

IN AN OLD PLAYHOUSE.

THE DRAMA IN ST. JOHN HALF A CENTURY AGO.

Hopley's Theatre and Some Who Trod its Boards—Plays and Players That are Seen and Heard no More—A House-Bill of the Good Old Days.

On the morning of the 15th of October, 1874, that great enemy of the historic houses of St. John, fire, swept away the last traces of the old Hopley theatre. For years before that time the greater portion of the building had been among the things that had been and were not, and comparatively few of the young generation knew that there had stood there the playhouse to which the beauty and fashion of the city had flocked in the days of long ago. Yet in the thirty or more years for which it stood, prior to a destruction of all but a portion of it by fire, in November, 1854, many actors of no mean note trod its boards, and not the least of these were Junius Brutus Booth, who made his advent in 1841, the Vandenhoffs, Mrs. Fitzwilliams, Buxton, the comedian, and others. There, too, prominent citizens were wont to appear on the amateur stage, in their younger days, and no less a thing than the Institute lecture course had its beginning there. The Hopley theatre had no small share in educating and developing the taste of the citizens of half a century or so ago. I do not know when the building was erected, but it was probably about the year 1820. It was used as a circus as far back as 1825, and no doubt for other purposes of amusement before that date. In the thirties and forties it was at the zenith of its fame as a theatre. The site of it was on Union street, east of the Golden Ball corner, within view, and indeed within pistol shot, of the new opera house. In looking over some old papers, the other day, I found a curious relic of this theatre in the early days of the Victorian era. It was a finely preserved house-bill, of an earlier date than I have seen published of late years, and it read as follows:



THEATRE.

By Permission of His Worship the MAYOR. STAGE MANAGER, MR. NICKINSON. PROMPTER, MR. ADDIS.

MR. DEVERNA, duly appreciating the support already received from the inhabitants of St. John, and anxious to merit a continuance of their liberality, respectfully announces that, during his late visit to the United States, he has succeeded in effecting engagements, for a limited number of nights, with

Mr. and Mrs. HARRISON,

of the principal "London Theatres," and recently the leading Performers in the "Park Theatre," New York. Engagements have also been entered into with

MISS ANGELICA

Principal "Dramatist," and favorite "Comedienne," of the London, New York and Philadelphia THEATRES.

MR. RAFFLE,

Of the Washington and Baltimore THEATRES, is also engaged—and

MR. ADDIS,

So long and favorably known as the efficient Prompter and Stage Director of the National and Bovey Theatres, New York.

With this "Combination of Talent" in addition to the acknowledged ability of the present Company, the Manager confidently anticipates a remuneration for his efforts to present, in perfection, in succession of

Sterling TRAGEDIES and COMEDIES, So carefully produced as to command the approbation of the most fastidious.

Monday Evening, July 23, 1838. Will be presented SHAKESPEARE'S celebrated TRAGEDY of

OTHELLO,

THE MOOR OF VENICE.

OTHELLO.....MR. HARRISON IAGO.....MR. RAFFLE Cassio.....Mr. Taylor.....Freeman.....Mr. Miller BRABANTIO.....Mr. Bellamy.....Gratiato.....Mr. Anderson LUDOVICO.....Mr. Brown.....Montano.....Mr. Milner DUKE.....Miss Angelica.....MR. SMITH DEMONON.....MRS. HARRISON EMELIA.....Mrs. Anderson

After which MRS. ANGELICA, will appear in her CELEBRATED GARLAND DANCE from the opera of the BRONZE HORSE.

MR. RASIMI will repeat his Spanish Bolero from the opera of Mussanillo.

To conclude with the admired FARCE of

HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS.

SIR HARRY.....MR. ADDIS MY LORD DUKE.....Mr. Nickinson LOVE.....Mr. Taylor.....Freeman.....Mr. Miller TOM.....Mr. Bellamy.....Phillip.....Mr. Anderson COACHMAN.....Miss Angelica.....MR. HARRISON MISS KITTY.....MISS ANGELICA LADY CHARLOTTE.....Miss Sands LADY BAB.....Mrs. Anderson.....Cook.....Mrs. Tessier In the course of the Piece a MOCK MINUET, by Mr. Addis and Miss ANGELICA.

Prices of Admission.—To the Boxes, Four Shillings—Pit, Two Shillings. Doors open at half-past 7 o'clock—the Performances to commence at 8 precisely.—Tickets to be had at the Saint John Hotel, at Mr. Nelson's Book Store, and at Mr. Seely's, next door to the THEATRE. —Also, at the Box Office from 10 a. m. to 1 p. m. daily, where Seats may be secured.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

St. John, July 21. H. P. SANCTON, Printer.

It would be inferred from the announcement that this was the opening night of the season, though it is just possible that Mr. Deverna was so well satisfied with his own rhetoric that he allowed the praise of his enterprise to appear on the bills on subsequent occasions. How this enterprise was rewarded, and how far the public found the enterprise equal to the promise, must, it is to be feared, remain a mystery to the people of today. I have no file of city papers for that year, and if I had, it is doubtful if they would throw much light on the subject. The mayor of St. John at that time was Robert F. Hazen, the eleventh to occupy the chair in the fifty and odd years of the city's corporate existence. Many of the local readers of PROGRESS will remember when he resided in the house which has since been transformed into the Hotel Danferin, and which was one of the very few buildings which stood in the path of the fire of 1877 and escaped. The St. John hotel, in 1838, was new in its career as a house of entertainment, having been

opened by Cyrus Stockwell in the previous year. Nelson's bookstore was kept by Valentine Nelson, and the Mr. Seely, who lived next door to the theatre, was the late Richard Seely, who was himself an amateur actor in the local entertainments of later years.

Among other amateur performers in the Hopley theatre, at one time or another, were such well remembered citizens as Col. Andrew Otty, who was specially notable in *Othello*; the late Judge Watters; Thomas E. Streek, who died a few months ago; John E. Ganong, who died a year or two ago; W. H. A. Keans, who was so prominent in the affairs of the city and county in later years; Douglas B. Stevens, afterwards superintendent of the American Telegraph company, the predecessor of the Western Union, and a number of others of lesser note. Among those who are living at the present day are W. H. Venning, late of the fisheries department; Alpin Grant, for many years past a resident of Halifax, and at a later period, I think (for he is still a gay young bachelor) G. J. Chubb.

Tom Hill, of the *Loyalist*, who could outchinquy Chiniquy in his assaults on the Roman Catholic church, was another who took part, as did one or two other printers, among whom was the erratic Arthur Slader.

In 1840 the place was known as Preston's theatre, having a Mr. Preston as lessee. It was in that year that the Vandenhoffs arrived. Prior to the completion of the Institute building, the lectures of the first course were delivered there.

In a partial file of the *Loyalist* for 1843, I find several notices of the performances of the amateurs of the Histronic society, but the value of them is sadly lessened by the fact that the names of the actors are not mentioned. Here are some of the plays which were produced:

On February 4, *The Dumb Girl of Genoa* was given, with *Billy Barlow* as an afterpiece. There was but a small audience, and in order to attract the public the price for future nights was reduced to one shilling and three pence for box tickets and seven pence ha'penny for the gallery. One week later the citizens who attended were treated to *Rob Roy* and the farce of *My Fellow Clerk*. The part of Baillie Nichol Jarvie was, it I mistake not, taken by James Robertson, a well known tailor.

*The Dumb Girl of Genoa* was repeated on Feb. 13, with the farce of *My Fellow Clerk*, "in a manner that would have done credit to stock actors," says the critic. Then followed, on succeeding Monday and Thursday nights, *The Rent Day* and *Hunting the Turtle*; *Wendock of Wendock* and *Miss in Her Teens*; the *Golden Farmer* and the *Irishman in London*, while on Feb. 27 *The Dumb Girl of Genoa* and *The Golden Farmer* were repeated. Of the latter, the *Loyalist* says that "the gentleman who personated the character of the farmer created quite a sympathy, as we observed many of the fair sex were affected even to tears."

Soaring a little higher, the *Merchant of Venice* was produced on March 16, and the next week came the *Robber of the Rhine* and *The Golden Farmer* again. The latter appears to have taken well, for the critic has this to say: "We have seen many performances in different parts of the continent, and most certainly think that the principal characters were as well performed as possibly they could be."

*Macbeth* was given twice during the season, and on April 27 the *Merchant of Venice* was repeated, for the benefit of Mr. Slader, who had rendered valuable aid as stage decorator and all-round actor. This was Arthur Slader, a man of many and brilliant gifts, who spent his life in alternately sinning and repenting. He is generally referred to as a printer, but in the course of his life he acted in many other lines of work, such as that of editor, schoolmaster and painter. He was a poet as well as an actor, and from all accounts he might have been anything he chose, had he taken care of himself. In this very year, 1843, he was the central figure in a total abstinence reform crusade, but his reformation had but all too brief a life.

The last performance of which I find any mention in this year was on May 4, when *Richard III* and *My Fellow Clerk* were produced. Other files, from which, no doubt, much more might be learned, are not at hand at the present writing.

The *Marble Heart*, to be produced at the opening of the opera house, has not been seen in St. John for some years, but it is remembered with pleasure by frequenters of Lanergan's old lyceum. It was put on as long ago as 1866, and possibly earlier, while I well remember it in the seventies. In 1866, Frank Roche, George Clair, W. H. Danvers, Rachael Noah and Jennie Anderson were among Lanergan's actors. The same play was given in 1870, with Shirley France as Volage, Frank Roche as Raphael and Lizzie Anderson as Marco.

In June, 1873, it was again given, with John W. Albaugh as Phidias and Raphael. Possibly that was the last time the St. John folks saw it, and it will be new to many now, besides being an old favorite with many more. KILBY.

**The Master of the House.**  
He cannot walk, he cannot speak,  
Nothing he knows of books or men;  
He is the weakest of the weak,  
And has not strength to hold a pen.

He has no pocket and no purse,  
Nor ever yet has owned a penny,  
But has more riches than his nurse,  
Because he wants not any.

He rules his parents by a cry,  
And holds them captive by a smile;  
A despot strong through infancy,  
A king from lack of guile.

He lies upon his back and crows,  
Or looks with grave eyes on his mother;  
What can he mean? But I suppose  
They understand each other.

Indoors and out, early and late,  
There is no limit to his sway;  
For, wrapt in baby robes of state,  
He governs night and day.

Kisses he takes as rightful due,  
And Turk-like has his slaves to dress him;  
His subjects bend before him, too;  
I'm one of them. God bless him.

**Ease and Comfort For Doctors.**  
PROGRESS Engraving Bureau has an order for a fine engraving of a physician's favorite phaeton from Edgecombe & Sons, of Fredericton, which when it is finished will be inserted in their regular advertising space. The phaeton is a model of neatness and beauty and is absolutely free from horse motion. It combines safety, convenience, utility and durability. It will be on exhibition at the exhibition and should be inspected by every practicing physician.—A.

**Splint Seatings,—Dural, 242 Union street.**

MILITARY ROUTINE.

As Seen at the Office of the Deputy Adjutant General, Fredericton.

A correspondent gives a description of the routine work at the office of the deputy adjutant general, Fredericton, as seen during a recent visit. It shows how methodical military people are.

Punctually at 9.30 a. m. the colonel came striding along, straight, tall and every inch a soldier. Greeting the assembled officers with a nod and a good morning, he seated himself and in a short sharp tone of voice put the question: "Any prisoners?"

"One prisoner, sir," is the ready response of Adjutant Hemming on this particular morning.

After all the preliminaries have been gone through, the stentorian tones of the sergeant-major were heard proclaiming: "Escort, prisoner, evidence, left wheel; quick march; halt; front;" and the prisoner appeared, with the witnesses for and against, and a member of the guard on either side.

The adjutant reads the charge, the witnesses deliver their testimony and then comes the inquiry, "Jones what have you got to say?"

The prisoner, evidently an old offender, but in much trepidation, proceeds to make an explanation. Then the colonel, after delivering a short lecture to the culprit, pronounces the sentence, the tones of the sergeant-major are again heard, "left turn! quick march! left wheel!" and the prisoner is marched out, a sadder if not a wiser man.

This business being finished, the colonel produces what is sometimes a formidable enough looking bundle of correspondence, all of which must be got through before 4 p. m., at which time the official mail closes at the post office.

At 10 a. m. the morning parade takes place, and the colonel goes out to have a look at the corps and to see that the drills are being carried out in the proper manner. After half an hour or so he returns to his correspondence which keeps him busy until one o'clock, at which hour he goes to lunch.

Col. Maunsell lives a most regular life. He arises punctually at 6.30 a. m. winter and summer, and takes a good long walk before breakfast. During the cold winter mornings, when others are reposing peacefully in their warm beds, the colonel is off for a tramp on his snow shoes, viewing the ground over which he will take his men when the time arrives, which will be in due course.

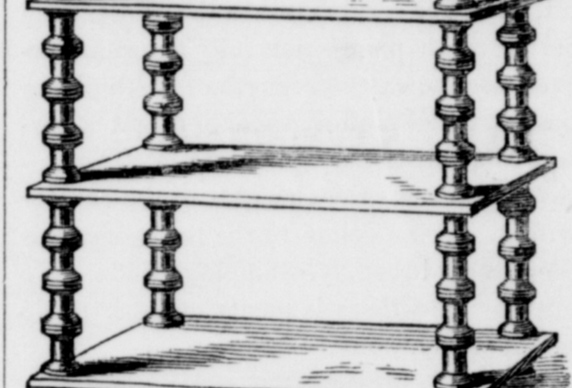
Major Buchan, who has lately been transferred from the company of mounted infantry, is a very popular officer with his men, strict and regimental on parade, but after, "a thoro' gentleman sorr."

THE OBSERVER.

USE FOR THE SPOOLS.

They Need Not be Thrown Away as Worthless Any Longer.

Whatever can we do with all our empty spools? It seems a pity to burn them and they are of no use." Gently, ye who thus complain, the spools may be transformed into a pretty piece of furniture if you will follow the directions of the Season. The



small etagers with its shelves made of cardboard, the tops covered with plush and the bottoms with glazed black calico is formed out of empty spools stained black, each of which is an inch and a-half high. The shelves are 14 1/2 inches long and 7 broad. The columns are strengthened by the spools being threaded on a thin stick 15 inches high, it also goes through holes made in the cardboard for the purpose, and the top knobs are spools cut in half. The top railing is made of the spools glued on, and then connected at the top, with a strip of plush covered cardboard, stud-headed nails serving both to strengthen and beautify the arrangement.

**In Bohemia.**  
Ha, my dear! I'm back again—  
Vendor of Bohemia's wares!  
Lordy! How it pants a man  
Climbing up those awful stairs!  
Well, I've made the dealer say  
Your sketch might sell, anyway!  
And I've made a publisher  
Hear my poem, Kate, my dear!

In Bohemia, Kate, my dear—  
Lodgers in a musty flat  
On the top floor—living here  
Neighbors, and used to that—  
Like a nest beneath the leaves,  
So our little home receives  
Only guests of chirping cheer—  
We'll be happy, Kate, my dear!

Under your north light there, you  
At your case, with a stain  
On your nose of Prussian blue,  
Paint your bits of shine and rain;  
With my feet thrown up at will  
O'er my littered window-sill,  
I write rhymes that ring as clear  
As your laughter, Kate, my dear.

Puff my pipe, and stroke my hair—  
Bite my pencil-tip and gaze  
At you, mately mooning there  
O'er your "Aprils" and your "Mays!"  
Equal inspiration  
Dimples of your cheek and chin,  
And the golden atmosphere  
Of your paintings, Kate, my dear!

Trying? Yes, at times it is,  
To clink happy rhymes, and fling  
On the canvas scenes of bliss,  
When we are half-famishing!—  
With my feet thrown up at spots,  
And your hat's "forget-me-nots"  
Have grown tousel'd, old and serene—  
It is trying, Kate, my dear!

But—as sure—some picture sells,  
And—sometimes—the poetry—  
Bless us! How the parrot tells  
His acclaims at you and me!  
How we revel then in scenes  
Of high banquetting—sardines—  
Salads—olives—and a sheer  
Pint of sherry, Kate, my dear!

Even now I cross your palm,  
With this great round world of gold—  
"Talking wild?" Perhaps I am—  
Then, this little five-year-old!—  
Call it anything you will,  
So it lifts your face until  
I may kiss away that tear  
Ere it drowns me, Kate, my dear!

James Whitcomb Riley.

CANNED Salmon. Lobsters. Oysters. Corn. Tomatoes. Peas. Beans. Peaches. 1400 Cases In lots of 25 Cases, at manufacturers' prices. JOSEPH FINLEY, 65, 67, and 69 Dock St.

A QUESTION FOR ALL! What are you going to have for Fall and Winter Wear? OUR COUNTERS are piled up high now with goods, and more are coming. Talk about assortment! Why, we've got two tables the whole length of our store filled up with Overcoats and Ulsters alone!

The Entering Wedge! TO PUBLIC TRADE

MEN'S SUITS, Boys' and Children's Overcoats. Hosts of them. Four Button Cutaway for \$7 to \$15; Sack Suits in Tweeds and Worsteds, \$4 to 16; Double Breasted Frock, in fine Black Corkscrew, \$18, \$20 and \$22; Double Breasted Sack Suits, \$8, \$12, \$16. Boss goods for fitting. Major Buchan, who has lately been transferred from the company of mounted infantry, is a very popular officer with his men, strict and regimental on parade, but after, "a thoro' gentleman sorr."

If you don't know REEFERS, In Chinchillas, Naps, Presidents, Beavers, Meltons and Tweeds, from 36 to 48 in. breast measure, from \$4 to \$10.

CUSTOM WORK A SPECIALTY. DEPT. UP STAIRS. SCOVIL, FRASER & CO., 47 and 51 King Street, St. John, N. B., - Oak Hall, and Royal Clothing Stores.

EMERSON & FISHER, 75 to 79 Prince Wm. Street, Specially invite Visitors to the City during the Exhibition (or at any other time) to call and inspect their Large and Varied Stock, embracing STOVES OF ALL KINDS; Artistic Mantels IN WOOD AND SLATE; GRATES, TILES, FENDERS, AND IRONS, And the most complete assortment of Household Hardware, Kitchen Furnishing Goods and Tinware EVER SHOWN IN THE LOWER PROVINCES. Assortment throughout unequalled, and prices at least as low as the lowest.

For Exhibition VISITORS! ELECTRO-PLATED WARE Best quality and latest patterns, comprising Tea Services, Waiters, Cake Baskets, Soup Tureens, Pudding Dishes, Spoons, Forks, Knives, and a variety of small goods, especially useful for Exhibition Presents.—Very Low Prices. English Cutlery, From leading Sheffield Houses, including Rogers, Wostenholme, Butler and others. An immense assortment of POCKET KNIVES, TABLE CUTLERY, RAIZORS, SCISSORS, recently opened. Please remember that we keep no trash. ENGLISH COAL SCUTTLES in Japanned Brass Panels, and all Brass; handsome patterns and good value, at Low Prices. Inspection invited. T. McAVITY & SONS, 13 and 15 KING STREET, - ST. JOHN, N. B.