

with delight, and Cooke growled out: 'Why the deuce don't you crow, then!'

An interpolation of Quinn's brought him into serious trouble. Playing Cato at Drury Lane, Williams, who acted the messenger, in delivering the sentence: 'Cæsar sends health to Cato,' gave such a peculiarly ludicrous pronunciation to the last word, that Quinn indignantly replied: 'Would he had sent a better messenger!' This so enraged the Welshman, that he challenged Quinn who tried to laugh him out of his passion. Williams, however, was determined to revenge his outraged dignity, and attacked Quinn as he was leaving the theatre. The latter was obliged to draw in self-defence, and the hot-headed Welshman paid for his folly with his life.

Still better and worse was the Nottingham manager's speech as Richard III.—

Hence, babbling dreams; you threaten here in vain.
That man in the brown wig has got in without paying.
Richard's himself again!

Nor did the marring of Shakspeare's text stand in Stephen Kemble's way, when he wanted to rebuke a noisy occupant of the boxes at the Dublin Theatre, who annoyed Stephen by applauding everything, and did it by making Shylock assure Gratiano: 'Till thou canst rail the seal from off this bond, thou, and that noisy fellow in the boxes yonder, but offend your lungs to speak so loud.'

Some of the most comical interpolations have come from the audience itself. When Spranger, Barry's Romeo, drew all the town to Covent Garden, Garrick, in defence, took to playing the same character at Drury Lane. On the first occasion of his doing so, upon the lovelorn Juliet exclaiming: 'O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?' a good-natured auditor saved Garrick the necessity of replying, by calling out: 'Because Barry is gone to the other house.' Bernard in his Autobiography, relates a good story of Haydon the painter. 'One evening I was playing Sharp in the *Lying Valet* at Plymouth, when my friend Benjamin Haydon and his little son (B. R. H.) were in the stage-box, and on my repeating the words: "I have had nothing to eat since last Monday was a fortnight," young Haydon exclaimed in a tone audible through the house: "What a whopper! You dined at my father's house this afternoon." The same actor is also responsible for the following: 'Our principal actress, a Mrs. Kirby, playing Queen Anne, inquired very piteously:

Oh, when shall I have rest?

A ruthless grocer started up in the pit and shouted out: "Not till you have paid me my one pound one and tenpence, ma'am." Quite a matter of fact in his way was the Yankee who, strolling into a theatre on the evening of the arrival of the news of the fall of the Crimean stronghold, could not hear Hamlet's complaint—

I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'erflows my spirit;
I cannot live to hear the news from England—

without easing his mind by shouting across the pit: 'Die away, old hoss! Sebastopol's taken!'—a piece of gratuitous information that probably surprised the representative of the Danish prince, as much as an English Othello was astonished, by a girl tumbling from gallery to pit as she pronounced the words:

'Tis like she comes to speak of Cassio's death.

The most experienced actor is apt to find his tongue unruly at times, and playing strange tricks with the text. The following curious colloquy took place between Quinn as Balance and Peg Woffington as Sylvia in the *Recruiting Officer*: 'Sylvia, how old were you when your mother was married?' 'What, sir?'—'Pshaw, I mean, how old were you when your mother was born?' 'I regret, sir, I cannot answer your question; but I can tell you how old I was when my mother died!' Peg was not so stupid as the actor who persisted in sticking to his text when Ellison as Richmond blundering asked: 'Is young George Stanley slain?' and replied: 'He is, my lord, and safe in Leicester town!' An Aberdeen actress having to ask if somebody retained his influence at the India House, from some extraordinary

confusion of ideas, actually inquired: 'Does he still maintain his infants at the India House?' Sometimes tongue-tripping proves catching, as when Mrs. Davenport exclaimed: 'I protest, there's a candle coming along the gallery with a man in its hand,' and Mrs Gibbs directly afterwards declared: 'Betty has locked the key, and and carried away the door in her pocket.'

Some ludicrous apologies have been made from the stage. Jack Johnstone, being called upon to sing the *Sprig of Shillelagh*, stepped forward to do so; but when he should have commenced, stood silent and confused. At length when the audience shewed signs of impatience, Jack astonished them by addressing them thus: 'Ladies and gentlemen, I assure you I have sung the song so often, that, by my soul, I cannot recollect how it begins!' Quinn, who despised and detested theatrical dancers, had thrust upon him the disagreeable task of excusing the non-appearance of a popular danseuse, and executed it by saying: 'I am desired by the manager to inform you that the dance intended for to-night is obliged to be omitted, on account of Madame Rollan having dislocated her ankle. I wish it had been her neck!' Elliston was a proficient in addressing a theatrical audience; and well he might be, seeing his recklessness was constantly getting him into scrapes out of which only his matchless insinuating impudence could extricate him. One season, when he had the Birmingham Theatre, business got awfully bad; do what he would, nothing but empty benches met the manager's eye night after night, and it became plain that unless something was done, the ghost would soon cease to walk. Elliston was equal to the occasion. Every wall in Birmingham grew eloquent recounting the feats of THE BOHEMIAN, who was to astonish the natives by his performances with a stone of a ton-weight. The night came, and the theatre was crammed. Pizarro was turned into a pantomime, for not a word could be heard for cries of 'The Bohemian! the Bohemian!' At last, the curtain fell; the band struck up *The Battle of Prague*, and all was expectation. Suddenly the audience was startled by the appearance—not of the Bohemian—but of the manager, who, pale as any ghost, exclaimed: 'The Bohemian has deceived me: that I could have pardoned; but he has deceived my friends—he has deceived you. I repeat, the Bohemian has deceived us: he is not here—and the man, of whatever name or nation he may be, who violates his word, commits an offence which'

The sentence was never finished; the conviction flashed upon the audience that they were sold, and a fearful clamour arose. Taking advantage of a momentary cessation, Elliston proceeded: 'Anxious for your gratification, I entered into correspondence with the faithless foreigner, who was this day to have appeared. The correspondence, ladies and gentlemen, is in my pocket; I'll read it to you.' As Elliston coolly produced a packet of letters, the uproar broke out again with tenfold violence; he waited patiently till they were tired, and then went on: 'Here they are. Does any gentleman present read German? If so, would he honour me by stepping forward.' This was too much; peals of laughter rang through the house. 'Am I left alone? Then I'll translate it for you.' (Cries of 'No, no; go on Elliston!') 'I obey; the correspondence shall not be read; but, ladies and gentlemen, the stone is here—you shall see it! You shall yet be satisfied! You are my patrons, and have a right to demand it!' Crash went the band again, up went the curtain, and there was an immense piece of sand-rock, labelled, 'This is the stone!'

Surrey audiences, at least in those days, were somewhat of the noisiest; how he talked to them, may be judged from the following speech, delivered when the crowded state of the gallery rendered the gods more uproarious than usual. 'Ladies and gentlemen, I take the liberty of addressing you. It is of rare occurrence that I deem it necessary to place myself in juxtaposition with you. When I said juxtaposition, I meant *vis à vis*. When I uttered the words *vis à vis*, I meant contactability. Now, let me tell you that *vis à vis* (it is a French term) and contactability (which is a truly English term) very

nearly assimilate to each other. Gentlemen! gentlemen! I am really ashamed of your conduct. It is unlike a Surrey audience. Are you aware that I have in this establishment most efficient peace-officers at my immediate disposal? Peace-officers, gentlemen, mean persons necessary in time of war. One word more. If that gentleman in the carpenter's cap will sit down, the little girl in red ribbons (you my love, I mean) will be able to see the entertainment.' Elliston's style may seem a cavalier one for a manager to adopt towards his patrons, but we have known modern audiences to be treated in even more supercilious fashion, and bear it with profound equanimity.

THE DOCTOR'S DAUGHTER.

MILES and miles away from London, and nearly an hour's drive from the nearest railway station, there is a village as little known as might be expected from so remote a position. It is a charmingly pretty village, the houses, each with more or less garden to it, scattered about, not ranged into any attempt at a street. There is a green, which is green, and not parched and brown, and there the village boys play cricket in the long summer evenings; and above it is a heathery common, bounded by a fir-wood, whose auburn trunks and boughs burn in the sunset; while below, winding softly through flat rich pastures, a trout-stream glides between its fringes of sedges and bulrushes and tall water myosotis, blue as turquoises in the sun.

Just out of the village stands the house with which we chiefly have to do. It is inhabited by Dr. Britton; he is an M.R.C.S., and used to make a fight to be called Mr. Britton, his proper title; but the village would not have it; his profession was doctoring, and doctor he was and doctor he should be called; and so doctor he was called, till he had become so used to it that any other prefix to his name would have sounded strange and unfamiliar. He was a widower, and had two children, a son, who had married early and foolishly, and who had emigrated, which was about the best thing he could do, and a daughter, Nelly, who lived with him, and kept his house and looked after him, from his shirt-buttons to such of his correspondence as a woman could attend to. For Mr. Britton was a much cleverer medico than village doctors and general practitioners are wont to be, and his practice was large and widely extended, all the country families for miles round employing his services for any but such cases as they conceived required the attendance of a London physician.

The house in which Mr. Britton and his daughter lived was very unnecessarily large for so small a family. It could not be called a good house or a pretty house, and yet, especially for the summer, it was much pleasanter than many a better and handsomer one. It was old, and the rooms were low, and those on the ground floor had beams across the ceilings, and the windows might have been larger with advantage, and the doors fewer and better placed. But the walls were thick, and there was abundance of space, and closets and cupboards enough to stow away all the goods and chattels of a large family. And there was a snug little stable for the doctor's good roadster, and a chaise-house, and cow-house, and poultry-house, and larder and dairy, and all the wealth of outhouses that can only be found now appertaining to old-fashioned middle-class tenements, and which are as unattainable to the wretched inhabitants of the modern lath and plaster abominations at four times the rent, as are the quiet repose and retirement that belong to those old houses. But it was the surroundings of the cottage that made its great delight. For it stood off the road, from which it was quite hidden, nestled down into the midst of a lovely garden, full of old-fashioned flowers and some newer ones, roses especially, one of which it was part of Nelly's self-imposed morning duties to gather, all gemmed and heavy with dew, to put in her father's button-hole before he started on his daily rounds. He used to boast that from May till November he never was without one. There were little belts and screens of