

MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC.

Dramatic Items. —The New York Clipper gives the following details about the cost of running a first-class theatre in New York:—

We are frequently asked by correspondents to state the amount of money expended each night or week by a manager of a theatre, whether he is not making an independent fortune every week, and many other similar questions relative to the theatre, and we have therefore gone to considerable trouble to find out, as near as possible, the actual weekly expenses of a manager, and will therefore take our readers behind the scenes "for this time only." The stage and all the people employed on and about it are under the direction of the stage manager, whose salary is from \$75 to \$100. In a theatre like Niblo's or Wallace's, the company consists of one juvenile man, leading man, heavy man, first and second old man, three walking gents, one character actor, first and second old woman, juvenile lady, *soubrette*, heavy woman, three walking ladies, ten utility men and women, and supernumeraries. For these the salaries range from \$100 to \$10. And here we might state that actors have some queer notions of their own, which nothing can change. While, with some people, no part is too good for them, few parts are good enough in every theatre in this city, but some, especially Wood's Museum, each and every member of the company was engaged for a special line of business; while, at the Museum, Manager Wood engaged them with the understanding that every actor or actress must play just what he or she is called upon to play; in fact, to make themselves generally useful, and work for the interest of the management. This is as it should be, but how few there are in the profession willing to accept "the situation." A manager always desires to cast a piece as strongly as he can, and often casts the walking gent or the juvenile man for a part that he would play exceedingly well, but which these gentlemen refuse to accept, because it is a utility part, and they are not to be seen in it. Of course the manager must succumb, and while the juvenile walking gent who may not otherwise be required in the piece walks about doing nothing during the run of said piece, he draws his salary the same as usual, and the manager is censured by the public for the weakness in some portion of the cast of the piece. While the men are bad enough, the ladies are still worse, and are so jealous of one another in the same company that it is with the greatest difficulty they can be made to keep their temper. We know of an instance where the juvenile lady had a part in which a song was to be given. So jealous was the leading lady (both of whom were in the same piece) that she insisted upon having a song also, and the manager, to save the troupe, had to give one. A "boy's part" in a piece will do more trouble than anything else, for we all know the weakness of the majority of lady professionals in wishing to show their legs; and since the padding business has been brought to such perfection, the desire to "be a boy again" is greater than ever. The "pads" being so woven into the flesh-colored leggings that it is impossible for any one, excepting an old theatre-goer, to detect the artificiality. We shall never forget one night when we were witnessing the pantomime acting of a certain French *Spy* actress, to see the pads slip down to the heel. Then things did look bad, and the symmetry of the lady was considerably damaged. But to resume. Unless a spectacular piece is produced, no more than six or eight ballet girls are needed in a theatre. These get from \$8 to \$15 weekly. It is generally supposed that ballet girls are of very easy virtue. A greater mistake than this has never been made; like everything else, there can always be found black sheep in a flock of ballet girls, we very well know, but we also know of many a ballet girl getting only \$10 a week at the theatre, who supports a widowed mother and from three to four brothers and sisters, and notwithstanding the many temptations they are thrown among, they are ornaments to society. When spectacle is produced, the *ballet* is increased to twenty-five or thirty ladies. Then there is the prompter, who commands a salary of \$80; the call-boy, \$15; supernumeraries, at 50 cents a night; the carpenter, and from three to five assistants. A good carpenter is worth \$50 and the assistants \$25, who, besides doing the work for the stage during the week, shift the scenes at night. The property man is one of the most useful "articles" about a theatre. It is his duty to make or provide all the properties used in the place, including the stage furniture, leg of ham, pot of soup, and thousands of little things. His salary ranges from \$30 to \$50. Then there are men up in the rigging loft who attend to the flies and the curtain wheel, wardrobe keeper and assistants, at a salary of \$20 and \$10.

There are from two to three scene painters at a salary from \$60 to \$100. The book-keeper has \$10, and two women to clean the theatre every day at \$4 each. The orchestra consists of the leader, at \$100, and from twelve to sixteen musicians, whose salaries range from \$20 to \$18 a week. The gas man and fireman make the forces behind the curtain complete. In front of the house we find a treasurer at \$30, two assistants in office at \$15 each, two doorkeepers at \$12 each, six ushers at \$8 each, and two policemen at \$12 each, making, altogether, over one hundred persons regularly employed throughout the season. The gas bill is from \$20 to \$150; rent, about \$600; license, \$500 (a year); and insurance, advertising, and printing, \$450; bill posting, \$15; and two part of the gross receipts is paid to the revenue department. Generally speaking, *ballet* girls have to find all the clothes they wear on the stage, and pay for the same out of their small pittance. Actresses furnish all the wardrobe that may be required in plays of modern life. In bringing out a spectacle, the cost of canvas for new scenes is great, also for the silks and satins worn. When a star plays an engagement he generally shares the gross receipts with the manager after a certain amount (generally from \$250 to \$350 per night) is deducted. Sometimes a manager engages a star on a certainty of \$1500 or \$2000 a week, or he may give him 20 per cent. of the receipts, or one-third of the gross receipts. This may appear to be a great deal of money, and many will wonder how it is that so few star actors retire from the stage that they can write a play, and at the same time, manufacturing plays without plot or incident, the spelling in which is execrable and the grammar exceedingly loose. Managers are so pestered by these "authors" that it is very difficult for a "live author" to get the manager to read his work, unless he has some power behind the throne to assist him. Authors get from stars from \$500 to \$1000 for a

new piece; and when they write one for a manager the author gets either from \$15 to \$50 a night for it so long as it runs, or a percentage of the receipts. —Miss Lizzie Price, who has been playing the part of "Dora," in Charles Reade's beautiful drama of that name, with much success in New York, was engaged for the role of "Arrah Meelah," in *Arcturion*, at Niblo's, but her demands for salary—\$150 per week—did not suit the ideas of the management, and she was consequently not engaged. —The Lydia Thompson troupe are in the last week but one of their present engagement at Niblo's Garden. This is the forty-fourth week of the engagement of this troupe in this country. For eighteen weeks they attracted good audiences to Wood's Museum, where they presented *Leola*, or *the Man at the Wheel*, for thirteen weeks. On December 28, *Leola* was given, and ran for five weeks, when the troupe closed at Wood's and opened at Niblo's Garden, on February 1, in *The Forty Thieves*. This was presented several weeks, when *Shahab the Sailor* was produced, and will continue the attraction to the close of the engagement. The troupe close on July 31, when Miss Thompson, Beckett, and Mr. Henderson will take a couple of weeks' rest at Niagara Falls, from which place they proceed to Buffalo, N. Y., and play one week, and go thence to Elmira, N. Y., for two nights, after which they go to the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, August 28, for a few weeks. They then proceed on their tour through the West and South, visiting all the cities of note as far as New Orleans, returning to New York about March to play a farewell engagement.

Joseph Jefferson, who is now in a similar place, at Hopkock, on the Saddle river, Bergen county, N. J., for \$30,000. He takes immediate possession. This property was formerly owned and improved by the late William H. Ranlet, architect, subsequently by Mr. Forrester, who sold it to "Old Rip." It is a charming spot, lying on both sides of the river, with a fine brook trout in the rear, a capital old brown-stone house and spacious outbuildings, the whole surrounded with innumerable fruit and shade trees. —Susan Denin has already got into the English courts. On June 25 an action was brought at the Bloomsbury County Court by her husband, Mr. Morris, against Messrs. Shepherd & Creswick, of the Surrey Theatre, London, to recover the sum of £100, 10s, 6d, being half the gross receipts taken on May 4 last upon the occasion of Miss Susan Denin's benefit. The lady's counsel stated that the plaintiff is an American lady, and came to that country to obtain a London engagement. She appeared at the Standard and other places. She obtained an engagement at the Surrey, and she was to have a benefit and was to receive half the gross receipts provided she obtained the assistance of a "star" or number of "stars" to appear on the said night. She obtained the services of the Vokes Family, but it was denied that they were stars, and £3 was paid into court as the amount owing. He then called Mr. Corby, a theatrical agent, who stated that he acted as agent to Miss Denin, and arranged the engagement with Messrs. Shepherd & Creswick. He knew the Vokes Family, and considered they were a "star" and not a stock company. They had many engagements, and at times earned £55 per week. A "star" was an artist engaged for a definite number of nights, and not a regular member of any company. He was acquainted with Mr. Macready and knew that he performed at the Haymarket for a term, but he was decidedly a "star" of the first magnitude. Mr. Frederick Vokes said he was leading member of Vokes & Co., and for the last few years had filled starring engagements only in Sheffield, Plymouth, and other places; also at the Crystal Palace, where he was paid £25 per week, and the Alhambra, for which he received £30 per week, and he worked both places the same day. He had filled no engagements but starring ones during the past two years. Mr. Nimmo, theatrical agent, stated that he had been connected with the profession for forty years, and was acquainted with every "star" in the world, and he was decidedly of opinion that the Vokes Family were "stars," and acknowledged "stars." On the bills for the benefit in question their names were printed in large type, as the names of "stars" generally are. Mr. Shepherd stated that Miss Denin wished to perform in the fifth act of *Richard the Third*. He said he had no dress, and it was then agreed that if he would provide the dresses she would bring the Vokes Family as an equivalent. The Vokes Family might be in his opinion, theatrical "stars." His honor said that as neither the lady nor her husband were present to dispute the agreement stated to have been made, he must decide for the defendants. Judgment for the defendants, with costs, was then given.

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—Miss Susan Galton appears to have achieved a fair success at Selwyn's Theatre, Boston, and the estimate formed of her abilities and attractions by the critics is the same essentially as in this city. Miss Galton will probably appear here next season, and we will be glad to see her, but the chances for her playing a profitable engagement will be materially lessened if she cannot induce some of her indiscreet admirers to restrain their enthusiasm within the bounds of common sense. One paper is now doing her a very serious

injury and disgusting all sensible admirers of the lady by copying all the adulatory criticisms that appear in the Boston papers, and by finding fault with those who do not think that she is the greatest singer that ever visited these shores. Miss Galton and her troupe will shortly visit Cape M. Y., and will thence make a tour of the other watering places, giving a series of performances.

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—The Lydia Thompson troupe are in the last week but one of their present engagement at Niblo's Garden. This is the forty-fourth week of the engagement of this troupe in this country. For eighteen weeks they attracted good audiences to Wood's Museum, where they presented *Leola*, or *the Man at the Wheel*, for thirteen weeks. On December 28, *Leola* was given, and ran for five weeks, when the troupe closed at Wood's and opened at Niblo's Garden, on February 1, in *The Forty Thieves*. This was presented several weeks, when *Shahab the Sailor* was produced, and will continue the attraction to the close of the engagement. The troupe close on July 31, when Miss Thompson, Beckett, and Mr. Henderson will take a couple of weeks' rest at Niagara Falls, from which place they proceed to Buffalo, N. Y., and play one week, and go thence to Elmira, N. Y., for two nights, after which they go to the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, August 28, for a few weeks. They then proceed on their tour through the West and South, visiting all the cities of note as far as New Orleans, returning to New York about March to play a farewell engagement.

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