

SOCIETIES.

Masonic Regular Meetings.
Minden, No. 253, on Monday, May 6th at 7:30 p.m.
Ancient St. John's, No. 3, on Thursday, May 2nd, at 7:30 p.m.
Catsaraul, No. 92, on Wednesday, May 8th, at 7:30 p.m.

I. O. O. F. M. U.
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE GRAND LODGE OF MANCHESTER, ENGLAND, meet every other Friday in the Sons of England Room, Princess Street. Next meeting APRIL 25TH. W. BUSHBELL, Recording Secretary.

Sons of England.
LEICESTER LODGE, No. 33, of the Sons of England Benevolent Society, will meet in their new Lodge Room, corner Montreal and Princess Street, Strachan's Hardware Store, the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month.

Canadian Order Foresters.
COURT STANLEY, No. 199, C.O.F. meets on TUESDAY, April 30th, in the "Princess" Hall, King street. T. R. RENTON, Rec.-Sec.

Independent Order of Foresters.
COURT FRONTENAC, No. 59, REGULAR MEETING, Thursday evening, May 2nd. J. S. R. McCANN, Secretary.

THE CITY DIRECTORY.

Hotels and Restaurants.
BURNETT HOUSE, Ontario St., nearest first class hotel to G. T. R. and K. & P. Stations. T. WILSON, Proprietor.
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OTTAWA HOTEL, corner of Ontario and Princess Streets. First-class accommodation; yard and stabling. JAMES NORRIS, Proprietor.
SCOTT'S HOTEL, corner of Queen and Ontario St. Satisfaction guaranteed. Fine liquors and cigars. Good yard and stabling. A. SIMPSON.

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F. A. BIRBY, 129 Brock Street, the leading hack and livery stable in the city. Telephone No. 157.
T. C. WILSON, 120 Clarence Street, the largest and longest established livery in the city. Telephone No. 179. Vehicles ready at a moment's notice.
ELDER BROS., New Livery in connection with St. Lawrence Hotel on King Street. First class hacks will always be on hand on the shortest notice.
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F. W. SPANGENBURG, manufacturer and importer of fine jewellery, 34 King Street.
J. A. LEBLANC, watchmaker, jeweller, 68 Brock St., dealer in watches, clocks and diamonds.
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WM. NEWLANDS, ARCHITECT AND APPRAISER, corner of Brock and King Sts., over Wale's Drug Store. Entrance on King street next to the Wale's Office.

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E. H. SMYTHE, Q. C., LL.D. C. F. SMITH, B. A.

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SADLER'S WELLS.

A Famous Old Theatre Which Is Still in Existence.

A CRADLE OF THE MIMIC ART.

It Dates Back to the Elizabethan Era—It Used to Be Miles Out of London, but It Is in Town Now—Stories About Grimaldi, the Famous Clown.

Let the curtain rise on the oldest theatre in existence, Sadler's Wells theatre. Not only the oldest, but the most remarkable, the scene of some of the grandest triumphs of the scenic art, the cradle of some of the greatest actors the world has seen.

It is in London, in London now, but when it was first built it was miles out of town. It stands in a part of the city which a century and a half ago was in the country near the Fleet river.

Its position was for years almost romantic, and it is even now possessed of elements of the picturesque. The New river ran through its courtyard, skirted by immensely tall poplars, while close against the theatre stood a gigantic elm of venerable age which spread its branches over the river. Under those poplars the actors used to pace to learn their parts. Even up to 1820 the house was so much in the country that Myddelton square (where stands the church which is seen in the illustrations) was an immense field where people used to be stopped and robbed on their road home from the play. Today the parish in which Sadler's Wells is situated has a population greater than New York and the traveler must go four miles further to find a field.

The illustration represents the stage end of the theatre seen from a portion of the courtyard.

The outbuilding with skylights at the rear was one of the paint rooms, the other being in the roof between the lantern and the box office building. The outbuilding beyond the stage door was a scene dock.

ORIGIN OF THE THEATRE.

So much for the theatre. Now for its history.

Near the site of the theatre some five or six mineral springs bubbled up. Having medicinal virtues, their owners established spas, with music rooms, to which fashionable loungers and invalids resorted as in the modern Baden Baden.

It is believed there were exhibitions of a theatrical nature at the music rooms at Sadler's Wells as far back as the Elizabethan era—there certainly was such sport as bear baiting.

In Sadler's time the music room was a large wooden building. Up to May, 1628, it was called Sadler's Musical house and concerts were regularly advertised there, the orchestra consisting of "violins, hautbois, trumpets, drums." In 1669 it was called Mile's Music house, and in that year great crowds used to go to see a man eat a live fowl!

Sadler died about 1700, and one Francis Forcer, a barrister, left the law to manage it, which he did, with variety entertainments, until 1730. It was then managed by a Mr. Rosoman, who in 1736 replaced it with a brick building at a cost of \$21,000. Old prints of the date of 1736 establish the identity of the present building with the same arcade—the principal addition has been raising the roof. It was surrounded by beautiful willows, elms and poplars.

In 1745-6 scenery was introduced there for the harlequinades and variety entertainments, the admission to which included a pint of wine.

The theatre has since become world famous. In the first place it is almost the very cradle of spectacular scenic art, dividing honors with Covent Garden under John Rich's management, and Drury Lane when Clarkson Stanfield was the artist.

It was an acknowledged home of pantomime even when the marvelous clown Joe Grimaldi first appeared there as a monkey at the age of 3, no less than 107 years ago, and its excellence in that regard remained unimpaired for a century.

In 1772 Rosoman gave up the management to King, the famous comedian of Covent Garden, who held it till 1782, when he sold it for £12,000. Charles Dibdin, the elder, began to write plays and songs for the house about 1775.

In 1780 Mark Lonsdale was conductor and had a hand in the management.

THE TWO GRIMALDIS.

The elder Grimaldi was employed as a clown at this theatre, where his famous son made his debut at the age of 3 in April, 1782, presumably at the Easter revival of the prior Christmas pantomime. Poor little Joe one night was being swung round by his father attached to a chain when the chain slipped and the mite of a monkey went flying into the pit. He had the charm of a cat's immunity, for he was none the worse!

What changes of fashion the old theatre has seen! At the period we speak of, when little Grimaldi was 5 years old, his parents used to dress him on Sundays in the fashionable costume of the time, and this was his rig: A green embroidered coat, white satin waistcoat, embroidered green knee breeches, white silk stockings, shoes with paste buckles, a shirt with a lace front cravat, a three cornered hat, ruffles and a cane. There's a model for a modern dude to set the fashion with.

MISS ROMANINI AND EDMUND KEAN.

In 1786 Miss Romanini (Mrs. Bland) made her debut there and two seasons later Braham, the greatest of all tenors, appeared. About that time Henry Siddons, husband of the great actress, became one of the proprietors. In 1801 Master Carey, "The Pupil of Nature," destined to become afterwards famous as Edmund Kean, appeared (his second appearance on any stage), and recited Rollo's speech from "Pizarro." His great-grandfather, Henry Carey, the author of "Sally in Our

Alley," had written many ballad operas for the house. In 1803 Belmont, the Egyptian traveler, appeared there as an athlete and performed prodigious feats of strength. He used to have an iron frame round his hips weighing 127 pounds, and by means of this eleven men mounted on him like a pyramid, and with this burden he used to walk round the stage. One night the floor gave way with the weight and plunged them all in the water.

In 1802 the theatre was managed by Reeve, the composer, in partnership with the two Dibdins, and soon after the spring was first utilized for stage effect, and with good success, in what were called aqua dramas.

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EXTERIOR OF SADLER'S WELLS.

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in 1804. It was "The Siege of Gibraltar," model vessels being used to bombard the fortress. When the supply of water from the spring ran short the river was utilized.

Up to 1820 the water piece formed a principal feature of the programme, being always the afterpiece, with the sensation water scene as the last act, so as to catch the "half priers." No end of ingenious and sensational business was done with the water, such as naval battles represented with small model war ships and the like. In one piece, produced with much success in 1816, called "Philip and His Dog," the startling business was that the villain of the piece threw an infant in the water, a dog rescued it, and then dragged in the villain to drown him.

The success of the water drama period was interfered with by several false alarms of fire, one of which, on Oct. 15, 1807, was very serious, twenty-three people being trampled to death and hundreds injured in the stampede. The pantomime that night was "Mother Goose." Grimaldi had finished and left the theatre, but hearing of a commotion went back. He saw a dense mob, and finding he could not get through he plunged into the river and swam to where he could get to a dressing room window. He opened it and jumped in harlequin fashion, but was horrified to find nine dead bodies in the room.

The cause of this panic was curious. The sky borders were called in theatrical slang the "blues." The master carpenter shouted up the flies the order, "Higher the blues," i. e., raise the sky borders. The audience heard it and fancied it was "fire in the blues," hence the stampede.

A MIRACLE.

At about the year 1811 also occurred what was almost looked upon as a miracle. A party of sailors, including one who had been deaf and dumb for years from a nervous affection, attended the theatre. The deaf mute fell into such a paroxysm of laughter at Joe Grimaldi's antics that his nervous disease was dispelled and his powers restored, to the astonishment of his friends. In 1819 Grimaldi first sang the famous "Hot Toddlers." A boy was crushed to death in the crowd that night.

In 1821 Ezerton, the actor, undertook the management. He induced Queen Caroline to visit the theatre in state, and for two seasons he industriously made everything unpopular and wound up with disaster, the abolition of the water drama being one of his mistakes.

Mr. Williams restored the fortunes with pony races and such plays as "Mazeppa," and reintroduced the tank dramas in 1824. They remained a feature until 1833, when they were finally abolished, although water affects have been used incidentally since.



FIT AND GALLERY ENTRANCE.

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GRIMALDI'S FAREWELL.

One of the notable events in the history of this play house was Grimaldi's farewell benefit on St. Patrick's Day, 1835. By 1 o'clock in the day the courtyard was filled with more people than the theatre would hold. The play was by Dibdin, "Sixes, or the Fiend." He had played forty-nine seasons on those boards. His last visit to any theatre was to Sadler's Wells, on Jan. 29, 1839. It was a benefit for a clown, and the management had announced that it would be under the patronage of the veteran. A full house was at first disappointed at not seeing him, but in a duet between the clown and Jim Crow the clown said:

Prithce tell me, Mr. Crow,
Why you look so full of glee?
Jim Crow—Why? 'Cos our old friend Joe
I'm delighted to see.
Clown—Now here we will welcome him
With a hearty three times three.

The house rose with deafening shouts. Poor Grimaldi crawled to the front of the box, faltered out some broken sentences about being overcome by the unexpected honor, and that it was the last time he should ever see his friends, spread out both hands to the house, saying, "God bless you all," and fell back exhausted in the arms of a friend.

THE SHAKESPEAREAN PERIOD.

Then came the brilliant period of the Phelps and Greenwood management from 1844 to 1850, when the major part of Shakespeare's plays were put on the stage with a wealth of spectacular beauty never before nor since in any way approached. Phelps intended to produce all—he did produce thirty of them, occupying about 4,000 nights.

"The immense theatre," says Philip Marston, in The Dramatic Mirror, "is very verd and mysterious at night. I recollect being at work all night once in a property room right up in the roof, where a stage carpenter had once hung himself from a cross beam. He was cut down, but the rope was left. I know that, with the creaking and whistling of the wind, my imagination, always pretty vivid, was wrought up that I could almost see him dangling at the end of the rope, which gave a kind of human shriek every time the wind swayed it to and fro. I got so nervous that I began singing 'Old Hundred.' Fenton heard it and cried out to the paint boy: 'Go up to Marston; he's scared into singing hymns.'"

The illustrations in this article are taken from Philip Marston's article in The Dramatic Mirror. "They are," he says, "faithful in their minutest details, and are from sketches made on the spot in my student days."

HOOF BEATS.

The stallion Grosjean, 2:30, by Belmont, will be campaigned for a fast record this season.

The compromise between the ex-jockey Wolf and Lord Durham is taken in England as simply meaning that the former knows he would get the worst of a trial.

London Truth reviews the performances last year of twenty-one yearlings, which were sold in 1887 for 1,000 guineas and upwards. The grand result, says the writer, seems to be that of these twenty-one yearlings, which were sold for 31,150 guineas, only six have won anything; and their aggregate winnings amount to £3,965; altogether, this shows pretty plainly that buying fashionably bred yearlings at exorbitant prices is not the sure or speedy road to success on the turf which some consider it to be.

The first French coach horse ever taken to New Hampshire for stock purposes is Gregorio, standard and registered in the French coach horse stud book of America, which was purchased this spring by Frank Hutchison, of Manchester, and will make the season of 1889 at that place. In color he is seal brown, stands 16 hands high, weighs 1,350 pounds, is very handsome, and his breeding is first class.

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Carpet and Curtain Poles
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