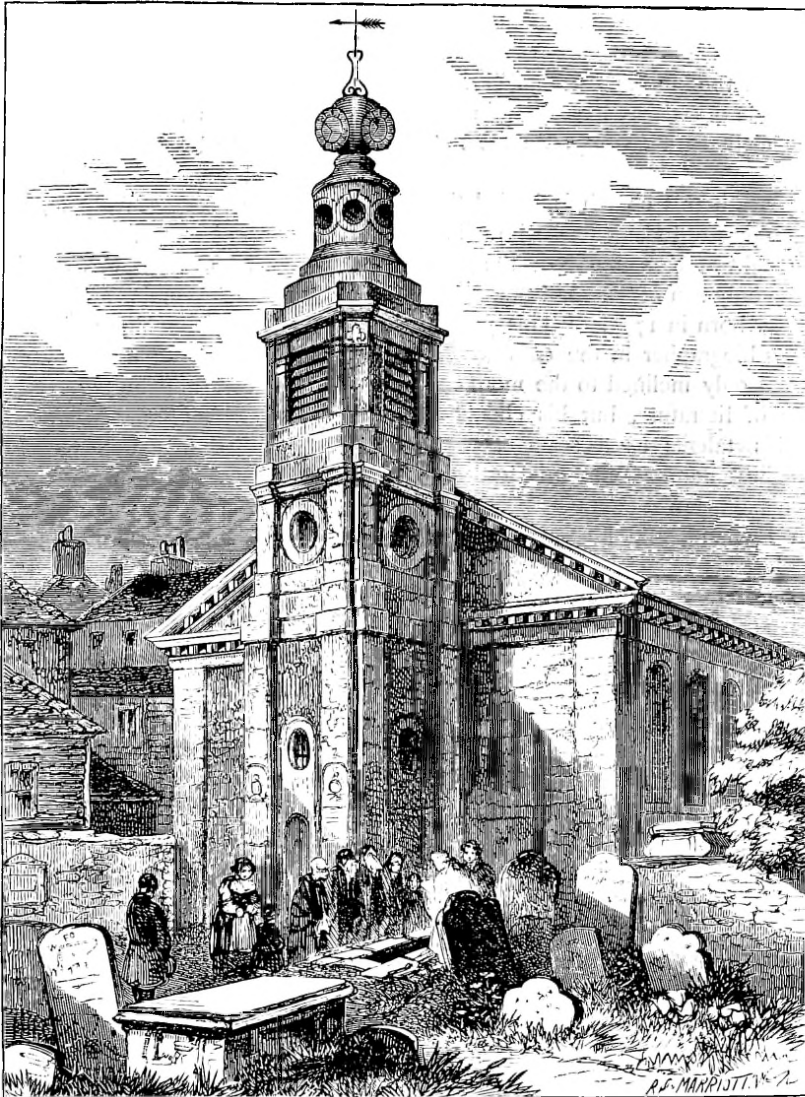


now a foreign restaurant and dining hall, rejoicing in the name of L'Hôtel de l'Étoile.

We learn that as the parish of St. Martin's grew more and more populous, fresh streets being built to the north and west, the inhabitants of the newly-built district applied to the bishop and the legisla-

and no provision had been made for the completion of the tower and steeple, or for building a rectory house, commissioners were appointed to carry out this work; and in March, 1685, the church was consecrated by Dr. Compton, Bishop of London, "and dedicated," says Allen, "to 'the Mother of



ST. ANNE'S, SOHO. (From a Sketch taken in 1840.)

ture, by whose joint action a site of land in "Kemp's Field," as it then was called, was granted, though not without difficulty. In 1673, soon after the erection of the new church, it was made into a separate parish, a district cut off from St. Martin's being assigned to it. It was then "discharged from all manner of dependence on the mother church, and ordered to be called the parish church of St. Anne, within the liberty of Westminster." As, however, there was but a slender endowment,

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the Blessed Virgin." The parish commences at the eastern end of Oxford Street, including Soho Square and all the south side of Oxford Street as far as Wardour Street. Its eastern boundary is formed by Crown Street and West Street, and it extends southwards to about the centre of Leicester Square.

Contrary to the usual custom, the chief front of this church is not to the west, but to the east, abutting on Macclesfield Street. It is a fair speci-



men internally of the classical style of the period, and calls for little remark or detail; but its spire may safely be said to rival that of St. George's, Bloomsbury, in ugliness. The name of the architect was Hakewill.

"The church was dedicated to St. Anne," says Allen, "out of compliment to the Princess Anne of Denmark. It is said to have been surmounted at first by a steeple of Danish architecture, which was 'the only specimen of the kind in London.'" But what the Danish style of art may have been in the early part of the eighteenth century, we are not informed.

In the vaults beneath this church is buried the eccentric and unhappy Lord Camelford, who fell in a duel which he fought at Kensington, in the year 1804. He was the only son of Thomas, first Lord Camelford, and was born in 1775. "This young nobleman," says his biographer in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, "was not only inclined to the more enlightened pursuits of literature, but his chemical researches, and his talents as a seaman, were worthy of the highest admiration. His lordship had an idea that his antagonist (Captain Best) was the best shot in England, and he was therefore extremely fearful lest his reputation should suffer, if he made any concession, however slight, to such a person."

It was Lord Camelford's eccentric wish, and, indeed, it was commanded by him in his will, that he should be buried in a lonely spot on an island in a lake in Switzerland; but dying at the time when he fell, while the European war was raging, it was impossible for his executors to carry out his instructions at the time; and when the peace came, in 1815, he had been too long in his grave for his wishes to be remembered. So his body still lies in a gorgeous coffin, surmounted with his coronet, in the vaults under St. Anne's Church, which have for many years been sealed down and closed.

Among those who lie buried here is the Lady Grace Pierrepont, daughter of the Marquis of Dorchester. A letter published by Sir Henry Ellis in 1686 speaks of the Countess of Dorchester, Sedley's daughter, as furnishing a fine house in St. James's Square, and having just taken a seat (sitting) in the "newly-consecrated St. Anne's Church."

The church also contains the remains of royalty of a certain kind—namely, of a king of Corsica, whose unhappy career and end has been told by Sir Bernard Burke, in his "Vicissitudes of Families;" and before him by Horace Walpole and by Boswell. A tablet in the churchyard to his memory bears the following inscription:—

"Near this place is interred Theodore, King of Corsica, who died in this parish, December 11th, 1756, immediately after leaving the King's Bench Prison by the benefit of the Act of Insolvency; in consequence of which he registered his kingdom of Corsica for the benefit of his creditors.

The grave, great teacher, to a level brings  
Heroes and beggars, galley-slaves and kings;  
But Theodore this moral learn'd ere dead;  
Fate pour'd its lesson on his living head—  
Bestow'd a kingdom and denied him bread."

It may interest our readers to know that this fallen monarch was buried at the cost of a small tradesman who had known him in the days of his prosperity, and that the tablet above-mentioned was erected by Horace Walpole, who also wrote the epitaph quoted above.

The King of Corsica was Stephen Theodore, Baron Neuhoof of Prussia, and was born at Metz, in 1696. Mr. Cunningham styles him "an adventurer," and certainly in assuming royalty here he went a step further than most other pretenders. He was educated in France, under the care of the Duchess of Orleans. He entered the service of Charles XII. of Sweden, when his name and the distressed state of Corsica induced the inhabitants of the latter island to ask his protection, and in return to offer him their crown. In March, 1736, we are told, he arrived at Aleria in a ship, with two others very richly laden with provisions and ammunition. He was conducted to Corsica, and was elected king amid the acclamations of the people, and was crowned as Theodore I. At this time the Corsicans were in a state of comparative barbarism. Theodore coined money, and maintained an army of 15,000 men at his own cost. The Genoese, in envy and jealousy, published a manifesto filled with falsehoods, and set a price on his head. Finding his life attempted by his own people, he called an assembly, and made them a short speech, which so affected them that they called him their saviour and king. In 1743 he issued a "declaration" calling back to that island all Corsicans in foreign service, under the penalty of confiscation of their estates. His money being now exhausted, he was obliged to seek foreign succour, conferring the regency in his absence on twenty-eight of the nobles. Theodore now went from place to place begging assistance, and in constant fear of assassination. The English sent him to their fleet in the Mediterranean, instructing their admiral to re-establish him on his throne. The admiral, however, told Theodore that the Corsicans meant to oppose his landing. It appears that he was now, in his helpless condition, made the victim of foul play, for on returning soon after to London, money was lent to him by a scheme of the Genoese

minister ; for this debt he was arrested and sent to prison.

He was arrested by a *ruse*. He lived in a privileged place—probably the Sanctuary at Westminster—and his creditors seized him by making him believe that Lord Grenville wanted to see him on business of importance ; he bit at the bait, thinking that he was to be reinstated at once. We may mention that while in England King Theodore distinguished himself, like his humble successor, the *soi-disant* Duc de Roussillon, by his fondness for the fair sex. He fell in love with Lady Lucy Stanhope, sister of the second earl, and even made her an offer of marriage ; and another lady, a widow, he all but persuaded to share his shadowy crown.

Horace Walpole describes him as a “comely, middle-sized man, very reserved, and affecting much dignity.” A life of him, Walpole tells us, was published, “too big to send but by messenger.”

There is a fine portrait of Theodore, taken from life by order of the King of Naples, when under confinement in the castle at Gaeta.

Horace Walpole wrote a paper in the *World*, as he tells us, in order to promote a subscription for King Theodore during his imprisonment. His Majesty's character, however, as Walpole tells us, was so bad, that the sum raised was only fifty pounds ; but “though it was much above his deserts, it was so much below his expectation that he sent a solicitor to threaten the printer with a prosecution for having taken so much liberty with his name ; and that, too, after he had accepted the money.” Well may Horace Walpole add, “I have done with countenancing kings.”

It was at Soho that Theodore went “to the place which levels kings and beggars, an unnecessary journey for him,” as Walpole says, “who had already fallen from the one to the other.”

The story of his actual death is thus related by the gossiping pen of Horace Walpole, who met him at several parties in London in 1749:—“King Theodore recovered his liberty only by giving up his effects to his creditors under the Act of Insolvency ; all the ‘effects,’ however, that he had to give up were his right, such as it was, to the throne of Corsica, which was registered accordingly in due form for the benefit of his creditors. As soon as Theodore was at liberty, he took a (sedan) chair and went to the Portuguese minister ; but not finding him at home, and not having a sixpence to pay, he desired the chairmen to carry him to a tailor in Soho, whom he prevailed upon to harbour him ; but he fell sick the next day, and died in three more.”

“I would have served him if a king, even in jail, could he have been an honest man,” said the individual who generously erected his monument.

It may be added that Boswell wrote an account of Theodore, strung together from anecdotes which he picked up from Walpole in Paris.

In the church or churchyard also lie Mr. William Hamilton, a Royal Academician of the last century ; Sir John Macpherson ; Mr. David Williams, who deserves to be remembered as the founder of the Literary Club ; and William Hazlitt, the critic and essayist, over whom the grave closed in 1830.

Adjoining the south-east angle of St. Anne's Church is the parish mortuary. This building was formerly the “watch-house” in the days of the old “Charleys ;” and here George Prince of Wales, in his youthful days, was more than once confronted with the ministers of parochial authority, on account of his share in some midnight brawl, but allowed to depart on unbuttoning his coat and showing the “star” on his breast beneath, whilst less well-born marauders were detained, to be brought before the “beak” the next day. Mr. J. T. Smith tells the following amusing anecdote concerning a scene witnessed by him at St. Anne's watch-house during one of those nocturnal rambles he occasionally indulged in whilst lodging in Gerrard Street:—

“Sir Harry Dinsdale, usually called Dimsdale, a short, feeble little man, was brought in to St. Anne's Watch-house, charged by two colossal guardians of the night with conduct most unruly. ‘What have you, Sir Harry, to say to all this?’ asked the Dogberry of St. Anne. The knight, who had been roughly handled, commenced like a true orator, in a low tone of voice, ‘May it please ye, my magistrate, I am not drunk ; it is *languor*. A parcel of the bloods of the Garden have treated me cruelly, because I would not treat them. This day, sir, I was sent for by Mr. Sheridan to make my speech upon the table at the Shakespeare Tavern, in *Common Garden* ; he wrote the speech for me, and always gives me half-a-guinea when he sends for me to the tavern. You see I didn't go in my royal robes ; I only put 'um on when I stand to be member.’ Constable : ‘Well, but, Sir Harry, why are you brought here?’ One of the watchmen then observed, ‘That though Sir Harry was but a little *shambling* fellow, he was so *upstroppolus*, and kicked him about at such a rate, that it was as much as he and his comrade could do to bring him along.’ As there was no one to support the charge, Sir Harry was advised to go home, which, however, he swore he would not do at midnight without an escort. ‘Do you know,’ said he,



'there's a parcel of *raps* now on the outside waiting for me.' The constable of the night gave orders for him to be protected to the public-house opposite the west end of St. Giles's Church, where he then lodged. Sir Harry, hearing a noise in the street, muttered, 'I shall catch it; I know I shall.' 'See the conquering hero comes' (*cries without*). 'Ay, they always use that tune when I gain my election at Garrett.'

"Sir Harry Dimsdale," remarks Mr. J. T. Smith, "first came into notice on the death of 'Sir Geoffrey Dunstan,' a dealer in old wigs, who had been for many years returned 'member for Garrett,' on his becoming a candidate. He received mock knight-hood, and was ever after known as 'Sir Harry.'" He exercised the itinerant trade of a muffin-man, in the afternoon; he had a little bell, which he held to his ear, smiling ironically at its tingling. His cry was—

"Muffins! muffins! ladies, come buy *me!* pretty, handsome, blooming, smiling maids."

Flaxman, the sculptor, and Mrs. Mathews, of blue-stocking memory, equipped him as a hardware-man, and as such Mr. J. T. Smith made two etchings of him.

This parish has one point in which it differed two centuries ago, and to a great extent still differs, from the surrounding districts. To use the words of the "London Spy," in 1725, "King Charles II., of pious memory, was a great benefactor to this parish; for soon after the Plague of London he re-peopled it with ten thousand Protestant families from abroad, who prov'd the most implacable enemies the late French king ever had." The same satirist draws an amusing picture, evidently from life, of one of the "shabby-genteel" households of Soho in his day, where a shopkeeper maintained himself, his wife, and a grown-up daughter, on a limited income. He says, "They were extraordinary economists; brewed their own beer, washed at home; made a joint hold out two days, and a shift three; let three parts of their house ready furnished; and kept paying one quarter's rent under another. . . . The worst the world could say of them was that they liv'd above what they had; that the daughter was as proud a slut as ever clapp'd clog on shoe-leather; and that they entertained lodgers who were no better than they should be." What a picture Charles Dickens could have called up out of this description!

## CHAPTER XXV.

### SOHO SQUARE AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

"Soho's busy Square."—*Wordsworth*.

Noted Residents in Soho—Appearance of the Square in Queen Anne's Reign—Proposal for the Restoration of the Square—Monmouth House—Lord Bateman—Carlisle House and the celebrated Mrs. Cornelys' Masquerades—St. Patrick's Chapel—Humorous Description of an Irish Wake—The White House and its Fashionable Patrons—Soho Bazaar—The Residence of Sir Joseph Banks—Origin of the Linnæan Society—Frith Street—Sir Samuel Romilly—Compton Street—Dean Street—The New Royalty Theatre—Greek Street—The House of Charity—Wardour Street—"The Mischief" in Oxford Street—Hog Lane (now Crown Street) and the Little Chapel founded by Nell Gwynne.

SOHO SQUARE, as shown in the previous chapter, was originally called the King's Square, and dates from the reign of Charles II. Evelyn, as he tells us in his "Diary," visited at a house in this celebrated vicinity, and spent the winter of 1690 "at Soho, in the great Square." It must not be forgotten, of course, that Sir Roger de Coverley is described, in the beginning of the *Spectator*, as living, when he is in town, at Soho Square. Shadwell, too, in one of his comedies, written in 1691, uses terms which imply that it was a fashionable quarter of the town, for he represents an alderman's wife as having "forced" her husband out of Mark Lane "to live in Soho Square." And no doubt it was the centre of fashion when Grosvenor and Cavendish Squares were not yet in existence.

The building of the Square was only begun in 1681, and at that time it contained no more than

nine inhabitants, among whom were the Duke of Monmouth, Colonel Ramsey, Mr. Pilcher, Mr. Broughton, Sir Henry Ingleby, and the Earl of Stamford, as the rate-books of St. Martin's attest.

Pennant says, though erroneously, that its original name was Monmouth Square, but that it came to be called after the king. Mr. Peter Cunningham, with his usual diligence, has sifted the question out by consulting the parish rate-books, ground leases, and other original documents, and so far as it is possible to prove a negative, he shows that it never was called Monmouth Square. It is possible, however that, from the Duke of Monmouth living in it, it may have been called "Monmouth's Square"—*i.e.*, the square in which Monmouth lived—and that this may have misled Pennant. The Duke of Monmouth lived in a large house with two wings on its southern side. It stood back, with a court before it.



The Duke of Monmouth was a natural son of Charles II., by Lucy Walters. His defeat at Sedgemoor, in 1685, and his subsequent execution, are matters of history.

Pennant mentions, as we have noticed before, a tradition to the effect that on the death of the Duke of Monmouth the name of the square was changed by his friends and admirers to Soho, that being the watchword of the day at the battle of Sedgemoor; but Mr. Cunningham has settled this question too in the negative, for he shows, by reference to contemporary documents, that whereas the battle of Sedgemoor was not fought till 1685, this district was called "Sohoe," or "Soho," nearly fifty years previously. For instance, the rate-books of St. Martin's, in 1636, speak of people living at "the Brick-kilns, near Soho;" and in 1650 the Commonwealth Survey describes "Shaver's Hall," or "Piccadilly Hall," as "lying between a roadway leading from Charing Cross to Knightsbridge West, and a highway leading from Charing Cross towards So Hoe." In the face of such evidence, it would seem impossible not to set aside the derivation propounded by Pennant as wholly untenable. It is far more probable that the duke borrowed his "watchword of the day" at Sedgemoor from the neighbourhood in which his home was situated, just as Nelson might have chosen "Burnham" or "Merton" as his watchword at the Nile or Trafalgar. Mr. Peter Cunningham writes—"I never saw it called Monmouth Square in any map, letter, or printed book, or anywhere, indeed, but in Pennant. It was called King Square, certainly, but not Monmouth Square." This, it appears to us, settles the question.

Soho Square is described by Allen, in his "History of London," even so lately as 1839, as presenting a very pleasing and somewhat rural appearance, having in the centre a large area within a handsome iron railing, enclosing several trees and shrubs." We should, however, certainly venture to assert that the expressions are scarcely any longer applicable to the square. "In the centre," adds Allen, "is a pedestrian statue of Charles II., at the feet of which are figures emblematic of the rivers Thames, Trent, Severn, and Humber. They are now," he continues, "in a most wretchedly mutilated state, and the inscriptions on the base of the pedestal are quite illegible."

London was brightened in Queen Anne's reign by numbers of public conduits and fountains. Most of them have been removed or destroyed, but are now in some measure replaced by drinking-fountains, which are certainly of great benefit to thirsty wayfarers. We add a description of the

ancient fountain in King's Square, Soho. In the centre was a fountain with four streams. In the middle of the basin was the statue of Charles II., in armour, on a pedestal, enriched with fruit and flowers; on the four sides of the base were figures representing the four chief rivers of the kingdom—Thames, Severn, Tyne, and Humber; on the south side were figures of an old man and a young virgin, with a stream ascending; on the west lay the figure of a naked virgin (only nets wrapped about her) reposing on a fish, out of whose mouth flowed a stream of water; on the north, an old man recumbent on a coal-bed, and an urn in his hand whence issues a stream of water; on the east rested a very aged man, with water running from a vase, and his right hand laid upon a shell. The statue is now so mutilated and disfigured, and the inscription quite effaced, that it is a difficult matter to distinguish whose it really was; some antiquaries, in fact, are of opinion that it is the effigy of the Duke of Monmouth. Its existence, however, is well nigh forgotten, as scarcely any persons now enter the enclosure. It stood originally in the middle of the basin of a fountain, which has long been filled up and converted into a somewhat unattractive flower-bed.

For several years past the inhabitants of Soho Square have been vainly endeavouring to obtain power to throw open this square to the general public, but it was found to be impracticable. The fee-simple of the property was supposed to be vested in the Duke of Portland, and all attempts to gain either an interview on the subject or the surrender of his lordship's rights having proved futile, a meeting of the inhabitants was convened in 1874, and a committee formed. Mr. Albert Grant, to whom the public are indebted for the transformation of Leicester Square, as described in a preceding chapter, generously offered to lay out and develop the grounds at an estimated cost of £7,000, and to endow it with an annual income of £150 in the names of a committee to be appointed by the inhabitants.

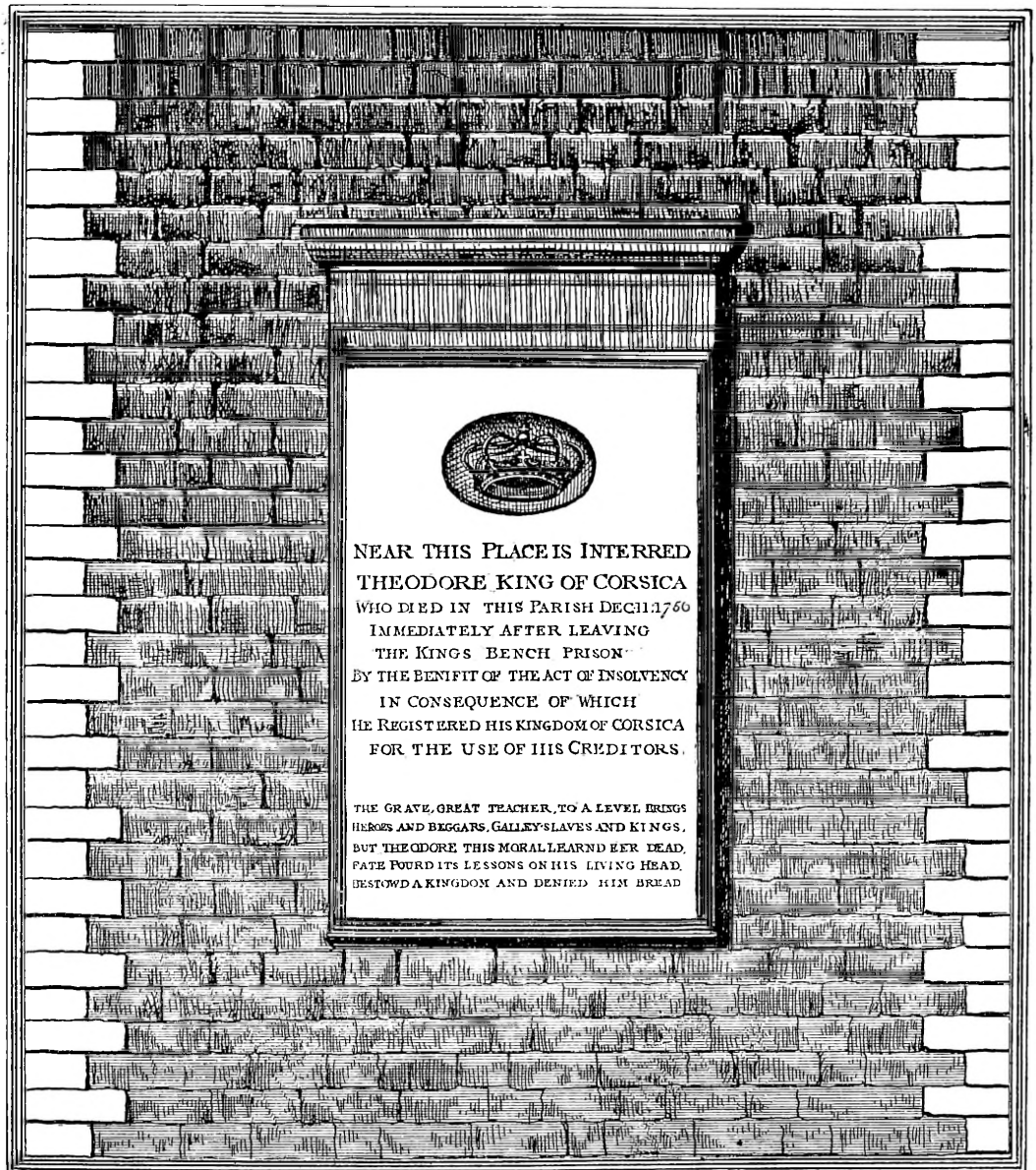
Alderman Beckford, whom we have already mentioned as a resident of the square, made here a collection of works of art which subsequently were sold by public auction. This did not, however, deter him from beginning *de novo*, in order to decorate his new Wiltshire toy, Fonthill, which was destined in the end to share the same fate. Here also the shipwrecked remains of Sir Cloudesley Shovel lay in state in 1707. Bishop Burnet, the historian, lived in Soho Square before his removal to Clerkenwell, and here he had his curiosities, including the supposed "original Magna Charta,"



with part of the great seal remaining attached to it.

Monmouth House, as shown in an illustration on page 187, was a lofty brick building of three storeys, comprising a centre with slightly projecting wings.

Monmouth, and after his death it was purchased by Lord Bateman, whose family occupied it for a time; but, as the stream of fashion was setting westwards, they travelled along with it, and, pulling down the mansion, let out the site on building



KING THEODORE'S MONUMENT.

Each wing was adorned with three pilasters, with enriched capitals, rising to the level of the third storey, and each floor was lighted with large semi-circular-headed windows. The doorway in the centre was approached by a broad flight of steps, and protected by an ample porch supported by double columns on each side.

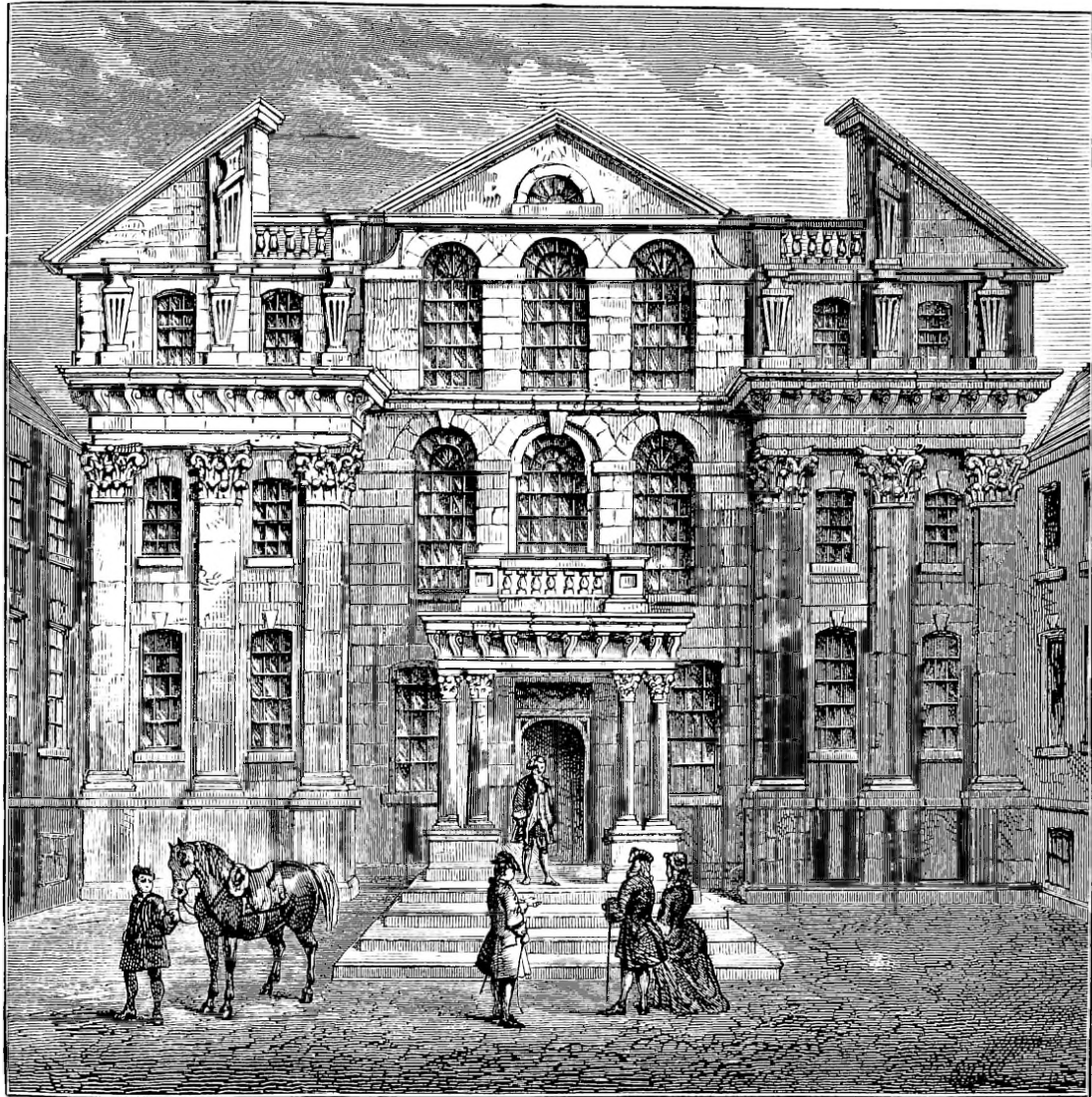
The house was built by Wren for the Duke of

leazes. This would seem to be the irrevocable fate of all the great houses in London either sooner or later. The house, in 1717, was converted into auction-rooms, but was demolished in 1773. The name of Lord Bateman is still kept up here by a row of narrow houses called Bateman's Buildings, connecting the south side of the Square with Queen Street. But the unfortunate duke has not been so



lucky: for a time his name lived on in "Monmouth" Street, St. Giles's; but since it had obtained a bad name as the resort of Jew dealers in rags and old clothes, the thoroughfare was re-christened Dudley Street; the old clothes, however, have not passed away along with the unsavoury name. Of

of the Howards, Earls of Carlisle (a branch of the ducal house of Norfolk), the head of whom was living, in the middle of the last century, in a house on the east side of the square. The mansion, which was built in the reign of James II., originally stood in the midst of a garden, the extent of which



MONMOUTH HOUSE.

this Lord Bateman, Horace Walpole tells the story that George I. created him an Irish peer to avoid making him a Knight of the Bath; "for," said his majesty, with the wit of Charles II., "I can make him a lord, but I cannot make him a gentleman." Before Lord Bateman's house was pulled down, it was let by him to various persons in the higher ranks of society. Among others, the French ambassador was residing in it in 1791-2.

In Carlisle Street we have perpetuated the name

it would be difficult to define at the present time. The lower walls of the house were of red brick and on the lead-work of the cisterns was the date 1669. The mansion in its original condition must have had a magnificent appearance, with its marble-floored hall, its superbly decorated staircases, and its large and lofty rooms with enriched ceilings.

Towards the close of the last century it was tenanted by the celebrated Mrs. Cornelys, who turned it into a place of resort for masked balls



and other fashionable amusements. Her assemblies were at one time the rage of the town, but she was in the end ruined by her extravagance. Hither "the quality" repaired in large numbers, although the morality of the place was rather questionable. Among the lady's chief patrons were the eccentric Duke of Queensberry ("Old Q.") and the notorious Duchess of Kingston, who appeared here in other characters, and especially on one occasion in that of Iphigenia, "in a state almost ready," as Horace Walpole slyly remarks, "for the sacrifice." There is a scarce print of the duchess in this character, which shows rather a deficiency of dress. It was at one of Mrs. Cornelys' masquerades that the beautiful daughter of a peer wore the costume of an Indian princess, three black girls bearing her train, a canopy held over her head by two negro boys, and her dress covered with jewels worth £100,000. It was at another that Adam, in flesh-coloured tights and an apron of fig-leaves, was to be seen in company with the Duchess of Bolton as Diana. Death, in a white shroud, bearing his own coffin and epitaph; Lady Augusta Stuart as a Vestal; the Duke of Gloucester, in an old English habit, with a star on his cloak; and the Duke of Devonshire, "who was very fine, but in no particular character"—all these, and others, passed through her rooms; yet before many years had gone by Mrs. Cornelys was selling asses' milk at Knightsbridge, and in 1797 she died in the Fleet Prison, forming schemes to the very last for retrieving her broken fortunes. Attempts were unsuccessfully made to keep up the festivities of Carlisle House; but "Almack's" drew away the great, and the square gradually declined in the world—from fashion to philosophy, from artists to tradesmen, from shops to hospitals—until at length its lowest depth seems to have been reached.

Into the promenades at Mrs. Cornelys' house gentlemen were requested not to enter "with boots;" and in satire the manager of a rival amusement is said to have given this notice:—"THE NEW PARADISE.—No Gentlemen or Ladies to be admitted with nails in their shoes." Of the morality of Mrs. Cornelys and of Carlisle House, Northouck had no high opinion; but he throws the blame on its aristocratic patrons. He says, "Here the nobility of this kingdom long protected Mrs. Cornelys in entertaining their masquerade and gaming assemblies, in violation of the laws, and to the destruction of all sober principles."

It is clear, from the advertisements scattered up and down the files of the London newspapers, that, beginning with the winter of 1762-3, Mrs. Cornelys contrived to secure for some ten or twelve years

the almost undivided patronage of the world of fashion, keeping the West End, and especially the neighbourhood of "Soho Fields," alive with a succession of balls, concerts, masquerades, "subscription music meetings," &c., and securing her interest with the families of "quality" by giving balls to their upper servants. Her advertisements are by themselves a study in the art of puffery, and occasionally throw light on the condition of life in London: as, for instance, when she "begs the chairmen and hackney-coach drivers not to quarrel, or to run their poles through each other's windows." On one occasion, when it was rumoured that the enterprising lady was about to open a sister institution in Bishopsgate Street, half the City was up in arms to oppose her on the ground of morality, and the lady was defeated. On several occasions as many as 800 persons of "quality" were present at her masquerades, the Duke of Gloucester, and even the King of Denmark, being of the number. At one time she was threatened with proceedings under the "Alien Act" by a rival in the same line of business; but by a judicious use of "soft sawder" she circumvented her opponents whilst appearing to give way to them, and thus she prolonged her lease of popularity. At length, however, by instituting a harmonic meeting, Mrs. Cornelys placed herself in an attitude of direct hostility to the Italian Opera House, whose managers applied to the magistrates to stop her entertainment. They were so far successful that Sir John Fielding ordered Guardini, the chief singer at Carlisle House, to be arrested. This was the first instalment of ill success which befell her; the next was the establishment of a rival house of entertainment at the Pantheon, in Oxford Street; and in spite of a desperate effort to prop up her falling fortunes by a new amusement, called a "Coterie"—the details of which have not come down to us—in July, 1772, there came a "smash," and in the November following the whole contents of Carlisle House, with its sumptuous decorations, were brought to the hammer. A graphic account of this sale will be found in the *Westminster Magazine* for January, 1773, under the title of "Cupid turned Auctioneer."

But the irrepressible Mrs. Cornelys was not destined to be crushed by a single failure. The "Circe" and "Sultana" of Soho gathered her aristocratic friends and patrons around her; and her name again appears, in 1774, as manager and conductress of a new series of concerts. These, however, would appear to have turned out profitless, for in August, 1775, Carlisle House was advertised for sale by Messrs. Christie "with or



without its furniture." She still, however, seems to have fought on against fate, for as late as 1777 we find Mrs. Cornelys still organising masques at Carlisle House, though "the whole company did not exceed three hundred." The exact date of her last effort to amuse the fashionable world on this spot is unknown. In 1779, the establishment appears to have been under the management of a Mr. Hoffmann, who tried a variety of experiments in the way of "masked balls," and "benefit concerts," but with a like result. With the year 1780 we find a great change in the amusements of Carlisle House, for it was devoted to the meetings of a debating society, called the "School of Eloquence:" its meetings being presided over by a clergyman as "moderator;" on other evenings the rooms being devoted to "the reception of company previous to the 'masqued ridotto,'" at the Opera House. On Sunday evenings also there was a "public promenade," the admission to which was by a three-shilling ticket, which included refreshments of "tea, coffee, capillaire, orgeat, and lemonade." These various attractions were held out, but with inferior success, for several years, a Mr. William Wade officiating as master of the ceremonies. In vain did he open a "morning suite of rooms" supplied with the newspapers and periodicals of the day "*gratis* to subscribers;" in vain did he organise courses of "scientific lectures," and advertise concerts by the Polish dwarf, Count Borawlski, with tickets at half-a-guinea, "entitling the purchaser to see and converse with that extraordinary personage." In 1785 the property was in Chancery, and the house sold under a decree of the court, and Mrs. Cornelys retired into private life at Knightsbridge, where we shall find her again.

What was once the music-room of Lord Carlisle's mansion, and afterwards the grand saloon of Mrs. Cornelys' establishment, was subsequently altered and turned into a Catholic chapel. It is now known as "St. Patrick's, Soho," and is largely frequented by the poor Irish of the neighbourhood. The entrance to the chapel is in Sutton Street.

The property was purchased in 1792 by the exertions and influence of the celebrated Catholic preacher and controversialist, Dr. O'Leary, who died in 1802, and to whose memory there is a mural tablet with his likeness on the south side of the building.

Over the high altar is a painting of the Crucifixion by Vandyke, said to be the finest specimen of a sacred painting by his hand in England, and equal to any in Belgium. It is, however, placed in an alcove or recess, in which the light is most unfavourable to the display of its beauty.

This chapel was formerly much frequented not only by the poor Irish who lived round Soho and St. Giles's, but also by Catholics of the wealthier class residing about Russell and Bedford Squares. It long divided with the Sardinian Chapel in Lincoln's Inn Fields the administration of the chief Roman Catholic charities; and the leading Roman Catholic bishops, Dr. Milner, Cardinal Wiseman, and Archbishop Manning have frequently advocated from its pulpit the cause of charity. The priest's residence, at the corner of the square, formed also a part of Mrs. Cornelys' premises.

Prior to the foundation of St. Patrick's Mission in Sutton Street, mass was said at No. 13 in the Square, in the house of the Neapolitan ambassador, and also, though by stealth and secretly, at a small house in Denmark Street, where some French priests had taken up their abode on the commencement of troubles in France.

The Irish live in various parts of London, apart and amongst themselves, carrying with them the many virtues and vices of their native land, and never becoming absorbed in the nation to which, for years, they may be attached. Swindlers, thieves, and tramps may surround them, but do not in general affect them. Tom Malone still renews upon English ground his feuds with the O'Learys, commencing not within the memory of man; and some Bridget O'Rafferty pays Ellen O'Connor for evidence given by her grandfather against the rebels of '98. "It would be a curious investigation," says Mr. Diprose, in his "Book about London," "for the philosopher, how far the interest and progress of this most gallant and interesting nation have been affected by what, in the absence of a better definition, we shall designate the absence of merging power. Nor is it less curious, that whilst the Irish preserve their national characteristics as steadfastly as do the Jews, they have the quality of absorbing other nations, for we find that the English who settle in Ireland, not merely acquire the brogue, but become more Irish than the Irish themselves. *Ipsis Hibernis Hiberniores* is as true now as it was in the days of the poet Spenser. The 'Irish Hudibras' (1682) thus humorously describes an Irish wake:—

"To their own sports (the masses ended)  
The mourners now are recommended.  
Some sit and chat, some laugh, some weep,  
Some sing cronans, and some do sleep;  
Some court, some scold, some blow, some puff,  
Some take tobacco, some take snuff.  
Some play the trump, some trot the hay,  
Some at machan, some at noddly play;  
Thus mixing up their grief and sorrow,  
Yesterday buried, killed to-morrow."

The house which stood at the northern angle of Sutton Street was celebrated in the last century, and the beginning of the present, as "the White House," and was a place of fashionable dissipation to which only the titled and wealthy classes had the privilege of admission. Its character may be inferred from the fact that it was one of the haunts of the then Prince of Wales, the old Duke of Queensberry, and the Marquis of Hertford; and the ruin of many a female heart may be dated from a visit within its walls. It is said by tradition that its apartments were known as the "Gold," "Silver," "Bronze" Rooms, &c., each being called from the prevailing character of its fittings, and that the walls of nearly every room were inlaid with mirrored panels. Many of the rooms in this house, too, had a sensational name, as the "Commons," the "Painted Chamber," the "Grotto," the "Coal Hole," and the "Skeleton Room"—the latter so styled on account of a closet out of which a skeleton was made to step forth by the aid of machinery. The "White House," as a scene of profligacy, lived on into the present century, and having been empty for some years, was largely altered, and to some extent rebuilt, by the founders of the present occupiers—Messrs. Crosse and Blackwell, the well-known pickle manufacturers.

We shall not attempt to describe in detail the White House, which enjoyed such an unenviable reputation from the scenes which it witnessed in the days when George III. was King, and George Prince of Wales was living. The "White House" retained much of its bad character till it was pulled down in 1837-8, to make room for the warehouse which now covers its site.

No. 21 in this square, which adjoined the "White House," and was afterwards Messrs. D'Almaine's musical repository, is now absorbed into the pickle warehouse of Messrs. Crosse and Blackwell. Though considerably modernised, it still retains one magnificently-carved mantelpiece and ornamental ceiling; and the grandly-proportioned rooms are the same as when the mansion was the town-house of the Lords Fauconberg.

In the north-west corner of the square is the celebrated Soho Bazaar, one of the haunts most frequented by sight-seers, especially at Christmas, New Year's Day, and other gift-seasons. It was first established in 1815, and for many years was a formidable rival to the Pantheon. It is a fashionable lounge for ladies and children, and especially attractive to "country cousins." It has now an entrance in Oxford Street also, one of the houses on the south side of that roadway having been added to it. It is scarcely necessary to ex-

plain here that the word "bazaar" comes to us from the East, denoting a group of shops in which dealers in some one commodity or class of commodities congregate in one place, much to the gain of both purchasers and sellers. Yet, as Mr. Chambers remarks, "a stranger may do well to bear in mind that in London . . . some approach is made to the system. For instance, coachmakers congregate in considerable numbers in Long Acre, watchmakers and jewellers in Clerkenwell, tanners and leatherdressers in Bermondsey, bird and birdcage sellers in Seven Dials, statuaries in the Euston Road, furniture-dealers and clothiers in Tottenham Court Road, hat-makers in Bermondsey and Southwark, dentists around St. Martin's Lane, and booksellers and publishers in Paternoster Row."

Soho Bazaar, the first of its kind in England, was established, according to Allen, by John Trotter, Esq., to whose family it still belongs. It was originally designed by Mr. Trotter as a *dépôt* for the sale of articles in aid of the widows and orphans of those who had fallen in the long war against Napoleon; but the Government of the day did not entertain the proposal, and accordingly Mr. Trotter started the bazaar as a private speculation of his own. The institution was opened by Queen Charlotte, in 1816, and was extensively patronised by the royal family. The building, which does not present any architectural features, covers a space of 300 feet by 150, and extends from the square to Dean Street on the one hand, and to Oxford Street on the other. It consists of several rooms, conveniently fitted up with mahogany counters. The bazaar occupies two floors, and has counter accommodation for upwards of 160 tenants. The rent of the counters, which are mostly for the sale of fancy goods, is very moderate; and to obtain a tenancy, it is requisite that a certificate, signed by eight respectable persons, be presented to the managers of the bazaar. The bazaar has been frequently patronised by royalty; the Princess of Prussia honoured it with a visit in 1868.

Entering from Oxford Street, the visitor will find a rare assortment of ivory goods, not only finished articles, but others being designed and made on the spot. Further on are china articles, and stalls for sewing-machines. Up a small staircase to the left is an extensive picture-gallery, with some 600 stereographs, water-colour and oil paintings. Other rooms close by are filled with a variety of fancy goods, or devoted to the purposes of photography. The two principal rooms in the building are about ninety feet long, and in them the visitor may find almost every trade represented. One large room is set apart for the sale of books, another for fur-



niture; and another for birds, cages, &c.; and at one end of the latter room is a large recess, occupied with a rustic aviary, through which runs a stream of water. Connected with the bazaar are spacious and well-appointed refreshment-rooms, and also offices for the registration of governesses and the hire of servants, &c.; and the scene that here presents itself during business hours is one well worthy of a visit.

During the latter part of the eighteenth and the earlier years of the present century, Soho Square attained some celebrity as the residence of the learned and accomplished philosopher, Sir Joseph Banks, so bitterly and caustically satirised by "Peter Pindar." He lived in the house, No. 32, now the Hospital for Diseases of the Heart, and here he used to hold his receptions, at which nearly every man eminent in science was a frequent attendant. Sir Joseph Banks, who was descended from an ancient Yorkshire family, was born in Argyle Street, in the parish of St. James's, Westminster, in 1743, and was educated at Harrow and Eton, whence he removed as a gentleman commoner to Christ Church, Oxford. His love of botany increased at the university, and there his mind warmly embraced all the other branches of natural history. In 1766 he was chosen into the Royal Society, and in that year went to Newfoundland, for the purpose of collecting plants. The Royal Society having made a proposition to the Government to effect a general voyage of discovery in those parts of the ocean which were still wholly unknown, or only partially discovered, and especially to observe the transit of Venus at Otaheite in 1769, Banks was appointed, in conjunction with Dr. Solander, naturalist to the expedition, which sailed from Plymouth Sound, under the command of Captain Cook, in August, 1768. After an absence of three years the expedition returned to England, the specimens which Banks had brought, at so much risk and expense, exciting much interest. In 1777, on the retirement of Sir John Pringle from the presidency of the Royal Society, Mr. Banks was elected to the vacant chair. In 1795 he was invested with the Order of the Bath, and he was afterwards sworn a member of the Privy Council, and chosen a member of the National Institute of France. His life was devoted to the prosecution of scientific researches, and the general diffusion of useful knowledge. In fact, he largely anticipated the Humboldts and Owens of our own day. Sir Joseph Banks died in June, 1820.

His house in Soho Square has also had other distinguished inhabitants; Sir J. E. Smith and Mr. Robert Brown, for example, both eminent naturalists. The Linnæan Society was founded in 1788,

and held its meetings in Gerrard Street, until its establishment in Soho Square. Here it continued to flourish till its removal to Burlington House, Piccadilly, in 1855.

The Linnæan Society, it would appear, like many another great institution, had its origin in an accident. The late Sir John E. Smith, then a medical student, was breakfasting one day with Sir Joseph Banks, when the latter told him that he just had an offer of the memoranda and botanical collections of the great Linnæus for a thousand pounds, but that he had declined to buy them. Young Smith, whose zeal for botany was great, begged his father to advance to him the money, and at length persuaded him to do so, though not without difficulty. It may appear strange that Sweden should consent to part with the treasures of her far-famed naturalist; and indeed the king, Gustavus III., who had been absent in France, was much displeased, on his return, at hearing that a vessel had just sailed for England with these collections. He immediately dispatched a vessel to the Sound, to intercept it, but was too late. The herbarium, books, MSS., &c., arrived safely in London in 1784, packed in twenty-six cases, and cost the purchaser £1,088 5s. In the following year Smith was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and devoted himself more to botanical studies than to his profession as a physician. In 1792 he had the honour of being engaged to teach botany to Queen Charlotte and the princesses, and he was knighted by the Prince Regent in 1814. At his death, in 1828, the celebrated collection, with Sir J. E. Smith's additions, was purchased by the Linnæan Society, and still remains in their possession.

The house of Sir Joseph Banks was kept for many years by his sister, a learned lady, who had as great a passion for collecting coins as her brother had for botanical researches. Her appearance is thus described by the author of a "Book for a Rainy Day:"—"Her dress was that of the old school; her Barcelona quilted petticoat had a hole on either side, for the convenience of rummaging two immense pockets, stuffed with books of all sizes. This petticoat was covered with a deep stomached gown, sometimes drawn through the pocket-holes, similar to those of many of the ladies of Bunbury's time, which he has produced in his picture. In this dress" (writes Mr. J. T. Smith) "I have frequently seen her walk, followed by a six-foot servant with a cane almost as tall as himself. Miss Banks, I may add, when she wanted to purchase a broadside in the streets, was more than once taken for a member of the ballad-singing confraternity. And yet this same lady, when she



was in the prime of life, had been a fashionable whip, and driven a four-in-hand in the Park."

In the south-east corner of the square lived, for many years, the late Mr. Barnes, the responsible editor of the *Times*; and it was here that, when waited upon by some of the leading politicians of

Romilly. He was descended from a Protestant family, who left France after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. His father was a jeweller, carrying on business in this street; and he was sent to the French Protestant School close by, where he received but an indifferent education;



SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY.

the time, he laid down the terms on which that paper would support the ministry of the Duke of Wellington, in 1828.

Among the other noted residents of Soho Square we may mention George II., when Prince of Wales; and also Field-Marshal Conway, Walpole's correspondent and friend.

In Frith Street, on the south side of the square, in the year 1757, was born one of England's celebrated advocates and philanthropists, Sir Samuel

but as soon as he had left it he applied himself to self-culture, and his diligence in the acquisition of learning was largely rewarded in after life.

Placed as a lad with a solicitor, whom he left for a merchant's office, which he also resigned, eventually he was articled to one of the sworn clerks of Chancery. At the expiration of his articles he qualified himself for the bar, but had to wait long and patiently ere he was rewarded with any practice. When briefs did at last fall to



his lot, it very soon became manifest that they were held by a master, and the result was that a tide of prosperity set in, and "success came upon him like a flood." His income rose to about £9,000 a year, and in his diary he congratulated himself that he did not press his father to buy him a seat in the

1806—the electors of Westminster having returned him to Parliament without the expenditure of a shilling on his part; a great thing in those days of bribery and corruption—and during the short administration of Mr. Grenville he was appointed Solicitor-General, and knighted. Nor was he dis-



THE SIGN OF THE "MISCHIEF" (see page 196).

Six Clerks' Office. Romilly now rapidly rose to distinction in the Court of Chancery, where he was distinguished for his profound learning and forcible eloquence; and to him Lord Brougham has paid the following tribute:—"Romilly, by the force of his learning and talents, and the most spotless integrity, rose to the very height of professional ambition. He was beyond question or pretence of rivalry the first man in the courts in this country."

Romilly entered the House of Commons in

tinguished professionally only; but during his political career he was listened to with rapt attention, and a passage in one of his speeches in favour of the abolition of the slave-trade received the singular honour of three distinct rounds of applause from the House.

But Romilly's grand claim to remembrance rests upon his humane efforts to mitigate the Draconic code of English law, in which nearly three hundred crimes, varying from murder to keeping company

with a gipsy, were punishable with death. The first bill which he succeeded in getting passed was to repeal a statute of Elizabeth, which made it a capital offence to steal privately from the person of another. He next tried a bolder stroke, and introduced a bill to repeal several statutes which punished with death the crimes of stealing privately in a shop goods to the amount of five shillings; and of stealing to the amount of forty shillings in a dwelling-house; or in vessels in navigable rivers. But this bill was lost. Romilly, however, did not despair, but kept on agitating session after session, and cleared the way for the success which came when he was no more.

In his forty-first year Sir Samuel Romilly married Miss Garbett (a *protégé* of the Marquis of Lansdowne), a lady of rare talents and moral excellence. But after twenty years of happy married life, her health began to decline, and on the 29th of October, 1818, she died. This was a dreadful shock to Romilly, and produced such mental anguish, that delirium followed, and in an unwatched moment he sprang from his bed, cut his throat, and expired almost instantly—and this at a time when worldly honours were being heaped upon him! It is related that the following morning, when Lord Eldon took his seat on the bench and Romilly's place was vacant—iron man though he was—he exclaimed, "I cannot stay here!" and rising in great agitation, broke up the court. The bodies of husband and wife were buried in one grave, at Knill, in Herefordshire. In Frith Street, too, William Hazlitt, the essayist, died of cholera in 1830; he was buried, as we have stated, in St. Anne's Churchyard.

Compton Street was built in the reign of King Charles II., by Sir Francis Compton; and New Compton Street was first called Stiddolph Street, after Sir Richard Stiddolph, the owner of the land on which it was built. Both New Compton and Dean Streets were named after Bishop Compton, Dean of the Chapel Royal, who formerly held the living of St. Anne's, Soho. In this street, on the west side, at No. 75 (now the warehouse of Messrs. Wilson, wholesale tin-plate workers, of Wardour Street), lived Sir James Thornhill, the painter, whose daughter married Hogarth. The house, which is still unaltered in its main features, has several handsome rooms, and a magnificent staircase; and the panels of the walls are adorned with a series of paintings by the hand of its former master.

At No. 33 in this street lived Harlowe, the painter of "The Trial of Queen Katherine." He died here in 1819, at an early age.

The small theatre in this street, now called the Royalty, was built in 1840, by Miss F. Kelly (an actress who had made herself a reputation in light comedy and domestic melodrama on the boards of Drury Lane and the Haymarket) as a school for acting, but she reaped little profit from the enterprise. It was for many years used chiefly for amateur theatricals, but has of late years become popular by its spirited performance of operetta and burlesque entertainments. Miss Kelly, who was the daughter of a retired military officer, was destined for the stage from her birth, and was familiar with the boards of Old Drury at ten years of age as a chorus-singer. Her *début* as an actress was at Glasgow, in 1807, she being then in her seventeenth year. She rose to great eminence in her profession, and was equally successful as a vocalist and an actress, succeeding to many of the parts which had been filled by the celebrated Madame Storace. For several years she was an extraordinary attraction at Drury Lane, and while performing one evening at that theatre, received a striking proof of the power of her charms. A pistol was fired at her from the pit, the ball passing directly over her head; and as the terrified lady fell insensible on the stage, it was at first thought she had been killed, and a scene of wild confusion ensued. The assailant was secured, and proved to be a lunatic who had for some time persecuted Miss Kelly with incoherent letters, expressive of his attachment. A similar attempt was made upon her life in Dublin, but happily with no greater success.

In the fiftieth year of her age, by which time she had acquired a handsome competence, it occurred to Miss Kelly to establish a school for acting, for which purpose she purchased an extensive freehold property in Dean Street, Soho, in the hope of improving the condition of dramatic art. The school was a success. A number of pupils hastened to enrol themselves under the banner of so accomplished a teacher, for few ever equalled Miss Kelly in the art of—

"Making the laughter weep, the weeper smile;  
Catching all passion in her craft of wile."

Unfortunately her ambition did not stop here, but inspired her with the wild idea of building a new theatre on her own extensive premises. Encouraged by the lavish promises of support and subscriptions from her numerous patrons among the aristocracy, foremost of whom was the Duke of Devonshire, who especially interested himself in her hazardous undertaking, Miss Kelly converted the large yard and stabling attached to her house into the Theatre Royal, Dean Street, Soho, by which title, however, it



was seldom known, generally passing under the name of "Miss Kelly's Theatre." The entrance to all parts of this toy playhouse was through Miss Kelly's private residence, a peculiarity of construction which had, at all events, the advantage of novelty.

Heralded by many a flourish of trumpets on the part of the newspapers, Miss Kelly opened her tiny theatre on the 25th of May, 1840, with a new piece by Mr. Morris Barnett, entitled *Summer and Winter*, in which the author and Miss Kelly sustained the principal parts, supported, as the announcement went, "by an efficient company." The result was as disastrous as it was speedy. The distinguished patronage, from which so much had been expected, proving more select than numerous, the theatre, after being open five nights, on two of which the actors outnumbered the audience, was closed abruptly. In November of the same year Miss Kelly announced herself *At Home*, at the Theatre Royal, Dean Street. The performance was monological, and similar to some entertainments which she had given a few years previously at the Strand, with but moderate success. The result was again a complete failure, and Miss Kelly retired into private life, a loser of more than £7,000 by her unlucky speculation.

In 1850 the little theatre, which had so long languished in obscurity, made a desperate rally, and presented itself to the public as the "New English Opera House," opening with, as the play-bills announced, "a grand opera in three acts, entitled *The Last Crusade*, by Alexander Mitchell, the blind composer." This opera had been originally represented with great success at the Grand Ducal Theatre, Brunswick, but, possibly from the inefficiency of the company, proved a total failure at the Soho theatre, and the "New English Opera House" was speedily closed.

In 1861 it was entirely re-constructed, with great improvements, and re-opened on the 12th of November under the name of the "New Royalty," since which time it has enjoyed its fair share of success. Miss Neilson made her successful *début* as "Juliet," in 1865. In 1866 Miss M. Oliver assumed the management, and during the reign of herself and her successor the Royalty has maintained its *prestige*.

Greek Street, which runs from north to south, parallel to Dean Street on the east, dates from the year 1680. Pennant considers that its name is a corruption of "Grig" Street, but it was more probably derived from a colony of merchants from the Levant, for whose use a Greek church was built hard by it in Crown Street.

The last house on the east side of Greek Street, now devoted to a Jewish school and synagogue, was the residence of Sir Thomas Lawrence for the first four years of the present century; and during the last century Josiah Wedgwood made it the head-quarters of his London business. It had previously been a dissecting-room, for Soho Square and the adjoining streets were frequented by the faculty; but Wedgwood, on making it his show-room, named it "Portland House." Here he exhibited the magnificent service which he made for the Empress of Russia, and Queen Charlotte was among those who came hither to inspect it. A great artistic interest belongs to the premises, for, as Miss Meteyard remarks in her "Life of Wedgwood," "it was here that his fame culminated in the greatest of his works—the jasper tablets, the medallion portraits and busts, the cameos, and the Barberini Vase." Time, fire, and alterations, however, have so changed Portland House, that little of what was Wedgwood's Gallery is now standing except the outer walls; though Miss Meteyard tells us that the name of the great potter was till recently to be seen here cut with a diamond on a window-pane.

Among the many charitable institutions to be found in Soho, none perhaps are more worthy of public support than one at the corner of the Square and of Greek Street, called "The House of Charity." It occupies the house which formerly belonged to Alderman Beckford, who lived here in princely splendour. The institution, which is under the patronage of the Archbishop of Canterbury, was founded in 1846; but the present building and fitting-up of the premises dates only from 1863, when they were taken at a cost of upwards of £3,000. "It is the only Home in London gratuitously afforded to such distressed persons as are of good character, upon a recommendation from some one who knows them. Thus many deserving persons are saved from the sufferings and privations which precede an application to the casual ward or nightly refuge, as well as from the degradation consequent upon their reception into such promiscuous places of resort. Among the various classes of distress relieved by this House are patients discharged from hospitals before they are sufficiently recovered to take situations; these find here a comfortable lodging and ample diet, and are generally successful in obtaining situations. Orphan or friendless girls who have unadvisedly come to London in search of employment, or have accidentally lost their places, meet here with protection, counsel, and, in general, with situations. Widows, who have been reduced to

the necessity of seeking a subsistence for themselves, are here recommended to places of trust or domestic service. Emigrants, while breaking up their homes and converting their effects into money, wait here until they embark. Out-patients of hospitals, excluded, through want of room, or by regulations, from admission into them, are enabled to derive benefit, while here, by attending the hospitals for medical advice and treatment. In short, the House of Charity is," says the Council of the Institution in their report, "a home for every kind of friendlessness and destitution which is not the manifest offspring of vice and profligacy."

Wardour Street, which runs from north to south, parallel to Dean Street on its western side, was named after the Lords Arundell of Wardour, one of whom married the daughter and heiress of one of those rare personages, successful gamblers—Colonel Thomas Panton, of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, a gentleman whose name is still perpetuated in Panton Street, Haymarket.

Wardour Street, as a stone at the corner of Edward Street informs us, was built in 1686. Flaxman was living here in 1784 at No. 27. In this street also lived the once celebrated Tom Hudson, the comic song-writer and singer. He carried on business as a grocer, and every week he wrote a comic song, which he had printed upon his "tea-papers," and presented to his customers on the Saturday.

During the last half-century the name of this street has passed into a by-word and a proverb, as the head-quarters of curiosity-shops, antique and modern, genuine and fictitious. Leigh Hunt tells us in his "Town" that it was a favourite haunt of Charles Lamb, and that he had often heard the author of the "Essays of Elia" expatiate on the pleasure of strolling up Wardour Street on a summer afternoon.

The shops occupied by brokers and dealers in old furniture, pictures, prints, china, &c., are above a score in number, forming thus almost a bazaar or mart, and constituting a class apart from the rest of the locality. Here the late Lord Macaulay might be seen trudging home with a second-hand book, or packet of ballads, or broadsides; and here Mr. Gladstone himself, even when Prime Minister, would often take a stroll, picking up a specimen of old-fashioned china for his superb collection in Carlton Terrace.

We read in old documents of "Old Soho, *alias* Wardour Street." To this street, no doubt, Pope really alluded when he wrote, in imitation of Horace:—

"And when I flatter, let my dirty leaves  
Clothe spice, line trunks, or, fluttering in a row,  
Befringe the rails of Bedlam and Soho."

On the south side of Oxford Street, No. 414, a few doors to the east of Charles Street, is an inn called "The Mischief." In its windows is still kept and shown a curious sign which used to hang over the entrance, representing a man with a "load of mischief" on his back; the said load consisting of a shrewish-looking wife, a monkey or ape; and hard by are most suspicious-looking pawn-shops and gin-shops. The design, of which we give a copy on page 193, is worthy of Hogarth's pencil.

The narrow, winding lane running southwards from the corner of Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road, now known as Crown Street, but in former times as Hog Lane, forms the boundary between the parishes of St. Giles and St. Anne, Soho. Its narrowness and its windings alike serve to show its antiquity; and, no doubt, it derived its first name from the pigs that fed along its sides when it had green hedges and deep ditches on either side. In 1762 it came to be dignified by its more recent appellation from the "Rose and Crown" tavern. Rose Street runs out of Crown Street, on the west connecting it with Greek Street. In it was a Greek church, built for the use of "merchants from the Levant," dating from the time of Charles II. This edifice helped to give its name to Greek Street adjoining. It does not appear, however, to have remained long in the hands of these oriental Christians, but to have been given up to the use of the French Protestants who settled in this neighbourhood in large force. As such it is immortalised by Hogarth. The Greek inscription still remaining over the door, however, points plainly to its original destination.

The poor little chapel which belonged in succession to the Greeks and to the French refugees, stood on the western side of Crown Street, adjoining some almshouses, which are said to have been founded by Nell Gwynne. Part of the chapel and one side of the old almshouses have lately been removed, in order to give place to a lofty and handsome Independent chapel with schools attached.

In Hog Lane Hogarth has laid the scene of one of the best of his smaller pictures, "Noon." Mr. Peter Cunningham notes a curious fact with respect to this picture, namely, that it is "generally reversed in the engravings, and thus made untrue to the locality, which (he adds) Hogarth never was." The background of the picture gives us a view of the then newly-built church of St. Giles's-in-the-Fields.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

## ST. GILES'S IN THE FIELDS.

"On Newgate steps Jack Chance was found,  
And bred up near St. Giles's Pound."—*Old Song.*

St. Giles, the Patron Saint of Lepers—The Lepers' Hospital founded here—The Village of St. Giles in the Time of the Plantagenets, Tudors, and Stuarts—Executions at St. Giles's—The "Half-way House" on the Road to Tyburn—The Cage and the Pound—St. Giles's Church—Church Lane—Monmouth Court and the Catmatch Press—The Seven Dials—Shaved by a Woman—The Prince and the Beggars.

ST. GILES, the patron saint of this and of so many other outlying parishes in English towns and cities, is said, by Alban Butler in his "Lives of the Saints," to have been of noble birth at Athens. He flourished in the seventh and eighth centuries, and combined with his piety a marked love of solitude. Quitting his own country he found a retreat in France, and passed many years of his life in the recesses of a forest in the neighbourhood of Nismes. It is said that the French king and a troop of hunters pursued a hind, which fled for protection to the saint. An arrow, intended for the hind, wounded the saint, who, however, continued his devotions, and refused all recompense for the injury done to his body. The hind, it appeared, had long nourished him with its milk, and had strayed into danger in one of the glades. This incident made him a great favourite with the king, but nothing could induce him to quit his forest for the atmosphere of a court. Towards the end of his life, however, he so far abandoned his solitude as to admit several disciples and found a monastery, which afterwards became a Benedictine abbey. The saint is commemorated in the Martyrologies of St. Bede and others, and St. Giles and the hind have often afforded a subject for the artist's pencil. St. Giles is the patron saint of lepers, and is styled in the calendar of the Roman Church "Abbot and Confessor."

It is very doubtful whether this manor and village, of which we now come to treat, was dedicated to St. Giles before the erection of the lepers' hospital by Queen Matilda, for there is no mention of it by any such name in "Domesday Book." The hospital consisted of a house or principal mansion, with an oratory and offices, but the "oratory" appears to have been only a chapel, added on to the village church. "Private charity, however," says Newton, "augmented it in after times, and the brotherhood seem to have become subsequently possessed of other lands, as the Spital croft, consisting of sixteen acres, lying on the north side of the highway, opposite the great gate of the hospital, and also two estates called Newlands and Lelane, the exact situations of which, though probably contiguous, we are unable to point out."

According to existing records, the earliest notice of this district tells us that a hospital for lepers was founded here, about the year 1118, by Queen Matilda, the good wife of Henry I., and that it was attached as a "cell," or subordinate house, to a larger institution at Burton Lazars, in Leicestershire, then recently founded. Grants of royalty were confirmed by a bull of Pope Alexander VI. (1240). The hospital here stood on land belonging to the Crown, and not very far from the present parish church. The grounds were enclosed with a wall, and formed almost a triangle, embracing between seven and eight acres. On the north it was bounded by High Street, on the west by Crown Street, and on the east by Dudley (formerly Monmouth) Street. The conventual buildings do not appear to have been of any great size, and, so far as we know, there is no print of their extent. The foundation, however, as we happen to know, was for "forty lepers, one clerk, and one messenger, besides matrons, the master, and other members of the establishment." Mr. Newton tells us that the grant from the Crown expressly stipulated that the hospital should be built "on the spot where 'John, of good memory,' was chaplain;" and hence he argues that the village church formed part of the grant along with the ancient manor.

Carew, in his "Survey of Cornwall," says that leprosy was common in the far west in his own day (James I.), and attributes it to the "disorderly eating of sea-fish newly taken, and principally the livers of them, not well prepared, soused, pickled, or condited." St. James's, St. Giles's, and Burton Lazars, in Leicestershire, were the three oldest houses for lepers in the kingdom.

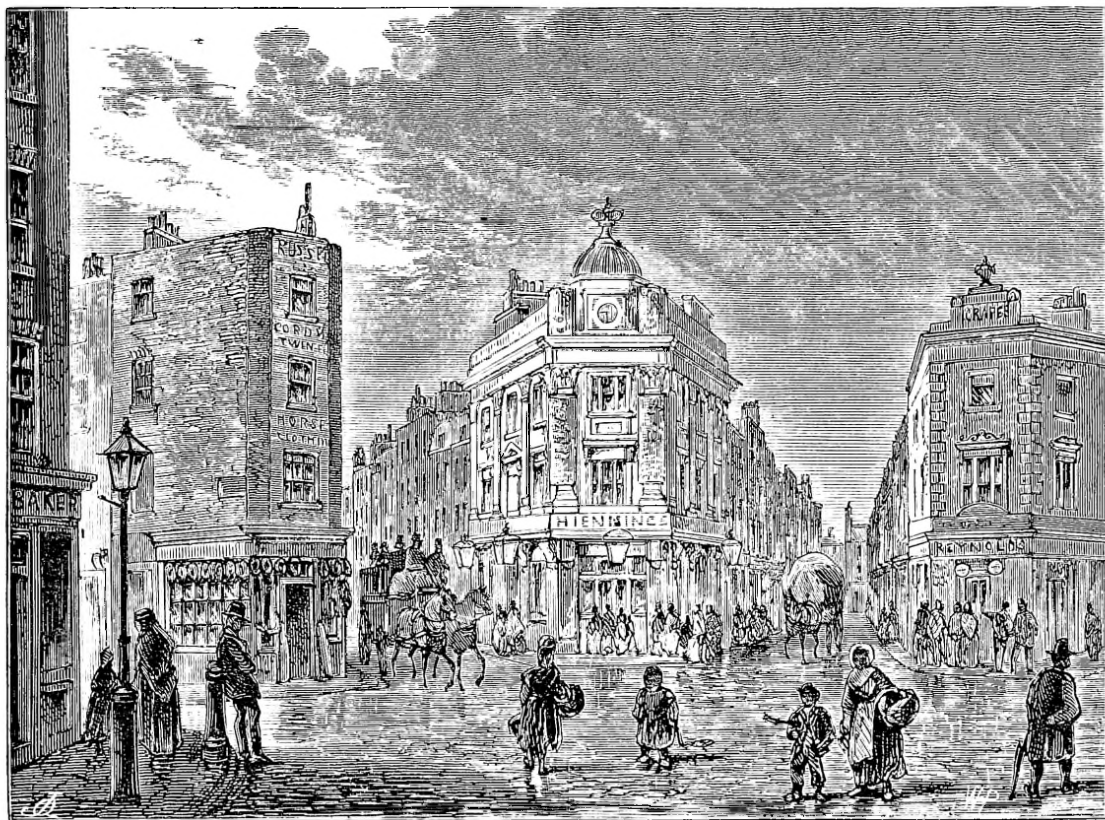
At the Reformation St. Giles's Hospital was dissolved, and granted by Henry VIII. to John Dudley, Viscount Lisle, whom the king graciously allowed to alienate it to John or Wymond Carew, in 1547. Belonging to the hospital was a Grange at Edmonton (Edelmston). At the time of this alienation (1547) Dr. Andrew Borde, "the first of Merry Andrews," was the tenant of a messuage, with an orchard and garden, adjoining the said dissolved hospital. Mr. Parton identifies this with the site of the residence afterwards given to the

rector by the Duchess of Dudley, and now known as Dudley Court. The hospital was endowed with lands at Feltham and Isleworth, and by an annual rent from St. Clement's parish. Lord Lisle fitted up the chief part of the building, and lived here two years. Mr. Parton publishes the list of masters and wardens of the hospital, with accounts, &c. Cotterell Garden, in St. Giles's parish, was confirmed to the hospital in 1186.

The hospital chapel and the parish church of

liament was passed, ordering the "western road" of London, from "Holborne Bars" to St. Giles-in-the-Fields, to be paved, "as far as there was any habitation of both sides of the street." The village of St. Giles had its ancient stone cross, which seems to have stood near what is now the north end of Endell Street.

In 1413 there was in London a conspiracy of the sect called the Lollards. They met in the fields adjoining St. Giles's Hospital, headed by Sir John



SEVEN DIALS. (From an Original Sketch.)

St. Giles would appear to have been two distinct structures under a single roof, much like the arrangement still to be seen in St. Helen's Church, Bishopsgate. Before the high altar in the chapel burnt St. Giles's light. There was a second altar and chapel of St. Michael.

The chief part of the village of St. Giles, in the days of our Plantagenet kings, was composed of houses standing on the north of the highway which led westward from Holborn to Tyburn, and whose gardens stretched behind them to St. Blemund's Dyke. In Ralph Aggas' map it figures as a small village, or rather a small group of cottages, with their respective garden-plots nestling around the walls of the hospital. In 1541 an Act of Par-

liament was passed, ordering the "western road" of London, from "Holborne Bars" to St. Giles-in-the-Fields, to be paved, "as far as there was any habitation of both sides of the street." The village of St. Giles had its ancient stone cross, which seems to have stood near what is now the north end of Endell Street.

In 1413 there was in London a conspiracy of the sect called the Lollards. They met in the fields adjoining St. Giles's Hospital, headed by Sir John Oldcastle, who afterwards was executed on the spot, being hung in chains over a slow fire. In the days of Elizabeth it was not so easy either for lepers or for ordinary people to find their way from St. Giles's to St. James's, as there were no continuous rows of houses in that south-west direction. But at the point where Tottenham Court Road now intersects Oxford Street, there was a notice, at the top of a narrow lane running across where is now Soho, "The Road to Reading." It led, however, by a somewhat singular bend, no further than the top of the Haymarket and a narrow lane parallel to it, which bore the rural name of Hedge Lane, not far from the corner of Leicester Fields.

The first era of building began a little before





VIEWS IN THE ROOKERY, ST. GILES'S.



1600, at which date Holborn and St. Giles's were nearly connected together. On the wall of the hospital being pulled down, houses began to be built on the east, west, and south sides of the church, and on both sides of St. Giles's Street new dwellings multiplied. Ten years later saw the commencement of Great Queen Street, and a continuation of the houses down both sides of Drury Lane. And so great was the increase that in 1623 no less than 897 houses were rated. Indeed, in Elizabeth's time, the parish was very largely built on, and distinguished by the rank of its inhabitants. (Both Elizabeth and James, it will be remembered, forbade building in the suburbs.) At the end of Charles II.'s reign there were more than 2,000; in Anne's, more than 3,000; in 1812, nearly 5,000 houses rated in the parish books.

A second great era of building came in with the Restoration. After the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, large numbers of poor French took up their quarters about this part.

In this parish, unfortunately, the earlier volumes of the rate-books have perished, so that it is not possible to obtain such accurate information as to its inhabitants in the Tudor and Stuart times as we find in those of St. Martin's, and of St. Paul's, Covent Garden.

Although the parish of St. Giles is reckoned, as indeed it is, a poor and third-rate neighbourhood, and its very name has passed into a by-word as the very antipodes of fashionable St. James's, still it is richer in its materials for history than many districts inhabited by a class higher in the social scale. It is observed in "Haunted London" that "the story of St. Giles's parish should properly embrace the whole records of London vagrancy."

When criminals ceased to be executed at the Elms in Smithfield, or, as some say, at a much earlier date, a gallows was set up near the north-west corner of the wall of the hospital; and it soon became a regular custom to present every malefactor, as he passed the hospital gate in the fatal cart on his way to the gallows, with a glass of ale. When the hospital was dissolved, the custom was still kept up; and there is scarcely an execution at "Tyburn Tree," recorded in the "Newgate Calendar," in which the fact is not mentioned that the culprit called at a public-house *en route* for a parting draught.

The memory of this last drink given to criminals on their way is still preserved by Bowl Yard or Alley, on the south side of the High Street, "over against Dyott Street, now George Street;" and Parton, in his "History of the Parish," published in 1822, makes mention of a public-house bearing

the sign of "The Bowl," which stood between the end of St. Giles's, High Street, and Hog Lane.

"A like custom," writes Pennant, "obtained anciently at York, which gave rise to the saying, that the saddler of Bawtry was hanged for leaving his liquor: had he stopped, as was usual with other criminals, to drink his bowl of ale, his reprieve, which was actually on its way, would have arrived in time enough to have saved his life."

The "Bowl" would appear to have been succeeded by the "Angel," or to have had a rival in that inn. At all events, in 1873, the *City Press* reported that another memorial of ancient London was about to pass away, namely, the "Angel" Inn, at St. Giles's, the "half-way house" on the road to Tyburn—the house at which Jack Ketch and the criminal who was about to expiate his offence on the scaffold were wont to stop on their way to the gallows for a "last glass." Mr. W. T. Purkiss, the proprietor, however, was prevailed upon to stay the work of demolition for a time.

When Lord Cobham was executed at St. Giles's, it is said that a new gallows was put up for that special occasion. But Lord Cobham was not the only distinguished person who here paid the last penalty of the law. St. Giles's Pound is also memorable as the scene of the execution of some of the accomplices in Babington's plot against Queen Elizabeth, though Babington himself suffered at Lincoln's Inn Fields, "even in the place where they used to meet and confer of their traitorous practices."

The Cage and the Pound originally stood close together in the middle of the High Street, but they were removed in 1656 to make room for almshouses. The Pound, too, occupied, as we learn casually, a space of thirty feet near the same site, but it was removed about the same time to the corner of Tottenham Court Road, where it stood till 1765 on the site of the isolated block of houses opposite the entrance to Messrs. Meux's Brewery.

The immediate neighbourhood of this Pound bore none of the highest characters, if we may draw any inference on the subject from the words of a popular song by Mr. Thompson, an actor at Drury Lane Theatre, which we have prefixed as a motto to this chapter.

In the High Street, on the left-hand side going towards Tottenham Court Road, the late Mr. J. T. Smith remembered four large and handsome houses, "with grotesque masques on the key-stones above the first-floor windows." He also tells us that just where Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road



meet there was a large circular boundary-stone let into the pavement. "When," he adds, "the charity boys of St. Giles's parish walk the boundaries, those who have deserved flogging are whipped at this stone, in order that when they grow up they may remember the place, and be competent to give evidence should any dispute arise with the neighbouring parishes."

Mr. Smith also tells us, in his "Book for a Rainy Day," that he remembered a row of six small almshouses, surrounded by a dwarf brick wall, standing in the middle of High Street. They were pulled down about the year 1780, and rebuilt near the coal-yard at the eastern end of Drury Lane. There was formerly a vineyard here, as there was on the slope of the hill near to Hatton Garden.

It is remarkable that in almost every ancient town in England, the church of St. Giles stands either outside the walls, or, at all events, near its outlying parts, in allusion, doubtless, to the arrangements of the Israelites of old, who placed their lepers outside the camp.

St. Giles's Church stands on the south side of High Street, at the junction of Broad Street, and was erected between the years 1730 and 1734. It is a large and stately edifice, built entirely of Portland stone, and is vaulted beneath. The steeple, which rises to a height of about 160 feet, consists of a rustic pedestal, supporting a range of Doric pilasters; whilst above the clock is an octangular tower, with three-quarter Ionic columns, supporting a balustrade with vases, on which stands the spire, which is also octangular and belted. The interior of the church is bold and effective; the roof is supported by rows of Ionic pillars of Portland stone, and the semicircular-headed windows are mostly filled with coloured glass.

There was here a previous structure of red brick, consecrated by Laud, whilst Bishop of London, in 1623, and towards the building of which the poor "players of the Cockpit," so cruelly persecuted by the Puritan party, gave £20. This church was pulled down to make room for the present edifice, which was opened for worship in 1734. It had for its architect one Henry Flitcroft, the same who built the church of St. Olave, Southwark; and Mr. Peter Cunningham draws attention to the fact that it bears a close resemblance to that of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. The first church of all on this spot appears to have had a round tower, not unlike those to be seen in the small parishes in the eastern parts of Norfolk and Suffolk.

Strype gives an account of several of the monuments in the church and churchyard, but we shall

notice only a few. There is, or was, near the south-west corner, one put up in 1611, by John Thornton to his wife, who died in childbed. He probably was the builder of Thornton's Alley, and that he was from the north country is more than probable from the legend round the family tomb:—

"Full south this stone four foot doth lie,  
His father John and grandsire Harvey;  
Thornton of Thornton in Yorkshire bred,  
Where lives the fame of Thornton being dead."

A stone in the churchyard against the east end of the north wall of the church records the death of one Eleanor Stewart, an old resident in the parish, who died in 1725, at the age of 123 and five months, an age which we venture to bring here under the notice of Mr. Thoms.

In the churchyard are tombs to the memory of Richard Pendrill, to whom Charles II. owed his escape after the fatal battle of Worcester, and of George Chapman, the earliest translator of Homer's "Iliad;" the latter is said to have been the work of Inigo Jones. The following bombastic epitaph on Pendrill's tomb will amuse our readers:—

"Hold, passenger, here's shrouded in his hearse,  
Unparalle'd Pendrill through the universe;  
Like whom the Eastern star from heaven gave light  
To three lost kings, so he in such dark night  
To Britain's Monarch, toss'd by adverse war,  
On earth appear'd, a second Eastern star;  
A pole, a stem in her rebellious main,  
A pilot to her royal sovereign.  
Now to triumph in heaven's eternal sphere  
He's hence advanced for his just steerage here;  
Whilst Albion's chronicles with matchless fame  
Embalm the story of great Pendrill's name."

Chapman deserves more particular mention here, as the intimate friend of Ben Jonson, who thus speaks of his translation of Homer:—

"Whose work could this be, Chapman, to refine  
Old Hesiod's ore, and give it thus, but thine,  
Who hadst before wrought in rich Homer's mine?  
"What treasure hast thou brought us, and what store  
Still, still dost thou arrive with at our shore,  
To make thy honour and our wealth the more?  
"If all the vulgar tongues that speak this day  
Were asked of thy discoveries, they must say,  
To the Greek coast thine only knew the way.  
"Such passage hast thou found, such returns made,  
As now of all men it is called the trade;  
And who make thither else, rob or invade."

He translated Hesiod's "Works and Days," as well as Homer, and was even better known as a play-writer; and was more than once imprisoned, along with Ben Jonson, for the freedom of his pen. Chapman and Fletcher, indeed, were Jonson's most intimate friends. He told Drummond of Hawthornden that he loved them both, and that "next

to himself, they were the only poets who could make a masque." Chapman died in 1634, at the age of nearly eighty.

On the very verge of the churchyard, overlooking the busy traffic of Broad Street, lies a flat stone, having upon it some faint vestiges of what was once a coat of arms and some appearance of an inscription; but the most expert of heralds would fail to describe the one, and eyes, however penetrating, may be baffled to decipher the other. Yet this is a grave without its dead—a mockery of the tomb—a cheating of the sexton; for hither were brought the decapitated remains of one who was among the brightest and most popular young noblemen of his time, and hence were they afterwards disinterred and privately conveyed to Dilston, in Northumberland, where they moulder in the family vault, amid the ashes of his forefathers. Here, in fact, was first deposited the body of the amiable and unfortunate James Radcliffe, Earl of Derwentwater, whose fatal connection with the fortunes of the Pretender, and untimely death on Tower Hill, are matters of history, and reveal a sad tragedy, in which he was at once the hero and the victim. The body of the earl was again removed from its grave in Northumberland, and carried to Thorndon, Lord Petre's seat in Essex, for re-interment, in October, 1874.

In the church and in the churchyard adjoining repose several other persons known to history. Among them Lord Herbert of Chisbury; Shirley, the dramatic writer; Andrew Marvell, of whom we have already spoken; the notorious Countess of Shrewsbury; Sir Roger L'Estrange, the celebrated political writer; Michael Mohun, the actor; and Oliver Plunkett, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Armagh, who was executed at Tyburn on the charge of high treason in 1681.

The only monument of interest in the church is to be seen in the first window in the north aisle. It is a recumbent figure of the Duchess of Dudley, who was created a duchess in her own right by Charles I., and who died in 1669. "This monument," Mr. P. Cunningham tells us, "was preserved when the church was rebuilt, as a piece of parochial gratitude to one whose benefactions to the parish in which she had resided had been both frequent and liberal." Among other matters, she had contributed very largely to the interior decoration of the church, but had the mortification of seeing her gifts condemned as Popish, cast out of the sacred edifice, and sold by order of the hypocritical Puritans. The duchess, who was also in other ways a benefactor to the parish of St. Giles, was buried at Stoneleigh, Warwickshire.

The gate at the entrance of the churchyard, which dates from the days of Charles II., is much admired. It is adorned with a bas-relief of the Day of Judgment. It formerly stood on the north side of the churchyard, but in 1865, being unsafe, it was taken down and carefully re-erected opposite the western entrance, where it will command a prominent position towards the new street that is destined sooner or later to be opened from Tottenham Court Road to St. Martin's Lane.

Mr. J. T. Smith, in his "Book for a Rainy Day," speaks of this "Resurrection Gateway" as being of red and brown brick: he says of the carving above it that it was "borrowed, not from Michael Angelo, but from the workings of the brain of some ship-carver." Rowland Dobie, in his "History of St. Giles'," states that "the composition is, with various alterations, taken from Michael Angelo's 'Last Judgment.'" Mr. E. L. Blanchard, in his "London Guide Book," informs us that the carving is "an elaborate and curious specimen of bronze sculpture," and that it was "brought from Florence." But a better authority, Canon Thorold, tells us, in his "Yearly Report on the Parish, in 1865," that "*it is carved in oak, of the date of 1658.*"

The lich-gate was erected from the designs of William Leverton, Esq., and cost altogether the sum of £185 14s. 6d., as may be seen in the parish records. Out of this sum "Love, the carver," received the miserable stipend of £27, showing the estimation in which sacred art was held under our Stuart kings. At the time of the removal of the gate, the tombstones were levelled in the churchyard, young trees were planted, the footway outside widened, and an ornamental railing placed by the kerb-stone instead of a dead wall.

Of all the dark and dismal thoroughfares in the parish of St. Giles's, or, indeed, in the great wilderness of London, few, we think, will compare with that known as Church Lane, which runs between High Street and New Oxford Street. During the last half century, while the metropolis has been undergoing the pressure of progress consequent upon the quick march of civilisation, what remains of the Church Lane of our early days has been left with its little colony of Arabs as completely sequestered from London society as if it was part of Arabia Petæa. Few pass through Church Lane who are not members of its own select society. None else have any business there; and if they had, they would find it to their interest to get out of it as soon as possible. Its condition is a disgrace to the great city, and to the parish to which it belongs.

The mansion house inhabited by Lord Lisle,



and afterwards by the Carews and the Duchess of Dudley, stood a little to the west of the church. It was demolished in order to build Denmark Street. Its site is marked by Lloyd's Court.

In a small court known as Monmouth Court, leading out of Dudley Street into Little Earl Street, is the celebrated printing and publishing office named after the late Mr. James Catnatch, by whom it was founded, in 1813. From it has been issued by far the largest store of ballads, songs, broadsides, "last dying speeches," &c., that has ever appeared in London, even in this most prolific age. He was a native of Alnwick, in Northumberland, and, coming to London when a lad to fight the battle of life, was apprenticed as a compositor in the office of the *Courier* newspaper. He deserves the credit of having been the first who, availing himself of larger capital and greater mechanical skill than his precursors and rivals, substituted white paper and real printer's ink for the execrable tea-paper, blotched with lamp-black and oil, which had marked the old broadside and ballad printing. He also first conceived and carried out the idea of publishing collections of songs by the yard, and giving for one penny (formerly the price of a single ballad) strings of poetry. He was the patron of much original talent among the bards of St. Giles's and Drury Lane; and in the quarter of a century which elapsed between the establishment of his press and his death, he had literally made a name in literature—of a particular kind. Among the events of the day which he turned to the best and most profitable account, were the trial of Queen Caroline, the Cato Street conspiracy, and the murder of Weare by Thurtell. On the last-named occasion, when the excitement about the execution was about to die out, he brought out a second penny broadside, headed "WE ARE alive again," which the public read as "WEARE." The public did not like the trick, and called it a "catch-penny;" hence arose the set phrase, which for a long time afterwards stuck to the issues of the Seven Dials' press, though they sold as well as ever. All sorts of stories are told to show the fertility of Catnatch's resources. He received such large sums in coppers, that he used to take them to the Bank of England in a hackney-coach; and when his neighbours in Seven Dials refused to take them, for fear of catching a fever which was said to have spread through their contact with low cadgers and hawkers, he boiled them *en masse* with a decoction of potash and vinegar, to make them bright, and his coppers recovered their popularity. He had also a knack of carving rough and rude illustrations on the backs of music-blocks, which he nailed on to pieces of

wood. Probably through his connection with Northumberland, he next fortunately picked up some of the wood blocks of Thomas Bewick, which raised at once the character of his printing-press. His next step was to increase the quantity which he gave for a penny, embodying his generosity to the public in a phrase which soon was in everybody's mouth, "Songs, three yards a penny! Songs, beautiful songs!" He next employed his talents on cheap Christmas carols and broadsheets of a higher class; and having realised something more than a competency, retired, in 1839, to the neighbourhood of South Mimms, on the borders of Hertfordshire, where he died about two years afterwards. The business of the "Seven Dials' Printing Office" he left to his sister, Mrs. Ryle, by whom it was carried on for a time, in conjunction with a Mr. Paul. It is now managed by Mr. W. S. Fortey, who, as a boy, was employed by Mr. Catnatch. The press is still as busy as ever, and though rivals have arisen, it enjoys a literary *prestige* which will not soon pass away, if we may judge from the fact that it still turns out and sells yearly no less than a million of cheap fly-sheets of the various kinds mentioned above.

Some idea of the Catnatch literature may be formed from the two items here following, taken from the catalogue of a second-hand bookseller:—

"**BROADSIDES.**—A Collection of 9 Curious Old Broad-sides and Christmas Carols, printed at Seven Dials and elsewhere. On rough folio paper, and *illustrated with quaint and rude woodcuts, in their original condition, with rough edges, neatly mounted on white paper and bound in half roxburghie.* Contents:—Letter written by Jesus Christ—6 Carols for Christmas—Messenger of Mortality, or Life and Death Contrasted—Massacre of the French King, by which the unfortunate Louis XVI. suffered on the scaffold, with a large woodcut of his execution.

"**OLD SONGS AND BALLADS.**—A Collection of 35 most Curious Old Songs and Ballads, printed at Seven Dials, on rough old straw paper, and *illustrated with quaint and rude woodcuts or engravings.* In their original condition with rough edges, *very neatly mounted on fine paper, and bound in half roxburghie.* This collection embraces a most varied series of old Ballads, commencing with the Wanton Wife of Bath, Woful Lamentation of Mrs. Jane Shore, Unhappy Lady of Hackney, Kentish Garland, Dorsetshire Garland, or Beggar's Wedding, Faithless Captain, and similar pieces. It next has 16 ballads with large engravings, illustrative of the pieces, bacchanalian, humorous, &c. &c.; and concludes with Liston's Drolleries (with a character portrait), the Paul Pry Songster (with woodcut of Liston as 'Paul Pry'), and the Harp of Ossian, &c."

The central space in this neighbourhood, called Seven Dials, was so named on account of the plan upon which the neighbourhood was laid out for building, seven streets being made to converge at a centre, where there was a pillar adorned with, or,

at all events, intended to be adorned with, seven dial faces. Till this column was put up, it was called "the Seven Streets," according to the "New View of London," which tells us that at the time of its publication (1708) only four of the seven streets had been actually built. The locality is

ducuer of the late lotteries, in imitation of those at Venice." Gay, in his "Trivia," sings :—

"Here to seven streets Seven Dials count their day,  
And from each other catch the circling ray."

It appears that the dial-stone had but six faces, two of the seven streets opening into one angle.



THE GATEWAY OF ST. GILES'S, IN ITS ORIGINAL POSITION.

built on what was formerly known as the Marshlands, and also as Cock and Pie Fields. These were surrounded by a ditch, which ran down to St. Martin's and so into the Thames, but was blotted out when the Seven Dials was built. Evelyn thus mentions the work in his "Diary," under date 5th October, 1694 :—"I went to see the building near St. Giles, where seven streets made a star, from a Doric pillar placed in the middle of a circular area, said to be built by Mr. Neale, intro-

The column and dials were removed in June, 1774, to search for a treasure supposed to be concealed beneath the base; they were never replaced, but in 1822 were purchased of a stonemason, and the column was surmounted with a ducal coronet, and set up on Weybridge Green as a memorial to the late Duchess of York, who died at Oatlands, in 1820. The dial-stone formed a stepping-stone at the adjoining "Ship" inn. The angular direction of each street renders the spot rather embarrassing



to a pedestrian who crosses this maze of buildings unexpectedly, and frequently causes him to diverge from the road that would lead him to his destination.

The business carried on in Seven Dials seems to be of a very heterogeneous character. It is the

boots and shoes, &c.; ginger-beer, green-grocery, and theatrical stores. Cheap picture-frame makers also abound here. In many of the houses, in some of these streets, whole families seem to live and thrive in a single room. In Charles Knight's "London" we read that "cellars serving whole



QUEEN ANNE'S BATH. (From a View taken in 1851.)

great haunt of bird and bird-cage sellers, also of the sellers of rabbits, cats, dogs, &c.; and as most of the houses, being of an old fashion, have broad ledges of lead over the shop-windows, these are frequently found converted into miniature gardens, which help, in some degree, to counterbalance the squalor and misery that is too apparent in some of the courts and lanes hard by. In Dudley Street (formerly Monmouth Street) the shops are devoted chiefly to the sale of old clothes, second-hand

families for 'kitchen, and parlour, and bed-room, and all,' are to be found in other streets of London, but not so numerous and near to each other. Here they cluster like cells in a convent of the order of La Trappe, or like onions on a rope. It is curious and interesting to watch the habits of these human moles when they emerge, or half emerge, from their cavities. Their infants seem exempt from the dangers which haunt those of other people: at an age when most babies are not

trusted alone on a level floor, these urchins stand secure on the upmost round of a trap-ladder, studying the different conformations of the shoes of the passers-by. The mode of ingress of the adults is curious: they turn their backs to the entry, and, inserting first one foot and then the other, disappear by degrees. The process is not unlike (were such a thing conceivable) a sword sheathing itself. They appear a short-winded generation, often coming, like the otter, to the surface to breathe. In the twilight, which reigns at the bottom of their dens, you can sometimes discern the male busily cobbling shoes on one side of the entrance, and the female repairing all sorts of rent garments on the other. They seem to be free traders: at certain periods of the day tea-cups and saucers may be seen arranged on their boards; at others, plates and pewter pots. They have the appearance of being on the whole a contented race."

"On one occasion," says Mr. J. Smith, in his "Topography of London," "that I might indulge the humour of being shaved by a woman, I repaired to the Seven Dials, where, in Great St. Andrew's Street, a slender female performed the operation, whilst her husband, a strapping soldier in the Horse Guards, sat smoking his pipe. There was a famous woman in Swallow Street, who shaved; and I recollect a black woman in Butcher Row, a street formerly standing by the side of St. Clement's Church, near Temple Bar, who is said to have shaved with ease and dexterity. Mr. Batrick informs me that he has read of the five barbaresses of Drury Lane, who shamefully maltreated a woman in the reign of Charles II."

Considering the class of the inhabitants, it is not surprising that many lodging-houses are to be met with. Mr. Diprose, in his "Book about London," tells us that perhaps the most celebrated and notorious of those in St. Giles's was kept by "Mother Cummins."

It is related that Major Hanger accompanied George IV. to a beggars' carnival in St. Giles's. He had not been there long when the chairman, Sir Jeffery Dunston, addressing the company, and pointing to the then Prince of Wales, said, "I call upon that ere gemman with a shirt for a song." The prince, as well as he could, got excused upon his friend promising to sing for him, and he chanted a ballad called "The Beggar's Wedding, or the Jovial Crew," with great applause. The major's health having been drank with nine times nine, and responded to by him, wishing them "good luck till they were tired of it," he departed with the prince, to afford the company time to fix their different routes for the ensuing day's business. At that period they used to have a general meeting in the course of the year, and each day they were divided into companies, each company having its particular walk; their earnings varied much, some getting as much as five shillings per day.

Monmouth Street, it may be remembered, is the street to which the Nonconformist minister, Daniel Burgess, referred when preaching on the subject of a "robe of righteousness." "If any one of you, my brethren," he said, "would have a suit to last a twelvemonth, let him go to Monmouth Street; if for his lifetime, let him apply to the Court of Chancery; but if for eternity, let him put on the Saviour's robe of righteousness."

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE PARISH OF ST. GILES'S-IN-THE-FIELDS (*continued*).

"Rure ego viventem, tu dicis in urbe beatum."—*Horace*.

The Poor of St. Giles's—Curious Parish Regulations—"Old Simon," the Beggar—Denmark Street—Etymology of Brownlow and Belton Streets—Endell Street—Queen Anne's Bath—British Lying-in Hospital—Baths and Washhouses—French Protestant Episcopal Church—Bloomsbury Chapel—Bedford Chapel—Outbreak of the Plague of 1665—Lewknor's Lane (now Charles Street), and its Character in the Reign of Queen Anne—Nell Gwynne's Birthplace—St. Giles's Almshouses—The Old Round House, and Jack Sheppard's Escape—The Cockpit and Phoenix Theatres—The "White Lion" in Drury Lane—"The Flash Coves' Parliament"—Great Queen Street and its Fashionable Residents—The Gordon Riots—Opie's Popularity—James Hoole's Residence—The Freemasons' Hall and Tavern—The Wesleyan Chapel—The Marriage Register of David Garrick—Benjamin Franklin's Printing-press—Gate Street—The Great and Little Turnstiles—Tichborne Court—Religious Persecutions.

THE parish of St. Giles, with its nests of close and narrow alleys and courts inhabited by the lowest class of Irish costermongers, has passed into a by-word as the synonym of filth and squalor. And although New Oxford Street has been carried straight through the middle of the worst part of its

slums—"the Rookery"—yet, especially on the south side, there still are streets which demand to be swept away in the interest of health and cleanliness. And yet, as Peter Cunningham remarks, "the parish could show its pound, its cage, its round-house and watch-house, its stocks, its whip-



ping-post, and at one time its gallows," as our readers are already aware. The locality, nevertheless, is not without its historic or romantic interest, for "a redoubt with two flanks near St. Giles's Pound," and a small fort at the east end of Tyburn Road, are mentioned among the forts ordered to be raised round London by the Parliament in 1642.

According to the "London Spy" (1725), St. Giles's was in the days of the first Georges a most wealthy and populous parish, and one "said to furnish his Majesty's plantations in America with more souls than all the rest of the kingdom besides." It was also remarkable for producing the "Jack Ketches" of that day, as well as a fair proportion of the malefactors who suffered at Tyburn. The same authority quotes an old saying—

"St. Giles' breed,  
Better hang than seed."

They were a noisy and riotous lot, fond of street brawls, equally "fat, ragged and saucy;" and the courts abounded in pedlars, fish-women, news-criers, and corn-cutters.

Parton, in his "History of St. Giles's," tells us that in remote times this parish "contained no greater proportion of poor than other parishes of a similar extent and population; the introduction of Irish mendicants, and other poor of that description, for which it afterwards became so noted, is not to be traced further back than the time of Queen Elizabeth." Strype, too, remarks that "when London began to increase in population, there was observed to be a confluence here out of the countries of such persons as were of the poorer sorts of trades and occupations; who, because they could not exercise them within the jurisdiction of the City, followed them within the suburbs; therefore the Queen, as well as forbidding the further erection of new buildings, ordered all persons within three miles of the gates of the City to forbear from letting or settling, or suffering any more than one family only to be placed in one house."

In 1637 it was ordered that, "to prevent the great influx of poor people into this parish, the beadles do present every fortnight, on the Sunday, the names of all *new-comers, under-setters, inmates, divided tenements, persons that have families in cellars*, and other abuses." "This," says Parton, "is the first mention of *cellars* as places of residence, and for which the parish afterwards became so noted that the expression of 'a cellar in St. Giles's' used to designate the lowest poverty, became afterwards proverbial, and is still used, though most of these subterranean dwellings are now gone."

Speaking of the beggars of St. Giles's, we should not omit to mention Simon Edy, who lived there in the middle of the last century. "Old Simon," as he was commonly named, lodged, with his dog, under a staircase in an old shattered building called "Rat's Castle," in Dyot Street.\* He is thus described by Mr. J. T. Smith in his "Book for a Rainy Day:"—"He wore several hats, and suffered his beard to grow, which was of a dirty yellow-white. Upon his fingers were numerous brass rings. He had several waistcoats, and as many coats, increasing in size, so that he was enabled by the extent of the uppermost garment to cover the greater part of the bundles, containing rags of various colours, and distinct parcels with which he was girded about, consisting of books, canisters containing bread, cheese, and other articles of food; matches, a tinder-box, and meat for his dog; cuttings of curious events from old newspapers, scraps from Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs,' and three or four dogs'-eared and greasy-thumbed numbers of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. From these and such-like productions he gained a great part of the information with which he sometimes entertained those persons who stopped to look at him." This eccentric character (perhaps the original of the "Simple Simon" of our nursery rhymes) stood for many years at the gate of St. Giles's Church, and a portrait of him is to be found in Mr. J. T. Smith's well-known book, "Sketches from the London Streets."

Denmark Street is described by Strype as "a fair, broad street, with good houses, and well inhabited by gentry." Near it is Lloyd's Court or Alley, to which Hogarth has given a celebrity by making it and the adjoining Hog Lane the scene of one of his series of sketches, "The Four Times of the Day." Lord Wharton's residence stood at the corner of this thoroughfare.

In Brownlow Street died, in 1684, Michael Mohun, the actor. The street, and the adjoining one of Belton (now Endell) Street, derived their names from Sir John Brownlow, Bart., of Belton, whose name occurs constantly in the parish rate-books as a resident in the reign of Charles II. His town mansion and gardens stood on this site, but the former was pulled down before the year 1682. The noble estate of Belton, in Lincolnshire, passed by marriage to the Custs, the head of whom is now Earl Brownlow.

At No. 3, Endell Street (formerly Old Belton Street), in the rear of the premises occupied by Messrs. King, ironmongers, is an ancient bath, said

\* This street has long since disappeared, and George Street is built on its site.

by local tradition to have been used by Queen Anne, which for the most part has escaped the notice of antiquaries. It was fed by a fine spring of clear water, which was said to have medicinal qualities. Whether it was the favourite bagnio of Queen Anne or not, it certainly is a curious relic of other days, though shorn of its ancient glories. Descending a dark and narrow staircase, we find ourselves in a low apartment, about twelve or fourteen feet square, its walls inlaid with Dutch tiles, white, with blue patterns—clearly of the sixteenth century. It once had “a lofty French groined dome roof,” but the upper part of the chamber is now cut off by a modern flooring, and formed into a blacksmith's forge.

In a “View of Old London” published in 1851, the bath is said to be “supplied direct from the spring, which is perpetually running; the water,” adds the writer, “is always fresh, and is much used in the neighbourhood, where it is considered a good cure for rheumatism and other disorders. It is a powerful tonic, and evidently contains a considerable trace of iron.” Some of the Dutch tiles have been taken away, and the lower part is now filled with lumber and rubbish instead of clear water, and the spring no longer flows; in this respect presenting a marked contrast to the “old Roman bath” of which we have spoken in our account of the Strand.\*

There are one or two buildings in Endell Street deserving of mention, not only on account of their architectural merits, but for their beneficial effects on the humble class of the inhabitants for whom they are specially intended. The first of these is the British Lying-in Hospital, a picturesque Elizabethan structure, erected in 1849, with all the improvements of modern science. This institution was originally established in Brownlow Street, in 1749, but was removed in the above year to its new quarters. It is the oldest lying-in hospital in London. It is solely for affording medical and surgical treatment to married women, who are either admitted into the hospital as in-patients, or are attended at their own homes. Down to the year 1874 upwards of 47,000 in-patients have received the benefits of this institution. The hospital is supported by voluntary subscriptions and donations. The number of patients annually admitted is about 750, and the yearly receipts amount to about £1,500.

Then there are the Baths and Washhouses, a handsome edifice of Italian architecture, erected in 1852, not far from the site of Queen Anne's Bath; and close by is Christ Church, a large

building of Early English architecture, erected in 1845.

In Bloomsbury Street, between Broad Street and High Holborn, and nearly in a line with Endell Street, are three chapels side by side. The first is the French Protestant Episcopal Church, built in the Early Pointed style, in 1845, by Poynter, the architect. This church was founded by Charles II., in the Savoy. Next is Bloomsbury Chapel, built by Sir Morton Peto for the Baptists. Adjoining this, at the junction of Bloomsbury Street and New Oxford Street, stands Bedford Chapel. It was built, or at all events remodelled, in 1844, and here for some time the late Rev. J. C. M. Bellew officiated as incumbent.

St. Giles's Parish enjoys the distinction of having originated the Great Plague of 1665. It is on record that the first persons seized were members of a family living near the top of Drury Lane, where two men, said to have been Frenchmen, were attacked by it, and speedily carried off. The havoc caused by the plague in this parish alone, in the above-named year, amounted to 3,216 deaths, “its malignity,” as Dr. Sydenham observes, “being mostly discovered among the poorer sort of people in St. Giles's.” The parish registers and rate-books contain many curious entries relating to this sad year; amongst them, the receipt of £50 from Sir Edmundbury Godfrey, and of nearly £500 from Lord Craven, for visiting and relieving the poor.

Lewknor's Lane, opposite Short's Gardens, at the top of Drury Lane, now styled Charles Street, derived its name from Sir Lewis Lewknor, who owned property here in the reign of James I. From an early date it bore a bad character, and in it Jonathan Wild kept “a house of ill-fame.” Constant allusions to its residents occur in the plays of the time of Queen Anne; and Gay, in the *Beggar's Opera*, alludes to it as one of the three places in which ladies of easy virtue might be found. If we may judge from a passage in “Instructions how to find Mr. Curll's Authors,” published in Swift's and Pope's *Miscellanies*, it was also the residence of hack-writers for the press. “At Mr. Summer's, a thief-catcher, in Lewknor's Lane, a man that wrote against the impiety of Mr. Rowe's plays.” The thoroughfare (called Lutner's Lane by Strype) is, as it was two hundred years ago, “a very ordinary place.” It is to be hoped that its morality is higher now than it was in the time of Samuel Butler, who speaks—satirically, of course—of

“The nymphs of chaste Diana's train,  
The same with those of Lewknor's Lane.”

To which passage Sir Roger L'Estrange adds a note to the effect that it was a “rendezvous and

\* See above, Chap. XII., p. 77.



nursery for lewd women, first resorted to by the Roundheads." It is said that in the time of Henry III. the north-west corner of Drury Lane was occupied by a smith's forge.

In the Coal or Cole Yard, on the eastern side of Drury Lane, near the Holborn end, Nell Gwynne is said to have been born. The Coal Yard is now a row of miserable tenements, at the end of which there is a turning to the south, by which we enter the Almshouses belonging to this parish and St. George's, Bloomsbury. A part of these has been formed out of the old "Round House," in which highwaymen and other dangerous personages were confined until they could be brought before the sitting magistrates and formally committed to prison. Although the outside of this not very inviting building is modernised, the old cells in which the prisoners were confined may still be seen; some of them are underground, and others in the attics. In one of them, it is said, Jack Sheppard was ordered to be confined for a night, but before the morning he had made his escape. Other prisoners, however, remained here long enough to cut their names or initials on the walls and window-sills, as may still be seen.

The old "Round House" was converted into almshouses about the year 1780. They are surrounded with buildings on every side, to which fresh air can scarcely penetrate; and though the interior is comfortable, they are sadly "cribbed, cabined, and confined" in their position. In fact, the Almshouses should without delay be removed to "fresh fields and pastures new," and a thoroughfare opened up through this crowded district.

A part of Oldwick Close, between Lincoln's Inn Fields and Drury Lane, was in possession of the celebrated Sir Kenelm Digby. In 1632 it was bounded on the western side by a ditch and a mud wall, intermixed with a few scattered buildings, among which was the Cockpit Theatre, which stood in a narrow court called Pitt Place, running out of Drury Lane into Wild Street. It was erected about 1615, but pulled down by the mob in 1617, and all the apparel of the players torn to pieces. On its site arose a second theatre, called the Phoenix, but this again, after a few years, gave way to Drury Lane Theatre, of which we shall have more to say presently. In 1651 most of the property had passed into the possession of the ancient and worthy family of the Welds, of Lulworth Castle, Dorsetshire, the head of which, Mr. Humphrey Weld, built here a handsome residence, the site of which is marked by Wild (formerly Weld) Court and Little Wild Street.

In Parker Street, or Parker's Lane, were formerly

situated the premises and stables of the Dutch ambassador.

The "White Lion," in Drury Lane, in former years, was a place of resort late at night for "swells" of the upper class, and also for market-gardeners and other persons, who resorted to the neighbouring market. As may be imagined, it bore no very good reputation.

At the "Crown Coffee House," in this lane, was held, in former times, an evening assembly called "The Flash Coves' Parliament"—a loose sort of gathering of members of the bar, small tradesmen, and "men about town," each of whom bore the title of some member or other of the Upper House of Parliament: e.g., one would be "Lord Brougham," another "the Duke of Wellington," another "Lord Grey," and so forth. This, however, has long since passed away.

Great Queen Street, which connects Drury Lane with Lincoln's Inn Fields, in a line with Long Acre, was so named in honour of Queen Elizabeth, and stands on the site of the common footpath which anciently separated the south part, or Aldewych Close (properly so called) from the northern division—latterly termed White Hart Close—which extended to Holborn. In the reign of Elizabeth this footpath appears to have become a roadway, but no houses were built on it up to that time. In a map of Westminster, by Norden, dated 1593, no houses are shown eastward of Drury Lane; but building must have commenced very shortly after this, for in Speed's Map of Westminster, in his "Great Britain," the commencement of Great Queen Street is indicated, together with a continuation of the houses on both sides of Drury Lane. In 1623 only fifteen houses appear to have existed on the south side of Great Queen Street, which was then open to the country, and the north side is of later date. Shortly after the Restoration, a new era of building having set in, the houses were finished on the south side of the street, from the designs, it is said, of Inigo Jones and his pupil Webb. It was at one time called Henrietta Street, in compliment to Henrietta Maria, Queen of Charles I.

"According to one authority," says the author of "Haunted London," "Inigo Jones built Queen Street at the cost of the Jesuits, designing it for a square, and leaving in the middle a niche for the statue of Queen Henrietta. The 'stately and magnificent houses' begun on the north side, near Little Queen Street, were not continued. There were fleurs-de-luce placed on the walls in honour of the queen."

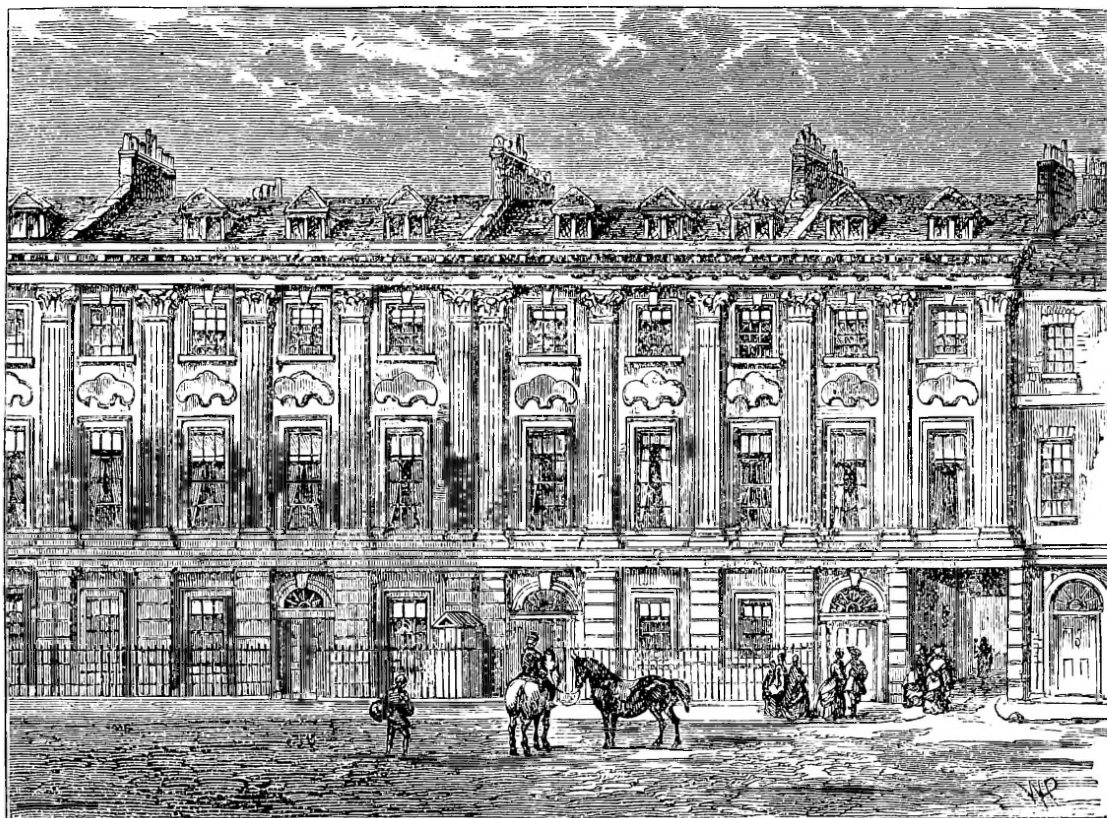
"Great Queen Street, in the time of the Stuarts," says Leigh Hunt, "was one of the grandest and

most fashionable parts of the town. The famous Lord Herbert of Cherbury died there. Lord Bristol had a house in it, as also did Lord Chancellor Finch, and the Conway and Paulet families." Mr. Parton, the author of a topographical work on St. Giles's, published in 1822, mentions Paulet House, Cherbury House, and Conway House among the fine mansions still standing in this street.

The house of Lord Herbert of Cherbury—"the Sir Edward Herbert, the all-virtuous Herbert" of

priation of each house to its respective inhabitant is, however, a matter of uncertainty, no clue whatever being to be found among our parish records, nor, indeed, any mention made of them to guide our inquiries."

Sir Thomas Fairfax dated a printed proclamation from Great Queen Street, February 12th, 1648, and is supposed, on that account, to have lived in the street. George Digby, second Earl of Bristol, lived in Great Queen Street, Evelyn says (1671);



OLD HOUSES IN GREAT QUEEN STREET, SOUTH SIDE.

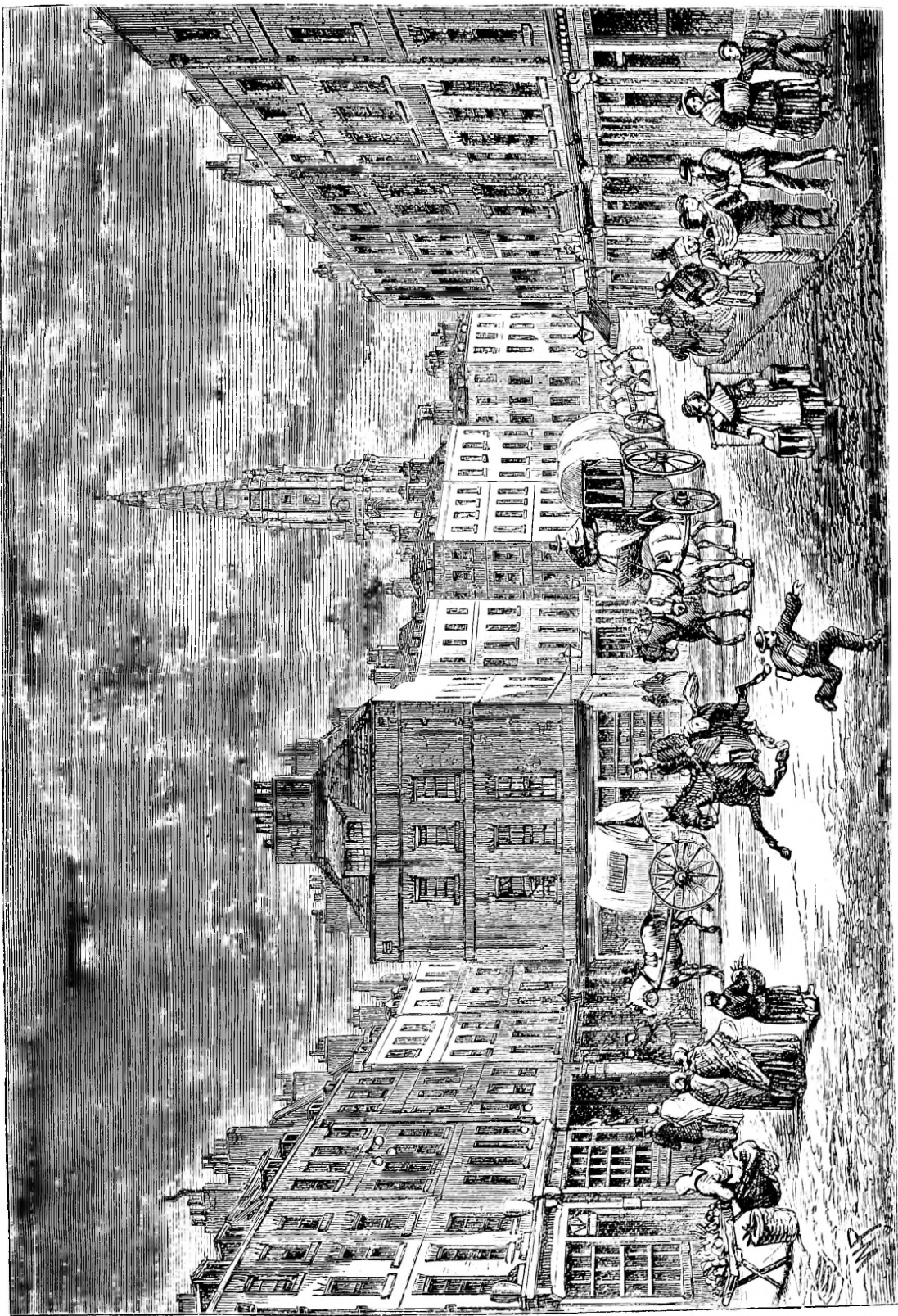
Ben Jonson—was a few doors from Great Wild Street. Here he wrote a part of his celebrated treatise, "De Veritate," and here he died, in 1648, aged seventy-seven, and was buried in St. Giles's Churchyard. The Lord Chancellor Finch mentioned above was the famous Royalist, Sir Heneage Finch, afterwards Earl of Nottingham, who died in 1682. He presided at Lord Stafford's trial, in 1680, and pronounced judgment on that unfortunate nobleman in a speech of great ability. He was the "Omri" of Dryden's "Absalom and Achitophel"—

"To whom the double blessing does belong,  
With Moses' inspiration, Aaron's tongue."

Many other distinguished personages lived here about this time; "but," says Parton, "the appro-

his' house was taken by the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations. The Duke of Buckingham, the Earl of Lauderdale, Sir John Finch, Waller the poet, and Colonel Titus (author of "Killing no Murder"), were among its new occupants. At Conway House, in this street, lived Lord Conway, an able soldier, defeated by the Scotch at Newburn. In the year 1733 the Earl of Rochford lived in Great Queen Street; here, too, about that time, lived Lady Dinely Goodyer, and Mrs. Kitty Clive the actress. It would be difficult, at this distant date, to fix upon the exact house in which any of these notabilities resided, for the practice of numbering was not in use till 1764; Burlington Street having been the first and Lincoln's Inn Fields the





MIDDLE ROW, ST. GILES.



second place in London where it was adopted. Sir Martin Ffolkes, an eminent scholar and antiquary, was born in Great Queen Street in 1690. He was a great numismatist, and the first President of the Royal Society of Antiquaries. He died in 1784.

In 1780 the Gordon Riots may be said to have had their rise in Great Queen Street, the first meeting in favour of the petition presented by Lord George Gordon to Parliament, asking for the repeal of a measure of relief granted to the Roman Catholics, having been held in Coachmakers' Hall, in this street, on the 29th of May. On the rejection of the petition, on the 2nd of June, the mob burnt the Roman Catholic chapels in Duke Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and Welbeck Street. On the following days they proceeded to further excesses, and on the 6th of June the house of Mr. Justice Cox, in Great Queen Street, was burned, together with the houses of other magistrates who had become obnoxious. The rest of the story of the Gordon Riots has been told in its proper place.

It is recorded that in 1735 Ryan the comedian, whose name was well known in connection with "Bartlemy Fair," was attacked in this street at midnight by a footpad, who fired a pistol in his face, severely wounding him in the jaw, and robbed him of his sword. He was hurt so badly that a performance was given at Covent Garden for his benefit, when the Prince of Wales sent him a purse of a hundred guineas.

No. 51 in this street is now the office of Messrs. Kelly and Co., the well-known printers and publishers of the "Post Office London" and "County Directories." Messrs. Kelly removed here from Old Boswell Court, St. Clement Danes, on the demolition of that neighbourhood in order to clear a space for the new Law Courts.

In this street is one of those Homes for Homeless and Destitute Boys which have done, of late years, such good service to the State. It was commenced in St. Giles's, in a loft over a cow-shed, about the year 1852, its originator being a Mr. Williams. It then gradually grew into a school, and was located for a time in Arthur Street, St. Giles's, whence it was removed hither in 1860. The premises which are occupied by the boys were formerly a carriage-maker's; they hold from 120 to 130 boys, most of whom are gradually drafted off to the *Chichester* and *Arethusa* training-vessels, or to farm-work in the country, chiefly with a view to emigration, the rest being taught various trades and employments. Some of the boys are employed in wood-cutting, others in cooking, others in tailoring, shoemaking, and making mats and brushes. We understand that the boys' industry suffices to

supply the inmates of the Home, and also the farm-boys and those on board the ships, with all the shoes that they require.

At No. 52 lived Sir Robert Strange, the eminent historical engraver, and adherent of Prince Charles Edward, "the Young Pretender." Strange died in 1792, and here his widow resided for some years afterwards.

Another artist of renown who resided in this street was Opie. He was living here in 1791, when his popularity was at its highest. In Opie's "Memoirs" we get a glimpse of the condition of Great Queen Street, when the roadway was sometimes blocked up with the carriages of his sitters. The great painter removed in 1792, and by the end of the century the street was no longer fashionable, the polite world having migrated westward.

At No. 56 in this street, in a large house, part of which is over the entrance to New Yard, lived James Hoole, the translator of Tasso, Metastasio, and Ariosto, who died in 1803. Born in London in 1727, he devoted his leisure hours to literary pursuits, especially to the study of the Italian language, of which he made himself a perfect master. He was the author of three original tragedies—*Cyrus*, *Timanthes*, and *Cleonicæ*—which were acted at Covent Garden, and also of some poems, and of a life of John Scott, of Amwell, the Quaker poet. With Hoole lived Hudson the painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds' master.

This house, now a steam pencil-factory, is the only one in the street which retains its original architectural features, all the rest having been either rebuilt or modernised. Worlidge, an artist of some celebrity, who was famous for his etchings in the manner of Rembrandt, died in this house in 1766. Richard Brinsley Sheridan lived in it for some years; many of the letters in Moore's "Life" are addressed to him here. How long Sheridan remained is not known, but it is related that he passed the day in seclusion at his house in Great Queen Street on the occasion of Garrick's funeral, in 1779. The "beautiful Perdita," Mrs. Robinson, the unfortunate favourite of George IV., appears to have lived in this same house shortly after her marriage in 1773; she describes the house in her "Memoirs" as "a large, old-fashioned mansion, the property of the widow of Mr. Worlidge."

Like the seven towns which claim to have given birth to Homer, Great Queen Street is claimed by some writers to have been the locality of the "scene" between Sir Godfrey Kneller and Dr. Radcliffe, which we have already described in our account of the Royal College of Physicians;\*

\* See Chap. XXI, p. 143.



others, however, fix the abode of the great physician and Sir Godfrey in Bow Street, Covent Garden.

The most important buildings in Great Queen Street are the Freemasons' Hall and Tavern. These stand on the south side of the street, and present a noble and elegant appearance. The Hall was first built by an architect named Sandby—one of the original members of the Royal Academy—in 1775-6; as its name implies, for the purpose of furnishing one central place for the several lodges of Loyal Masons to hold their meetings and dinners, instead of borrowing, as up to that time had been the custom, the halls of the City companies. Freemasons' Hall, as we are told by Hunter, in his "History of London," was "dedicated" in May, 1776. The Tavern was built in 1786, by William Tyler.

The original Hall, at the back of the Tavern, was built at a cost of about £5,000, which was raised by a tontine. "It was the first house," says Elmes, "built in this country with the appropriate symbols of masonry, and with the suitable apartments for the holding of lodges, the initiating, passing, raising, and exalting of brethren." It was a noble room, although not so large as the present hall. Above the principal entrance was a gallery, with an organ; and at the opposite end was a coved recess, flanked by a pair of fluted Ionic columns, containing a marble statue of the late Duke of Sussex, executed for the Grand Lodge by Mr. E. H. Baily, R.A. Here very many public meetings—political, charitable, and religious—were held; but the last-named have mostly migrated to Exeter Hall, in the Strand.

Among the most important public meetings held at Freemasons' Tavern was one in June, 1824, at which Lords Liverpool, Brougham, Sir J. Mackintosh, Sir Robert Peel, Sir Humphrey Davy, Mr. Huskisson, and Mr. Wilberforce, bore public testimony to the services of James Watt as the inventor of the steam-engine, and resolved that a national monument should be erected in his honour in Westminster Abbey. It was on this occasion that Peel frankly and generously acknowledged the debt of gratitude which was due to Watt from himself and his own family, as owing to him their prosperity and wealth. Here public dinners were given to John Philip Kemble, to James Hogg ("the Ettrick Shepherd"), and to many others who, either in the ranks of bravery, science, or literature, have won a name which shall last as long as the English language is spoken.

Of late years the Freemasons' Hall and Tavern have been considerably altered, and in part rebuilt,

and now occupy a very much larger area than the original erection. The work was carried out, about the year 1866, under the direction of Mr. F. P. Cockerell, son of the late accomplished Professor of Architecture in the Royal Academy, and the illustrator of the Æginetan Marbles. The Grand Lodge buildings and the Freemasons' Tavern are now entirely separate establishments, although they join; the former, which stands on the west side of the Tavern, contains offices for all the Masonic charities, Grand Secretary's office, and lodge-rooms entirely for the use of the craft. These rooms, as it were, form the frontage of the large hall—a magnificent room, of noble proportions, which, from its internal fittings, may be truly termed the temple of Masonic rites. The room is beautifully decorated, and lit from above. Here are now held the balls and dinners of the Royal Scottish, Humane, Artists', and other benevolent societies and institutions.

Mr. Timbs, in his "Curiosities of London," tells us how that St. Paul's, in 604, and St. Peter's, Westminster, in 605, were built by Freemasons; that Gundulph, Bishop of Rochester, who is said to have built the White Tower, governed the Freemasons. Peter of Colechurch, architect of Old London Bridge, was Grand Master. Henry VII., in a lodge of master Masons, founded his chapel at Westminster Abbey. Sir Thomas Gresham, who planned the Royal Exchange, was Grand Master; as was also Inigo Jones, the architect. Sir Christopher Wren, Grand Master, founded St. Paul's with his Lodge of Masons, and the trowel and mallet then used are preserved; and Covent Garden Theatre was founded, in 1808, by the Prince of Wales, in his capacity as Grand Master, assisted by the Grand Lodge. For some reason or other, however, Freemasonry has latterly been under the ban of the Roman Catholic Church.

Two doors eastward of Freemasons' Tavern is a Wesleyan Chapel; and it may be interesting to record here the fact, "not generally known," that at a place of worship on or near this spot on the 22nd of June, 1748, one "David Garrick, of St. Paul's, Covent Garden," was married by his friend, the celebrated Dr. Franklin, to "Eva Maria Violette, of St. James's, Westminster, a celebrated dancer." According, however, to her own statement to Mr. J. T. Smith, when within a few months of her death, Mrs. Garrick was married at the parish church of St. Giles's, and afterwards in the Chapel of the Portuguese Ambassador, in South Audley Street. She also said that she was born at Vienna, on the 29th of February, 1724. If so, at her death she must have been only three months short

of entering on her hundredth year. She was buried beside her husband, in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey.

Although Mrs. Garrick's maiden name (apparently) is given in the above record of her marriage, there has always been a mystery about her birth. Lee Lewis asserted that she was a natural daughter of Lord Burlington. When Mrs. Garrick heard this, she replied with indignation, "Lee is a liar; Lord Burlington was not my father: but still, I am of noble birth." It was also said that Lord Burlington gave Garrick £10,000 to marry her. This, too, she denied, adding that she had only the interest on £6,000, which was paid to her by the Duke of Devonshire. She died at an advanced age, in October, 1822, in her arm-chair, in the front drawing-room of her house in the Adelphi, having survived her husband forty-three years. She had just ordered her servants to put out on chairs two or three dresses, in order to choose one in which to appear that evening at Drury Lane, it being a private view of Elliston's improvements for the coming season. Mr. J. T. Smith, who knew her personally, speaks thus of her in his "Book for a Rainy Day:"—"Perhaps no lady in public or private life held a more unexceptionable character. She was visited by persons of the first rank; even our late Queen Charlotte, who had honoured her with a visit at Hampton, found her peeling onions for pickling. The gracious queen commanded a knife to be brought, saying, 'I will peel some onions too.' The late King George IV. and King William IV., as well as other branches of the royal family, frequently honoured her with visits." In addressing her servants, however, she was in the habit of using more *expletives* than would now be thought ladylike in any circle, high or low.

Great Queen Street seems to have been a favourite locality for the residence of actors. Miss Pope, a celebrated actress of the last century, lived for forty years "two doors west of Freemasons' Tavern." She died at Hadley, in 1801. In a house on the south side, occupied before 1830 by Messrs. Allman, the booksellers, died Lewis, the comedian; and at No. 74, now part of Messrs. Wyman and Sons' premises, and known in these days as the "Lincoln's Inn Steam Printing Works," died, in 1826, Edward Prescott Holdway Knight, the comedian, commonly called "Little Knight." Within the walls of Messrs. Wymans' establishment (then Messrs. Cox and Co.'s) Laman Blanchard discharged the duties of a printer's reader side by side with his friend, Douglas Jerrold, who at that time (about the year 1825) was the editor

of a periodical called *La Belle Assemblée*; and many other interesting literary traditions cling to the place.

Benjamin Franklin has been described by some writers to have worked at Messrs. Wymans' printing-office as a journeyman printer. This is an error, Franklin having been employed at Mr. Watts's, which was on the south side of Wild Court, a turning out of Great Wild Street, near the western end of Great Queen Street. The press which Franklin recognised as that at which he had worked as a journeyman pressman in London in the years 1723-6, stood in Messrs. Wymans' office, however, for many years. In course of time it was taken down, and passed into the hands of Messrs. Harrild and Sons, who in 1840 parted with it to Mr. J. V. Murray, of New York, on condition that he would secure for them in return a donation to the Printers' Pension Society of London—a highly-deserving institution (its object being the support of aged and decayed printers and widows of printers), and of which they were active members. By Mr. Murray the press was exhibited in Liverpool, and afterwards taken to America. So great was the interest excited by the exhibition of the press, that it was ultimately arranged to have a lecture delivered on "The Life of Benjamin Franklin" during its exhibition. This was accordingly done, and with such success as to enable the committee of the Printers' Pension Society to initiate the "Franklin Pension," amounting to ten guineas per year; and it is interesting to record that one of the early recipients of this small bounty was a very old servant of the firm in whose office he and the press had so long done duty together.

The following inscription is engraved upon the plate affixed to the front of the press:—

"DR. FRANKLIN'S Remarks relative to this Press, made when he came to England as Agent of the Massachusetts, in the year 1768. The Doctor at this time visited the Printing-office of Mr. Watts, of Wild Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and, going up to this particular Press (afterwards in the possession of Messrs. Cox and Son, of Great Queen Street, of whom it was purchased), thus addressed the men who were working at it:—'Come, my friends, we will drink together. It is now forty years since I worked like you, at this Press, as a journeyman Printer.' The Doctor then sent out for a gallon of Porter, and he drank with them—

'SUCCESS TO PRINTING.'

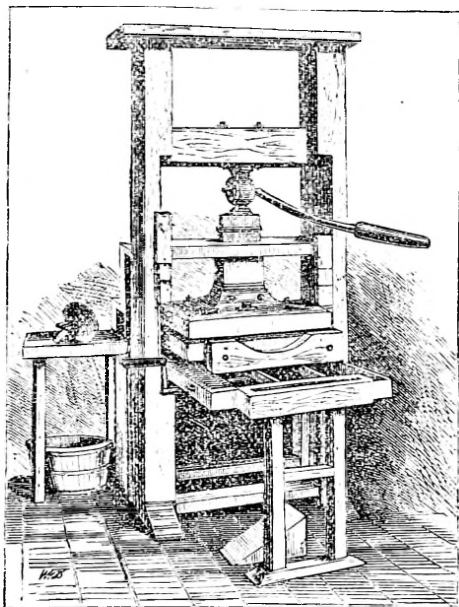
"From the above it will appear that it is 108 years since DR. FRANKLIN worked at this identical Press.

"June, 1833."

In 1863 the authorities of the South Kensington Museum of Patents, being engaged in collecting some early memorials relating to the art of printing, made application to Messrs. Wyman for the loan of a companion press to that above described, and



which was then in daily use. After being photographed *in situ*, the press was removed to the Museum of Patents, it having been presented to the trustees by Mr. Wyman. This press, of which we here give an engraving, is a fac-simile of the



DUPLICATE OF FRANKLIN'S PRESS.

Franklin press, and there is strong reason to suppose that the celebrated American philosopher worked at it as well as at that which is now a venerated relic in the public museum of Philadelphia.

It may be added that at this printing-office in Great Queen Street, for nearly a century, was executed all the printing relating to our possessions in the East, for the once famous East India Company; and that, in addition to the high reputation which this office has always enjoyed for its Oriental printing, may be noted its connection with the periodical press of modern times, in which the *Builder* takes a prominent place; and we might also specially mention a very useful and interesting annual, published by Messrs. Wyman, called *Everybody's Year-book*, to which we are indebted for the particulars here given concerning the Franklin press.

At the eastern end of Great Queen Street is Gate Street, the name of which is equally significant of its origin, as being at the top of a lane out of which the horses would have strayed into the high road towards St. Giles's if it had not been for a gate. This thoroughfare leads to a narrow passage called Little Turnstile, which, with another known as the Great Turnstile, at the north-east corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields, open up communications with High Holborn.

The Great Turnstile, according to Strype, in 1720 was "a great thoroughfare, and a place inhabited by sempsters, shoemakers, and milliners, for which it is of considerable trade and well noted."

Of Whetstone Park, the connecting thoroughfare between the two Turnstiles, we have already spoken in our chapter on Lincoln's Inn Fields. We may, however, add that it was a resort of profligate persons some two centuries since, and that its character at that time is commemorated in the plays of Shadwell, Dryden, and Wycherley:—

"Where ladies ply, as many tell us,  
Like brimstones in a Whetstone alehouse."

But, if we may believe Strype, its infamous and vicious inhabitants had been banished previous to the year 1720.

One of the small courts between Lincoln's Inn Fields and Holborn, near the eastern end of Whetstone Park, is called Tichborne Court; over the Holborn entrance are the arms of the Tichbornes, with the date; the last figure is scarcely legible. This property came to the Tichborne family early in the seventeenth century, by the marriage of White Tichborne, Esq., of Aldershot (grandfather of the sixth baronet), with Ann, the daughter and heiress of Richard (or James) Supple, Esq., a member of the Vintners' Company.



THE ARMS OF TICHBORNE.

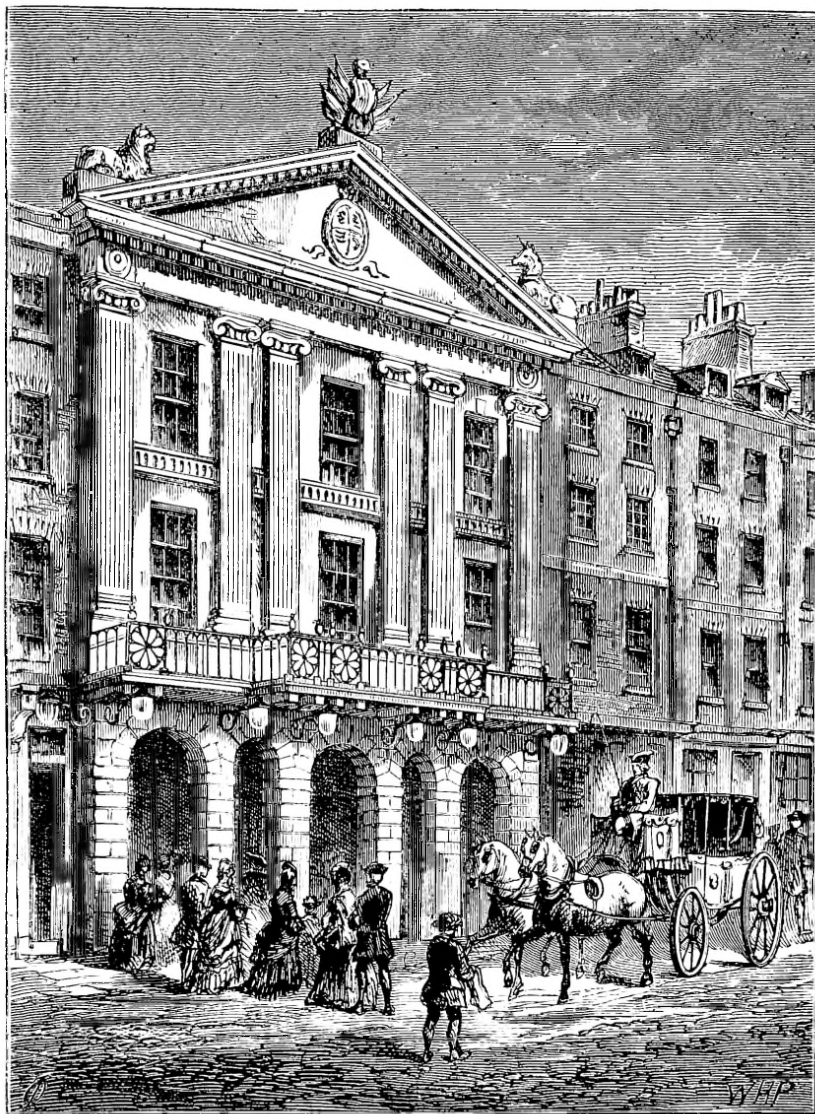
Among the more celebrated inhabitants of the parish of St. Giles's are, Andrew Marvell, whom we have already mentioned, and the profligate Countess of Shrewsbury, concerning whom Horace Walpole tells us that she held the horse of Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, while the latter killed her husband in a duel.

Among the old families in St. Giles's, Parton names the Spencers, or De Spencers, after whom the great ditch which ran along the southern side of the parish was called Spencer's Ditch or "Dig."

The name of this drain in more recent times was Cock and Pie Ditch.

The "History of St. Giles's-in-the-Fields," by Mr. Parton, contains a variety of curious and interesting matter, and we have drawn largely upon it in these pages. But we have not adopted all his

out so minutely as to show each man's possession in the parish, and every garden-plot delineated, with flower-beds, parterres, and bordered walks, just as if the gardener of William III. or Queen Anne had been alive in the Wars of the Roses! Mr. Parton gives no authority for these details; and it is to be



FRONT OF OLD DRURY LANE THEATRE.

statements, having our confidence in him as a topographer and historian a little shaken by the fact that he gives in it a plan or map of the parish as it was in the thirteenth century—in other words, two centuries and a half, at the least, earlier than the map of London by Ralph Aggas, which is the oldest authority known to antiquaries, and from which, it is clear, on a close inspection, that he has borrowed many of his details. It is, indeed, made

feared that he allowed his antiquarian zeal to carry him in this one matter—like Herodotus of old—out of the domain of fact into the airy regions of fiction. In other respects, however, he would appear to have been a trusty chronicler, and his work from first to last is full of interest.

We may conclude our notice of St. Giles's with the following paragraph from a publication which does not often mislead, or misrepresent facts:—





DRURY LANE CELEBRITIES.

BETTERTON.  
MRS. PRITCHARD.

GARRICK.

MACKLIN.  
MRS. ROBINSON.

"As lately as the year 1767," says a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, "another mass-house was discovered in Hog Lane, near the Seven Dials," and the officiating priest was "condemned to perpetual imprisonment"—simply for saying mass and giving the communion to a sick person. After four years' imprisonment his sentence was "commuted into exile for life." At the end of the last century, if not early in the present, Dr. Archer, a well-known Roman Catholic divine, and the author of several

volumes of sermons, said mass in the garret of a small public-house in St. Giles's, kept by an Irishman who was not ashamed of his religion. This sounds strange in our ears in the present state of general toleration and liberty; but more than a century before, in 1663, Pepys records the fact that "a priest was taken in his vestments officiating somewhere in Holborn the other day, and was committed [to prison] by Mr. Secretary Morris, according to law."

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### DRURY LANE THEATRE.

"I sing of the singe of Miss Drury the First,  
And the birth of Miss Drury the Second."—*Rejected Addresses*.

The Original Playhouse in Covent Garden—The Players Imprisoned in the Gate House—The Cockpit Theatre—Killigrew's Theatre in Drury Lane—Betterton's Early Triumphs—The Players first styled "His Majesty's Servants"—Testimonial to Mrs. Bracegirdle—Lovely "Nancy" Oldfield—Colley Cibber as Manager and Dramatist—Garrick at Drury Lane—Kitty Clive, the Comic Actress—A Batch of Fortunate Actresses—Edmund and Charles Kean—Mrs. Nisbet, Macready, and Madame Celeste—Anecdote of Madame Malibran—Michael Balfe, and the Statue erected to his Honour—Salaries of Celebrated Players—Changes and Vicissitudes of "Old Drury"—The New Theatre closed by Order of the Lord Chamberlain—Mrs. Siddons' *Début*—The Kembles—Sheridan's Habit of Procrastination—The Theatre again destroyed by Fire—Coolness of Sheridan—The "Rejected Addresses"—Mr. Whitbread and the Colonnade—Rebuilding and Opening of the New Theatre—Its subsequent Vicissitudes—Van Amburgh and his Wild Beasts—The Theatre opened as an Opera-house.

IN speaking of Drury Lane Theatre there arises a frequent source of confusion in the fact that it had no especial name till the middle of the eighteenth century; being in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden, where the quality then resided, it was often styled "The Covent Garden Theatre." Thus Pepys, writing under date 1662: "To Lincoln's Inn Fields, and, it being too soon to go to dinner, I walked up and down, and looked upon the outside of the new theatre building in Covent Garden, which will be very fine." The late Mr. Richardson, of coffee-house celebrity, was in possession of a ticket inscribed, "For the Music at the Play House in Covent Garden, Tuesday, March 6, 1704"—nearly thirty years before Covent Garden Theatre, properly so called, was opened. It was also styled "The King's Theatre," and "The King's House;" Killigrew and his company being "His Majesty's Servants," while Davenant and his rival company were known by the name of "The Duke's Servants."

Guest writes, "I have not met with any play which is said on its title-page to have been acted in the Theatre Royal Drury Lane till after the division of the company in 1695; nor am I aware that the theatre is called 'Drury Lane' in any preface of the time. Even in 1704, *Love the Leveller* is said on its title-page to have been acted at the Theatre Royal in Brydges Street, Covent Garden. In 1719-20, an order from the Lord Chamberlain's

office is addressed to 'The Managers of the Theatre in Drury Lane, in Covent Garden.'

It is worthy of note that, although there were other theatres in London at an earlier date, there was, according to Guest, in the time of Shakespeare one at least outside the walls—namely, the Phoenix or Cockpit, on the eastern side of Drury Lane, the site of which is still defined by the name of Pitt Court—formerly Cockpit Alley. The company who acted there were styled "The Queen's Servants." In 1647, when an act was passed for the suppression of stage plays, the Cockpit was converted from the error of its ways into a school-room, but, in spite of the supremacy of the Puritans, its existence as a seat of learning was brief; it backslided, and again became a place of profane amusement, until in 1649, when the Puritan soldiers broke into the playhouse during a performance, routed the audience, and broke up the seats and stage. Nor was this all. Dr. Doran says that "the players, some of them the most accomplished of their day, were paraded through the streets in all their stage finery, and clapped into the Gate-house and other prisons, whence they were only too glad to escape, after much unseemly treatment, at the cost of all the theatrical property which they had carried on their backs." They had already experienced similar treatment in 1617, in a popular outbreak, when their clothes and properties were torn up by the mob, for what cause is not apparent.



Subsequently, after General Monk's arrival in London, the theatrical standard was raised again, and the drama commenced its new career at the Cockpit, with Rhodes for its "master"—managers being not then known—and Betterton as his pupil and apprentice.

Pepys thus writes in his "Diary," November 20th, 1660: "This morning I found my lord in bed late, he having been with the king, queen, and princesses at the Cockpit all night, where General Monk treated them, and after supper a play." It may be added that the original name of the "pit" in our theatres was the "cock-pit"—a word strongly corroborating the fact that our earliest places of such entertainment were used for lower sports before being applied to the purposes of the dramatic muse.

The principal actors at the Cockpit were Betterton and the beautiful youth, Edward Kynaston, who generally performed women's parts, before female actresses were permitted on the stage. Of Kynaston Pepys writes, Aug. 18: "Capt. Ferrers took me and Creed to the Cockpitt play—the first that I have had time to see since my coming from sea. *The Loyall Subject*, where one Kynaston, a boy, acted the duke's sister, but made the loveliest lady that ever I saw in my life." "Jan. 7. Tom and I and my wife to the theatre, and there saw *The Silent Woman*. Among other things here Kynaston, the boy, had the good turn to appear in three shapes: first as a poor woman, in ordinary clothes, to please 'Morose;' then in fine clothes, as a gallant, and in them was clearly the prettiest woman in the whole house; and lastly as a man, and then likewise did appear the handsomest man in the whole house."

Pepys tells us that the old actors were in possession of the Cockpit in August, 1660; also that he saw *The Cardinal* acted there, October 2, 1662; but the theatre was small, and seems to have soon been superseded. At all events, nothing further is known of its history. There is a chance allusion to it in *The Muse's Looking-glass* of Randolphe, wherein the following dialogue occurs:—

"*Mrs. Flowerdew.* It was a zealous prayer  
I heard a brother make concerning playhouses.

*Bird.* For charity, what is it?

*F.* That the Globe,

Wherein (quoth he) reigns a whole world of vice,  
Had been consum'd; the Phoenix burnt to ashes."

We hear very little of the other actors of the Cockpit, save that one Allen became a major in Charles's army, and acted as quartermaster-general at Oxford; and that two others, named Perkins and Sumner, finding their occupation gone, "kept

house together at Clerkenwell, where they died some years before the Restoration."

Soon after the Restoration Thomas Killigrew, Page of Honour, and subsequently Master of the Revels, to Charles I., purchased from the Earl of Bedford a lease for forty-one years of a piece of ground situated in the two parishes of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields and St. Paul's, Covent Garden. On this site, until then known as the "Riding Yard," he erected, we are told, at a cost of £1,500, a theatre, the dimensions of which were 112 feet by 59 feet, and which was opened in 1663. The following is a copy of the first playbill issued:—

"By His Majesty his company of Comedians, at the New Theatre in Drury Lane. This day, being Thursday, April 8th, 1663, will be acted a comedy called *The Humorous Lieutenant*. The King, Mr. Wintersell; Demetrius, Mr. Hart; Seleucus, Mr. Burt; Leontius, Major Mohun; Lieutenant, Mr. Clun; Celia, Mrs. Marshall. The Play will begin at Three o'clock exactly. Boxes, 4s.; Pit, 2s. 6d.; Middle Gallery, 1s. 6d.; Upper Gallery, 1s."

This comedy (by Beaumont and Fletcher) is mentioned in Pepys' "Diary," in the following terms:—"To the King's House, and there saw *The Humorous Lieutenant*—a silly play, I think—only the spirit in it that grows very tall, and then sinks again to nothing, having two heads breeding upon one, and then Knipp's singing, did please us. Here, in a box above, we spied Mrs. Pierce; and going out, they called us, and so we staid for them; and Knipp took us all in, and brought us to Nelly, a most pretty woman, who acted the great part, 'Coelia,' to-day, very fine, and did it pretty well. I kissed her, and so did my wife; and a mighty pretty soul she is."

Of Killigrew it is recorded by Pepys that "when a boy he would go to the 'Red Bull,' and when the man cried to the boys, 'Who will go to be a devil, and he shall see the play for nothing?' then would he go in, and be a devil on the stage, and so get to see plays." It may here be remarked by way of parenthesis that the "Red Bull" which stood at the end of St. John Street, Clerkenwell, was, according to tradition, the playhouse before which Shakespeare held gentlemen's horses.

Dr. Doran writes:—"In December, 1661, there is a crowded house at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, to see young Mr. Betterton play the Dane's part in *Hamlet*; charming Mistress Saunderson acting 'Ophelia.' Old ladies and gentlemen flock in crowds to witness it, and the streets are fairly blocked with the lumbering carriages; among the carriage folk being Mrs. Palmer, destined to become, next year, Countess of Castlemaine." "It's beyond imagination," whispers Mr. Pepys to his neighbour,

who answers only with a long-drawn "Hush!" "Mr. Betterton," rejoins Pepys, in the complacent tone of one qualified to judge, "is the best actor in the world, and Miss Saunderson is the best lady on the stage. It is a pity they are not married."

Fifty years after these early triumphs Mr. and Mrs. Betterton, having made their fortune as well as their fame, are living in Great Russell Street, Covent Garden, in a well-appointed house. In April, 1710, the former retired from the stage, fixing the 13th as his benefit-night at the Haymarket Theatre, then newly built. He died within forty-eight hours afterwards.

Actors were first known as "His Majesty's Servants" in 1603, having been previously styled "The Servants of the Lord Chamberlain." It may be mentioned here that as "His Majesty's Servants" the actors were entitled to wear, and did wear, the royal livery of scarlet. The last actor who wore it was Baddeley, who gave the annual "cake" to the green-room of Drury Lane. He was, we believe, the original "Moses" in *The School for Scandal*. A portrait of Baddeley, in his red waistcoat, used to be seen in poor old "Paddy" Green's collection at "Evans's." At this period dramatic entertainments began at one and terminated at three o'clock in the afternoon.

In 1663, as we see by the playbill before quoted, fashion had altered the hour of commencement to three p.m.; in 1667 it had crept on to four o'clock, until by degrees the evening came to be recognised as the most appropriate time for such amusements. Mohun and Hart had both held commissions in the army, and excelled in tragic and heroic parts. The former was a boon companion and favourite of Rochester. "Becky Marshal" is frequently mentioned by Pepys, and always with praise, as also is Mrs. Knipp, of whom Killigrew told him, "Knipp is like to make the best actor that ever come upon the stage, she understanding so well, that they are going to give her thirty pounds a year more."

Time and space alike, however, would be wanting to enumerate all the dramatic celebrities who have immortalised themselves upon the boards of "Old Drury;" their name is "Legion." As they pass in review before our imagination we can only briefly particularise a few of the most remarkable.

Here Thomas Betterton, who, as we have seen, served his apprenticeship at the Cockpit, and was long the chief attraction of the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, took a farewell benefit in 1709, preliminary to the one before mentioned, being then in his seventy-fifth year. As admirable in his private as in his professional character; a devoted husband to a wife who, *although* an actress, was as virtuous

as she was beautiful; generous and charitable to excess to his poorer "brethren of the buskin;" the son of the cook of Charles I. fairly earned the universal esteem in which he was held, and which procured him a royal funeral in Westminster Abbey. Here Mrs. Bracegirdle, equally celebrated for her beauty and her coldness, drove troops of scented fops to distraction.

There seems little doubt of her attachment to the unfortunate Mountford, who acted "Alexander" to her "Statira," and who was murdered by Captain Hill, one of her many rejected suitors. Hill and Lord Mohun having made an abortive attempt to carry off Mrs. Bracegirdle, the former (as we have seen) vowed vengeance upon Mountford, whom he regarded as the cause of the lady's coldness. He accordingly laid wait for the actor in the street, and struck him. Mountford demanded "what that was for;" upon which (according to the dying man's deposition) Hill drew his sword and ran it through the actor's body.

At Drury Lane flourished the lovely "Nancy" Oldfield, who quitted the bar of the "Mitre" for the stage, and whose notorious intimacy with General Churchill, cousin of the great Duke of Marlborough, obtained for her a grave in Westminster Abbey. Persons of rank and distinction contended for the honour of bearing her pall, and her remains lay in state for three days in the Jerusalem Chamber!

Here, too, Barton Booth stimulated the rival parties of Whigs and Tories in Addison's famous tragedy of *Cato*. Of this piece Johnson remarks, in his "Life of Addison:" "The whole nation was at that time on fire with faction. The Whigs applauded every line in which liberty was mentioned as a satire on the Tories, and the Tories echoed every clap, to show that the satire was unfelt. The story of Bolingbroke is well known. He called Booth to his box, and gave him fifty guineas for defending the cause of liberty so well against a perpetual dictator."

Is not Drury Lane Theatre also intimately associated with the name of Colley Cibber, successful manager and dramatist, and for twenty-seven years Poet Laureate? His annual birthday and New Year odes, all religiously preserved in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, are so invariably bad that his friends asserted that he wrote them as so many jokes. The *London Magazine* for 1737 contains the following epigram:—

"ON SEEING TOBACCO-PIPES LIT WITH ONE OF THE LAUREATE'S ODES.

"While the soft song that warbles George's praise  
From pipe to pipe the living flame conveys,  
Critics who long have scorn'd must now admire;  
For who can say his ode now wants its fire?"



Drury Lane at this time exhibited a perfect constellation of talent. Quin, Macklin, Garrick, Mrs. Clive, and Mrs. Pritchard, with others of subordinate merit, formed a company which has rarely been equalled. It must have been a cruel blow to Quin, long the favourite tragedian of the town, to see himself rivalled by Macklin, and subsequently surpassed by Garrick. In spite of the contempt with which he affected to regard the latter, he expressed his own secret misgivings in his first burst of indignation at the rapid success of the rising actor:—"If this young fellow be right, then *we* have all been wrong."

From 1747 to 1776 Drury Lane owned the sway of David Garrick, the English Roscius, of whom Horace Walpole says: "All the run is now after Garrick, a wine-merchant who is turned player. The Duke of Argyll says he is superior to Betterton." This, however, was not the opinion of the cynical Horace, although Alexander Pope's verdict on Garrick was, "That young man never had his equal as an actor, and he will never have a rival." And Dr. Johnson awarded him a still higher meed of praise in saying: "Here is a man who has advanced the dignity of his profession. Garrick has made a player a higher character."

Drury Lane made the fortune of the ugly, witty, and most popular comic actress, Kitty Clive, thus celebrated by Horace Walpole—

"Here liv'd the laughter-loving dame—  
A matchless actress—Clive her name;  
The comic muse with her retir'd,  
And shed a tear when she expir'd."

To which Peter Pindar (Dr. Wolcot), who was a devoted admirer of Mrs. Jordan, retorted—

"Know Comedy is hearty—all alive;  
Truth and thy trumpet seem not to agree;  
The sprightly lass no more expir'd with Clive  
Than Dame Humility will do with thee."

Here the silver-toned Mrs. Billington appeared in the opera of *Rosetta*. Haydn the composer, who admired this lady greatly, observed of Sir Joshua Reynolds' celebrated picture of her—where she is represented as "St. Cecilia" listening to the heavenly choir—"It is a very fine likeness, but there is a strange mistake in the picture. You have painted her listening to the angels; you ought to have represented the angels listening to her."

Old Drury witnessed the farewell performance of Miss Farren (Countess of Derby) in 1797, just before she exchanged the buskin for a coronet; witnessed, too, the first appearance of Harriet Mellon, in 1795, and her last, in February, 1815—for in the previous month she had wedded Mr. Coutts, the banker. In 1827, Mrs. Coutts having been

then five years a widow, married the Duke of St. Albans, at that time in his twenty-seventh year. Drury Lane saw the rise of the long and devoted attachment of the Duke of Clarence to Mrs. Jordan, and the short-lived passion of George, Prince of Wales, for the lovely Mrs. Robinson, better known as "Perdita," the character in which she appeared on the evening when she captivated her royal admirer.

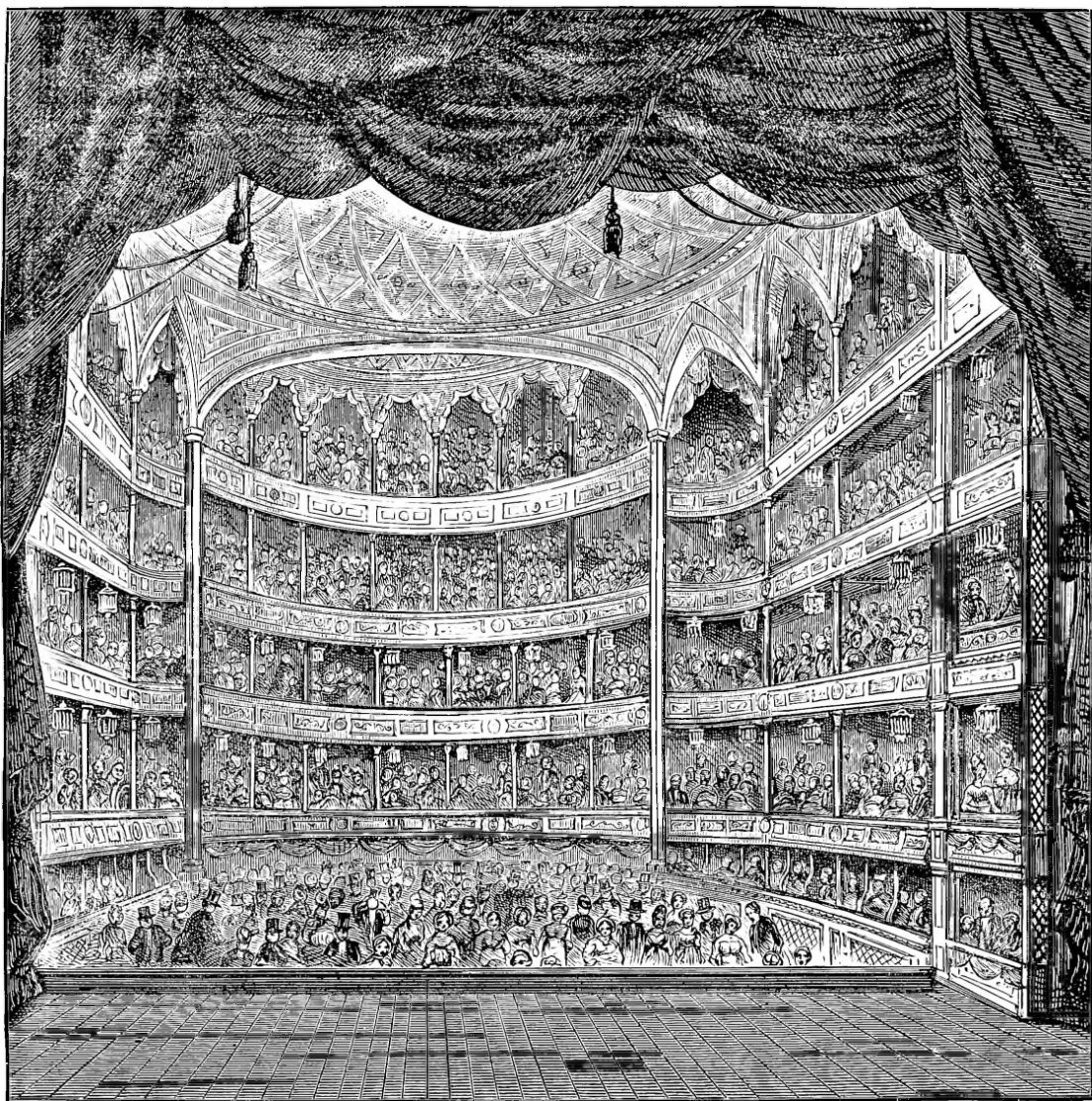
Here, in the present century, Edmund Kean ran his brilliant but erratic career, and his more estimable, although less highly gifted, son Charles made his *début* as "Young Norval." Here, in 1828, Joe Grimaldi, prince of clowns and of good fellows, took his farewell of the stage, where, the following year, Mrs. Nisbet (subsequently Lady Boothby), made her first curtsey to a London audience; and there for several years the imperious Macready rode roughshod over supers, brother-actors, and managers, until, after a personal assault upon the lessee, he transferred his services to the rival house. Neither must the name of Madame Celeste be omitted from the list; for, although it was not Drury Lane Theatre to which she owed her reputation as an actress, it was nevertheless there that she made her first appearance in London, in the ballad of *La Bayadere* in 1830. This lady may fairly be ranked among the wonders of her age, for in 1874 we find her performing the part of the Indian huntress in *The Green Bushes* with all the vigour and pathos and much of the freshness of her youth. During those four-and-forty years generations of great actresses have arisen, shone as stars for a score of years, and passed away into oblivion, marriage, or death; but Celeste still survives, still flourishes—forty-four years after her *début*—bidding defiance alike to old Time and new fashions, as if warranted, like Tennyson's "Brook," to "go on for ever."

The two first operas of Michael Balfe—*The Siege of Rochelle* and *The Maid of Artois*—were produced at Drury Lane in 1835-6. The gifted and ill-fated Madame Malibran sustained the principal part in *The Maid of Artois* a few months before her premature death. In Bunn's "History of the Stage" we are told an amusing anecdote of the famous vocalist in this character. She was supposed in the last act to be perishing with thirst in the desert; the scene was long and exhausting, the lady in delicate health. She therefore proposed to Bunn that he should somehow convey a pint of porter to her in the desert, promising him in that case an *encore* to the finale. "So," says Bunn, "I arranged that behind the pile of drifted sand on which she sinks exhausted a small aperture should be made in the



stage, and through that aperture a pewter-pint of porter was conveyed to the parched lips of this rare child of song, which so revived her, after the terrible exertion of the scene, that she electrified the audience, and had strength to repeat the finale."

quent triumphs as a successful composer of English, French, and Italian opera. The works of Michael Balfe are appreciated not only in England, but in France, Germany, and Italy. The statue lately erected to his honour in the vestibule of this temple,



INTERIOR OF DRURY LANE THEATRE, 1804.

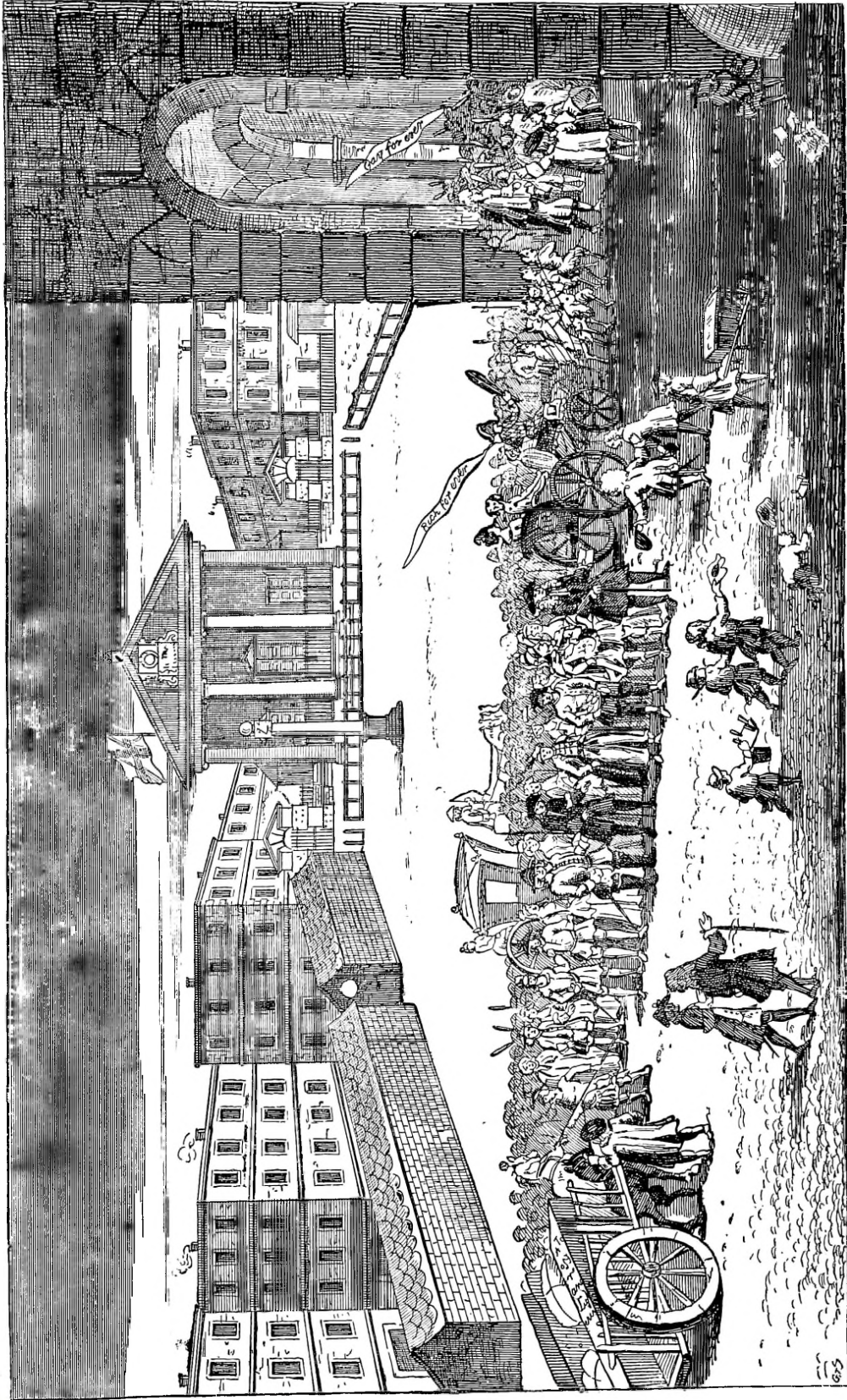
Bunn having paid Malibran £125 for each of fifteen performances in one month, she, after much persuasion, consented to sing for him throughout the next month for the sum of £1,000, but added, "For goodness' sake, do not let any one know I am singing on such terms!"

The name of Balfe, pre-eminent among our English composers, is intimately associated with Drury Lane, from the time of the young Irishman's unassuming *début* in the orchestra to his subse-

where so many of his triumphs have been achieved—a memorial to which numbers of the most distinguished patrons and professors of music, literature, and the drama, both native and foreign, have added their quota—will be a lasting proof of the estimation in which he has been held both at home and abroad.

It is worth while to notice how the salaries of actors have been steadily rising during the last two centuries. We have Pepys' authority that Mrs.





“ RICH'S GLORY.” (After the Original Caricature.) (See page 227.)



Knipp, "who was like to make the best actor of her time," had her salary increased £30 a year. A century later Garrick, as head of his company, drew the highest salary—*i.e.*, £16 16s. a week. Yet fifty years, and Miss Farren, "the Oldfield of her day," is receiving £31 10s. a week, while scarcely a decade afterwards we find Edmund Kean drawing double that sum nightly.

It was remarked about forty years ago by a well-known writer "that Malibran drew five times the salary of the Colonial Secretary, the President of America was not so well paid as Ellen Tree, or the Premier of Great Britain as Mr. Macready. What would he have said in 1874, when Madame Christine Nilsson received £200 a night at Drury Lane, and Madame Patti demanded and was paid £800 for singing six songs at the Liverpool Musical Festival?"

"Old Drury," viewed simply as a building, has experienced many changes and vicissitudes. In 1672 it was burnt to the ground, and the company migrated to the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, until the completion of a new building, designed by Sir Christopher Wren.

The new theatre was opened in 1674, with a prologue and epilogue by Dryden, who, as shown by Mr. R. P. Collier, in Vol. IV. of the Shakespeare Society's Papers, was joined with Killigrew, Mohun, &c., in the speculation of what was then colloquially termed "the New Play House."

In 1707 this theatre, of which Christopher Rich was then the patentee, was temporarily closed, by order of the Lord Chamberlain, in consequence of the violent quarrels between the proprietors and the actors. It subsequently passed into the hands of Willer, Dogget, Cibber, and Booth. In 1714 a life patent was granted to Sir R. Steele, which five years afterwards was revoked. In 1747, when Lacy and Garrick entered into partnership, the latter revived here the performance of Shakespeare's plays; the prologue on that occasion being written, as every Englishman knows, by Dr. Johnson.

In 1780, during the Gordon Riots, a "No Popery" mob got up a row in the theatre, to which they did considerable damage. The objects of their fury were "the papists and Frenchmen" whom Garrick had engaged to dance in a grand spectacular piece entitled *The Chinese Festival*. His Majesty George III., who happened to be present the night of the riot, seemed, it is said, rather amused than otherwise!

In 1775 the afterwards famous Mrs. Siddons, then in her twentieth year, made her first appearance at Drury Lane, in the character of "Portia," in *The Merchant of Venice*. She seems to have

excited but little notice at this time, and retired to the provinces the following year. It was not until 1782, when her performance at the Bath Theatre had excited general admiration, that she obtained a re-engagement at Drury Lane—which she used often to call "the wilderness"—and where her brother, John Kemble, made his *début* as Hamlet, in 1783. In 1776, when Garrick retired from the profession, Messrs. Sheridan, Linley, and Ford became the proprietors of the theatre which he had rendered so justly celebrated. It was pulled down in 1791, and rebuilt, the company meanwhile performing at the Haymarket. In 1794 the new theatre—which was designed by Mr. Holland, and is said to have been a model of elegance and beauty—opened, with every prospect of a long and brilliant career. For some years subsequently the gifted Kemble family—John and Charles, with their unapproachable sister, Mrs. Siddons—were the principal attraction at Drury Lane, and the fortunes of the theatre were seriously affected by their withdrawal, in 1803.

We are told in the "Memoirs" of Sheridan that his translation of *The Death of Rolla*, under the title of *Pizarro*, brought him in £25,000 in five weeks. The *Era Almanack* mentions a curious instance of Sheridan's inveterate habit of procrastination:—"At the time the house was overflowing, on the first night's performance of *Pizarro*, all that was written of the play was actually rehearsing; and, incredible as it may appear, until the end of the fourth act, neither Mrs. Siddons, nor Charles Kemble, nor Barrymore, had all their speeches for the fifth. Mr. Sheridan was up-stairs in the prompter's-room, where he was writing the last part of the play while the earlier parts were acting, and every ten minutes he brought down as much of the dialogue as he had done, piecemeal, into the green-room, abusing himself and his negligence, and making a thousand winning and soothing apologies for having kept the performers so long in such painful suspense."

In 1809 Drury Lane Theatre was again destroyed by fire. Sheridan, at the time of the conflagration, was at the House of Commons, which voted an immediate adjournment when the disastrous news arrived; though Sheridan himself protested against such an interruption of public business on account of his own or any other private interests. He went thither, however, in all haste, and whilst seeing his own property in flames, sat down with his friend Barry in a coffee-house opposite to a bottle of port, coolly remarking, in answer to some friendly expostulation, that it was "hard if a man could not drink a glass of wine by his own fire!"

The fire which burnt down "Old Drury" was



not altogether profitless to the world of poetry, though so heavy a blow to the dramatic muse, for it proved the immediate cause of the appearance of the "Rejected Addresses"—the joint production of Horace and James Smith—one of the most popular contributions to modern light literature. The history of the book was as follows:—In the month of August, 1812, there appeared in the daily newspapers an advertisement to the effect that the committee for rebuilding Drury Lane Theatre were anxious to promote a "free and fair competition" for an address to be spoken upon the re-opening of the theatre on the 10th of October ensuing, and that they had therefore announced to the public that they would be glad to receive such compositions, addressed to their secretary. Some hundred and twelve compositions were sent in—good, bad, and indifferent; and the two Smiths, seizing on the occasion, put together and published in a small volume twenty-one such imaginary addresses or prologues, imitating in the most delicate and graceful manner the styles of the chief writers of the day. The book, as soon as published, sold like wild-fire, and ran through very many editions before the end of the year, and soon established itself as an English classic. Among those writers who were thus travestied were Lord Byron, Scott, Crabbe, Wordsworth, Thomas Moore, Dr. Johnson, "Monk" Lewis, Fitzgerald, William Cobbett, and Samuel T. Coleridge. Of all the imitations, however, that of Sir Walter was universally pronounced the best; and as it contains a vivid description of the scene of conflagration, though in mock-heroic style, we may be pardoned for drawing upon it here rather largely.

First we have a picturesque description of London in darkness; next, we are thus introduced to the outbreak of the fire in the early morning—by a poetical licence, of course, since it happened, in fact, in the evening:—

"As Chaos, which, by heavenly doom,  
Had slept in everlasting gloom,  
Started with terror and surprise  
When light first flashed upon her eyes:  
So London's sons in nightcap woke,  
In bedgown woke her dames;  
For shouts were heard 'mid fire and smoke,  
And twice ten thousand voices spoke—  
'The Playhouse is in flames!'  
And, lo! where Catherine Street extends,  
A fiery tail its lustre lends  
To every window-pane;  
Blushes each spout in Martlet Court,  
And Barbican, moth-eaten fort,  
And Covent Garden kennels sport  
A bright ensanguined drain."

Then follows the description of the arrival of the fire-engines, quite in the style of Sir Walter Scott in "Marmion" or "The Lady of the Lake:—"

"The summoned firemen woke at call,  
And hied them to their stations all;  
\* \* \* \* \*  
The engines thundered through the street,  
Fire-hook, pipe, bucket, all complete,  
And torches glared, and clattering feet  
Along the pavement paced.  
And one, the leader of the band,  
From Charing Cross along the Strand,  
Like stag by beagles hunted hard,  
Ran till he stopped at Vinegar Yard.  
The burning badge his shoulder bore,  
The belt and oilskin cap he wore,  
The cane he had his men to bang,  
Showed foreman of the British gang.  
His name was Higginbottom: now  
'Tis meet that I should tell you how  
The others came in view:  
The Hand in Hand the race begun,  
Then came the Phoenix and the Sun,  
The Exchange, where old insurers run,  
The Eagle, where the new."

And then we have the fire itself brought before us in all its sensational details:—

"A sadder scene was ne'er disclosed;  
Without, within, in hideous show,  
Devouring flames resistless glow,  
And blazing rafters downwards go,  
And never halloo, 'Heads below!  
Nor notice give at all.  
The firemen, terrified, are slow  
To bid the pumping torrent flow,  
For fear the roof should fall.  
Back, Robins, back! Crump, stand aloof!  
Whitford, keep near the walls!  
Huggins, regard your own behoof!  
For, lo! the blazing, rocking roof  
Down, down, in thunder, falls.  
An awful pause succeeds the stroke,  
And o'er the ruins volumed smoke,  
Rolling around its pitchy shroud,  
Concealed them from the astonished crowd.  
At length the mist awhile was cleared,  
When, lo! amidst the wreck appeared,  
Gradual a moving head appeared,  
And Eagle firemen knew  
'Twas Joseph Muggins—name revered!—  
The foreman of their crew.  
Loud shouted all, in signs of woe,  
'A Muggins! to the rescue, ho!  
And poured the hissing tide.  
Meanwhile, Joe Muggins fought amain,  
And strove and struggled, all in vain,  
For, rallying but to fall again,  
He tottered, sunk, and died."

Last follows a picture, too often seen in other and lesser conflagrations, of the death of a gallant fireman, told with a mock-heroic power which never certainly has been surpassed.

Of the brothers Smith, the authors of these charming parodies, we have already spoken in our description of Craven Street, Strand. It will be therefore enough to add here the fact that, having shone as wits in London society for more than a quarter of a century, they died, James in 1839, and Horace ten years later. Lord Byron himself, in spite of being one of the authors so pleasantly satirised in the volume, called the "Rejected Addresses" by far the best thing of the kind since the "Rolliad." Slight and small as was the volume, it was reviewed at considerable length by Lord Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review*, while the *Quarterly* criticised it in company with forty of the "Addresses" which had really been "rejected" on the occasion, pronouncing it a model of "humour, good-humour, discrimination, and good taste." It may be of interest, and an encouragement to young authors, to learn that the copyright, which in the first instance Murray refused to buy for twenty, was sold by the brothers for upwards of a thousand pounds! The book has been republished in America, and is read with delight wherever the English language is known. The imitations of Wordsworth ("The Baby's Début"), Cobbett ("The Hampshire Farmer's Address"), Southey ("The Rebuilding"), Coleridge ("Play House Musings"), Crabbe ("The Theatre"), Lord Byron (the first stanzas of "Cui Bono?"), the songs entitled "Drury Lane Hustings" and "The Theatrical Alarm Bell" (imitations of the then editor of the *Morning Post*), and the travesties of *Macbeth*, *George Barnwell*, and *The Stranger*, were all written by James Smith; the rest, including the parody of Sir Walter Scott, by Horace.

The present edifice—the fourth erected on the site—modelled upon the plan of the great theatre at Bordeaux, by Mr. Wyatt, the architect, was opened in 1812, with a prologue written by Lord Byron. In 1831 the Doric portico in Catherine Street, and the colonnade in Little Russell Street, were added to the structure. It is not a little singular that the necessity of such a colonnade had been thus humorously brought under the notice of the Building Committee as far back as the year 1812, in one of the "Rejected Addresses," in the following lines, in imitation of S. T. Coleridge:—

"Oh, Mr. Whitbread! fie upon you, sir!  
I think you should have built a colonnade.  
When tender beauty, looking for her coach,  
Protrudes her gloveless hand, perceives the shower,  
And draws the tippet closer round her throat,  
And ere she mount the step, the oozing mud  
Sinks through her pale kid slipper.

On the morrow  
She coughs at breakfast, and her gruff papa

Cries, 'There you go! this comes of playhouses!  
To build no portico is penny wise;  
Heaven grant it prove not in the end pound foolish!'

The new building was pronounced by the imitators of Mr. Cobbett, in the "Rejected Addresses," "not a gimcrack palace, not a Solomon's temple, not a frost-work of Brobdingnag filagree, but a plain, honest, homely, industrious, wholesome, brown-brick playhouse"—a "large, comfortable house, thanks to Mr. Whitbread." The theatre, in 1818, was under a committee of noblemen and gentlemen, among whom were Lord Yarmouth (afterwards Marquis of Hertford) and Lord Byron, the latter of whom, however, soon after being appointed, left England, never to return.

For many years after that date the great national theatre ran an erratic and, for the most part, disastrous career, having been not inaptly compared to a syren luring adventurous lessees to ruin and bankruptcy. In the agony of desperation it has worn "motley," caught eagerly at every *bizarre* attraction, and been—

"Everything by turns, and nothing long;"  
a monster concert-hall, a French hippodrome, and even an arena for the sports of Van Amburgh and his wild beasts, with spasmodic intervals of pantomime and legitimate drama. Sad to relate, we have it on the authority of Mr. Bunn, the lessee, that Van Amburgh was a greater success, in a pecuniary point of view, than Mr. Macready.

For several seasons it was the home of English opera, a class of entertainment which has never been appreciated as it deserves among our countrymen, though frequent attempts have been made to give it a position equal to that enjoyed by Italian opera. It may be observed here that Clara Novello, now the Countess Gugliucci, made a brilliant *début* at Drury Lane, in 1843, as "Sappho."

Since the destruction by fire of Her Majesty's Theatre, in 1867, "Old Drury" has risen greatly in the social scale, having been advanced to the dignity of the opposition opera-house to Covent Garden. This, which was supposed to have been only a temporary arrangement until the new opera-house should be built, now appears likely to be a permanent one, in consequence of circumstances to be hereafter mentioned in connection with Her Majesty's Theatre; and the two great playhouses of Covent Garden and Drury Lane are once more rivals—as in former times, in the days of Garrick and Rich.

Apart from the interest attaching to the theatre as a place of dramatic entertainment, some details of the present building may be placed on record here.

The general form of the edifice is that of a



parallelogram; its extent from north to south being 131 feet, and from east to west 237 feet, independently of the painting and scene-rooms, which are partially detached, extending 93 feet further eastward. The chief entrance is approached by a flight of steps, protected by a porch. The entrance-hall communicates, eastward, with the rotunda and the staircases to the boxes; on the north and south, with the pit-lobbies; and from the latter, by circuitous passages, with the pit itself. The rotunda and grand staircase form very beautiful portions of the theatre. The rotunda, 30 feet in diameter, is surrounded by a circular gallery, and crowned by an elegant dome. Here, among other statues of famous poets and actors, is the bust of Balfe already alluded to.

The auditory has a most imposing effect, and is built nearly in the form of a horse-shoe; it is 46 feet wide at the stage, 52 feet across the centre of the pit, and 48 feet from the front of the stage to the centre of the dress-circle. The height from the floor of the pit to the ceiling is 47 feet. There are three tiers of boxes, and an upper and lower gallery; and the house is calculated to accommodate upwards of 3,000 persons.

The proscenium, being as it were the portico of the stage, has less of imitative art in its decoration than the other parts of the house. On each side are two demi-columns of the Corinthian order, supporting a rich entablature, a coved ceiling, and, spanning the stage, an elliptical arch, the whole

richly gilt upon a white ground. Down to about the year 1860, when the theatre underwent extensive renovation, the proscenium bore above it the royal arms, together with the well-known classical motto "*Veluti in speculum.*" In its original state the interior of the theatre was circular, but it was altered to its present form during the management of Mr. Elliston, at a cost of about £21,000. The whole of the interior has undergone renovation at different periods; it is very effectively decorated, gold being extensively used in the embellishment.

The stage is of great extent, being 96 feet from the orchestra to the back wall, and upwards of 77 feet in width from wall to wall. The manager's room, actress' dressing-rooms, and various other apartments, are on the north side of the stage; and on the south are the green-rooms, the prompter's-room, the actors' dressing-rooms, and a range of stabling for twenty horses. Above the auditory are the carpenters' shops and store-rooms; whilst the gas-fitters' and property-rooms are in the immediate vicinity of the stage. The painting-room is over the eastern extremity of the stage, and measures nearly 80 feet in length by 36 in height and width. An opening has been made through the original back wall of the stage, whereby the space below the painting-room can be made available for scenic effects, thus giving to the stage an entire depth of 125 feet, the largest of any stage in Europe.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.

"The houses twain  
Of Covent Garden and of Drury Lane."—*Rejected Addresses.*

The Building of the Theatre—"Rich's Glory"—The First Performance at Covent Garden—Ladies at the Theatre—Receipts of the House—Performance of Handel's "Messiah"—Royalty flock to the Haymarket, and Horace Walpole's Remarks upon the Subject—First Appearance of "Peg" Woffington—Death of Rich, and Sale of Covent Garden Theatre—Charles Macklin, the Comedian and Centenarian—Stephen Kemble—Inledon—George Frederick Cooke—John Philip Kemble—"The Young Roscius"—The Theatre burnt in 1808—The Duke of Northumberland's Generosity to Kemble—The Theatre rebuilt and opened—The "O. P." Riots, succeeded by a run of uninterrupted Prosperity—Poetic Effusions upon Actresses wedded to Noblemen.

WE have seen that "the new playhouse in Drury Lane" was frequently spoken of as "Covent Garden Theatre," and naturally enough, for the theatre in Bow Street was not built until the year 1731. The latter was a speculation of John Rich, the celebrated harlequin, and patentee of the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, who removed hither with his company in 1732.

Hogarth's caricature of "Rich's Glory; or, His Triumphal Entry into Covent Garden," of which we give a copy on page 223, refers to this removal.

The progress of the building was thus commented on in the *Daily Advertiser* for March 2, 1730:—"We hear the new theatre which is to be built in Covent Garden will be after the model of the opera-house in the Haymarket; and by the draught that has been approved of for the same, it's said it will exceed the opera-house in magnificence of structure."

The same paper for August 4, 1731, states:—"The new theatre building in Covent Garden for Mr. Rich is carrying on with such expedition and

diligence (there being a great number of hands employed therein) that it's thought it will be completely finished and ready to receive his audience next winter. Several persons of distinction resort thither daily to view the said work, and seem much pleased at the performance."

The first performance at Covent Garden Theatre was advertised in the following manner : —

the boxes, the young married women compose the second row, while the rear is generally made up of mothers of long standing, undesigning maids, and contented widows. Whoever will cast his eye upon them under this view, during the representation of a play, will find me so far in the right, that a *double entendre* strikes the first row into an affected gravity or careless indolence, the second will venture



COVENT GARDEN THEATRE : FRONT IN 1850.

"By the Company of Comedians.—At the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden, on Thursday next, being the 7th day of December, 1732, will be revived a comedy called *The Way of the World*, written by Mr. Congreve. The cloathes, scenes, and decorations entirely new, and, on account of the great demand for places, the pit and boxes, by desire, will be laid together at 5s.; gallery, 2s.; upper gallery, 1s.; and to prevent the scenes being crowded, the stage half-a-guinea. N.B.—All persons who want places are desired to send to the stage-door (the passage from Bow Street leading to it), where attendance will be given and places kept for the following night as usual."

It was doubtless *à propos* of some such comedy as the one just mentioned that the *Guardian* remarks:—"As the playhouse affords us the most occasions of observing upon the behaviour of the face, it may be useful (for the direction of those who would be critics this way) to remark that the virgin ladies usually dispose themselves in front of

at a smile, but the third take the conceit entirely and express their mirth in a downright laugh."

Here, as Mr. Timbs reminds us, Rich and Lambert, in 1735, founded the Beefsteak Club; and here, in 1746, Garrick played for the season.

The site of the theatre was leased to Rich for a term of years by the Duke of Bedford, at a yearly rental of £100. It held before the curtain £200, which was at that time reckoned a good receipt. In Shakespeare's day £20 was considered profitable; and "in 1747," says Colley Cibber, in his "Apology," "Mrs. Rich said she was always contented if the receipts reached three figures." In 1750, further to increase the profits, seats were built on the stage sufficient to accommodate a large number of persons; but this arrangement was such an obstruction to the actors that it was abolished by

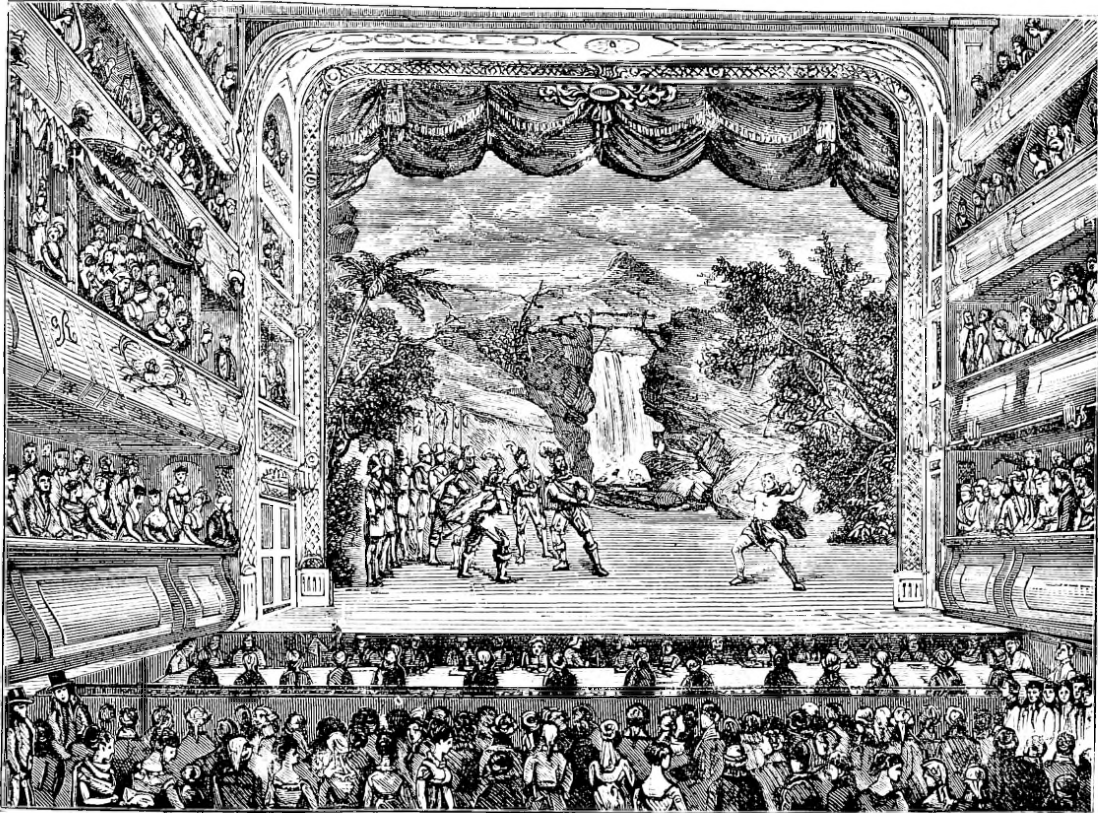


Garrick. At the time of the death of John Rich in 1761, the ground-rent had been raised from £100 to £300 per annum, and the property was estimated at £60,000. In 1792, when the Duke of Bedford, as ground-landlord, granted a new lease, it was at the rate of £940 a year.

It was at Covent Garden that Handel, in 1741, produced his great oratorio, the *Messiah*. The fashion of the day was against him, though he was

royalties went to the Haymarket when it was the fashion to frequent the other opera in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Lord Chesterfield one night came into the latter, and was asked if he had been at the other house. 'Yes,' said he; 'but there was no one there but the king and queen; and as I thought they might be talking business, I came straight away.'

It was at Covent Garden that the fascinating



INTERIOR OF COVENT GARDEN THEATRE IN 1804.

supported by the court, the mob, and the poet of common sense, Alexander Pope, who records in his "Dunciad" how, on finding it impossible to hold his own against the Italian faction, Handel quietly withdrew to Ireland for a year or so, till the tide should turn in his favour. "Handel has set up an oratorio," writes Horace Walpole in 1742, "against the operas, and it succeeds." And well was Handel avenged. In a few years the Italian Opera House in the Haymarket went out of fashion, and the nobility set up their own rival house in Lincoln's Inn Fields. "What the Court then patronised," observes Charles Knight, "the aristocracy rejected." As usual, Horace Walpole has a cynical story to tell upon the subject. He writes thus to Mr. Conway, in 1761:—"The late

Irish actress, Margaret Woffington, made her first appearance upon a London and her last upon any stage. Her choice of a character for her *début*, in 1738, excited the surprise of the public, being that of "Sir Harry Wildair;" but so captivating did she appear in it that Garrick, with whom it had been a favourite part, gave it up from that time. Her best rôle was that of "Rosalind," in *As You Like It*, to which, in 1757, she was speaking the epilogue with all the saucy piquancy peculiarly her own, when she was suddenly stricken with paralysis, and carried off the stage never to return to it. According to Dr. Doran, a bitter source of jealousy existed between "Peg" Woffington and the beautiful and notorious George Anne Bellamy, whose "Memoirs," written by herself with an asto-



nishing absence of reserve, were formerly read and quoted by every lady of fashion. "The charming Bellamy," says Dr. Doran, "had procured from Paris two gorgeous dresses wherein to enact 'Statira' in the *Rival Queens*. 'Roxana' was played by Woffington, and she was so overcome by malice when she saw herself eclipsed by the dazzling glories of the resplendent Bellamy, that she rolled 'Statira' and her spangled sack in the dust, pommelling her the while with the handle of her stage dagger, as she declaimed, Alexander standing by:—

'Nor he, nor heaven shall shield thee from my justice!  
Die, sorceress, die! and all my wrongs die with thee!'

Rich lies buried in Hillingdon churchyard, near Uxbridge. A vignette of his tomb, and a fac-simile of his autograph, attached to an agreement with Charles Fleetwood respecting the receipts of Covent Garden Theatre, will be found in "Smith's Historical and Literary Curiosities."

A few years after the death of Rich the theatre, having been sold by his heirs for £60,000, was opened in 1767 by Messrs. Harris, Colman, Powell, and Rutherford. In 1774 Mr. Colman sold his share, and from this time the theatre was virtually under the management of Mr. Harris, who had by far the largest interest in the property. In 1787 it was almost wholly rebuilt, and was further altered and enlarged in 1792.

Covent Garden is rich in names famous in histrionic annals, each of which is a landmark to point out the progress of the drama during the last century and a half. Among the earliest of these is that of Charles Macklin, the comedian and centenarian, who frequently performed on its boards, and unless absent from London on engagements at Dublin, lived constantly almost under its shadow—mostly under its piazza; or hard by, in James Street, Hart Street, or Tavistock Row. Having once retired from the stage in middle life, in the hope of making a fortune by establishing a tavern and coffee-house in Hart Street, he returned to it after the failure of his scheme and his consequent bankruptcy, and for many years, whilst quite an old man, played leading parts with some of the fire of youth. His last appearance at Covent Garden was on May 7th, 1789, he being then eighty-nine years of age, when he attempted the part of "Shylock" for his "benefit," but was unable to proceed with the performance. But in spite of his loss of memory he still lived much abroad as usual, haunting the scene of his former triumphs, telling his stock of anecdotes over and over again, and, evening after evening, frequenting a public-house in Duke's Court, close by, where a large concourse would repair in order to hear the anecdotes of so aged and remark-

able a person, who remembered the days of the dramatic giants of an earlier generation. "As the infirmities of age increased on him, he would wander feebly about the neighbourhood of Covent Garden, sometimes looking in at the theatre, though he went thither rather more from the force of habit than from any gratification that he could receive, except, perhaps, from the music between the acts. On these occasions the audience, it is said, would always venerate his age, and compassionate his condition; for on his entrance into the pit, however full the house might be, room was always made for him in his accustomed seat—the centre of the last row next to the orchestra; and when the performance was over he would walk home leisurely by himself across the square of Covent Garden to Tavistock Row, where he lived and where he died, a veritable centenarian, in 1797. His "Memoirs," which originally appeared in the *European Magazine*, but were subsequently re-published in a volume, furnish us with some curious information respecting society in London and the manners and habits of the gentry and professional classes a century ago.

Macklin does not say much for the morality of Covent Garden and its neighbourhood, or of the taverns and public-houses by which it was surrounded, or of the still lower public-houses near Clare Market, which were the resort of second-rate actors, and theatrical critics of Grub Street or Drury Lane, who "lived from hand to mouth." The ordinaries of the time, it appears, were charged from sixpence to a shilling a head—in the latter case being supplied with two courses, and attended by a superior sort of mixed company; though there were private rooms besides for wits of the higher order, and for such of the nobility as liked to frequent such places, where conviviality was often carried to excess. Macklin says also that the habits and manners of the dramatic as well as of other professions were very different from those which now prevail. The merchant, at that time, scarcely ever lived out of the City, his residence being always attached to his counting-house, and, indeed, his credit being in a great degree dependent on his observance of the established practice. According to Macklin, the first migration of the London merchants to the westward dates only from 1747, when a few of those who had already made large fortunes removed to Hatton Garden. The lawyers, too, he used to tell his hearers, used at that time to live mostly in their inns of court, or else about Westminster Hall; and in like manner the actors "did mostly congregate" around the two great theatres. Thus, as we know, Quin, Booth, and Wilks lived almost constantly in or about Bow



Street, Colley Cibber in Charles Street, Billy Howard in Henrietta Street, and Garrick, for a considerable portion of his life, in Southampton Street. The inferior players lodged in and about Vinegar Yard, Little Russell Street, and the lesser courts round the theatres; "so that," says Macklin, "we could all be mustered by beat of drum, could attend rehearsals without any inconvenience, and yet save coach-hire—no inconsiderable part, let me tell you, of a former player's annual expenses. I do not know how the change has been effected, but we are now all looking out for high ground—squares and genteel neighbourhoods—no matter how far distant from the theatre, which should be the great scene of business; as if, forsooth, local situations could give rhythm to the profession, or genteel neighbourhoods instinctively produce good manners." What he would have said on this subject if he had lived on into our own days may be easily inferred from these last remarks of the father of the theatrical world a century ago. But we must return from this digression to the theatre itself, from which we are in danger of wandering with the actors.

Stephen Kemble made his first appearance here, as "Othello," in 1783. Possessed, like all of his family, of considerable dramatic capabilities, his talents were unhappily obscured under a load of personal obesity, which had, however, the advantage of enabling him to enact the part of "Falstaff" (his best character) without stuffing! Charles Incedon—"The Ballad-singer"—as he loved to be termed—made his *début* as "Dermot," in *The Poor Soldier*, in 1790. His voice is said to have been the most melodious, as well as powerful, of his time; and his manner of singing such songs as "Black-eyed Susan," "The Soldier tired," and "The Storm," has never since been surpassed. In 1794 Charles Kemble, and in 1797 Mrs. Glover, made their first appearances here. In 1800 George Frederick Cooke achieved a great success as "Richard III."—a performance spoken of as "the best since Garrick." In 1803 John Philip Kemble purchased a sixth part of the property of the Covent Garden patent, transferring his own services, with those of his sister, Mrs. Siddons, and his brother Charles, from Drury Lane to Covent Garden. In 1804 "The Young Roscius," William Henry Betty, at twelve years of age was filling the theatre to overflowing, and a detachment of the Guards was posted outside, with a large body of constables inside, to preserve order amongst the thousands who had assembled hours before the opening of the doors. His salary was at first £50 a night, but, after three performances, was increased to £100; and at sixteen years of age he quitted the profession with a

handsome fortune. Twelve years later he returned to the stage; but the performance of his maturer years was not considered to fulfil the promise of his youth; and disappointed at the coldness with which he was received, he again retired into private life. He died in August, 1874, aged eighty-two.

On the morning of the 30th of September, 1808, Covent Garden Theatre was totally destroyed by fire; a calamity which involved a fearful loss of human life—twenty-three firemen being killed by the unexpected fall of a part of the ruins. The splendid organ left by Handel, and the stock of wine belonging to the Beefsteak Club, shared the fate of the whole building. The loss of property was estimated at £150,000, of which £50,000 were covered by insurances.

John Kemble, who had invested his all in the share so recently purchased, met with universal sympathy, which, in some notable instances, did not confine itself to words. The Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV., presented him with £1,000; and the Duke of Northumberland with £10,000, which Kemble declined as a gift, but accepted as a loan, giving the duke his bond for the amount. On the 31st of December, 1808, the Prince of Wales laid the first stone of the new theatre, and the Duke of Northumberland sent Kemble back his bond, enclosed in a letter, saying that, "it being a day of rejoicing, he concluded there would be a bonfire, and he therefore requested that the enclosed obligation might be thrown in, to heighten the flames." The architect was Sir Robert Smirke, and the model selected, the Temple of Minerva in the Acropolis at Athens. The Doric portico in Bow Street, with its four fluted columns, and statues of Tragedy and Comedy, were by Flaxman, and the two long panels in the upper part, with representations in basso-relievo of ancient and modern drama, were by Flaxman and Rossi. Some £50,000 of the cost of the construction was received from the insurance offices, and the remaining £100,000 was raised by subscription shares of £500 each.

On the 18th of September, 1809, the splendid edifice was opened at "new prices," a proceeding which the management considered necessary on account of the enormous cost of the building. These new prices were by no means approved by the public, and led to the well-known "O.P." riots. On the opening night of the new theatre, a cry of "Old prices!" (afterwards diminished to "O.P.") burst from every part of the house. This continued and increased in violence till the 23rd, when rattles, drums, whistles, and cat-calls having completely drowned the voices of the actors, Mr. Kemble, the stage-manager, came forward and said

"that a committee of gentlemen had undertaken to examine the finances of the concern, and that until they were prepared with their report the theatre would be closed." "Name them!" was shouted from all sides. Their names were declared. "All shareholders!" bawled a wag from the gallery. In a few days the theatre re-opened; the public paid no attention to the report of the referees, and the tumult was renewed for several weeks with even increased violence. The proprietors sent in hired bruisers to mill the refractory into subjection. This irritated most of their former friends, and amongst the rest the annotator, who accordingly wrote the song of "Heigh-ho, says Kemble," which was caught up by the ballad-singers, and sung under Mr. Kemble's house windows in Great Russell Street. In the end Kemble was obliged to give way, and after a humble apology, which was graciously accepted by a crowded audience, peace and the "old prices" were simultaneously restored.

For many years after this inauspicious commencement Covent Garden enjoyed a run of uninterrupted prosperity, the receipts between 1809 and 1821 averaging £80,000 each season. The largest annual amount taken at the theatre was in the year 1810-11, when the sum of £100,000 was received at the doors! The annual expenses during this period averaged £40,000—an outlay which required a skilful and liberal management to insure the large amounts just mentioned. It will be sufficient to mention the names of the principal performers at Covent Garden between 1809 and 1822 to show how powerful was the dramatic force there assembled:—In tragedy, Messrs. Kemble, Cooke, Macready, Young, &c. &c.; Mrs. Siddons, Miss O'Neill, &c. In comedy, Messrs. Liston, Munden, Charles Mathews, sen., W. Farren, &c.; Mesdames Jordan, Brunton, Foote, C. Kemble, &c. In opera, Messrs. Incedon, Braham, Pyne, and Mesdames Catalani, Bolton, Stephens, and Tree. "Kitty" Stephens made her first appearance here in 1812; Miss O'Neill, in 1814; Macready, in 1816; and Farren, in 1818. Several of these actresses and singers afterwards married noblemen; and the "Memoirs" of the late James Smith, published in 1840, contain various poetic effusions upon those ladies. We will quote a few, which will interest our readers:—

The first, in allusion to Miss Farren, Countess of Derby, runs thus:—

"Farren, Thalia's dear delight,  
Can I forget the fatal night,  
Of grief unstain'd by fiction,  
(E'en now the recollection damps)  
When Wroughton led thee to the lamps,  
In graceful valediction?"

Another verse is in honour of Miss Brunton, Countess of Craven:—

"The Derby prize by Hymen won,  
Again the god made bold to run  
Beneath Thalia's steerage;  
Sent forth a second earl to woo,  
And captivating Brunton too,  
Exalted to the peerage."

Of Miss Bolton, Lady Thurlow, whose celebrated part was "Polly" in *The Beggar's Opera*, the poet says—

"Thrice vanquished thus on Thespian soil,  
Heart-whole from Cupid's toil  
I caught a fleeting furlough:  
Gay's *Newgate Opera* charmed me then;  
But 'Polly' sang her requiem when  
Fair Bolton turned to Thurlow."

Of Miss O'Neill, who made prize of a baronet in the matrimonial lottery, he writes:—

"These wounds some substitute might heal;  
But what bold mortal bade O'Neill  
Renounce her tragic station—  
Taste, talent, beauty to trepan?  
By Heaven! I wonder how the man  
Escaped assassination!"

Appended to these verses is one from another pen, written some years later, immortalising the lady who afterwards became Countess of Essex:—

"Last of this dear, delightful list—  
Most followed, wondered at, and missed  
In Hymen's odds and evens—  
Old Essex caged our nightingale,  
And finished thy theatric tale,  
Enchanting Kitty Stephens."

Miss Foote, although not celebrated in verse by the author of "The Rejected Addresses," was another actress of this period who was elevated from the stage to the peerage. She made her first appearance at Covent Garden, in 1814, as "Amanthis," in Mrs. Inchbald's comedy of *The Child of Nature*; and became Countess of Harrington in 1831.

Among the many good stories and anecdotes relating to Drury Lane and Covent Garden Theatres to be found in abundance in the anecdote biography of the two last centuries, the following, relating as it does to Miss Farren, may be repeated here:—Lord Derby once applied in the green-room to Sheridan for the arrears of Lady Derby's (Miss Farren's) salary, averring that he would not leave the room until it was paid. "My dear lord," said Sheridan, "this is too bad; you have taken from us the brightest star in our little world, and now you quarrel with us for a little dust which she has left behind her."

Mrs. Siddons retired from the stage in 1812; her brother, John Kemble, followed her example in 1816, presenting his share of the theatre (one-sixth)



to his brother Charles. In 1820 Mr. Harris, who owned seven-twelfths of the property, died, and from this time the fortunes of the theatre declined. Differences arose between Mr. Henry Harris (who had succeeded to his father's share) and Mr. Charles Kemble, resulting in legal proceedings.

In 1822 Mr. Henry Harris resigned his management, and the property was thrown into Chancery. Nevertheless, the Shakespearian play of *King John* was put upon the stage here in 1823, though Mr. Kemble was doubtful how far any attempt to improve the costume would succeed, being afraid lest he should be considered an "antiquary." But in this matter he listened to the advice of Mr. Planché, and the introduction of appropriate mail-armour and helmets of the thirteenth century was thoroughly appreciated by the public, "receipts of from £400 to £600 nightly soon reimbursed the management for the production; and a complete reformation of dramatic costume became from that moment inevitable upon the English stage."

In spite, however, of these and other undisputed successes, the theatre, in 1829, was seized by the parochial authorities, advertised for sale, and was only rescued by public subscriptions and voluntary contributions of the company. Charles Kemble's administration was not so fortunate as that of his brother, although the last three years of his management were brightened by the triumphs of his daughter, Miss Fanny Kemble, afterwards Mrs. Butler. Here was performed, in January, 1832, Lord Francis Egerton's tragedy of *Catharine of Cleves*. In 1833 Edmund Kean made his last appearance on these boards. In the same year the two great theatres of Drury Lane and Covent Garden were united under the management of Mr. Bunn, but the union was of short duration. In 1835 Covent Garden was leased to Mr. Osbaldistone, and the experiment tried of reducing the prices. Charles Kemble, Macready, and Miss Helen Faucit were the principal stars under this management, which only lasted two years, when the theatre passed into the hands of Macready. A Shakespearian revival now took place, and *The Tempest*, *Coriolanus*, *Henry V.*, and *King Lear* were produced in a style of gorgeous and appropriate magnificence. The profits were, however, by no means commensurate with the expenses, and within two years Mr. Macready retired from the management a considerable loser.

In 1839 Covent Garden Theatre was taken by Madame Vestris, the most fascinating actress of her time; Mr. Planché, as he tells us in his agreeable "Recollections," acting as superintendent of the decorative department, and introducing great

reforms in the matter of costume, and acting also as "reader" of plays submitted to the manager by unknown authors; but in spite of the almost unrivalled attractions afforded by a company which, in addition to the talented lessee and her no less talented husband, Charles Mathews—including Messrs. Harley and Keeley, and Mesdames Nisbet, Humby, and Keeley, &c.—the speculation was a losing one, and was resigned at the end of the third season. About this time Dickens wrote for Covent Garden Theatre, by way of helping the manager, a farce about which the actors could not agree, and which he afterwards turned into his story of "The Lamplighter."

In April, 1842, Mr. Charles Kemble again essayed the direction of the theatre, which opened with the opera of *Norma*, Miss Adelaide Kemble being the prima donna; but Mr. C. Kemble, in spite of the prestige of his name, and his great success as an actor, was not destined to be fortunate as a manager, and the smallness of the receipts obliged him to withdraw the following November. The Christmas of the same year found the indomitable Mr. Bunn in possession, the entertainment offered being a curious olla-podrida, compounded of Shakespeare, English opera, and pantomime. Mr. Bunn's brief management ended in May, 1843, and the theatre was then let to the Anti-Corn-Law League, who used it for the purpose of a bazaar. Next, M. Jullien installed himself there for a season of winter promenade concerts, which were highly successful; and on March 4th, 1844, the first *bal-masqué* given in England during the present century took place at Covent Garden, under his auspices. During the spring of the same year *Antigone* was performed, the theatre being under the direction of M. Laurent. M. Jullien's concerts and *bal-masqué* again attracted large crowds during the season of 1845-6.

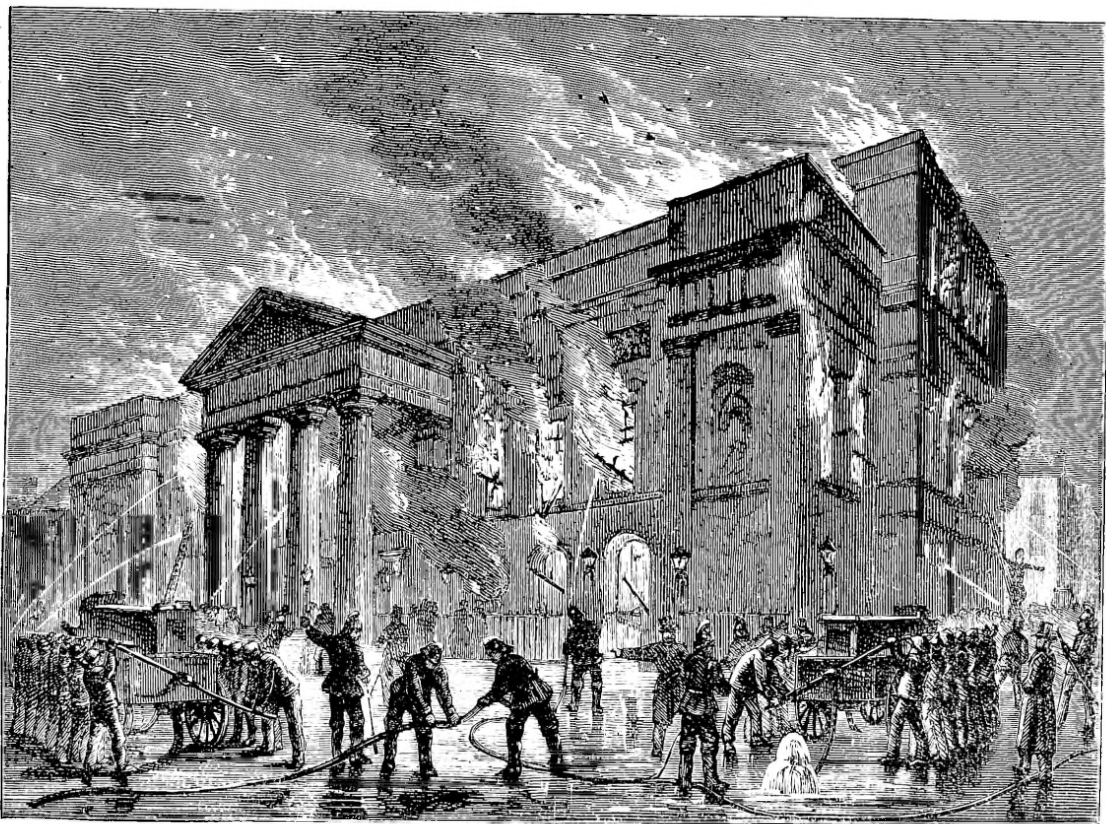
Mr. Planché, in his "Recollections," in contrasting Covent Garden with Drury Lane at this period, speaks of the former as "strong in comedy, and superior to its rival in spectacular entertainments." To a certain extent this remark held true down to a recent date; and in proof of the latter part of the assertion, it may be said, without fear of contradiction, that Covent Garden has always been celebrated for the gorgeousness and brilliancy of its pantomimes. In fact, so gorgeous were the spectacular entertainments here, that on one occasion we find Mr. Planché complaining to Mr. Kemble, the manager, that a thousand pounds were often lavished on a Christmas pantomime or an Easter spectacle, whilst the plays of Shakespeare were put upon the stage with "makeshift scenery,

and old and second-rate dresses." *Apropos* of the degeneracy of the drama (proper), and of the rising taste for "spectacle," Byron writes—

"Gods! on those boards shall Folly rear her head,  
Where Garrick trod and Kemble loves to tread."

It was at this time the project was formed of opening a rival opera-house to the one in the Haymarket; and in April, 1847, after undergoing important alterations and additions, Covent Garden

Italian opera." That this exclusive right was no dead letter had been proved by Mr. Bunn in 1835, when the entire company of "The King's Theatre" had performed for one night only in *La Gazza Ladra* at Drury Lane—a performance immediately followed by a dignified protest from the Lord Chamberlain. A period of a dozen years, however, produces a change both of times and of Lords Chamberlains, and Mr. Lumley found out, as he



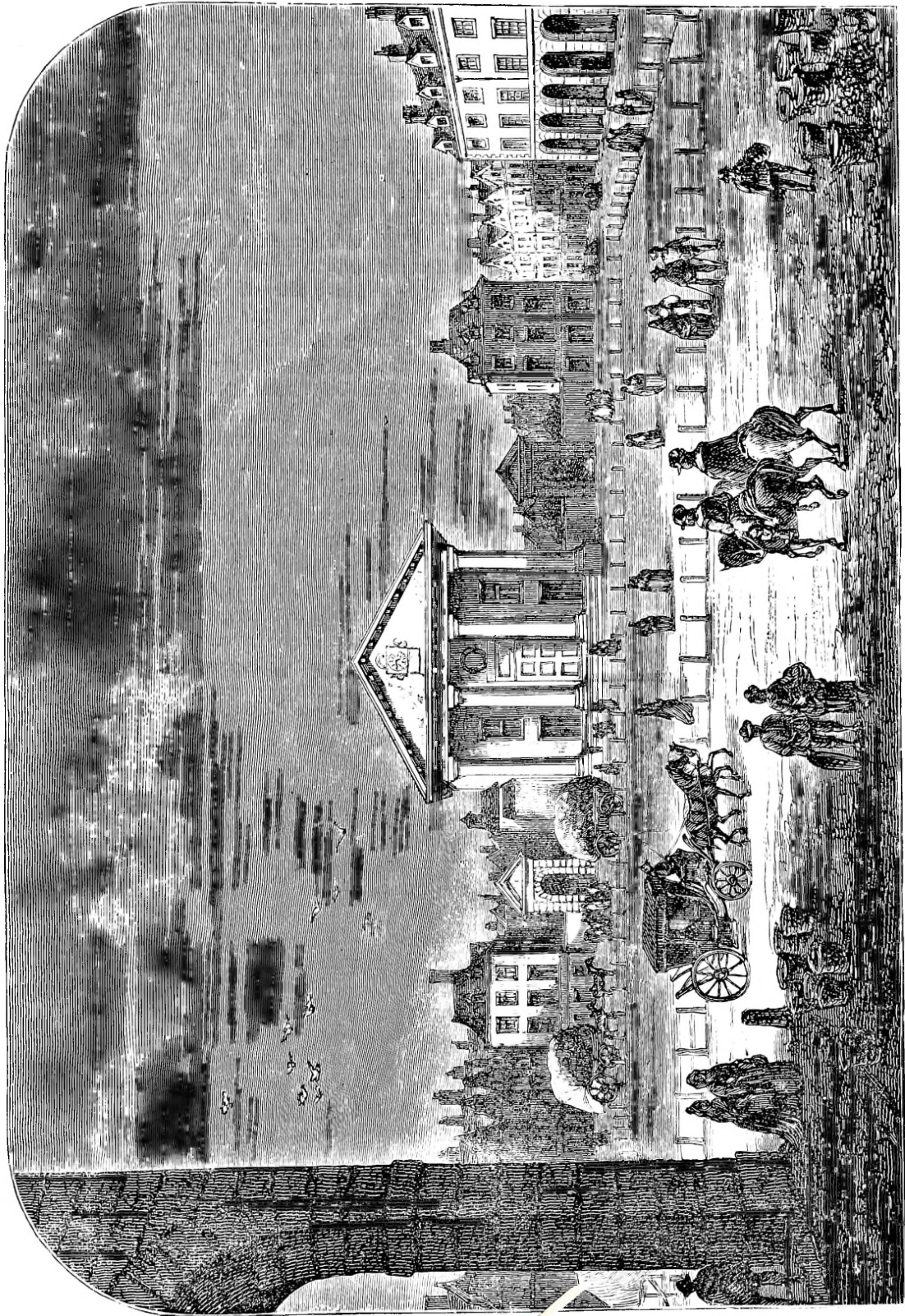
BURNING OF COVENT GARDEN THEATRE IN 1856.

Theatre commenced its new career as "The Royal Italian Opera House." The company consisted principally of seceders from Her Majesty's—hitherto the only Italian opera-house in London—and comprised the famous names of Giulia Grisi, Persiani, Mario, Tamburini, and even the great leader of the orchestra—Michael Costa himself. No wonder the alarmed lessee of Her Majesty's made strenuous efforts to prevent the threatened rivalry, in virtue of a privilege having been of old granted to the "King's Theatre" (the name by which it was known previously to her Majesty's accession) "for the exclusive production in perpetuity of Italian opera;" the same document containing a stipulation that "the patents of Drury Lane and Covent Garden should never be used for the purpose of

tells us in his "Reminiscences," that he was under a government which discouraged monopolies of all kinds; and, his opposition notwithstanding, the Royal Italian Opera House, Covent Garden, was duly opened, "without let or hindrance."

The *Era* of June 13th, 1847, remarks:—"It has been said that London cannot support two operatic companies; but while the house at the Haymarket was filled to overflowing by the presence of Jenny Lind, that at Covent Garden was crammed to suffocation by Grisi." Yet, although Grisi, so long the popular idol, still held her own, in spite of the Jenny Lind mania, and, supported by Alboni—who made a triumphant *début* during this year—insured a full house every night, the expenses were frightfully in excess of the receipts. Two years





COVENT GARDEN IN 1660.



sufficed to involve Mr. Delafield, the lessee, in bankruptcy, although he had commenced his speculation with £100,000. The reconstruction of the interior, by Albano, had cost £40,000; the vocal department, in 1848, cost £33,349, of which Albani drew £4,000, and Grisi £3,106. The orchestra cost £10,048; the ballet, £8,105; gas and gasmen, £1,927; properties, £1,920; carpenters' work, £1,858; advertisements, £2,376; wardrobes, £3,100; printing, £982; bills of performance, £885; hairdressers, £100; salaries of officials, £2,118; law expenses, £2,100; and fireworks, £27! The whole expenditure in 1848 was £78,765; the aggregate receipts, including cloak-room, saloon, &c., £44,008.

A curious contrast to this lavish outlay is to be found in the modest charges of a play acted in the year 1511, on the Feast of St. Margaret, of which the expenses were as follow:—

	£	s.	d.
For Players ... ..	1	4	0
„ Musicians ... ..	0	5	6
„ John Hobbard, Priest, and Author of Play ... ..	0	2	8
„ Decorations, Dresses, and Play-books ...	0	1	0
„ Hire of Place of Performance ... ..	0	1	0
„ Furniture ... ..	0	1	4
„ Painting Three Phantoms and Three Devils ... ..	0	0	6
„ Fish, Bread, and Ale for Players ... ..	0	3	5
„ Four Chickens for the Hero ... ..	0	0	4
Sum total ... ..	£1	19	9

In 1850 Covent Garden passed into the hands of Mr. Gye. At the commencement of 1856 Mr. Gye let the theatre for a few weeks to Professor Anderson, the “Wizard of the North,” whose short lease terminated on the 4th of March with a masked ball, for which Mr. Gye's reluctant consent had been extorted, after repeated refusals. It was not, as we have seen, the first or the second time that Covent Garden Theatre had been employed for the same purpose; but Mr. Gye's objections were in this instance unfortunately prophetic. The festivities were just concluding with the performance of the “National Anthem,” at five a.m., there being then only about 200 of the vast crowd of revellers left in the building, when the alarm of fire was given, and in a few hours nothing remained of the splendid structure but a heap of smoking ruins. Happily no lives were lost, although little else was saved in the general destruction, except the façade, and Flaxman's statues and bassi-relievi. The origin of the fire was never ascertained. Such a catastrophe, occurring at a period when the preparations and engagements for the coming season were on the point of completion, was calculated to daunt the

stoutest heart; but Mr. Gye's courage and fertility of resource were equal even to an emergency like this. He at once engaged the Lyceum for the season, made a manly appeal to the public to support him, and opened his temporary opera-house on the 15th of April to a brilliant and crowded audience. Early in the following year Mr. Gye obtained from the Duke of Bedford a lease of the site for a new theatre, at a rent of £850 for ninety years. This site included not only the ground on which the late theatre stood, but also that occupied by the “Piazza” Hotel, together with other tenements, the whole being equivalent to more than an acre. The funds for the new building were raised by loans; amongst the contributors being the Duke of Bedford, £15,000; Messrs. Lucas, £10,000; Colonel Meyrick, £5,000; Mr. Billings, £5,000; Mr. Maynard, £5,000; Sir E. Majoribanks and Mr. Antrobus, £5,000; besides Sir George Armytage, Mr. E. M. Barry, Mr. Turner, and others.

The yearly interest upon this large capital is necessarily considerable, and the securities contain a proviso that if the interest be in arrear over three months, or the premiums of fire insurance be not paid, the lessee is to be considered as a tenant at a rental of £4,000 per annum.

These preliminaries arranged, the work of rebuilding the theatre commenced, and progressed with extraordinary rapidity, and with every improvement in the way of lighting, ventilation, decoration, comfort, and precaution against fire which modern science and taste could suggest. In contemplating this, one of the largest and most magnificent theatres in Europe, it is difficult to realise that it was begun and completed within the short space of six months.

The edifice occupies a space of ground measuring 219 feet on the south side, next the Floral Hall, 210 feet on the Hart Street side, and 127 feet along the Bow Street end, where there is an enclosed portico projecting about 17 feet. The portico is about one-fifth larger than that of its predecessor, adorned by Corinthian columns 36 feet high, and by the figures and basso-relievos of Flaxman from the old building, which were cleverly adapted to the new one, and have been insured by the Duke of Bedford for £1,000. The area of the stage, exclusive of the bow in advance of the proscenium, measures 90 feet by 88, and the cost of the stage-machinery and various appurtenances was nearly £2,500. There are eight main staircases, besides six minor ones, all of which are fireproof. In addition to the usual entrances there is a private one in Hart Street, with a staircase attached,



leading to the royal box, and also a separate entrance and staircase leading to the box of the Duke of Bedford. The architect of this splendid structure was Mr. E. M. Barry; the contractors Messrs. Lucas; and the sum originally calculated, £60,000, but the actual cost has been computed at more than £70,000.

The new theatre is said to be of the same size as La Scala at Milan, which up to that time had the reputation of being the largest theatre in Europe, or perhaps in the world. The interior decorations are of a very chaste and elegant design, being of pale azure and white, relieved with rich gilding.

It was opened on the 15th of May, 1858, by Mr. Harrison, in conjunction with Miss Louisa Pyne, with Meyerbeer's opera of *Les Huguenots*, which was performed to an overflowing audience, the numbers present on that occasion being 300 in excess of the estimate of a "full house;" and it was under their management that Balfe's celebrated opera of *Satanella* was produced with the greatest success. It was called by the critics of the time Balfe's "happy inspiration."

It would be a work of supererogation to mention the names of the great artists who within the last twenty years have made their world-wide reputation upon these boards. Who of the present generation needs to be reminded of Adelina Patti, who rose upon the horizon of the musical world in 1861, and has reigned ever since queen of song and of hearts; of Pauline Lucca, equally fascinating and capricious; of the stately Titiens, always in splendid song, the only soprano that recalls to the musical connoisseur the singing of Pasta, Malibran, or Grisi; of that peerless contralto, Trebelli; or of the young Emma Albani; of Santley, Faure, Nicolini, or Tamberlik?

For ten years after the opening of the new theatre in Covent Garden, the lessees of the rival operahouses were fully occupied in endeavouring to solve the vexed question whether two such establishments simultaneously carried on, in opposition to one another, could be made to pay. In 1869 the belligerents, believing that the solution of the problem was to be found only in a coalition of forces, entered into partnership; but difficulties beset them from the very commencement, and the ultimate result was far from satisfactory, and, to begin with, Sir Michael Costa, the dignified *chef d'orchestre* at Covent Garden, declined to countenance the scheme, and withdrew his august services; Signors Arditi and Li Calsi being thereupon appointed to conduct by turns. Next, differences of opinion (to speak very mildly) arose among the "bright, particular stars" of the amalgamated

companies, and terminated with the secession of Mdlles. Nilsson and Di Murska, and Signors Foli, Santley, Arditi, and others. Finally, the general public began to be dissatisfied, for a brisk competition between those who cater for its amusement is always an advantage, and monopoly of any sort invariably ends in mediocrity. Before the conclusion of the year 1870 the fusion had terminated in "confusion worse confounded;" Messrs. Mapleson and Gye had dissolved their brief partnership, and the season of 1871 saw them again engaged in the amicable warfare which would seem to be the normal and natural condition of the two principal theatres of the metropolis.

Adjoining the theatre, on the southern side, is the Floral Hall, erected about the year 1860, somewhat on the plan of the original Crystal Palace in Hyde Park; but of this we shall have more to say in a subsequent chapter.

It may be interesting here to make a note of the fact recorded in Forster's "Life of Dickens," that when he was about twenty years old he applied to Mr. Bartley, the then manager of Covent Garden, for an engagement at that theatre, and that a day was fixed for him to make trial of his powers. When the day came he was laid up with a bad cold, and could not appear; his trial was therefore postponed till the next season. In the meantime he had made himself famous by his pen, and so he took to literature instead. Possibly to that "bad cold" we owe "Pickwick," "Nicholas Nickleby," and "Oliver Twist."

It may be stated here that owing to their being the two patent theatres, Drury Lane and Covent Garden have each at their doors a guard of honour of six soldiers, furnished by the household troops. We have no doubt some of our young friends think they have something to do with the pantomime; but this, we can assure them, is a mistake, for the guard, we believe, is the sole relic of the exclusive "royal patent" under which these two theatres so long existed.

We have thus endeavoured to compress into a few pages an outline of the history of the two leading theatres, and, indeed, for many years, the only theatres of London. But the whole neighbourhood around Covent Garden teems with theatrical reminiscences, for which a volume, in reality, would scarcely suffice. We will, however, endeavour, in the following chapters, to skim lightly over the ground, yet carefully, and as exhaustively as possible, rambling about from street to street, as the bee flits from flower to flower, and sipping here and there from the stores of past history of the Stuart and Hanoverian ages.

## CHAPTER XXX.

## COVENT GARDEN:—GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

“Hail, market, hail, to all Megarians dear!”—*Aristophanes*, “*Acharnians*.”

Extent of the District—Covent Garden in the Fourteenth Century—The Site passes into the hands of the Duke of Somerset, and afterwards the Earls of Bedford—Origin of the Market—Annals of Covent Garden—The Fashionable Days of Covent Garden—The Piazzas as a Promenade—History of the Market—The Sun-dial—The Hackney-coach Stands—The Mohocks and other Marauders.

THE region which we intend to embrace in this and the following chapter, extending, to speak roughly, from St. Martin's Lane on the west to Drury Lane on the east, and from Long Acre on the north to the Strand on the south—in other words, considerably less than half a mile the one way and a quarter of a mile the other—is remarkable as including in its circuit more of literary, and, indeed, of human interest, than any other spot in modern or ancient London. That interest belongs chiefly, if not wholly, to the last two centuries; and the memorials of it are scattered on every side of us in such thick profusion, that one can almost fancy we can see the *genius loci* standing there and pointing around him with his wand, and exclaiming, “*Si monumentum quæris, circumspice* ;” like Sir Christopher Wren in the cathedral church of St. Paul. In the well-known words of the “*Connoisseur*,” the neighbourhood of Covent Garden was in the last century—though it is no longer—“the acknowledged region of gallantry, wit, and criticism.” And doubtless it was as a frequenter of this neighbourhood, and in love with the good literary society which its coffee-houses afforded, that Johnson assented with a “*Why yes, sir*,” to Boswell's frank avowal that “the vicinity of the Strand was much better than Blackheath Park.”

The latter half of the seventeenth century formed an important epoch in the growth of western London. We see from the Plan of London, published by Aggas in 1562, that it was then comparatively a small place, almost entirely confined to the limits of the City proper. But our capital “found itself so secure in the glorious government of Elizabeth,” that by the year 1600 very considerable additions were made to the north of the long line of street now known as the Strand, and the gap between London proper and Westminster was nearly filled up.

Covent Garden—a corruption, we need hardly say, of “the Convent Garden”—was an enclosure belonging, as far back as the first quarter of the thirteenth century, to the abbots of Westminster, who it is supposed used the site as the burial-place for the convent, as being at a convenient distance for “burying their dead out of sight.” Here were “fair spreading pastures” seven acres in extent,

now all swallowed up in the general name of “Long Acre ;” the present Long Acre, which was built in the reign of Charles I., being carried from the north-east towards the south-west—from the middle of St. Martin's Lane and the top of Drury Lane. It is said that where Long Acre runs there was once an avenue of stately elms, whose shade was grateful to the citizens of London when they walked out on holydays; and that there were country lanes with green fields on either side.

In the map of Ralph Aggas above alluded to, Covent Garden is shown as enclosed by a brick wall, which runs straight on the north side, parallel with these shady elms; whilst the southern side is bounded by the houses and small inclosures abutting upon the Strand highway. Nearly in the middle of the old garden there appear to be some small buildings, probably the dwellings of gardeners and other workmen, and the trees are scattered up and down the place so thick as to give it the appearance almost of a wilderness. “A large pond,” writes Newton in his “*London in the Olden Time*,” “is said to have existed near the middle of Covent Garden two centuries ago. It was fed partly by a running stream from the higher grounds, and partly by a local spring which still supplies a pump near the modern parish church. The overflow from this pond would pass by Ivy Bridge Lane down to the Thames.”

Stow himself makes no mention of Covent Garden; but Strype tells us that it probably had the name of the Convent Garden, “because it was the garden and field of that large convent and monastery where Exeter House formerly stood.” But here, no doubt, Strype is in error, for there are no traces of a “convent” or “monastery” on that site; and according to general tradition this convent garden belonged to the abbot and monks of Westminster, by whom it was used partly as their kitchen garden, supplying, no doubt, not only the wants of that religious community, but also the public markets, and so bringing in an income to the abbey, and partly as a burial-ground, as already stated. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that in digging for the foundations of the new market in 1829, a quantity of human bones was exhumed on the north side of the area.



Walter Savage Landor thus quaintly and pointedly describes the change which came over the Convent Garden of the monks of Westminster:—"The Convent becomes a playhouse; monks and nuns turn actors and actresses. The garden, formal and quiet, where a salad was cut for a lady abess, and flowers were gathered to adorn images, becomes a market, noisy and full of life, distributing thousands of fruits and flowers to a vicious metropolis." It is to be feared, from the turn of his expressions here, that Mr. Landor did not remember that the Latin *conventus*, and its French equivalent, *couvent*, is strictly applied to the houses of religious men as well as women; if so, it is more probable that a salad cut on this spot was destined for the Abbot of St. Peter's, Westminster, and not for an abess. But this is a matter of no great moment.

At the dissolution of the religious houses this property came into the hands of the Duke of Somerset, on whose attainder in 1552 it was given by the Crown to John Russell, Earl of Bedford, under the description of "Covent Garden, lying in the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields next Charing Cross, with seven acres called Long Acre, of the yearly value of six pounds six shillings and eight pence."

It is probable that for a very long time after the Russells became possessed of this property, it still remained a garden, or at all events consisted of open fields; for in 1627, as Mr. P. Cunningham tells us, "only two persons were rated to the poor of the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields under the head of 'Covent Garden.'"

"If we add an 'n' to 'Covent,' and say Convent Garden," observes a writer in the *City Press*, "we shall go back to the old days when nuns or friars studied their missals in the church orchard, and then we shall think of Henry VIII., and the Bedford family with their slice of consecrated ground. It was then, and long after, in the country, and was probably used for pasture until the growing population made it an object to possess a market." How the work prospered may be gathered in some measure from the fragmentary accounts which have reached us. The *Spectator* speaks of daily prayer at the Garden Church, and tells us how fine ladies, with black pages carrying their books, walked across the market to their pews. Even at the beginning of the century the arrangements were very primitive. "The middle walk consisted of odd, tumble-down shed shops, though the fruit, flowers, and vegetables were excellent. Crockery-ware was sold several of them. There were two medical herb-shops, where you could purchase leeches; and snails, then employed to make broth for con-

sumptive patients, were vended. Also a well-known itinerant bird-dealer had a stall, where he sold larks, canaries, owls, and, if you desired it, could get you a talking parrot, or manufacture you a love-bird, on the shortest notice. 'Quality folks' often walked in the centre avenue, but there was no accommodation for choice plants on the roof. The ducal proprietor improved the market into its present state; but of course far more might be done with the present site. Covent Garden was used for many years as a pasture-ground, and was subsequently let on a building lease. Then the square was planned, and Inigo Jones designed it. The piazza, which runs round a part of it, was also his work. The market originated casually. Vendors of vegetables and fruit from the neighbouring villages used the centre of the square as a market; and, in lapse of time, the market grew into a recognised institution. It was strangely unsightly, being but a rude combination of stalls and sheds. But in 1831 the present market buildings were erected at the Duke of Bedford's expense; and, a few years later, open-air accommodation was obtained on the roof, at the entrance, for the sale of plants, &c. The duke derives a considerable revenue from the rents and tolls. It is quite a problem to what the tolls amount. Those who occupy shops or stands by the week or year, and who sell the greater part of the produce brought in, merely pay their rents as for ordinary shops. Some of them, though held only from week to week, have continued in the same families through two or even three generations.

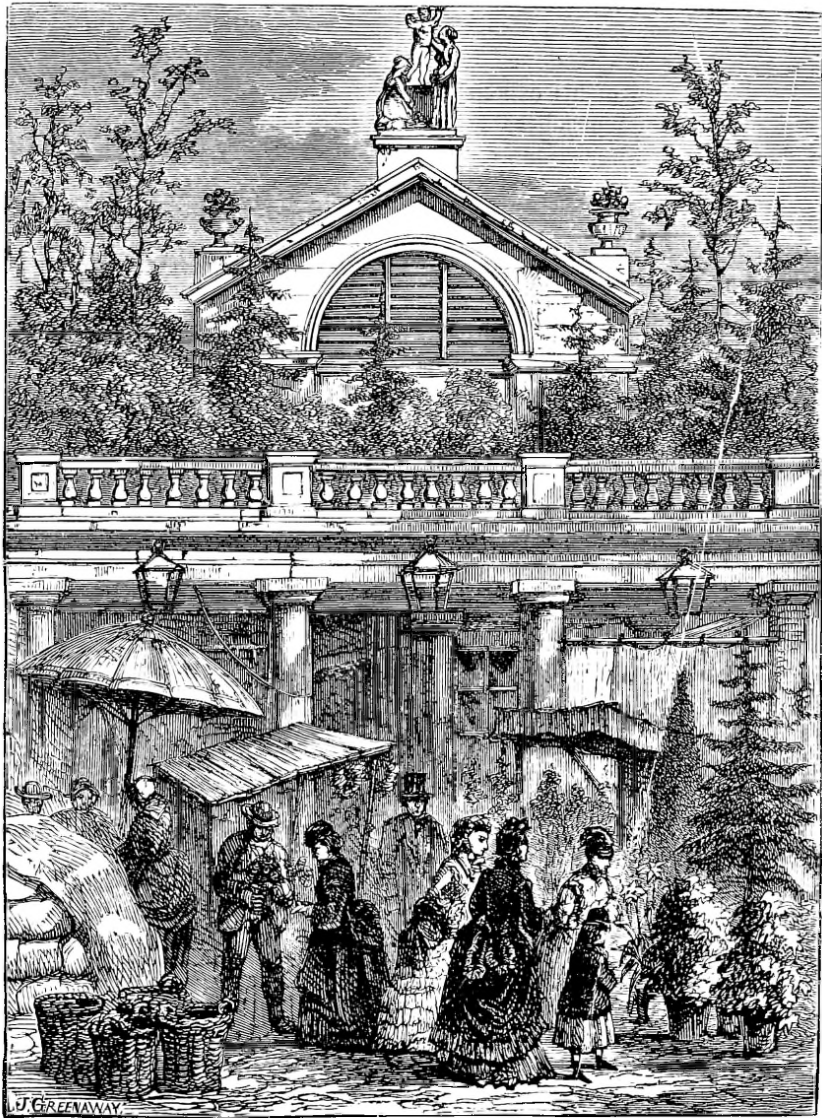
"The early morning at Covent Garden affords a curious sight. From 3.30 to 4.30 there is little bustle in the market, though business goes on rapidly. Early risers of both sexes—a class of 'higglers' who indorse the old proverb that 'the early bird catches the worm'—flock to the market. They form a medium between the grower and the small dealer, buying the whole stock from the former, and seeking to sell portions of it to the latter at a higher price. The crowd and bustle increase from five o'clock up to seven or eight. Porters, with baskets, offer their help to buyers. The piazzas become very lively with their clamour. Against every post and pillar are small tables, where coffee, tea, bread and butter may be purchased. Hawkers parade in every direction with cakes, buns, knives, and pocket-books for sale. Many customers seek for stimulants, and consume gin or hot spirits-and-water with avidity.

"In our climate piazzas were a novelty—we seldom need to exclude the sun—yet those in Covent Garden became popular. Long afterwards



two piazzas were erected in Regent Street, and termed the 'Colonnade,' but they were not a success and have been removed. Those in Covent Garden, though much dishonoured, still remain; and are, perhaps, the only buildings in that style in England." Thus Byron says in "Beppo"—

June 24 following. The poet Dryden was assaulted in Covent Garden, on account of some verses in his 'Hind and Panther.' 1687, April 14. A soldier, William Grant, hanged in the market for running from his colours. 1636. This date is cut in a stone let into the brickwork of No. 23, King



ENTRANCE TO COVENT GARDEN MARKET.

"For, bating Covent Garden, I can hit on  
No place that's called 'Piazza' in Great Britain."

The following is given by the same authority as a brief epitome of the annals of Covent Garden. We shall enlarge upon it as we proceed in our survey:—  
"The market buildings were commenced in 1632 by the Earl of Bedford. 1650, April 26. Col. Poyse was shot to death in the market. 1675, December 29. A proclamation issued against coffee-houses. 1679, January 8. To allow their continuance till

Street, of Evans's Hotel, we are told. It formed a prominent object in Hogarth's print, 'Morning,' And here lodged Sir William Alexander, Earl of Stirling, 1637; Thomas Killigrew, 1640; Denzil Hollis, 1644; and in 1647, Sir Harry Vane, and also Sir Kenelm Digby, 1662. Of Hollis this anecdote is told:—In a hot debate in Parliament, Ireton offended Hollis, upon which he persuaded him to walk out of the House, and told 'im, he must fight to justify his words. Ireton pleaded



