NEW YORKISMS.

From Our Own Correspondent.

NEW YORK, Dec. 7, 1868.

MRS. SCOTT-SIDDONS.

If Philadelphians are not prepared to believe that Mrs. Scott-Siddons is a very wonderful actress, it is not because professional puffers have not spent an extraordinary quantity of breath in her behalf.

She is a shining exemplification of the proverb that where there is so much smoke there must be some fire; but the smoke has been very great indeed, and the fire has been very little.

Philadelphians appreciate good acting as much as the inhabitants of any other great city do, but I shall be surprised if they run wild over Mrs. Scott-Siddons, as the Bostonians have done, or if they fill the theatre at which she may be fortunate enough to effect an engagement, as the New Yorkers have done.

Last Friday evening Mrs. Siddons gave her fifth performance in this city. She concluded her week with a Saturday matinee and evening performances, and is re engaged for this week.

A distinguished photographer has exercised all his skill and art in placing her before the public, in music and book-store windows, in the most charming attitude and among the simplest yet most enhancing surroundings. Her theatrical manager has hung up in the vestibule of the New York Theatre a picture of Sarah Siddons of whom the present little lady is assumed to be the prototype. No means have been left untried to remind the forgetful public that a lineal descendant of the great Siddons is before them, and that if they do not admire her, they ought to for her ancestress' sake.

But let us approach the *tragedienne* (as she is called), and see for ourselves what she is.

During the week, commencing last Monday she has appeared as "Juliet," "Rosalind," and "Lady Teazle." I choose the character of "Lady Teazle," in which to invite the reader to see her, because the vast majority of readers are more familiar with the character of "Lady Teazle" than with the Shakespearian ones of "Rosalind" and "Juliet."

Last Thursday evening the *School for Scandal* was presented at the New York, better known as the Worrell Sisters', Theatre. The cast was as follows:—

Sir Peter Teazle	Mr. William Davidge
Sir Oliver Surface	Mr. H. C. Rymer
Joseph Surface	Mr. D. H. Harkins
Charles Surface	Mr. J. K. Mortimer
Crabtree	Mr. T. Hind
Sir Benjamin Backbite	Mr. F. A. Gossin
Rowley	Mr. Egbert
Moses	Mr. T. Owens
Trip	Mr. C. T. Parsloe
Snake	Mr. Bendle
Careless	Mr. J. Dunn
Sir Harry Bumper	
Lady Teazle	Mrs. Scott-Siddons
Maria	Miss Blanche Grey
Lady Sneerwell	Mrs. W. Wright
Mrs. Candour	Mrs. Wilkins

Five or six of these names may be familiar to Philadelphians. These are Mrs. Siddons, Mr Davidge, Mr. J. K. Mortimor, Mr. C. T. Parsloe, Mrs. Wilkins, and (through the notoriety of the Broadway Theatre homicide) Mr. D. H. Harkins. Of these six Mrs. Siddons, Mr. Davidge, Mr. Mortimer, and Mrs. Wilkins alone showed any merit. Of the remaining nine of the cast, all were equal failures. With the exception of the four that we have mentioned none of the actors gave evidence of being familiar with their parts. The flashes of silence were as frequent as sheet lightning; some of the most brilliant points were quite lost; hisses prevailed for a short time, and I would be ready to swear that by the time the second act was over Mrs. Siddons could have wept those lovely eyes of hers out with vexation.

As one instance of the several good points that were utterly lost, owing to the stupidity of the support, the reader will be pleased to recollect the brilliant string of repartees which "Lady Teazle," "Sir Peter," "Mrs. Candor," "Lady Sneerwell," "Sir Benjamin," and "Crabtree" hang their tongues on in the second scene of the second act. "Lady Sneerwell" remarks to "Sir Peter" that he is too phlegmatic for a jest and too peevish to allow with in others, and the conversation continues thus:—

Sir P.—Ah! madam, true wit is more nearly allied to good nature than your ladyship is aware of.

Lady S.—True, Sir Peter. I believe they are so near of kin that they can never be united.

At this point the reader will remember that it is "Sir Benjamin Backbite's'" to step in with—

"Or, rather, suppose them man and wife, because one so seldom sees them together."

This caps the climax of the witticisms that have been uttered, but the incompetent "Sir Benjamin" of Thursday evening, who, however dull his memory, ought to have remembered such a reply from its very point and elegance, suddenly collapsed. In vain Mrs. Siddons whispered the words, in vain hisses were heard from the uppermost circle, "Sir Benjamin" remained in his state of collapse, and now the rest of the act was proceeded with nobody knows.

But here have I been beating about the bush of Mrs. Siddons' performance without once making at her.

Is she a good "Lady Teazle"?

No.

Why not? Come, let us have reasons, not vague and general dispraise.

Listen. True, "Lady Teazle" is represented as having been, previous to her marriage with "Sir Peter," a country girl. But there are country girls of refinement, and my "Lady Teazle," previous to her marriage, was no more a great strapping wench than are those elegant young ladies of to-day who reside at Germantown or at Chesnut Hill, and are indistinguishable from other elegant young ladies who have homes on Pine or Walnut or Spruce streets. The more primitive and simple habits of that period enabled her to transact duties which have long passed out of the curriculum of the well-bred young women of to-day. She was used, according to "Sir Peter's" description, to sitting at her tambour in a pretty figured linen gown, with a bunch of keys at her side, her hair combed smooth over a roll, and her apartment hung round with fruits in worsted of her own making. Her daily occupation, according to her own words, was to inspect the dairy, superintend the poultry, make extracts from the family receipt-book, and comb her aunt "Deborah's" lap-dog. Her evening amusements were to draw patterns for ruffles, to play *Pope Joan* with the curate, to read a novel to her aunt, and to be stuck down to an old spinet to strum her father to sleep after a fox-chase. From these tame pursuits she was suddenly transferred into a central position among rank, wealth, and fashion. For this position she was naturally adapted, and six months' schooling in it perfected her in all the acquirements which distinguish the dazzling woman of fashion.

This idea of "Lady Teazle" is what Mrs. Siddons did not present. If her characterization lacked many of the old traditional points, it presented no new ones worth mentioning. Her voice is used too monotonously to express all the graceful and varying raillieries which her relationship with "Sir Peter" calls forth. She indulges in a number of the disagreeable tricks of the voice. She gives the words of the cue with such emphasis and gesticulation that the whole house observes them, as well as the actor for whom they were meant. She flaunts and flounces about the stage with a hurried nervousness which is certainly not suggestive of elegant caprice, but causes the observer to believe that in reality it is only what it seems to be, and nothing more. She makes too much of eyes and a mouth which she has quite enough reason to believe to be beautiful. It has been suggested that the stock company of either Wallack's or Booth's Theatre is her proper sphere. It would certainly be a better sphere than the one she now so falsely occupies. She permits herself to be announced as a tragedienne, without giving the slightest intimation of possessing tragic powers. She is simply a beautiful and lovely woman, trying to do her best, but that best will not enable her, for several years at least, to compare with native American actresses. She is not to be mentioned beside Mrs. D. P. Bowers, and any one who has seen Mrs. John Drew perform the character of "Lady Teazle" will certainly never desire to see Mrs. Siddons in that part. In brief, from all I have seen of Mrs. Siddons, I should not rate her above Rose Eytinge, of Wallack's (except in point of beauty), and, as far as versatility goes, she will not compare with Miss Orton. When you take into consideration that her stage experience extends over only three years, you would promise her performance fair and promising.

But if neither the screen scene of the fourth act, or what is commonly called the "scandal-scene" of the second, did she make use of the situations to any extent compared with what might have been done in other hands. A great actress, such as she pretends to be, would have made an audience almost weep in the one and have convulsed it in the other. Something of course must be allowed for the gloomy circumstances of the cast, which clouded her efforts. But after all allowance has been made, it must be admitted that Mrs. Siddons is a disappointment in New York to people of culture who expected excellent acting. As an illustration of this I cannot do better than close with an extract from a brief criticism by the dramatic editor of the *Tribune*, who enjoys the reputation of being the most accomplished theatrical critic in New York:—

"In the performance of *The School for Scandal* there was little to admire. The comedy, as all are aware, requires entirely brilliant acting on the part of all the actors, and possible concord of talent, purpose, and art. Were it requires it by no means received. Breaks grew so familiar as to be intolerable. The scandal scenes were noisy without meaning and pretentious without elegance. So many angular people in so many false positions rarely never were seen before. As to the Lady Teazle of Mrs. Scott-Siddons, it was no better than a baker's dozen of the Lady Teazles of the dramatic period, while it cannot for an instant be tolerated beside the superior representations of the character to which the local stage has been accustomed. To heap about the stage like a chestnut's hot shovel is not by any means to realize Sheridan's portrait of the brilliant woman of fashion in one of the most polished circles of social periods."

And so, yours truly, ALI BABA.

MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC.

"Faust."

A very good performance of Gounod's opera of *Faust* was given on Saturday evening, and it is worthy of remark that the Germans, whatever comparisons may be made as to their vocal accomplishments, are infinitely better actors than the Italians. The Italian opera is too often a mere matter of lungs, but the German opera generally has brains in it as well. If singing were all that we attend the opera for, a concert performance, it seems to us, would answer as well, if not better; but in the opera we have a right to expect dramatic as well as vocal effects, and it will be unsatisfactory if the artists are not actors as well as singers. Good operatic acting is not so common but that we are glad to see it, even if it should be a trifle overdone; and it is always a pleasure for us to hear and see such performers as Madame Rotter and Herren Habelmann and Hermanns, not merely on account of their trills and quavers and intricacies of vocalization, but because they endeavor to express all that there is in the music as an illustration of the characters and theme of the drama.

Madame Rotter is not the best singer that has appeared in the *role* of "Margaret" during the past two or three seasons, although her vocal efforts on Saturday entitle her to hearty commendation; but her performance, as a whole, was in a high degree artistic. We might take exception to her acting, that it was at times too energetic; but then she really did act, did express, with fidelity and intelligence, what there was in the character of "Margaret," and, like the "Mephistopheles" of Hermanns, her personation was not studied merely from the score-book, but from Goethe. Hermanns' "Mephistopheles" was great, of course. This part he has made his own, and in it he is unapproachable. While acknowledging the truth of the commonly urged objection to Hermanns that he carries "Mephistopheles" into everything he does, we would not have him less perfect in this for the sake of a possible improvement in other *roles*. Habelmann's "Faust" was good, and Wilhelm Formes appeared to advantage as "Valentine." His dying scene was finely done, although we did wonder when he was going to make the last gasp. But, as we before remarked, a little too much acting can be excused in an operatic performance, when the singers know what they are about and are evidently doing their best. Madame Cellini, who undertook the part of "Siebel," was rather overshadowed by the German singers. Some passages she executed creditably, although her vocalization was rather uncertain, and she acted not at all.

In many instances that which cannot be well done had best not be attempted. In the case under consideration this remark will apply to the tableau representing the apotheosis of "Margaret," with which the opera of *Faust* concludes. The dirty-looking clouds painted on the back of a flat, with all the framework in sight, are not calculated to leave a favorable impression on the minds of an intelligent audience at the conclusion of a performance. Such a shabby affair as the tableau exhibited on Saturday night would bring discredit on a third-class theatre, and it was disgraceful at such an establishment as the Academy of Music. We have also to take exception to the dungeon scenes exhibited last week. In *Il Trovatore* and *Fidelio* the flats set for the dungeons were painted to represent the corridors of a castle with a court-yard attached, where the prisoners might step out and get the fresh air whenever they felt inclined; and in *Faust* we were treated with the spectacle of "Margaret" immured in a dismal-looking place enough, but with a gallery adjoining it where she could roam at her own sweet will, with no one to interfere in case she should conclude to climb over the railing and make her escape.

We have no disposition to be hypercritical, but such matters as these are not trivial or unimportant. As we have more than once remarked, the success of the *Opera Bouffe* was in a great measure due to the care and good taste displayed in putting the pieces on the stage. Every detail of scenery, costume, and appointment was attended to; and the managers of the grand opera might take a number of hints from these much abused burlesques which would be of advantage to themselves and the public.

Apropos of matters to be mended, the following, from the *Press* of this morning, so entirely coincides with our own ideas, that we quote it at length in preference to giving remarks of our own:—

"We have been several times requested to call attention to the great annoyance caused by boys selling librettos in the opera. Not only are their shrill cries disagreeable and distracting, but the boys themselves are impudent and annoying. On Saturday evening a gentleman seated by us, who held a libretto in his hand, was importuned five several times to purchase another, and on remarking that he had a copy, was told, 'You haint got this one, though.' We know by experience that they often charge higher than the fixed price, and seldom have change. The whole system is a disgrace to every management, and could Mr. Maretzek realize the complaint to which it gives rise, he would do away with it. A stand outside where libretti could be sold to those who really wanted them, *where change could be given honestly*, and where the price for the libretto could be stated on a placard, would answer every purpose. Another advantage would be that at such a stand libretti of other operas, music, and photographs could be sold to great advantage, both as regards the public and the management. People often wish while an air is ringing freshly in their memory to obtain the music, while numbers would buy the libretto of the *next* opera to study betimes, if they saw it advertised, though they might not take the pains to go to a music store to obtain about the house should be stopped.

"On the subject of annoyances, we regret to observe that the double line of 'gentlemen' who stand to watch the ladies going from the inner to the outer door of the Academy has become denser than ever, rendering it almost impossible to cross the lobby. And, still worse, another line has begun to form itself from the east entrance, leaving only the very narrow and inconvenient ticket-taker's entrance for those who wish to pass out quickly and unobserved. During the present season this loafing in the lobby, standing in the doorways, and intruding into seats where the intruders have no business, has been carried to an unprecedented pitch, and we trust that our contemporaries will unite with us in condemning such ungentlemanly and boorish practices."

The City Amusements.

AT THE ACADEMY OF MUSIC Verdi's opera of *Ernani* will be given this evening. *Martha* is announced for Tuesday and *Norma* for Wednesday.

AT THE ARCH Colonel Fitzgerald's new drama of *Wolves at Bay* will be produced this evening, with new scenery, appointments, great spectacular effects and the following cast:—Mrs. Drew as "Lucy Drayton;" Miss Price as "Mary Kelsey;" Mrs. Maeder as "Mrs. Harmer Dollyer;" Miss Creese as "Miss Becky Somerville;" Miss Fanny Davenport as "Tom Dollyer;" Mr. Barton Hill as "Arthur Lovering;" Mr. Craig as "Jack Somerville;" Mr. Mackay as "Mr. Drayton;" Mr. Wallis as "John Kelsey." The scene of the play is laid in the present time, and it is said to be full of highly sensational effects.

AT THE CHESNUT the second week of the circus will commence with several novelties, which will doubtless prove in the highest degree attractive. Mr. Tom King will make his first appearance, and an amusing pantomime, entitled *Lubin and Annette*, will be given. Mr. James Robinson and his infant son Clarence will appear.

AT THE WALNUT Mrs. D. P. Bowers will appear this evening as "Camille." To-morrow the drama of *Leah the Forsaken* will be given.

AT THE THEATRE COMIQUE there will be a change of programme this week. The automaton, the spiral ascent, "Jocko the Monkey," and other new features will be introduced.

AT THE AMERICAN Miss Betty Rigl will appear for the last time this week. The entertainment is varied and attractive.

MR. RUFUS ADAMS will give a select reading to-morrow evening at Concert Hall, under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association. The following programme is announced:—Part I—"The Prodigal Son," from the Bible; the trial scene from *The Merchant of Venice;* "Darius Green and his Flying Machine," by J. T. Trowbridge. Part II—"The Grave Diggers," from *Hamlet;* "The Building of the Ship," by Longfellow; "Parrhasius and the Captive," by N. P. Willis; and "The Letter," Anonymous. Tickets, fifty cents; can be procured at Gould's music store, No. 923 Chesnut street.

A GRAND CONCERT in aid of the National Printing Association for the Blind will be given this evening at the church, corner of Broad and Sansom streets. A number of eminent musicians will assist, and a fine entertainment may be expected. The object is a most deserving one, and we hope there will be a full attendance. Tickets can be procured at the principal music stores.

MISS CLARA LOUISE KELLOGG, assisted by the members of Max Strakosch's troupe and the "Amphion" Association of this city, will give a grand concert at the Academy of Music on Friday evening, December 18, for the benefit of the Lincoln Institute for Soldiers' Orphans. Tickets for sale at Trumpler's, No. 926 Chesnut street.

CITY ITEMS.

WE WOULD at present particularly invite the attention of the public to our established business rule, which is strictly adhered to under all circumstances:

"We guarantee all prices lower than the lowest elsewhere; also, guarantee full satisfaction to every purchaser, or the sale cancelled and money refunded."

We give all customers more value for their money THAN THEY CAN GET ELSEWHERE,

under any and all circumstances.

TO FULLY CARRY OUT THIS RULE AT THE PRESENT TIME, we have reduced the prices of our entire stock, which will be disposed of lower than the same or equal goods can be purchased of ANY OTHER ESTABLISHMENT IN THE CITY.

Without going into further detail, we would say that our stock comprises all kinds and sizes of every desirable style of goods to be found in the market, and is SUPERIOR TO ANY STOCK IN PHILADELPHIA,

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WE are indebted to A. Winch, No. 535 Chesnut street, for *Punch, Fun,* and *Reynolds' Miscellany.* Winch has an extensive assortment of both foreign and domestic periodicals.

MARRIED.

HILLBORN—DYOTT.—On Thursday evening, the 3d instant, by the Rev. J. D. Newlin, ROBERT HILLBORN to MARY IDA, daughter of J. B. Dyott, M. D., both of Philadelphia.

DIED.

ARRISON.—On the 6th instant, PETER ARRISON, in the 75th year of his age.

The relatives and friends of the family are respectfully invited to attend his funeral, from his late residence, on Bustleton pike, near Bustleton, on Tuesday, the 10th instant. To proceed to the Penn Cemetery, Frankford.

ATWOOD.—Suddenly, on the 4th instant at his late residence, in Camden DANIEL V., youngest son of Rev. Anthony Atwood, aged 25 years.

The relatives and friends of the family are respectfully invited to attend the funeral, from his father's residence, No. 623 Catherine street, on Tuesday, the 8th instant, at 10 o'clock. To proceed to Ebenezer M. E. Vault.

DURELL.—On the 6th instant, after a lingering illness, Miss MARY ANN, daughter of Samuel and Sarah Jane Durell, in the 22d year of her age.

The relatives and friends of the family are respectfully invited to attend the funeral, from the residence of her parents, No. 1139 Frankford road, on Wednesday morning at 11 o'clock. To proceed to Hanover Street Vault.

HOGAN.—On the 5th instant, Mrs. B. HOGAN, in the 61st year of her age.

The relatives and friends of the family are respectfully invited to attend the funeral, from the residence of her son-in-law, Mr. W. H. Wise, No. 932 Lafayette street, on Wednesday morning at 8½ o'clock.

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Last Year's Dolls Closing Out at Extremely Low Prices.

CARD.—On Monday, A. M., 7th instant, we shall open a very attractive display of Holiday Goods, in the selection of which care has been taken to combine utility with ornament. That the day may be long and convenience offered to all wishing to inspect, the Store will be open at 7 30 o'clock A. M.

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