#### SCENES FROM PARISIAN THEATRES.

From the Dublin Magazine. Theatrical entertainments have at all times entered more into the social life of the French people than that of their island neighbors. would hardly come within the scope of our pre-cent paper to account for the circumstance, which we believe will be taken on trust by our readers, especially by such of them as have made the transit of the Channel. They have seen that six days of the week are not sufficient for the Parisian play-goer's enjoyment of Le Spectacle; he must supplement it by Sanday evening.

do not envy his sensations at his awaking on Monday morning, if he has any regular employment. We British islanders plume ourselves on our superior morality when we put ourselves in comparison with our Gallic contemporaries, and, without doubt, the moral exchange between French and British comedians and directors of theatres is in favor of the latter. Were every shadow of restraint to be removed from theatrical management in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh, no such licentious spectacles would ever be tolerated by the public as were exhibited successively in Paris immediately after its three revolutions. In fact, no actors or actresses known to the British public could ever be induced to appear in them.

The interest taken in the dramal in Paris' so much exceeding anything witnessed here, it is not to be wondered at that the French Government should so long have made a useful engine of it, and subsidized it with liberal subventions when it was incapable of supporting itself, or that the great people about the Court have from the days of Corneille at all times been assiduous visitors to the green-rooms and the coulisses of the principal theatres. The people in authority during the Directory and those who succeeded them in the Consulate were as assiduous in their attendance as those who, under the elder regime were admitted to the orgies of the Regency and of the Court of Louis XV

Our object in this paper being merely to notice some interesting circumstances and characters of the Parisian stage within the present century, the reader need not fear the perusal of a chroni cle embracing the lives and works of Corneille Racine, Moliere, and their less known suc-

#### TALMA AND BONAPARTE.

The predilection of the First Consul for the theatre was only less strong than his love of arms. From the epoch of 1752 he and Talma were inseparable, and he passed his evenings in the cou lisses of the Theatre Francais. More than once the stage manager asked Talma, "Who is this young officer?" "Napoleon Bonaparte." "His name is not on our stage list." "Don't mind; he is my friend." "Oh, that's another affair."

If ever emperor or king loved the theatre, that man was Napoleon 1. On the battlefield, and in the gallery, pit, and boxes of the playhouse, it was his supreme will to civilize and render happy all the nations of the earth. When conquering and going to conquer, he carried about with him his favorite actors and actresses. When at Erfurth, in 1808, Talma presented every morning to the Emperor the play-bill of the ensuing evening. One morning, as he afterwards related to Dr. Veron, when proceeding to the door of Napoleon's reception room, he found himself detained by the skirt of his coat. "Will you inform the Emperor," said the impatient visitor, "that I am here?" This impatient visitor was the King of Saxony.

TALMA AND DUMAS.

One of the earliest theatrical performances witnessed by Alexander Dumas in his youth was 'Talma's "Hamlet" in Ducis gadaptation of the play. It was an epoch in his life. What would it not have been had he seen the "Hamlet" of Shakespeare! He had read some of the tragedies of Corneille and Racine, and found the exercise rather tiresome. The piece was performed at Soissons by a strolling company, but he had not seen Talma, nor ever had been inside a Paris theatre, nor heard Shakespeare's name pro-nounced.

"The actor," he writes in his "Memoires," tome 5, "who presented 'Hamlet' was a tall, pale, and dark young fellow named Cudot. He had fine eyes, a powerful voice, and such good recollection of Talma, that when I saw the great tragedian in the same part. I thought he was imitating Cudot.

"As I was entirely ignorant of the original the 'Hamlet' of Ducls, with his fantastic entry. his apparition, visible to himself only, his argument with his mother, his soliloguy, the sombre interrogatory addressed by doubt to death-in fine, the 'Hamlet' of Ducis appeared a master-piece, and made a profound impression on me, full of inexplicable sensations, of desires without object, of mysterious vistas of light, of pleasing but puzzling ideas."

Dumas, on procuring the printed play, got it by heart in three days; and later in time, he became acquainted with the original (Alexander is value of his knowledge of English), he could not forget the poor adaptation, and this has always been a source of annoyance to him. It was a happy morning for young Alexander when his friend Adolphe introduced him to the

great tragedian, the object of the visit being tickets to see him in "Sylla" in the evening. Talma was very short-sighted, so I do not know whether he saw me or not.

'He was washing his breast. His head was nearly bald, a circumstance which rather puzzled me, as I heard that his hair absolutely rose on his head at the supposed sight of the ghost. It must be acknowledged that there was little of the poetical at that moment about

Still, when he stood upright, with the lower part of his body draped in a white woollen robe, and drew a corner of it over his shoulder and breast, there was in the movement something

Discovering that Alexander was a son of an old acquainfance, he discoursed awhile with him, and at parting gave him his hand, which his visitor would have gladly kissed. His description of the rest is entirely Dumasian.

With my exalted ideas of the theatre, Talma was a god—one unknown 'tis true as Jupiter was to Semele—a god who then appeared to me, but who would be fully revealed in the evening. 'Our hands touched.

"O Talma, if you had been twenty years younger, or I twenty years older!
"All the honor was for me. I knew the past;
you could not know the future (renown of D.

"If any one could have told you that the hand which you then held would thereafter write sixty or eighty dramas, in each of which you who were seeking for characters all your life would have found one which you would exalt to a wonder, you would not have let off so coolly the poor young man, all blughing for having had the sonor of speaking to you-of touching your

But how could you have discovered in me, O Talma, that of which I was unconscious my-

A very sensible query! Many a successful man of letters, as well as Dumas, has been seized with melancholy at the recollection of the death of his parents before they could enjoy the literary renown of their child.

MADEMOISELLE GEORGES.

In the revolutions of years, Talma had his entrees at the Tuilleries, and this or that crowned head would ask of the Emperor, "Sire, who i this man?" and the answer invariably was, is Talma, one of my friends." It was Talma who first gave the little court at Malmaison a desire to see Mad'lle Georges, who made her debut in Iphigenia in Aulis, at the Theatre of the Republic, on the 29th of November, 1802. A fine woman and charming actress was Mad'he Georges Weymer, and hard was the struggle for places to get a glimpse of her on that memorable night. Geoffry, the "Jules Janin" of that day, was scandalized at the ill-conduct which the most polite people under the sun exhibited

on getting into the playhouse. This taste for spectacles resembles ferocity and barbarism. Women nearly stilled uttered piercing cries, while men, in a savage silence lorgetful of all politeness and respect to the fair sex, thought of nothing but forcing a passage at the expense of all that surrounded them. \* We have, perhaps, better pieces and better actors than the Athenians—this is not proved—but it is

certain that they conferred on their scenic entertainments more notility and dignity.
"The councillors of King Priam cried out as

Helen went by, 'So beautiful a princess is worth fighting for, but however wonderful her beauty, peace is to be preferred to it.' "And I have said to myself in beholding Mile. Georges, 'Can we be surprised that people should run the risk of sufforation for the sight of so superb a woman? But if she were fairer still, they should not allow people to be stifled—even on her own account, for an audience is more se vere on a debutante when the sight of her has

cost them much." The historian of the Dublin Theatre in our own days would not subscribe this opinion. He says, and it is from experience he speaks, that no spectators are more chary of applause than those who have paid nothing at the doors.

F In 1835, thirty-three years later, Theophile Gau-tier felt himself at a loss for words to present a befitting idea of the appearance of the same enchant-How a woman ever under the influence of public applause, strong hopes, strong fears, exhaustive passions, and life spent in the unhealthy atmosphere of a theatre, could retain her good looks and her popularity for such a long period, is more than we can undertake to ac-We must venture on a version of Gautier's impassioned French:-

"Mademoische Georges resembles a medal of Syracuse, or an Isis from the bas-reliefs of The curve of the eye-brows, traced with an incomparable purity and delicacy, shadow two eyes full of fire and the lightning flashes of tragedy. The nose slender and straight, distinguished by nostrils oblique and dilated when under the influence of passion, is united to the forehead by a line simple and grand at the same time. The mouth, displaying great firmness, is distinguished by sharpness at the corners, and; is as superbly disdainful as that of the avenging Nemesis, about to unmuzzle her lion with the claws of bronze. This mouth, however, is decked at times with smiles of imperial grace, and no one would think when it is expressing the tender passions that it has ever nunched the antique imprecation or the modern anathema. The chin, full of strength and resolution, relieves by a majestic outline the profile, which is rather that of a goddess than a mortal. As all the fine women of the Pagan cycle, Mademoiselle Georges has the forchead broad, full, and swelling at the temples —not high, however—resembling in this particular the Venus of Milo. The junction of the arms (to the body) presents a formidable appearance from the vigor of the muscles and the boldness of the outline. One of the bracelets of the upper arm would serve for girdle to a woman of moderate size. But they (the arms) are white, smooth, and terminated by a dimpled hand of childish delicacy—genuine royal hands, made to bear the sceptre or the poniard of Eschylus or Enripides.

All the influence of the Christian religion has hitherto been ineffectual to drive out the sensuous pagan spirit from the inhabitants of the old Lutetia, its stronghold and citadel being in the hearts and minds of its men of letters and

#### NAPOLEON A GREAT PLAY-GOER.

We do not purpose to dwell on the special favor found by Mile, Georges, as well as Mars, in the sight of the First Consul. With his love of the stage and everything connected with it, it followed of course that two such gifted and attractive exponents of the institution should have entered more deeply into his affections than was agreeable to poor Josephine.

The reader probably recollects the name of that Roman general who, when seeing some masterpieces of Greeian art embarked at the Pireus for Rome, gave the captain a serious charge concerning them. "Take special care of these images and pictures," said he, "for if they are lost or damaged, you will have to get others as good as them made."

The First Consul had in him something of the stuff of this man of war. Being in want of a few poets, he asked them of his Grand Master of the University, as he would have demanded soldiers from his War Minister. Dumas says in his "Memoires," "it was easier for M. le Duc de Feitre to furnish three hundred thousand conscripts than for M, de Fontanes to furnish twelve poets." So the great man was obliged to be content with a few men of verse of the second order. For the ake of geniuses of this class many chiefs like Napoleon I would be desirable. Said he to Luce de Lancival, who had just finished the readings of his Hector, "You have written a fine tragedy; I will have it acted in the camp. the evening of its representation he sent the poet a brevet of 6000 francs' pension, with directions that, taking into consideration the poverty of poets in general, the first year's salary should be paid in advance.

### MADEMOISELLE MARS.

It was the imperial will that all the mem-bers of his family and the great digni-taries of the crown should have their boxes at the Theatre Francais. the example by engaging one for himself at 21,000 francs per annum. He did not even think it beneath his dignity to pay attention to the reigning stage goldess on a public occasion. One Sunday, reviewing his guards in the court of the Taileries, he perceived Mile. Mars in the crowd of spectators, kept from pressing on the exercise-ground by a row of pickets. He advanced at once through this cordon, and accosted the lady with the utmost kindliness and courtesy, "You have, mademoiselle," Said he come to return one of the frequent visits which it gives us such pleasure to make to you at the Theatre Francals." Of course the eyes and attention of the staff officers were at once fixed on the lady, whom all her familiarity with the attention of the great hardly fitted to go composedly through her part in the conference.

Bonaparte's return from Elba was a source of joy and triumph to the great actress. On her first appearance during the "Hundred Days" she held in her hand a bouquet of violets; bore violets in her sash; they were to be seen in the borders of her robe; they adorned her hair. This was remembered to her prejudice in the early days of the Restoration. Acting in "Tartuffe," she was prevented from proceeding by loud orders from the orchestra and the pit to cry 'Vive le Roi!'" She availed herself of a moment of quiet to say, "Gentlemen, I have already cried, "Vive le Rol!" and they condescended

not to insist on the repetition. In private life, as well as on the boards, Mademoiselle Mars was matural, unaffected and cheerful. She showed in her manners, in her language, and in her conduct, a rare penetration. and the delicacy of a well-educated woman. She did not seek for witty expressions, but spoke with tact and good sense. One of her obervations deserves to be quoted: "How much better would we act if we sought applause less! Daughter of a comedian, she appeared on the oards at eight years of age. Her debut as an ingenue in the Theatre Francais was not successful. She was meagre in person, had sharp elbows, and rather red arms and hands, but her eyes were expressive, her smile agreeable, and voice of a pleasing and impressive character. With time came soft and rounded contours, and

she combined in herself all the qualities of beauty, talent, and success.

Mademoiselle Mars was well-favored by fortune. Besides her profits as societaire of the theatre, she was in receipt of a salary of 30,000 franes besides her gains during the recess; and the presents made to her (some from unknown

quarters) amounted to a fabulous sum. She was of a generous and charitable disposition, and supported more than one helpless artist. The life of the theatre was so combined with her well-being that she did not renounce the presentation of young "Ingenues" till she was close to sixty Her farewell of the stage was an initia-

tory death In 1838, when the societaires of the theatre were becoming painfully sensible that the lady's age and appearance, and her pretensions to fill the parts of young ladies, were not in accordance, some of them said to Scribe, "Ah, if you could induce her to select the role of a duenna!"
"Certainly," said he, "I'll do it." A wager was made, and the never-weary dramatist composed a piece in which there was a charming woman, but still a grandmother. She was such a delightful personage that the wooer of her granddaughter changed his mind and proposed for

berself. Having read the piece to Mad'lle Mars, and received abundant applause for it, he said, "I need not mention, Mademoiselle, the part in-tended for you." "Oh, no need at all," said she, "but whom do you intend for the grandmother?"
Scribe's spirits descended into his boots; he lost his wager, and the company their hopes. RACHEL.

Mademoiselle Rachel, who enjoyed such a degree of public favor, was in her youth so thin and sickly looking, that when she solicited some lessons from M. Provost, one of the company of the Theatre Francais, he advised her to go and sell flowers. On one of the evenings of later triumphs, when she was enthusiastically called for, and bouquets in profusion flung to her, as soon as the curtain was down she collected a number of them in her Greek tunic, approached her master that should have been, and gracefully kneeling before him, and holding out er collection, thus addressed him: -"I have followed your advice, M. Provost, and am a flower-seller; will you buy?" The professor, of course, acknowledged his want of foresight, and paid her due compliments.

When Rachel entered the Theatre Français in the year 1888, she was a well-exercised comedienne, though young in years. Her first studies were directed to singing, under a certain M. Choron, whose school of religious music was subventioned by the Government of the Restaura-tion. He requested her to take the name of Eliza as more befitting a Christian school. She gave up the vocal study, and entered a class of declamation kept by M. St. Aulaire, and was very glad to get occasionally two francs per night for assisting in juvenile performances. She performed at the Theatre Mollere, under the She performed at the Theatre Monere, make pet name of La Petite Elisa, and then entered the Gymnase under M. Poirson. "Have you any other name besides Eliza?" said he. "Yes, my is Elizabeth Racnel." "Then Rachel you shall be; Eliza is not a good name on a play-bill." Previous to this she had filled a variety of characters. In "La Vendeenne" she made her debut at the Gymnase. Poirson, after some study of her abilities, counselled her to adopt the serious business of tragedy. She followed his advice, and put herself under the instruction of M. Samson, one of the company of the Theatre Francais. Being received at that theatre, she attracted little notice at first, but she won her way to public favor, in a few months, by the possession of genuine talents and perseverance.

Sprung from people of low condition, spending her youth in a state of penury, and in a society far from edifying, she found herself suddenly admitted to the tables and the salons of the nobility, yet a stranger meeting her there would scarcely suspect that she had not been "to the manor born." Without education, she was always ready to be instructed by competent authorities in literary matters. As an artist, she was unrivalled in the expression of the stronger and fiercer passions and feelings, but she was deficient in exhibiting the tenderer emotions of our nature. She attempted comedy, like other eminent tragedians, but failed of success.

Where she felt at ease in society she gave way to all her lively, cheerful, and satirical impulses, and charmed her company. She could act the fine lady to the entire approbation of any reunion in high society in which she might happen to be, but, like Tony Lumpkin, frequently | ferred the company of the "Three Pigeons the people of the "great house."

Having read before her Majesty at Windsor, and won royal approbation by her delivery as well as her easy, unaffected demeanor, she entered the family circle much fatigued, and throwing herself on a sofa, cried out in a tone of relief, "O, how I love to valgarize myself M'encanailler)."

That she was grasping as well as generous, fickle, eager to take back to-day what she liberally gave away yesterday, that she by no means appreciated a good woman's best gift, cannot be denied. She was only thirty-eight years old at her death in 1858.

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may be paid up at the time of subscription, and each instalment so paid shall be entitled to a pro rata of the Dividend that may be declared on full shares. Third, That every Stockholder holding less than four shares shall be entitled to subscribe for one share; and those holding more than a multiple of four shares shall be entitled to subscribe for an ad-

ditional share. Fourth. All share upon which instalments are yet to be paid under Resolution of May 13, 1868, will be entitled to their allotment of the 25 Per Cent. at par, as though they were paid in full.

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