Tippet, Miss Tidswell -- Tuttle, Mrs. Harlow -- very well acted, but many scenes imperfect -- they had not their parts off -- Elliston & Mrs. Jordan were very correct.

XI, 117

Lady Restless does not suit Miss De Camp. She is too violent & not genteel enough. Elliston & Mrs. Jordan were excellent. Wroughton is a tiresome actor -- always the same. -- Personation followed which was admirably supported by Mr. Bannister & Miss De Camp. In it she is quite at home. The M's were highly pleased -- not having seen it before. -- The farce of the Castle of Sorrento followed -- from the Haymarket theatre. Elliston was as lively & animated as possible in Blinval, & his supporting 2 parts at once is droll enough -- the music also is very pretty -- trios & quartetts. Johnstone makes as much as possible of the Irish Governor -- Dignum had nothing to do & was as stupid as usual in Count Murville -- Collins

in Germaine, the servant (as a substitute for Suett who was taken ill) attempted to be very droll -- but the part being very stupid, & the actor not possessing a great fund of humor, it did not produce any effect. Mrs. Belmont, Miss De Camp -- a stupid part -- out of her line. I wonder she chose this farce. Rosina, Mrs. Mountain -- who sung "Just like love" most enchantingly -- nothing could be more delightful -- it was the best thing.

XI, 118

[14. May. 1805]

... went to Miss Pope's at 3 & found them all well. Miss Jane & I went to Drury Lane theatre, & saw the King's box, which is most beautiful -- the staircase & drawing room are charming -- & the thrones of the King & Queen, & hangings of their box are all of crimson highly ornamented. I sat in the chair both of the King & Queen. The 5 princesses apartment is all done with blue & is very elegant. Altogether it has a most noble appearance. We then went to Miss Pope's dressing room. It is very comfortable, close by the stage & was formerly Mrs. Siddon's -- now Mrs. Powell's -- also was in both the Green rooms. That for the chief performers is very handsome. We were in Sheridan's box which is very comfortable. We were all under the stage & in the Music room.-- the depth below is wonderful. We were in a neat handsome room where the board of Management meet -- also in the Prompter's box & thro' all the scenes.

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We proceeded up to the top of the stage, & saw the immense machinery for conducting the scenes. It has quite the appearance of a ship & is so complicated that it must require

an immense number to keep it in order -- ranges of men's dressing rooms are on one side, & of women's on the other -- but they are too distant from the stage. -- We ascended thro' various large painting rooms to the roof -- & so up to the base of the statue of Apollo, which is the highest place in London except St. Pauls -- from thence we had a most astonishing view of the river & the 3 bridges, of St. Pauls, Westminster Abbey, & of all London -- the sun shining shewed us, tho' the wind being easterly made it rather smoky. -- We descended again, & went thro' most curious holes & corners -- & down to the stage lamps -- & into the orchestra: from thence up to the entrance of the private boxes, to which there is an elegant drawing room attached, where they wait for their carriages -- & then we went out at the stage door again -- I was most highly entertained & had no idea of the vastness of it -- till I saw it. -The immense iron curtain to cut off the audience part in case

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of fire is astonishing. We saw several portions of most beautiful scenery, of trees & fruit -- and also numbers of gilt jars of various sizes -- for the Forty Thieves, which is soon to come out.

Went home to dinner with Miss Kell & Mrs. Brough at 5. Dressed after -- and went to the opera -- where there was a full house. Gli Orazi ed i Curiazi -- the new opera -- the 2^d time of it -- Marcus Horatius, Braham -- Curiatius, Righi -- Horatia, Grassini. -- horrible story -- and the concluding scene of it most ipressive & affecting -- by Braham & Grassini -- nothing could exceed their animation. I was highly interested: & the Music from beginning to end is most charming; very

harmonious -- & strong -- too trying & loud for the voice, but very expressive & delightful to the ears. Cimarosa exactly. Grassini's voice is a contralto, singularly low for a woman & very impressive -- but her clear

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upper notes, tho' good of themselves, are so unconnected with the lower voice, that they do not in general produce a great effect -- as a singer, her voice tho' remarkable is not good, and her execution not great; her taste, feeling, & grace of action, as well as expressive countenance, render her a most charming actress. Braham sung & acted delightfully, tho' it did not exactly suit him, being too loud. Righi sung well. He improves daily.

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[15. May. 1805]

... after dinner went to the play at Drury Lane. Very full -- a little push in getting in. Got an excellent seat -- by a young man who was musical & chatty. -- The boxes very genteel, & very full -- about £600 -- the play, The Soldier's Daughter -- capitally performed throughout. I was most highly entertained by it. Malfot, Powell -- Malfort Jun^r, Pope -- dull disagreeable actor -- but the rest capital. Downton in Governor Heartall -- Bannister in Frank -- & Collins in Timothy Quaint. I don't know which to admire most. I was performed with admirable spirit & uncommon applause. -- Palmer played Gerret very well -- but it is a horrid part. -- Mrs. Fidget, Mrs. Sparks -- Susan, Mrs. Scott -- Mrs. Mountain performed Mrs. Malfort in a very interesting manner & looked beautiful: but Mrs. Jordan is the chief attraction -- she was

really delightful -- so bewitching, good humoured, & natural. The scenes between her & the Heartalls are capital indeed -- & the whole play admirably got up.

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3
A
Mrs. Mountain sung Donald and the Tartan Plaidie delightfully -- & was encored in the last -- also a new Polacca bravura, which had some pleasing turns & was admirably executed. -- Also, a Mr. Fitsimmons sung "No twas neither shape nor feature" -- being his first appearance on any stage, his voice is very good indeed, & his execution considerable -- but fear prevented him from exerting himself sufficiently -- his friends encored him. A lyric address was spoken & sung by Mrs. Mountain which had a most happy effect & was highly applauded. It was written by Mr. Cherry. The farce, the Poor Soldier. Mr. Cherry appeared in Darby & was very droll. In reading the letter it was admirable, he made the mistakes so naturally. Dermot was played by Fitzsimmons, who sung much better. He will be a great acquisition, I have no doubt, when he becomes acquainted with the stage. 3
A
Bagatelle, Wewitzer -- Fitroy, Cooke -- Father Luke, Lee -- Patrick, Mrs. Mountain, who looked & sung charmingly. Norah, Miss De Camp, who looked most interesting & did all that was possible for the part. Kathleen, Mrs. Bland -- as merry & sung as sweet as usual.

Highly pleased -- walked home with my musical companion who was going to Picadilly & got to bed soon after 12.

[21. May. 1805]

... Called at Miss Pope's & had to talk over with them about plans for tomorrow night &c. -- Went home & dressed -- & went in a coach to Hill street, where dined with the Duke & Duchess. ... I went in the coach to the Opera -- to the Duchess' box ..., opera very full -- Gli Orazi ed i Curiazi. The first act was over, but we saw the Divertisement, the 2^d & 3^d acts of the opera, & the Belle Laritiere. -- They all danced as well as usual,

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and the music improved by the repetition -- the duet between Braham & Grassini, which was encored, was delightful -- & their acting, especially hers in the last scene, is capital indeed. Charming opera -- Braham's song, too, is exquisite in the last act.

[22. May. 1805]

... Walked with Miss Jane to the theatre and found stage box disengaged -- walked to Hill street & had a long talk with the Duchess -- tried her new piano forte -- excellent.

... after tea we all went in a hack coach to Drury Lane -- where we met William & had excellent places in the stage box. Miss Pope's benefit. Charming house -- most genteel boxes -- Margravine of Auspach -- Marchioness of Townsend &c.

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After half price there was near £500 & it looked most genteel & brilliant, which I was truly glad of. The play was School for Scandal -- charmingly acted. Went off with great spirit. Sir Peter Teazle, Mr. Wroughton -- which he played better than any part I have yet seen him in, Sir Oliver, Mr. Downton -- excellent. Moses, Mr. Wewitzer -- capital. Careless, Holland. Joseph Surface, Barrymore -- very well -- also De Camp in the

Footman -- but Elliston in Charles is the spirit of the piece -- he is really the gentleman & yet full of fun & spirit, most winning in the scenes with brother & uncle. -- Sir Benjamin, Mr. Palmer -- & Crabtree, Mr. Collins. -- Miss Pope makes much of Mr. Candour -- she plays it admirably, to nature exactly. -- Maria, Mis Mellon -- looked well, but not lively enough for her. -- Lady Sneerwell, Mrs. Harlowe & Lady Teazle, Mrs. Jordan -- who played it delightfully, tho' not with the elegance of the original, Miss Farren -- acting the part with less a lady's grace & pretense and with more the hoyden at the same, with perhaps more truth, as Lady Teazle is

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really a country girl. In the scene of repentance, I did not think her quite sorry enough, nor did she produce such an effect in it as I have seen Mrs. S. Kemble do, but in the lively scenes she was admirable. -- On the whole I was highly amused with the play -- when It was over I knocked at a door behind the lobby of the stage box -- & it being opened I asked for Miss Pope & found her & Miss Jane behind the scenes. -- Behind the scenes is wonderfully stiking when lighted up -- with all the scene shifters, call boys, prompters, &c., and the performers wandering about, some dressed in character & others not, together with their various friends. Miss Pope took me into the Green Room where she introduced me to Mr. Kelly & to Miss De Camp: with the former I had talk about his opera on Friday -- which he says is excellent as to the words -- of course I told him the music would be at least equal in merit -- Miss De Camp & I talked about Newcastle, about her sister, & about Personation.

Bannister was strutting about the Green room, as droll as ever & saying queer things to every body -- there were also Mr. Waldron, Mr. Bartley, Mr. De Camp, Mr. Dignum, Mrs. Harlowe, Miss Halloway, & Mr. Holland. Personation beginning, I went back to my box -- where all our party were delighted with it -- indeed it went off with uncommon éclat.

After that I went back to the Scene of merriment -- and again went to the Green room with Miss Pope where all the chief parts of Comus were -- Elliston & Mrs. Mountain dressed as Comus & the Lady -- the former seems most entertaining & lively, but without any thing of Bannister's grimace -- equally good humored & more gentlemanly -- he was wishing much he could have seen Othello tonight at Covent Garden with Kemble & Cooke as Othello & Iago. Miss De Camp coming in, she chatted a while with me -- the modesty & unassuming elegance of her manners are very attractive, and I was highly delighted with her.

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Miss Pope also introduced me to my favorite, Mrs. Mountain, who was as chatty & pleasant as possible -- easy & elegant, just as she is on the stage -- but more lively -- we had much talk of vocal powers, which she displayed divinely in the song of Sweet Echo -- which she sung on stage as she acted the Lady -- she looked divinely & sung inimitably well. It was truly delightful. She & I had a great deal of chat. -- I was also introduced by Miss Jane Pope to Young De Camp at the Wing on the prompter's side -- he is a very genteel young Man: -- but I was highly amused with seeing Comus behind -- Elliston made such droll faces to Mrs. Mountain while she sat chained in the chair -- & told her he supposed the reason she refused it was

that the glass was not large enough -- his face is at times comedy itself -- indeed, tho' not handsome, it is capable of every variety of expression. Having paid my compts to Mrs. Mountain, &c., & wished Miss Jane goodnight, I went thro' to the boxes, & assisted in handing iff the ladies -- we soon got a coach & got home -- they much pleased.

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[25. May. 1805]

... walked to Covent Garden theatre ... house crammed to suffocation & uncommonly genteel. We saw very well -- being neither too near or far distant. -- For the benefit of Mr. & Mrs. H. Siddons.

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Mrs. Siddons made her first appearance in Lady Macbeth, & she is only to act once or twice more. -- She looked lovely, especially in the 2nd dress. She is rather stouter, but looks well & is very strong in action & as great as ever in every thing. She was received with such tumults of applause that I thought they would never end -- and she was so affected at first, as to be scarcely able to read the letter. Charming woman! no words can do justice to her acting -- every scene, speech, word, look & action were complete -- & such as I cannot describe. Kemble is certainly a great actor, but there is a little want of that warmth of genius which is so evident in Mrs. Siddons' acting -- his conception & performance of Macbeth are very grand -- the play was got up with a correctness in all the quick changes of scenery, & a completeness in every part, which does great justice to Mr. Kemble as acting manager,

and the inferior parts being so well supported gave it an air of interest which I never saw before -- often as I have seen it before, I may safely say I never saw it completely & thoroughly represented till this night -- the scenes of the murder of Duncan, of the meeting of Macbeth & Lady -- & of the banquet scene -- his scene of soliloquy, & hers of sleep walking in the last act, were I think inimitable & the interest was wrought up to the highest pitch. -- After the play, Mr. Kemble came forward & announced that Mrs. Siddons, not being so much fatigued as she expected, would have the honor of appearing on Monday night in Zara in the Mourning Bride. -- Tumults of applause. -- Rosina was the farce -- in which Incledon sung a song well but the rest were stupid.

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[27. May. 1805]

... After dinner went to Covent Garden theatre to the pit. A great crowd, but I was early -- & waited near 1/2 an hour for doors opening. Tho' not given out, it was understood to be Mr. C. Kemble's benefit. House full as it could hold -- we had a terrible squeeze to get in: -- but got an excellent place 3rd row in the pit. The Mourning Bride the play. Don Manuel, Murray -- Gonzalez, Cory -- Garcia, Brunton -- Osmyrn, Mr. Kemble -- who made as much as possible of the part which affords no scope for him.

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Mrs. Humphries looked well in Leonpra. Mrs. H. Siddons is a charming interesting woman, and was very affecting in some parts of Almeria, but she is rather monotonous, & has not so much variety in her acting nor such power as Mrs. S. Kemble to whom she has a great resemblance in her acting -- but her face & figure are rather small & unimportant for a tragic part.

Zara by Mrs. Siddons. --

In this part she shines still more than in Lady Macbeth, as there is more variety of passion in it. Her dignity on her first entrance -- her visit to Osmyrn -- her alternate resolutions in his favor & against him in revenge of his neglect of her were capital -- no words can do justice to the expression of her countenance & action -- she was truly the character itself -- love, hatred, revenge, scorn, horror, doubt & despair all reigned in turns. The scene in the 3rd act where she discovers Osmyrn & Almeria, & suppresses or attempts to suppress her rage, was inimitable, the finest acting I ever saw -- I shall never forget her in: -- "Hell has no fury like a woman scorned"

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She appears fevered with hurt and jealousy, but following the sudden outburst "Hell! Hell!" she gives herself over to mounting anger and condemnation; her malediction of Osmyrn, from the words "Vile and ingrate," is horrifyingly precise & controlled, tho' almost screamed with hysterical passion. --

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also in the scene in the 2^d act where she upbraids Osmyrn with his neglect of her -- and in the 4th act where she advises the King & dissembles her real motives, for wishing Osmyrn privately murdered -- also at last when she mistakes the headless trunk of Manuel for Osmyrn's body -- & drinks the poison. It was truly exquisite -- no description can do justice to her and it was received with peals of applause -- tho' it must be owned that the catastrophe of the play is ill contrived -- & there are no grand scenes which afford scope for her powers

after the 3rd act -- except her dying scene which was truly admirable, tho' the author has made it too short. Had Osmyn arrived before her death, the scene might have been made truly affecting, & it would have been more dramatic. Her death was truly admirable, and altogether her acting in Zara must be reckoned a perfect masterpiece of acting.

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I was highly delighted, & very unwillingly descended from my heroics to attend to Love a la Mode -- which is of all farces the most stupid: & tho' admirably acted, can never amuse, it is so completely flat. -- Cooke in Sir Archy excellent -- but Lewis & Simmons are still more so in Squire Groom & Mordecai -- Waddy in Sir Callagan is a sad falling off from Johnstone -- but indeed the farce is so stupid I am surprised it is ever acted at all. Mrs. St. Leger looked very handsome in Charlotte.

The farce might appear remarkably stupid -- after such acting as preceded it -- but it is really a dull thing.

I sat next a gentleman very conversible & very theatrical -- & we agreed in most things & completely so in allowing Mrs. Siddons to be the first actress that ever performed, in tragedy -- she has every possible requisite both of body & mind, & I think has taken a new lease of life for she looked lovely.

[29. May. 1805]

... Dressed & went to the Hanover Square concert rooms -- to the concert for the benefit of the Musical fund. Full as it could be of the best company -- the room had a most splendid appearance. The King & Queen, Elizabeth, Sophia, Mary, & Amelia came in soon after me, & looked most noble -- a great number of noblemen & ladies with them. The Stewards box is just below the Royal box -- Lords Darnley & Dartmouth &c. were there -- & also the Duke of Kent & the Duke of Cumberland -- the latter a very agreeable looking young man -- the former very stupid & yet conceited & I dare say very tyrannical.

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I sat so near them all I had a most complete view -- and as they stood up for a long time at the Hallelujah & Wonderful is the Lamb choruses -- I saw their figure as well as face. The King in his Field Marshall's uniform looked very well -- the Queen very frightful -- Elizabeth & Mary are my favorites -- the 2 others have rather a silly look -- but they are all modest & graceful -- only Elizabeth is the most fat & lively.

The Messiah, the performance, & done in a most superb style of excellence as to the instruments, & the singing admirable by Harrison, Bartleman, W. Knyvett, Sale, & Mrs. Billington & Miss Tenant. The choruses of "For unto us" & "Hallelujah" -- and "Comfort ye" by Harrison -- & "Rejoice greatly" & "I know that my redeemer" by Mrs. Billington-- & "Why do the Heathens" by Bartleman, I most admired.

[1. June. 1805]

... Went to the Pit of Covent Garden theatre.... The performance was a grand selection from Handel &c. -- of sacred music -- for Mess^{rs} Ashleys benefit. Mr. Ashley leader, who played a most delicate, shewy, and exquisite concerto on the violin; the 2 Mess^{rs} Petricles played a duetto concerto on the french horns; -- & best of all Mr. Woolf between the acts played a most delicious concerto on the pianoforte, which I never heard equalled for execution & neatness. We had also the overture to Zauberflote, &c. -- but the vocal was the grand attraction. The "Hallelujah" & "Hailstone" choruses, & that of "For unto us" were exquisite. The Duet between Mrs. Bland

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and Miss Tyrer of "Hear my prayer" was deliciously sweet. Mrs. B. sung "How cheerful" from Dr. Arne most sweetly & was encored. Miss Tyrer sung "Father of Heaven" very well but it is not a shewy song. Miss Munday sung the air of "With verdure clad" by Haydn most sweetly, & also "Let the bright seraphim" with great effect. Her voice is clear & sweet tho' thin, & her execution great. Mrs. Ashe sung "Holy, Holy Lord" with inimitable taste, & also "Ye sacred Priests" -- but in both she produces at times a disagreeable effect by forcing her voice which makes her scream & be out of tune, but her taste, sweet notes, and delicious shake are exquisite. Bartleman sung "Shall I in Mamres" and "O Lord have mercy" -- and above all "Angel of Life" by Calcott -- inimitable, with such taste, spirit, & execution, & so as to give most superlative pleasure -- but Braham in a recitative of the Creation was truly great -- tho' his singing in "Deeper & deeper still" &

"Waft her angles" is the perfection of the art: & only can be equalled by his "To Arms." I think I never heard him

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produce such an effect as he did in this song, both the times I have heard it. Mr. Vaughan sung the "Lord our Maker" -- and Mr. Miller "Honor & Arms" -- very well. Altogether it was a Musical treat such as very seldom occurs: and the selection was so admirable & performance so good that I don't remember ever being so highly pleased. It was really capital throughout -- the only thing was that there was so much of excellence it was not over till half past 11 or more.

[6. June. 1805]

... I sat next Lord Galloway & had as usual much chat with him. On my other side sat Mr. Scotland, the young man who performed Jaffier at Berwick street theatre. We talked & I mentioned having been there, being introduced en passant to him & Mr. Shakespeare by Miss Pope -- upon which we were very cordial, & finding him really fond of music & a judge, we never ran out of conversation the whole evening We both enjoyed the opera much which I had never seen before. It was *Il Ratto di Proserpina* -- Ceres, Mrs. Billington -- Proserpine, Grassini -- Ascolfo, Viganoni -- Pluto, Ravedino -- Arethusa, Mrs. Weichsell -- Most beautiful & interesting opera. Grassini looks, acts, & sings admirably -- as does Mrs. B. I never heard Mrs. B. in better voice.

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She sung the first Duet inimitably, which was encored -- & also her 3 songs -- & last duet were beautiful. Grassini's music also is very fine -- nothing can be more exquisite than to see two such excellent performers in one piece: -- & the scenery &c. is very fine. The music is by Winter & is very spirited. The only fault is that the Songs are too short in general: -- tho' elegant & very sweet, & in some parts grand, it does not fill the ear like Cimarosa's *Gli Orazi ed i Curiazi* or Bach's *Clemenza di Scipione* -- but altogether it is a charming opera: -- the Arethusa episode with Viganoni & Mrs. Weichsell provides an enchanting interlude & lyrical reflection of the principle action, in which Mrs. B. & Grassini sung with great effect -- & they both looked lovely. Mrs. Mountain sat 3 seat behind me -- but as we went out I had a chat with her about it -- she admires Mrs. B. to the skies, & I think hardly does justice to Grassini.

[12. June. 1805]

... After dinner went to the Haymarket theatre -- good house but not full. Sat next a very conversible foreigner. The first piece was Ways & Means, which is dull enough till the last act of the 3 -- where the scene of the bundering elopement in the dark is very droll. Mathews in Sir David Dunder very comic indeed, as was the antic posturing of Palmer in Tiptoe -- the rest poor.

The next was the Hunter of the Alps -- a very charming & elegant little drama -- & most admirably supported by Elliston in Felix -- the rest were also tolerably played -- and the scene of his relieving the family of his

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unknown brother Rosalvi was really charming; indeed the whole depends on him -- tho' Chapman, in Rosalvi -- Mrs. Gibbs, in the wife, & Masters West & Horrebrow in the 2 children were very interesting: Mr. & Mrs. Taylor in Juan & Genevieve I thought very poor -- miserable singers. Altogether a very pleasing & elegant piece.

Love laughs at Locksmiths followed, which my companion informed me is taken from a french piece called Une folie, of which I remember to have heard much, tho' I did not see it, while in Paris. It was at the Feydeau. Elliston in Beldare is charming, but Mathews in Risk I think inferior on the whole, tho' he is certainly very comic, to Liston. De Camp in Solomon Lob is no more than equal to Pritchard -- & Grove in Totterton is far inferior to Lindoe who played it admirably -- Denman also in Vigil is very stupid & very inferior to Chippendale -- & as to Mrs. Mathews in Lydia, she can't be put at all in competition with Fanny Kemble -- so altogether I

prefer it at Newcastle -- tho' Elliston is here such a tower of strength, that he can carry thro' any thing, & the piece is so laughable it must succeed when tolerably acted.

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[13. June. 1805]

... Went to the opera before 7. Pit then half full -- & in 1/4 of an hour it was cram full. Got my old place -- & had the agreeable talking lady behind me ... the Duke of Cumberland & the Duke of Cambridge just before me. I having a book, they spoke to me several times, asking various questions about the opera -- & Lord Galloway, who was next to the Duke of C^d on the other side, reached over him to speak to me about the music, & the Duke of C^d spoke often to me -- the Duke of Cambridge seemed to enjoy it much & to know the music, having seen it abroad. He often asked if such & such songs were or were not marked with a star (as those were which were only introduced for this night) & always guessed right.

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I was much pleas'd by being so near the royal Dukes & much honored by the little conversation I had with them. They are both very affable & pleasant -- but the Duke of Cambridge seems to have real pleasure in music & to be very clever. I like the appearance of the Prince of Wales, Cambridge & Cumberland much better than that of the Dukes of York & Kent.

The opera was for Braham's benefit & the fullest house I have seen this season: -- & very elegant. La Cosa Rara: charming music by Martini, great part of it the same as the Siege of Belgrade which was partly taken from this opera.

Queen -- Mrs. Billington

Prince -- Braham

Lubino -- Viganoni

Litta -- Morelli

Corrado -- Kelly

Podesta -- Ravedino

Ghita -- Mrs. Weichsell

Lilla -- Signora Storace

charming comic opera -- The duet of Braham & Mrs. Billington
exquisite: also Braham's 2 songs, one of which was encored.

[15. June. 1805]

... In the Evg. went to the opera -- Clemenza di Scipione -- charming music, of greater style, strength, & structure than what we heard from Lesueur. ... Lord Galloway & I had much chat during the interlude of Paul & Virginia.

... Mrs. Billington delightfully performed -- her 4 songs, 2 trios, & duet -- nothing could be more charming. As usual the first trio & the Site perdo were encored. Viganoni was better heard than common.

... The Curtain dropped at 1/2 past 11, at the end of the 2^d act of Ossian which was all advertised to be performed.

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The Audience not knowing that the performance was finished -- were incensed at the Curtain's dropping, & the pit became very clamorous & galleries also. At last, no notice being taken of all the house, they proceeded to the stage -- tore the orchestra all to pieces -- completely ruined all the instruments, which were quite destroyed -- & the music torn & scattered about -- the piano reduced to shivers -- the pit passage broke down, all the scenery & wings destroyed, several lustres broke &c. -- the ladies retired. Such a scene I never saw before -- Mr. Kelly came forward -- they would not hear him but called for Mr. Goold -- who was not to be found: so they went on tearing away -- one young man on the stage was much wounded by the fall of a scene -- but they well deserved it -- for as the performance advertised was played throughout, it was a most scandalous thing. -- When the noise first began. Kelly might have imagined the mistake -- & should have come on & explained it.

How the matter ended -- God Knows -- for I left the whole in a state of confusion soon after 12. -- This is all owing to the Bishop of London's absurdity.

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[17. June. 1805]

... Elliott called at 1/2 past 10 -- and it was 11 when we arrived in Hill street at the Duchess's, where there was a very large party.

... After the concert was over Lady Hamilton sung -- her voice is immensely powerful but her manner is at times too violent -- she looks as if going to eat one. Her voice also is so inflexible -- she can do nothing. She is quite a female Incledon -- & sung Black eyed Susan in great style.

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2 Miss Gunns also sung with taste & some execution -- but a want of voice -- very elegant pretty girls. Lady H. is a most enormous woman -- & much painted -- but has fine features -- she has still an air of the Cook Maid but seems uncommonly good humored -- her carriage being come, she staid to the last -- & I did also to hear her talk, which she did most fluently, about Naples &c. There is however in her acting & humor & singing some thing very remarkable & peculiar to herself. What astonished me most is her vulgar method of pronouncing words, especially in singing. I had a good deal of talk with her & was highly entertained. The party was altogether elegant. The concert was directed by a Mr. Paddon, & Miss Parke & Bartleman sung divinely, assisted by Sale & Mr. Knyvett -- but it was after all the musical people retired that Lady H. sung. Got home to bed at 1/2 past 2 -- after an evening of great variety & amusement.

[20. June. 1805]

... After dinner Miss Pope, Miss Susan, & Miss Jane & a young [man] named Augustus Pitcher came for me in a coach -- I got in & we had a pleasant drive down to Hammersmith, to Brandenburgh House -- at which I was once before. -- We were in good time & got good places. The theatre is neat & was very crowded. At the end of the first piece -- there were refreshments in plenty -- in the adjoining gallery -- tea, orgeat, lemon & orangeade &c., of which we partook.

The first piece was in one act -- translated from the french by Keppel Craven, called "tis well they are married" -- very ingenious, elegant, & amusing.

The Margravine as Ernestine

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displayed much cool humor, and Miss Shuttleworth as the Baroness looked & played very well. Woldemar was extremely well done by Keppel Craven, as was his friend Altorff by Simmons. They were both most splendidly drest. We were highly pleased.

It was followed by a Pantomime called the Release of Eblis: in which the scenery was capital, & music beautiful, & it was admirably acted throughout. The singing of the Margravine & Mr. Maynard was tolerable. She looked most elegant, especially in the 2^d act. It was in 3 acts -- & altogether highly interesting & grand. Keppel Craven danced inimitably. Chatterly acted admirably -- as did the Margravine -- indeed the whole characters were most magnificently dressed & it went off with great spirit & eclat.

Keppel Craven is a very handsome young man -- fine figure, good dancer, &c. -- & would be a good actor, but has the burr in his throat in the oddest way,

which gives a very peculiar sound to his voice.

The Margravine is most beautiful woman of her age -- & acts with great expression. Her hand & arm are the finest I ever saw & her face lovely, tho' no longer young.

[21. August. 1805] Newcastle

... We saw the Young Roscius in the street -- beautiful boy with light hair -- fair complexion -- short blue jacket, nankeen pantaloons, silk stockings, & white waistcoat. He was going to dine with Lady Chambers & the G. Clarke's. ...

Soon after six, J. Chatto & I went to the play, where there was £130, & got a front row in the green boxes.

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We saw & heard perfectly. Tancred & Sigismunda was the play -- Siffredi, Mr. Gibbon, very bad -- Osmond, Mr. Pritchard, worse -- Rodolpho. Mr. Rees --

Mrs. Kemble made a charming Sigismunda. I thought her rather cold at first, but in the scene with her father & the latter scenes with Tancred she was very effecting; her cries are always to the heart. -- To see Young Roscius in Tancred is the highest treat I can form an idea of -- such fire, spirit, feeling, & tender love -- every shade & variety of passion were expressed with ardour & effect -- it was complete perfection. His tones, action, voice, & manner are truly delightful -- they carry the mind away with them -- & one forgets every thing but him, & totally so that one is in a theatre. His scene with Siffredi in the second act, where from violent reproaches he changes to tender reverence

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was touching indeed -- & his scenes with Sigismunda, after her marriage, are wrought up to a pitch of excellence by his acting, which however can scarcely be called acting, as it is the complete expression of nature -- every feeling of the part he enters into, & loses himself in the character he assumes. I was never

so delighted with him, not having so near a view. His mad scene, after the affecting death of Sigismunda, was too much -- it caused in me a most unpleasant hysteric affection, which was like to choke me. I never saw any thing to equal it -- in no part can he have greater hold on the passions than in Tancred -- & of the passions he is complete master.

I went down after the play & sat with the G. Clarke's &c.-- & saw various I knew in different parts during the farce of Raising the Wind, which I could not be at pains to attend to.

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[22. August. 1805]

... There was £111 in the house. The play was Hamlet. King, McGibbon -- Laertes, Terry -- Horatio, Pritchard -- Polonius & Gravedigger, Bellamy -- Osric, Rees -- all very poor -- the Ghost by Mason was spoken with great propriety & effect. Mrs. Mason I thought rather tame in the Queen, but it is a stupid part. Mrs. Kemble was as usual most charming in Ophelia,

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but the attraction was Roscius in Hamlet -- every part of which was inimitable. The more the difficulty of the part, the greater his success. His amiable pensiveness at first, his solemn manner with the ghost, scarce drawing breath for reverence & attention, & all the variety of assumed madness -- directions to the players, his behaviour at the play while observing the King was astonishing. Tho' I have seen him in it before, my astonishment was extreme. No character is placed in such a variety of situations as Hamlet, yet thro' the whole of it, he was nature itself. The Closet scene was highly affecting -- he was so earnest, so wrapt up in his purpose, that

it was impossible to think him acting. Ophelia's madness, so admirably done, is the whole of the 4th act nearly -- but Hamlet in the 5th was exquisite. His easy & elegant conversation at the graves was so strong a contrast to his behavior

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at the wrestling match where his graceful attitudes & manner of fencing are so much admired -- but after killing Laertes & being wounded, his manner of expressing his hatred to the King & joy that he was now on the point of revenge was beyond every thing -- it was impossible to think it acting. He was nature itself. -- The play went off in thunders of applause, & I am sure a Newcastle audience were never before so interested by the distress of a Hamlet, which, were it not animated by his nature, grace, & elegance, is rather a dragging play, for it depends more than Macbeth, or Othello, or any other, on complete success in the performance of the major character. It is certainly the part which shews his astonishing powers in the highest degree, as it is by far the most difficult of all his parts to perform -- he however succeeds completely in what has baffled almost all the great actors of every age.

Every body came away at 11, after the play was over, & did not stay for the Purse. Got home & to bed at 12.

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[23. August. 1805]

... most of us walked to the play which was very crowded -- they had no room for W. Heron or me -- I went up stairs & sat in the Green Boxes with Mrs. Kemble --

the front seats being all occupied, we sat behind & stood during the play, which we saw perfectly. There was £181.-- in the house. The play was Barbarossa -- Barbarossa, Pritchard -- Othman, McGibbon, very poor -- Sadi, Terry, very well -- Aladin, Mason -- Irene, Mrs. McGibbon, decent -- Zaphira, Mrs. Mason, who would have acted it ell, but not being well now, she is not in good spirits.

Of Young Roscius in Achmet I need say little. I have seen it before & it is perfection -- particularly his first scene with Othman & Barbarossa -- & his interview with his Mother while unknown to her -- his discovering himself in the 4th act was exquisitely great -- indeed he rises in every scene, & sometimes to a height of wonder: his fire, spirit, disdain of the tyrant, tender affection to his mother, & regard (for it is scarcely love) for Irene are all inimitably done.

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The more I see him the more I am convinced he is inspired by the most powerful genius that ever flowed in the direction of a tragic actor. His performance is nature itself -- & without one fault -- he feels every word & his actions are grace, dignity, & propriety, & only to be excelled by his judgement & varied powers of moving the passions.

The last act is deficient in interest after the 2^d, 3^d, & 4th, but yet the winding up of so much distress in happiness is pleasing, after the violent woe of the 4th act.

Mrs. Kemble & I had a great deal of talk about various matters. She went away after the play, & I went downstairs where I conversed with my new friend, Baron Wrangel, who had very nearly understood all the play & admired Roscius much.

[26. August. 1805]

... My Swedish acquaintance Baron Wrangel I found had called for me in my absence. -- I shall not see him, I suppose, as he will have left N. C. by this time. -- Dined with J. Chatto. Went to the play in the Evg. Very full -- £135. Sat with Bates in the 3rd row of the stage box, farthest seat from the stage -- an excellent place.

King Richard 3^d the play: -- King Henry, McGibbon -- Tressel, Mason -- Buckingham, Terry -- Richmond, Pritchard -- Stanley, Collier -- Lord Mayor, Bellamy -- Catesby, Rees -- Queen, Mrs. Mason -- Duchess of York, Mrs. Jones -- Lady Ann, Mrs. Kemble-- Edward, Master Pritchard -- & Richard by the Young Roscius. His dress, &c., disfigures him much, but he looked it admirably & in the latter rose to heroic height. It was truly inspiring. His exultation at the murder of the children -- his rage --

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his dreams in the tent scene -- his death: exquisite; but above all, his scenes with the women -- the flattery to Lady Ann was inimitable & also his scene with the Duchess & Queen before the children go to the tower. There were more astonishing strokes of genius in this part than any other I have seen -- yet on the whole it did not please so much -- his figure, face, & voice -- his gracefulness, & irresistible charms altogether make it more delightful to see him in an amiable part -- tho' his acting of the whole part is equal to any thing I ever saw -- & much superior to what I should have thought he could have made of a part where grace, beauty, & elegance go for nothing. The more I see him, the more I am astonished.

Came away in the midst of the stupidity of the Irishman in London.

[28. August. 1805]

... Called at the Herons. Charlotte & I went out in search of Roscius. We met Mrs. Kemble & Fanny Heron, & went with them to the Rehearsal of Romeo & Juliet -- where met Sam Barret & Jane Clark & also the Young Roscius -- to whom I was introduced. Most beautiful & elegant boy, but childish to a degree -- with a great deal of fun, spirit, & humour -- constantly romping & playing. The Rehearsal was a mere burlesque -- & between their scenes he played & romped with us -- one of his gloves dropping, I purloined it, & shall keep it as a relic. -- He gave Sam Barret a complete dressing in the Connaught fashion with my stick.

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I was highly entertained with him & had much chat with Mrs. Kemble. We left them there in the 3rd act, & Charlotte & I walked to Mr. & Mrs. Betty's & introduced me. She is a very elegant young woman, & would be pretty were it not for a flash in her face. He is a well behaved man about 40. They were very chatty & civil -- 7 the little Roscia only 3 years old is beautiful & fair -- a charming child & like its mother.

... At 1/2 past 6 went to the play -- f187 -- crowded to suffocation -- but Bates, W. Heron, & I had our places -- J. Lamb & Airly got in also -- & such a crowd behind in the stage box -- there was no

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hearing it -- they made such a noise & shut & opened doors so often that there was no enjoying the play -- which, tho' there are some fine parts in it, is dull & unconnected, & never produced any great effect. Roscius does not find variety of passion in Romeo -- it is all one love & grief -- & besides 'tis too short

-- in his scene with Juliet in the first act he was most tender & charming -- in his scene with Tibalt very commanding & elegant -- in his scene with the friar his burst of grief was exquisite, but Romeo is too quiet a part, for he takes the news of Juliet's death too quietly. He made as much as possible of it -- & in the soliloquy following, & in the scene with the apothecary, was admirable -- but the dying scene was dreadful -- & as different from his death by sword as possible -- his groans & pangs would have affected a stone. On the whole however the play is never worked to any high pitch of interest & there is less in it to admire than any other of his parts I have seen.

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Mrs. Kemble made a most charming Juliet: the tenderness & softness of it, & the interest of love she creates, which is at times great, were admirable. She was particularly charming in the scene with the Nurse. -- Mrs. Jones, an excellent Nurse. Pritchard, a most excellent Mercutio. It is the best part I ever saw him act. Of the rest I can say little good -- Benvolio, Terry -- Tibalt, Mason -- Capulet, Collier -- Friar, McGibbon -- Lady Capulet, Mrs. McGibbon -- Paris, Mr. Rees -- Apothecary, Bellamy.

The Romp followed -- but we only staid to cool as it was execrably acted by Mrs. McGibbon, &c.

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[29. August. 1805]

... There was £164.-- charming house. Lovers' Vows: which on the whole was decently acted -- Baron, Mr. McGibbon, heavy & stupid -- Cassel, Pritchard, easy & impudent, very well -- Butler, Bellamy, humorous --

Anhalt, Mason, decent -- Country man, Terry, very well -- Country woman, Mrs. Jones -- Amelia, Miss V. De Camp, tolerable -- & Agatha, Mrs. Mason, very well indeed. She played it with great feeling & propriety -- but Frederick by the Young Roscius I shall never forget -- it is not a long part -- but the scene with his Mother at first -- the robbery, the prison, & above all the scene where he discovers himself to his father -- & then in the last act his scene with his father where he determines not to be separated from his Mother were admirable, & touching in the extreme. In the 4th act I shall never forget him -- every look, tone, and action spoke to the heart -- his downcast looks, respectful animation, & gradual advance to a climax of passion were inconceivably great. It is equal to any thing I have yet seen. In impetuous passion, elegant dialogue, & amiable feeling, especially filial affection, he is nature itself.

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The farce of Matrimony followed -- for which almost all the audience stayed as the play is short. Pritchard was very well in Delaval, if I did not remember Elliston -- but Mrs. Kemble was so uncommonly lively & pleasant, & so arch & agreeable in Clara, that it was really charming, & the more so as it was unexpected.

[30. August. 1805]

... Mrs. Kemble & I walked from the theatre to Herons, where I took my leave of Miss Heron & Fanny who are going to morrow to stay a fortnight at Lawsons at Chirton. When we got near the door we were overtaken by the Young Roscius on horseback who did not come in, but talked a while -- he looked beautiful

and was come for C. Heron's horse for his Mother to ride as they were going to see Ravensworth Castle -- the head Gardner there having been at school with Mr. Betty. Sat a good while chatting with the Herons & Mrs. Kemble -- & then she & I walked up street as far as the theatre.

... At 7 went to the theatre & got in to N^o 10, where I had a good place. Fenwick & J. Lamb were next me in the stage box. -- The house not so full as last night. Zara was the play -- but an apology was obliged to be made for Mrs. Mason who

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was very ill, & had not been able to study the part & therefore begged to be indulged with the book in her hand. This, with the effect of her dullness, injured the piece considerably -- but the fire & animation of Roscius surmounted all -- & was astonishingly great.

There was £136 in the house. Zara was very flat by Mrs. Mason -- Selima, Mrs. McGibbon -- Lusignan, McGibbon, very poor -- Chatillon, Terry, decent -- Nerestan, Pritchard, poor -- Orasmin, Mason -- but Osman by the Young Roscius, exquisite. I saw him in it at Covent Garden, & it is still the same & inimitably great. It was the first part he ever studied. His reading the letter is beyond any thing -- the last scene is unnatural itself. Nobody would kill themselves in the theatrical style M. de Voltaire has chosen, but his acting in it was superexcellent.

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His acting on reading the letter I shall never forget -- indeed violence & impetuosity of passion very properly characterise his acting thro' the whole -- but intermixed with

such strokes of love & tenderness that it is really delicious. This part affords scope for love, pity, rage, jealousy, & remorse.

The farce was changed from Three weeks after Marriage to the Citizen, & was badly acted.

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[2. September. 1805]

... Put on my blacks for the Duke of Gloucester -- & went to the play. Very full indeed in pit & gallery, but boxes not so full as I could have wished. -- £107. -- the smallest house there has yet been. The play, the Castle Spectre. Sat with Bates & Loraine -- in N^o 1. -- Percy, Mason -- Kenrick, Terry -- Hassan, Rees -- Father Philip, Pritchard -- Motley, Bellamy -- shockingly cast as to men. Mrs. Mason made an excellent Ghost, and Mrs. Kemble in Angela is always charming: -- indeed it is one of her best parts -- the play was however extremely ill got up as to scenes &c.

It is impossible to do justice to the violent rage & fire, which seemed to reign in Osmond's soul -- his disturbed & guilty mind

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was never so portrayed before. His scene with Angela where he declares his passion was astonishingly great -- the transitions from pride to love [were] nature itself & his action so suited to the vindictive raging part of Osmond: --and in the scene with Kenrick, at first he promises with freedom, but after the latter's preventing Saib's death, his exit at "you who can so well take care of others, now look to yourself" was admirable. The dream scene was powerful horror -- his gasping for breath, his roving eyes, his seizing on Hassap

to save him, his agony on relating what he has suffered were beyond belief: but his description of the horrid dream -- brought every image of it to the soul -- one felt the shuddering he describes -- every word was

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given with that sort of expression which best suited it & all the horrid images -- his face, voice, & action completely brought to view the agony & torment of mind & soul -- any one ignorant of the language would from the tone & manner have known that he described some horrid unaccustomed sight. -- I shall never forget it. His scenes with Percy & Angela were also truly great -- indeed nothing can exceed him in this part, & in the frantic violence of the last act, where he is going to kill his brother & the Ghost intervenes -- nothing could be finer -- also his attitude & adjuration of the figure of Percy, disguised in Reginald's armour, exceed belief.

I look on this to be one of his finest parts.

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[4. September. 1805]

... The house fuller than on Monday. £ 109. The play, The Revenge. -- Terry performed Alonzo very respectably indeed. He gave it with great feeling & was quite perfect: & some of it with great effect.

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Mason shocking in Carlos. -- Mrs. Mason made nothing of Leonora -- I don't know what is the matter -- but she is constantly acting, & never plays as she used to do. -- Manuel, Mr. McGibbon -- Isabella, Mrs. McG. Zanga by the Young Roscius. His part is long & affords great scope for his abilities. In every scene he was great -- but above all in the scene, where he attempts to

palliate Leonora's supposed guilt to Alonzo, & his excuses gradually inflame the mind of his friend still more against her: -- but in the scene in the last act where he discloses to Alonzo the deceit he has practiced, and begins -- "Know, then, 'twas -- I." -- was inimitable. He seemed to soar into the other world -- such fire & passion & exultation I never saw -- the whole part was admirable, & tho' labouring under the disadvantage of his face being black, he produced an astonishing effect.

The farce was Three Weeks after Marriage -- horribly murdered.

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[5. September. 1805]

... House very full in all parts -- £139 -- Barbarossa for the second time -- same as before -- play went off most inimitably well & with great éclat. He, if possible, greater than the last time he played it.

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It is impossible to describe with any justice -- the energy & feeling with which he utters every word of this part -- if I have a preference among his various characters, I must fix on this, as my favorite. -- Mrs. Mason supported him to night very well; she seemed in good spirits & exerted her energies.

The farce was the Agreeable Surprise. Pritchard made a fool of Lingo. Miss Jones squalled most execrably in Laura. Nothing could be so bad -- but Mrs. Kemble sung her song admirably, and played Cowslip divinely.

[6. September. 1805]

... The House full -- £125. Gustavus Vasa: -- The play rather undramatic -- it is patriotism throughout -- the distress of his Mother Augusta & of his mistress Christina is too little insisted on, but the scene where the Mother & Sister of Gustavus are carried off to be murdered by Christiern in presence of Gustavus was very affecting.

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The character & death of Arvida interest us much, & it was played by Mr. Terry with much feeling. Mrs. Jones as Augusta had little to do -- and Mrs. Mason as Christina very little more. The plot of this play is the same exactly as Barbarossa except that the Tyrant is not in love with the Mother & puts her to death -- before he is conquered himself; -- but the situations are not near so interesting, & Arvida is sent into the tyrant's camp instead of the churf character, whom by that means we lose entirely for one act. It is an ill contrived play -- yet detached parts of it are very interesting, & very affecting, and the language beautiful. Great part of the scenes between Christiern & his party are omitted, much to the benefit of the piece which is quite long enough. The character of Gustavus is a most noble one, & the language of that part is indeed, of all the play, most beautiful.

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Christiern, Pritchard -- Peterson, Mason -- Laertes, Bellamy -- Sivard, Collier -- Anderson, Rees -- Arnoldus, McGibbon. I have already noticed the other parts, which were decently supported -- these last were wretchedly done.

But all defaults were made up by the admirable acting -- the fire, animation, spirit, and power of Roscius in Gustavus. He

seemed to soar above all idea -- so exquisitely great was he in his harangues to the soldiers -- & interview with Christiern. It could only be exceeded by his anguish at being forced from his mother & little sister -- and by the tenderness of his forgiveness of Arvida after his return from Christiern's camp, where he had been deceived into a promise to kill Gustavus. It is exactly the part of Rolla, only much more beautiful & inspiring.

I must place this very high in his list of parts, tho' with his abilities, it is not a difficult part, as there is no striking variety of passion -- patriotism is the chief spring of action.

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[7. September. 1805]

I got up at 1/2 past 3 -- Dressed -- Got a bason of milk. Will^m Carr walked with my things to the coach. -- Soon after 5 we set off. I need scarcely add I left Newcastle with regret -- & took my leave of the Young Roscius -- when again I shall see him Heaven knows -- he plays to night at Sunderland, on Monday he plays Rolla at Newcastle for his benefit, on Tuesday he plays Tancred at South Shields -- on Wednesday & Thursday he plays Norval & Achmet at Berwick, & on Saturday he plays Norval at Glasgow. -- So he will have enough to do next week.