

Everybody in London knows Sadler's Wells Theater, situated on Rosebery avenue, Clerkenwell. In the good old days, when Dolly Varden of Dickens' Barnaby Rudge fame, used to reside in the near vicinity and turn the heads of all the gay apprentices of the district with her bright smile and saucy dimples there were green fields in the vicinity of the famous Angel inn of Islington. Prosperous city merchants had their homes in the immediate district, affluence and respectability reigned predominant. The most famous actors of London subsequently used to entrance fashionable audiences in the then suburban theater of Sadler's Wells.

Alas, how have the mighty fallen! The theater still stands, so do a great many of the noble residences of the departed city magnates, but no longer do a Garrick and a Siddons tread the boards; no longer do the link boys of these hard drinking old eastern merchants extinguish their torches in the old iron snuffers beside the portal of their master's residences; the famous theater is now a second cousin to what is euphonistically termed in the modern Babylon, "a penny gaff." The mansions and terraces that still stand are now nothing more or less in the majority of cases, than noisy, overcrowded human warrens with three or four families and attendant grinning children, whose name is legion, to each floor of a single dwelling house.

Sadler's Wells Theater can hardly be said to be situated on an aristocratic thoroughfare. While seeking the entrances, you may, if you are short-sighted, fall over a fruit stall or two, together with a collection of second hand, rusty iron bedsteads that are exposed for sale in the streets by the storekeepers who conduct at the best, a precarious livelihood in the immediate vicinity. The theater itself presents to the eye a dilapidated exterior. It is built after the simple but unobtrusive style of architecture commonly known as the "dry-goods packing case pattern"—four straight brick walls punctured here and there by a stray window the beams of a flickering yellow gas lamp revealing a dismal attempt at a plaster chipped portico before the carriage entrance.

Nine o'clock, the time for commencing the second "house," had already struck when Tom and I pulled up outside Povertyopolis temple of Thespis; sulcet strains were issuing from the interior in which a bass drum and a baser trombone took a prominent part. A portly individual stood at the box entrance; he wore in the precise center, to be paradoxical, of an acre more or less of immaculate shirt bosom one of the most perfect specimens of the glass-cutters art as I have ever been privileged to encounter. The "Deseret News" is apparently recognize in London—another international courtesy that demonstrates Johnny Bull's kindly attitude—for in a few minutes after producing our pasteboard we were ushered into a stage box by a damsel, with a most fearful and wonderful cranial integument in the form of a huge greasy bob as big as a football on the back of her head.

We put on airs until we learned that the regular price of the stage box was one shilling each or to be vulgar "two-bits a time."

The play was in full swing and already there was trouble brewing, so much so that the first words that greeted our ears were: "Stand back cur-r-rse yer!" We stood back, and throwing our arms around each other wept bitterly. Old associations connected with an adobe theater in a certain city some 7,000 miles away passed before us, involuntarily we simultaneously echoed "It is it is our long lost Lincoln J. Car-

ter." There was something touchingly familiar about that "cur-r-rse yer," that conjured up visions of a Terrible Leap for Life "the greatest mechanical stage effect of the age." Once more we saw Paul Hamer stoically transferring his gaze from the desolate parquette to the top-heavy gallery in the center of the front row on which, with elbows squared, sat the two deaf mutes of the northeast bench, whilst President Simpson, of the Newsboys' union was to be observed nearby supported by his noble henchmen "Peanuts" and "English" in evening dress, i. e., shirtsleeves.

The play apparently was of the "Rotten-shot Ike and the vigilantes" order. There was a loving roll about that "cur-r-rse yer!" which lingers in my memory even yet. The observation was on the part of the leader of the aforesaid vigilantes, who apparently had Ike Cornbred, together with his sweetheart, the heroine, and of course her mother who was there to play propriety. Just as we were fairly seated and things had begun to assume a miniature assault-on-Santiago-aspect, a peculiar individual, ferfully and wonderfully attired to represent a miner of Desolate Gulch, at least so the play-bill led us to believe, strolled nonchalantly on the play-bill led us to believe, strolled nonchalantly on the stage and in the purest cockney accent I ever heard outside of Whitechapel, informed the audience in general and the first violin in the orchestra in particular that he had arrived to see fair play "and doant yer fergit h't." What I liked most about this individual then, and ever afterwards, was his supreme coolness in everything he undertook, and which never deserted him, not even in that fateful moment when he asked the heroine to become his bride, much as though he were asking her for the loan of her wash tub.

One must not infer that there were moments when this perambulating arsenal could not rise supreme to the occasion, such as for instance when he seated himself, and with grandiloquent impressiveness demanded of Gobby George the Gladiator of the Gulch bar, "two coffin screws and a pile driver"—subsequently I hunted through the bartender's companion, and ignominiously failed to locate the particular beverage. All went merry as a marriage bell—I have encountered that smile elsewhere but let it go—until one of the vigilantes attempted to jab a couple of cold steel into the cool one's cervical vertebrae. Retribution swift and sure followed. The cool one lit a two-fer and sailed in. Down went the vigilantes, down went the audience to liquor up for the next act or rather to be accurate part of them remained to yell themselves hoarse over the telling finale.

Now we could examine the audience at our leisure and they likewise criticize the two "toffs" in the box—as far as criticism went the honors were distinctly with the audience. What an audience! We shall never forget that penny (two cents) gallery, to our dying day. Tom wanted to be where there were "kids," they were here in shoals, prematurely old little urchins with matted hair, dirty faces and rags, that in a windstorm would flay them to death, one and all jammed in so tightly that when the center one coughed he shook the entire row. The house, fairly clean and tidy in itself, was packed in every part, mostly by lads and young girls—costers, bootblacks, fur pullers, trolley boys, flower girls, match sellers, odoriferous fish porters, factory hands, one and all mixed up indiscriminately and enjoying their penn'orth of blood and gunpowder. Pandemonium reigned supreme—once more I plead guilty to the charge of plagiarism. Apparently the band was playing but although the

first cornet was visibly going black in the face with his exertions before our very eyes, we were hardly aware that the orchestra was discoursing blatant music. Little street arabs, who ought to have been still in kilts, or in bed—where they managed to get their admission money from goodness only knows—were doing their juvenile best to split one's tympanum with ear-splitting whistles and cat calls. Coy maidens, wearing impossible hats that must have been conceived by delirious milliners, were yelling, with astonishing vigor, facetious greetings to palpable acquaintances across the building. "Wat, O Liza! wot price yer pearlys?"

In the pit a number of coster girls of the large hat, greasy bang, and multi-colored ostrich feather variety, were exchanging, in stentorian tones, sweet nothings, more to the point than with elegance. Thus did festive Povertyopolis lay tribute to the Thespian muse!

The popular pastime of the juvenile gods seemed to be to provide themselves, from the universal purveyor who hawked his wares between acts, with a ha'porth of cherries in a sack which they devastated in an incredibly short space of time. Then to vary the monotony, they would beguile the fleeting moment and surreptitiously insert a well sucked cherry stone between a dirty thumb and finger and take a steady aim for the eye of the long suffering artist in the orchestra, who presided over the big drum department, a gentle squeeze, a savage whoop of triumph.

Another bullet had found its billet. Ever and anon they would draw their attention to the lady in the front row of the pit stalls who was providing a diminutive infantile, duplicate of her noble maternal self, with light liquid refreshments. To quote the immortal bard "a worm will turn if trod upon, even a sausage will turn if kept too long." The matronly lady arose from her seat, infant son and all, and with long-suffering, motherly dignity, observed to the occupants of the gallery in general that "H'if yer doant chuck h't, I'll come h'up and punch yer bloody 'eads."

Finally the band prevailed, the curtain went up, the committee on supply from the Irrigation department came up likewise, and with a lot of apparently unnecessary waste of pure billingsgate, unintelligible sarcasm and sanguinary conversation, resumed their respective benches and proceeded to drink in the next installment of blood and thunder. The youth, who during the last five minutes had been breeding a well-developed riot, incidental to his successful angling with a bent pin and thread for a very sporty leghorn hat in the pit below, was ignominiously fired downstairs, out into the cold, cold world, by the low browed attendant. Order was once more restored after the second act had been under way for fully seven minutes.

We saw the villain with wearisome reiteration catch the heroine on the fly, so to speak, and after dusting his patent leather shoes—contemplate the fact—a mining camp desperado in patent leathers—light the regulation cigarette, leisurely pick up his unconscious burden, blow a thick cloud, and walk off on the opposite side, with a big patch of the heroine's ready made pallor on the left shoulder of his velveteen coat. The heroine was not so backward, either, for when she broke in upon a nice little lynching bee, in which the hero was to be the star attraction, and with the aid of two revolvers and a bulldog cleared the canyon, really we thought the heavens would fall. The associations conjured up by the play were beginning to be too much for us. We were actually getting homesick. So rising from our seats we staggered