

SOME EARLIER PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS OF
ROCHESTER

by

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Anyone attempting to write a comprehensive history of the earlier amusements of this city finds, at the outset, that he is going to be very much embarrassed through several causes, primarily, because there were so few of them, about which to write and, secondarily, because of the very meager and limited sources of information at his command concerning those few. Our forefathers of that early day were too busy in their struggle for existence in a new country, subduing the forests, planting and fostering the infant industries and fashioning the beginnings of this great city, to have either time or inclination for the lighter, less serious side of life. Hard days of earnest toil brought needed rest and they did not feel the want of those artificial aids to enjoyment that comes to older communities as the outgrowth of more of ease and leisure. And again, coming, as most of them did, from New England, they brought with them,

naturally, and unavoidably, prejudices and habits of thought inherited from a Puritan ancestry, whose canons were very strictly drawn in the matter of amusement. Rochester was, therefore, one of the last of the younger inland cities to yield a foothold to the player and the showman. As a further difficulty in the path of the historian, beyond the poverty of material, nearly all of those who sat in front of the early foot lights have passed away; there are none left who bear personal recollection of those Thespian beginnings. The sole reliance left, then, is the files of the newspapers and, here again, disappointment awaits the chronicler. The local press reflected the popular sentiment of the community, to which it catered, and its space was very limited. An occasional advertisement in small type was admitted to the columns, rather under protest, but local editorial notice or comment was practically unknown, save an occasional note of condemnation and anathema, frequently deserved, no doubt. Some curious outcroppings of this sentiment I would like to read from examples in my possession did time permit. One will suffice:

Jan. 8th, 1828. "It is really astonishing to think that the trustees of so respectable a village as Rochester, should permit such a disorderly place as the theater. We ex-

press ourselves thus plainly from our knowledge that the respectable part of this community has long since decidedly disapproved the theater, and we do sincerely hope that our village trustees will, hereafter, when an application for license is presented by any playing company, act more in accordance with the wishes of the sober, reflecting and moral part of our citizens."

So late as 1849 the editorial staff of the Advertiser was prohibited from even mentioning theater or circus. In his "Sketches of Rochester," published in 1838, good old Henry O'Reilly gives a devout expression of thankfulness that "neither theater or circus can now be found in Rochester. The buildings formerly erected for such purposes were years ago turned to other objects—the theater is converted into a livery stable and the circus into a chandler's shop." It is amusing to note even along in the "fifties," when editorial comments and criticisms began to appear, they rarely, almost never, appeared on the day immediately following the entertainment, but frequently two or three days afterward, when a few lines of vacant space could be found. Doubtless, many exhibitions came and went, leaving no trace behind them. Each generation seems to have its own idea of what con-

stitutes a code of morality. Along in the period between 1825 and 1840, the papers would not notice the theater at all and were far from sure that concerts were quite proper, while their columns fairly teemed with lottery advertisements, all sorts of alluring schemes, with daily drawings at the wheel of fortune. The tickets were offered for sale, too, by a class of men, who, in this day, would scarcely be willing to have their names identified with such questionable schemes. Those advertisements would, under the present United States law, have excluded every paper printed in Rochester from the mails and have subjected the publishers to heavy penalties.

From such records as time has spared and the sentiment of the day has permitted, I have prepared these chronicles, as the result of very many days of patient research. I am quite conscious of their many imperfections and can only express regret that the work was not done some years ago, while many were yet living who could have given material help in its preparation.

Prior to 1824, there was no regular place of amusement in the village. Occasional concerts and minor entertainments were given, principally by local talent or, at long intervals, by traveling parties, in

rooms, fitted up for the purpose, in the several taverns of the town. The most popular were those of the Eagle Tavern, on the site now occupied by Powers Block, and the Morton House, on the site of the present Powers Hotel.

On the 31st of October, 1820, we learn that "The concert which was to be holden in the meeting-house is postponed until Sunday evening next. Performance at 6. Doors close at 7:30; admittance two shillings. A piano fort is expected to accompany the musick. Performance to consist of anthems, solos, duets, etc." Please note how early the Sunday evening entertainment obtained a place here.

In January 1821, Stowell & Co., announce "That they have opened an elegant museum at the Eagle Tavern of Ensworth & Son, consisting of thirty-four wax-figures, two elegant organs, one playing a variety of music, accompanied by a chime of bells, the other, a new patent organ, playing a variety of music accompanied by a drum and triangles; the Temple of Industry, a grand mechanical panorama, consisting of 26 moving figures, each working at their different occupations. Also elegant views N. B.—They have just added a representation of the duel between Commodores Baron and Decatur."

In the summer of 1824, a frame structure

was built on the east side of Exchange street, on, or very near, the spot where the county jail now is, to be "permanently occupied as a circus." This was the first regular "temple of art" erected here. Its permanence under such dedication was compassed by a period of less than six months. It opened with the play of the "Miller's Frolick," "followed by a grand entre of eight beautiful leopard horses. Master Burton's unrivalled horsemanship will conclude by leaping over a surface of canvas nine feet wide, and alight again upon the horse while at full speed. For the first time in this place Mr. Connor will go through his grand equilibriums on the slack wire. Mr. Lewis will conclude the evening's entertainment with a grand trampoline, throwing a wonderful flying somerset over seven real horses and conclude by going through a balloon on fire sixteen feet high!"

Early in 1825, the Rochester Museum came into being. It was opened by J. R. Bishop, in the upper story of the Exchange street extension of the old Smith block, upon the spot where the Smith & Perkins building now stands. An early announcement says: "Everything has been done to make the establishment permanent and a public ornament, offering the naturalist, the philosopher, the Christian and the youth of the city a place of study, serious contemplation and amusement; several original

paintings by native artists." From all that can be learned the museum had a slender beginning, a few minerals, fossils, skeletons and shells, some Indian curiosities and a few relics of more or less doubtful authenticity. But it grew in favor and held its place, through varying fortune, for more than a quarter of a century. One of its chief attractions, and one in which interest centered until the end, was its gallery of wax-works, without which no museum was complete. Originally the figures must have been very fair examples of that plastic art, but, as with their human prototypes, time also deals unsparingly with "wax-figgers." They, too, wax old, I might be tempted to say. Occasionally it was announced that the management had, at a great expense, procured new raiment for them, and, if it must be confessed, the management frequently re-christened them as well. They did duty under many guises. Joan of Arc, by some theosophical metamorphosis, known only to the management, and Madam Blavatsky, became reincarnated as the Empress of the French and then as Jenny Lind! Fancy, if you can, Judas Iscariot doing duty as the Duke of Wellington, Dr. Parkman and Shylock! Sometimes exhibitions of pictures appeared on the walls of the museum. Here is one: July, 1840. "The proprietor would inform the public that he has just received from Philadelphia and added

to his museum, a splendid collection of paintings, and has fitted up a room for their reception. 'The Maid of Saragossa,' 'Death of Sapphira,' 'Incredulity of St. Thomas,' etc., thirty-eight figures in all, the size of life. These paintings are the work of a celebrated artist, who has touched them with a masterly hand and need only be seen to be appreciated. The proprietor has been to great expense in getting up the collection and trusts to an enlightened public for remuneration.

A few years later the owner added a modest little theater known as the Museum Saloon, with a seating capacity of three or four hundred, where minor farces and pantomimes were occasionally given, both by regular stock companies of limited powers and entertainments by strolling players for short seasons. At an engagement, during the latter days of the Museum, a band of players calling themselves "The Eastern Dramatic Company," gave, in one week, "The Roof-Scrambler," "Slasher & Crashier," "The Bandit Chief," "Mabel's Curse," "The Drunkard's Doom" and "Hamlet." What company for the melancholy Dane to be caught in! The Museum was abandoned about 1852, the "Daily Union" taking possession of the premises shortly after. A part of what was once the Museum was occupied for a number of years by the John C. Moore bookbindery. I can remember

Saturday afternoon visits, as a boy, to the decaying collection of wax-works, dust covered, in their broken glass cases, relegated to a lumber-room partitioned off from the bindery—"The Rochester Beauty," pitiful in the faded and ragged remnants of her tawdry finery; a group illustrating the final unpleasant episode in the family affairs of the Moor of Venice; the Indian Massacre; the Drunkard's Progress, a series of ghastly relics that haunted my dreams for nights afterward. There are those who yet remember, possibly some of you, the huge parrot on his perch outside the window, and the wheezing tones of the old barrel-organ that was wont to lure the visiting rustic into the mysterious precincts of the Museum with the oft-repeated strains of the "Maid of Lodi" and "Bonaparte's March." Our lamented friend, Mr. George Arnold, told me, as a reminiscence of the Museum days, that Judge Chapin, not himself a patron of the Museum, had his office for a long time on the floor below, and that, when he vacated the office, it was found that the boards of the floor under the desk, at which he had sat so long, were worn quite through, where he had beaten time to the tunes of that same organ overhead, in the days of its pulmonary degeneration, summer and winter, for so many years.

In November, 1825, the circus having

been abandoned, the building was fitted up as a theater and opened by a Mr. Davis, who announced his opening with the engagement of Mr. and Mrs. Smith, late of Utica and Saratoga theaters, in "Love and Madness" and "The Weathercock," followed soon after with "The Honeymoon," and "Fortune's Frolick." Some idea of the character of the audiences attracted may be gathered from the fact that, during the play of "Othello," the manager was obliged to stop the play, come forward and lecture the unruly ones in the pit. During this engagement a benefit was given for one unfortunate Mr. Hunn, "who had been burned out." The benefit realized \$48. Mr. Smith's benefit night presented "The Forty Thieves," and a somewhat equivocal advertisement says that "this piece will be the more interesting because the audience is familiar with the subject."

Toward the close of this year we read that, "For one night only, the Dramatic Ventriloquist, Mr. Taylor, at the Mansion House, will give a Colloquial Divertisement, that the front seats will be reserved for the ladies, and that if the weather proves unfavorable the performance will be postponed."

The next month is bulletined, also at the Mansion House, by Mr. and Mrs. Smith, a concert of vocal music, and the file says: "As we understand that they are to be ac-

accompanied by a pianofort (without a finale) we have no doubt they will have a crowded house."

Soon after this, in March, the Rochester Band announce a grand concert, and frankly explain that "having obligated themselves for a good deal of money in procuring an instructor, they take this method of soliciting." As a tribute to the industry of that instructor, leading us to believe that he had earned "the good deal of money" for which the band had obligated themselves, they offered a programme of twenty-six numbers, besides encores, including the DeWitt Clinton Grand Erie Canal March," "Dead March," "Hail to the Chief," etc.

The year 1826 was marked by the advent of two new theaters. Their birth was heralded with considerable flourish of trumpets and great prognostications were made as to their future, but both languished and died of inanition in early infancy. The first of these houses was located on the north side of Buffalo street, now West Main street, on the present site of the Young Men's Catholic Association building, and was opened April 8th; the management, Smith & Davis, announcing, "That it is their wish and intention to establish a permanent and respectable theater worthy of the rising greatness of this splendid and flourishing town." The company contained no notable names. The opening bill was

"Richard III." and "The Rendezvous." This was the first presentation of Richard III. and probably one of the very first Shakespearean plays given here. As a sample of some of the dramatic food provided at this temple I may cite, "The Vampire, or the Bride of the Isles," "Pizarro," "George Barnwell" and "Tom and Jerry." The fortunes of this house waned rapidly, and in three months it had ceased to be.

The second of these theaters was opened in a frame building, erected for the purpose, on the west side of Carroll, now State street, nearly opposite Market; in later years, after Thespis had flown, remembered as the Charles' livery stable. This building opened May 15th, with more of promise than had been the lot of its predecessors. There was a marked improvement in the class of audiences, as well as the attractions offered. The evening opened with a prize address, in verse, written by Chancellor Whittlesey. The dramatic portion of the entertainment consisted of "The Honeymoon," followed by the comic opera of "The Poor Soldier." The stock company was made up of names, then unknown, now long forgotten, with but a single exception. It was here that William Forrest first appeared. Little Billy Forrest, as he was familiarly called, became a comedian of a great deal of talent, extremely whimsi-

cal and droll in his personal appearance, versatile and original in his acting, reminding one very forcibly of the James Lewis of to-day. In one or another of the later theaters for many years, reaching down to the period of my recollection, he contributed much to the pleasure of Rochester's play-goers. No one who ever saw his "Bailie Nicol Jarvie" is likely to forget it.

In June a new melodrama was presented, entitled "The Vale of the Genesee, or the Big Tree Chief," written in this village and founded on a number of facts, well known to all the first settlers in the West."

A grand holiday performance was announced for the Fourth of July, at which was presented the "Grand Ballet of the American Tars Ashore," in the afternoon, followed in the evening by "The Glory of Columbia and the Soldier's Daughter." (red fire.)

Soon after this Edmund Kean, having finished his first engagement in New York, and on his way to Niagara Falls, stopped over here for a day or two of rest. He played in this theater, "Sir Edward Mortimer" in "The Iron Chest." There is a tradition that the manager was a man whom Kean had known in England, and that the performance

he gave was an amiable effort on his part to put an old acquaintance on his feet. Certainly he played here, and in this single event the theatrical history of Rochester differed from that of most young towns, in that the first real actor who trod its boards, was one of the very greatest tragedians of modern times. There is probably no one living who remembers that performance. All record of it is lost save the bare fact. Imagine the support that he must have had. Imagine the comparisons his mind must have drawn between that cheerless barn, lighted with tallow dips—its tawdry scenery and costumes,—its two-penny appointments, and the splendors of the Haymarket and Drury Lane, where he had won his laurels. This event was closely followed by the appearance of Tom Hamblin in "William Tell" and kindred parts. During a short time the two play-houses ran in opposition. "Jane Shore" had a run at one house, and "Kenilworth" and "Robinson Crusoe" at the other. On the 23rd of May both theaters produced the same play, "Tekeli, or the Siege of Montgatz," "the first time west of Albany." The prices of admission were small then, but the patrons expected their money's worth, while the management evidently sought to make up in quantity what the plays may have lacked in quality. One bill presented

"Macbeth, "five acts, a fancy dance by Miss Hatch, followed by the three-act comedy of "Sweethearts and Wives," a play, the acting time of which, if I remember aright is about two hours.

A certain amount of success seems to have followed this enterprise for, later on we learn, editorially this time, that "The theatrical corps seem to have played themselves, by their advertisements, into a very profitable speculation, and as a 'testimony of their gratitude' will appropriate the avails of this evening for the benefit of the Female Charitable Society. We are very apprehensive that the respectable ladies composing this commendable association have more self respect than knowingly to accept of money obtained through a channel which they are, by their efforts, endeavoring to persuade children to avoid as a noisome sink of immorality." (The Female Charitable Society justified the editorial expectation, and declined the proffered benefit). Prosperity was, it seems, of short duration and this house soon sank into the oblivion that had engulfed its predecessors.

The next two years are a blank, save for the appearance of an automaton whist player, at the Merchant's Exchange, "At Which Mr. Wiley Nickles will play with a pair of artificial hands." I wonder if that would help some of us to play our

natural hands. There was, also, in 1828, exhibited at quarters in the Merchant's Exchange the first menagerie of living animals which the "manager feels sure will interest all those who are desirous of improving upon the study of Natural History." He thus catalogues his ferocious family group:

"1st. An African lion, not only the largest but from his flowing mane and superior carriage is considered the finest of his species in America.

"2nd. A lioness, the most beautiful animal that has been seen in captivity—yet the most courageous. The lioness, when she has young ones to nourish, will combat with fury even the most powerful animals that oppose her. The tiger or elephant would on such an occasion, in vain attempt to oppose her. When pursued by mankind, she is only to be conquered by the powerful weapons which they bring against her.

"3rd. Recently added a young Jagware, late from Borneo, also a dogfaced baboon.

"4th. The jackall or lion's provider.

"5th. Ichneumon, an Egyptian animal, famous for destroying crocodile's eggs and young reptiles, and formerly worshipped by the Egyptians.

"6th. Capt. Bill will go through his pleasing performance on his Indian pony, with other diverting tricks.

7th. Dandy Jack, the semi-equestrian has excited the admiration of all who have visited the menagerie, with his unexampled feats of horse-monkey-ship on his small Shetland Poney. The ring is fitted for his performance.

8th. Sports of the ring. Also a number of smaller animals.

Another traveling menagerie, exhibited here about this time, mentioned among its attractions a Zebra and two living Emuses.

The sole item of interest in 1829 was, an event, devised for amusement but culminating in tragedy, the leap of Sam Patch over the Falls of the Genesee. The first leap took place on the 5th of November, from the crest of the upper falls one hundred feet into the pool below, and was successful. The last occurred one week later, Friday, November 13th, (unlucky thirteen) at 2 p. m., and was witnessed, it was estimated, by seven or eight thousand people. He jumped from a staging erected 25 feet above the verge of the Fall, and having first thrown his pet bear into the gulf below, he quickly followed. It was supposed that he was intoxicated. At all events he lost his poise in the air, turned upon his side and upon striking the water sank, never to rise again. His body was found at Charlotte

the next spring, and was buried in an unmarked grave in the little road-side burying ground at the right as you enter the village. His name became famous simply because he was the pioneer in that long procession of inspired idiots who have continued bridge-jumping and rapid-shooting, making parachute descents from lofty balloons and navigating the ocean in dories, ever since. In distant provinces the traveler always finds that Rochester is inseparably associated in the minds of the people, either with the advent of spirit-rappings or the fate of Sam Patch.

The ten years that now succeed are almost entirely devoid of interest, with no regular place of amusement except the mild attractions offered by the Museum. Very few attempts were made even by local talent, while the wandering minstrel and strolling fakir seem to have learned that Rochester was a serious town and gave it a wide berth. In 1837 there is a brief mention of the first appearance of Mrs. McClure, afterward Mrs. W. G. Noah, at the theater, presumably the Museum, although the locality is not specified, as "Helen McGregor" in "Rob Roy." Mrs. McClure afterward became a very celebrated actress in tragic roles, having, at one time, in Boston, I believe, played an engagement, while Charlotte Cushman

was playing the same parts at a rival theater, and fairly divided the interest of the public with that queen of tragedy. It was in this cast at the Museum that Dan Marble's name first appears. A little later, at Marble's benefit, the bill included "Richard III.," "Valentine and Orson," the farce of "Frank Fox Phipps" and the play of "Sam Patch," four plays—five hours at least—and all for fifty cents.

On the 11th of September in 1840, Mr. Edwin Dean, a veteran manager, then conducting the Eagle Street in Buffalo, came here to establish a place to be managed in connection with the Buffalo house, and succeeded in founding the first theater that was really deserving of the name. He leased what was then known as Concert Hall, in Child's Marble Building, on the east side of Exchange Street, south of the canal. Another story was added to the old building and it was divided into dress-circle and boxes, pit (corresponding in locality to the modern parquet), and a gallery called the family-circle. The green-room and dressing-rooms were in the south end of the building, and, as was customary in the best theaters of that time, there was a door from the pit leading into an adjoining bar. This building still stands. It was occupied for many years as the armory of the 54th

, Regiment, when many of the decorations of the old theater remained. A very fine stock company, for that day, was here gathered together. Among them was Mrs. McClure, in leading parts alternating with Mrs. Dean, Joseph Parker as leading man, Little Billy Forrest, as comedian, Mr. and Mrs. Archer and others. Sam Parker, afterward a noted scenic artist, started here; James Barron led the orchestra and Captain Alex Scott was captain of the supers.

During Mr. Dean's management a number of star engagements were played, the intervals being filled by the stock company. About this time a class of plays were coming into vogue calling for elaborate scenic display, spectacular plays, so called. To meet this demand the manager brought here James Lamb, a very talented scene-painter from the Drury Lane, London. Under his direction were produced the spectacular plays of "Alladin," "Cherry and Fair Star," "The children of Cyprus," "The Ice-Witch or Sun-god" and "Faustus." The last two had long runs. The scenery and mounting of these pieces must have been very creditable work, far in advance of the time. One scene in "Faustus"—Moonlight in the Drachenfels—was a particularly memorable one. Lamb also painted the drop-curtain, a hall of statu-

ary with a tessellated pavement, Shakespeare upon a pedestal in the center. At this time, and in this place, Edwin Forrest played his first engagement in Rochester, supported by Miss Clifton and presented "Metamora," "Richard III.," "Claude Melnotte," "Spartacus," "Macbeth" and "Virginius." The price was raised to one dollar and the house was nightly filled to the doors. The elder Booth and Henry Grattan Plunkett also played here that season. It was in this house that little Julia Dean made her first appearance in a minor part of the "Last Days of Pompeii." She must, at that time, have been about eleven or twelve years of age, frequently appearing thereafter in child parts, messengers, pages, etc. She was the daughter of the manager, Edwin Dean, and afterward became one of the greatest of American actresses. She married Dr. Arthur Hayne, of the old South Carolina family of that name, and retired from the stage, returning to it, when widowed, some years later. There are many who remember, possibly some here to-night, her great beauty, exceeding grace of manner and winning personality, accompanied by a wonderfully modulated voice and great dramatic power. Her greatest role was "Queen Catharine," in which she was "every inch a queen." I saw her in that part

in Chicago in the time when her great power was at its fullest maturity, yet still retaining her rare beauty and grace. The impression then made will never be effaced. Another little daughter of the manager, Edwina Dean, frequently appeared as a danseuse between the plays, as did also Mrs. McClure's daughter Ada, in the ever popular "Highland Fling," and "Sailor's Hornpipe."

An old attache of this theater has told me a little incident that is rendered the funnier by the fame afterward achieved by its heroine. During the run of "Alladin" Julia Dean played the young princess. The play required the comedian, Kazrac (Billy Forrest) to consume, at each performance, large bowl of macaroni, smoking hot. This succulent dish was nightly prepared by the property man in a tin pail on the green-room stove, for want of a more convenient place, being allowed to simmer until wanted. But, night after night, when the cue was given for the macaroni to enter, it was missing. None knew where it went. Its disappearance was a dark mystery, and poor Forrest's funny act was reduced to a dumb show only. Finally a watch was set and little Julia was found to be the culprit. The managerial exchequer was much depleted in those days and the inference is unavoidable that her juvenile appetite was revenging itself upon the meager fare at

home. I wonder if the great actress, amid the echoing plaudits of half a continent, ever recalled with a smile, a tear perhaps, those hungry childhood days in Rochester when she stole Kazrac's macaroni.

Dean originally took a five years' lease of the theater, but, after a time, the popular opposition to the drama seems to have broken out afresh. His business ran down and he became involved in debt. Complaining of the continued opposition of the clergy, he challenged them to a public discussion of the merits of the theater, the proceeds to be devoted to charity, but no one seems to have responded. The business continued to decline until, at the end of the third year of his management he gave up the contest and abandoned his lease.

In October, 1840, an amateur concert was announced at the National Hotel, under the patronage of Judge Gardiner, Dr. Munn and Dr. Frederic Backus, to erect a monument in Mt. Hope to the memory of Samuel A. Cooper, a professor of music.

In January, 1841, Sig. Blitz, the renowned sleight-of-hand performer and ventriloquist, seems to have made his first appearance here in a series of entertainments at the National Hotel hall, proposing, at the same time, that he would, "during the daytime give private instructions in ven-

triloquism to such citizens as desired to become proficient in the art."

In the summer of this year the Rochester City Garden was opened on the south side of Main street, on the spot now occupied by Palmer's block, nearly opposite North street. Peter Palmer was the proprietor and the entertainments consisted principally of music and fire-works. It was for a long time a popular summer evening resort. One of the earlier garden advertisements promises a concert by Williams' Light Infantry band, and three pieces of fire-works! Tickets 12 1-2 cents, "for which a refreshment will be served." Another, on the 4th of July, 1845, the following is the order of the day: "At 10 o'clock the water fountain will commence playing and continue at intervals during the day. A grand promenade concert. At noon a fire-balloon will be sent off. In the evening rockets will be fired at intervals, and an exhibition of fire-works, consisting of a splendid Chequer-piece, the Signet of Peru, Star of Independence, the Persian Glory, to conclude with the Era of the Battle of Bunker Hill," and lest the wild enthusiasm engendered by all these exciting causes—the water fountain, balloon and lurid glories later on, should incite the audience to riot, we are informed "that an efficient posse of officers will be in attendance to preserve order."

In connection with the City Garden was

a small hall used for concerts, balls and exhibitions of various kinds. At one time it was converted into a theater for a short season, under the management of a man who had formerly been a machinist in Oswego, and who was known, while here, as Isaac Merritt. He did not make a success of the venture, and left town heavily in debt for rent and other expenses. This man was Isaac Merritt Singer, afterward the inventor and manufacturer of the Singer sewing machine, and who died in England a few years since, worth many millions.

We now enter upon a period of increased and constantly increasing interest, beginning with the years 1843-44. While, by the retirement of Dean, the city was left without a permanent playhouse, the opening of the railroads had made traveling easier and cheaper, the young city was growing rapidly and possibly with more of leisure; the appetite for amusement was sharpened and consequently better patronage was assured. Negro minstrelsy was just struggling into existence and panoramas, dioramas, etc., illustrating a variety of subjects, history, travel and allegory, were finding a place in the popular taste.

About this time the temperance revival, known at the Washingtonian movement, was at its height; its impress being very apparent in many of the entertainments

offered the public in these years. It seemed also necessary for each advertisement to assure the people of the absolute and unimpeachable morality of the entertainment it heralded. The growth of the intellectual life of the community was also evidenced in the reaching out after something that should at once amuse, elevate and instruct. What may be termed the "lecture era" was about to dawn. Want of time warns me that I must but briefly allude to many items upon which I would gladly dwell longer.

On August 7, 1843, Henry Russell, an English vocalist, who possessed a voice of great sweetness, gave his first concert, at the Eagle. His name appears several times in the annals of the next four or five years. The "Democrat" said on the day following his first concert, "He sings as no one else we have ever heard can sing and probably as well as any one else, during the present century will sing."

On this same day Tom Thumb made his first of many bows to a Rochester audience at the Morton House. He is described "as 11 years old, 25 inches high and weighing 15 pounds, the smallest person that ever walked alone; is pleasant, agreeable, lively, intelligent and sociable." He was certainly lively enough in after life.

In October, at the Morton House, "Mr. Williams and his daughters will give a grand and unparalleled evening's entertain-

ment consisting of temperance songs, duets and dances." I cannot imagine just what a temperance dance may have been like, but possibly it foreshadowed the skirt dance of the latter end of the century.

Soon after this Mr. Winchell, the great humorist, made his first appearance, in the new hall of the Museum, with an olio of impersonations, whims and oddities. The mention of his name will bring up the recollection of many a hearty laugh. On this occasion we read that "A young lady of Rochester will sing a variety of songs, duets, etc." A talented girl that, to sing a duet all by herself! Winchell was a frequent visitor for a number of years.

In January, 1844, came a moral exhibition, at Irving Hall, in Smith's Arcade block, Mr. Parker's illustrations of the Bible, Paradise Lost, Pilgrim's Progress, etc. "Mr. Parker has been exhibiting at Batavia to crowded houses."

And now comes the Washingtonians. January 3rd we read of a moral exhibition, at the Morton House, of "The Reformed Drunkard," by Mr. Robinson and his assistants. It depicts the career of the drunkard from the fashionable wine-cup to the alms-house. Those who wish a hearty laugh or a hearty cry may find an opportunity to exercise their better feelings in this respect by witnessing the waggeries

of Tom, or the pathetic appeals of the sister and wife."

Soon following, again at the Morton House, comes "a grand astronomical, comical and moral exhibition (always moral). Mr. Goss will exhibit, by means of a powerful optical instrument, the most interesting and striking phenomenas of the heavens, the sun, moon, etc.; will describe the signs of the zodiac, also a series of diagrams exhibiting the drunkard from his first tippling at the wine-cup down to the depths of misery and woe, together with a large number of scriptural views. A large number of comical diagrams will also be introduced and a good band will be in attendance. Tickets, one shilling, to be had at the Morton House bar."

In May a grand vocal concert, at Irving Hall, by Covert and Dodge (Ossian E. Dodge) beginning with the "Grave of Bonaparte," "Robin Ruff," and "Happy Land" and ending with "The Dutchman's Account of His Intemperate Son."

At Concert Hall the faucet was turned on and a temperance drama was produced entitled "The Victim of the Cup of Woe," and anon, the Museum took up the cry with a grand moral exhibition, which, the advertisement tells, us, "Should be visited and patronized by all of our citizens who are in favor of putting down alcohol.

Permit me to record two further testimonials of morality. At Concert Hall we learn of a "Grand Chemical and Moral Diorama, showing Milan Cathedral, the Holy Sepulchre, Belshazzar's Feast, etc. "R. Winter begs to inform the citizens of Rochester that he feels proud in stating that his exhibition stands preeminent for its moral tendencies." On July 3rd there was a "moral concert at the Morton House, by the Twin Sisters, the Misses Macomber. Music by Miss Clara Jane, violinist, and Miss Emma Loraine, violincello, accompanied by their voices. Nothing in song, word or dress can be objectionable to the visits of the most fastidious of any religious denomination." Lindley Murray might have objected.

A couple of rather amusing survivals of this time are as follows: "A concert in May, 1844, at the Morton House. Doors open at 8, to commence at 8:30 (the people were evidently beginning to sit up later now). Mr. Bley, first violinist of Paris Musical Gymnasium concerts. Mr. Willson will preside at the piano. The seventh number on the programme: Les Cloches, hymne du Soir, piece imitative, pour piano et violin, executed par Mr. Willson et Mr. Bley." The French was executed whether the piece was or not!

In October, 1845, "Concert Extraordinary at Irving Hall, Mons. Joseph Dundonie,

from Paris, will give a grand concert upon his Componeum Quintetto, an instrument that has required his personal attention for seven years in its constructing. Will represent a perfect band of ten instruments, and twenty-five bells, playing upon each separately and playing the whole together with "Bonaparte's March," and firing minute-guns with his Quintetto, for particulars see small bills." Would that we had a small bill.

And here come the lecturers, a few straggling pioneers in advance of the main column, soon followed by a grand army in solid phalanx. One of the earliest was Colton, the historian of the American Indian, about 1843. In 1844, the Young Men's Association gave the first regular course of which I find record. All, with the exception of Elihu Burritt, the learned blacksmith, were citizens of Rochester. The Revs. Dr. Shaw, Dr. Whitehouse, Edwards and F. W. Holland, B. R. McAlpine, Dr. E. M. Moore, Professor Dewey, George Dawson, then editor of the "Democrat," J. W. Dwinell, Dr. Dean, E. Peshine Smith and Thomas C. Montgomery.

Soon after in 1846-47, in the first course of the Athenaeum, appear names a little further from home: Rev. Samuel J. May, of Syracuse; J. O. Putnam and the Rev. Dr. Hosmer, of Buffalo, and President Nott,

of Union College. The popularity of the institution was now assured, and, during the succeeding ten years, each season brought its galaxy of bright stars from the firmament of letters, theology, science, oratory and statecraft. Lewis Cass, John A. Dix, R. H. Dana, Mark Hopkins and Horace Greeley, in 1849. Beecher, Saxe, Dr. Pierpont, Theodore Parker, Emerson, Horace Mann, Horatio Seymour, E. P. Whipple, James T. Brady, Donald G. Mitchell and Oliver Wendell Holmes, Henry J. Raymond, T. Starr King, Parke Godwin, George William Curtis, Henry Giles, Wendell Phillips, Bayard Taylor, Bishop Potter, Prof. Silliman, John B. Gough, Higginson, Cassius M. Clay and Fred. Douglass, Salmon P. Chase, James Russell Lowell and Charles Sumner, Gilmore Sims, J. S. C. Abbott and Lieutenant Maury, S. S. Cox, E. H. Chapin and B. P. Shillaber. Added to these were a scientific course by Professor Boynton, on geology; by Professor O. M. Mitchell, six illustrated lectures on astronomy; and six by Professor Louis Agassiz. Pardon this long catalogue, but it seemed worth recalling and the record incomplete without it. Who can estimate, at its true value, the work of that old Athenaeum in molding the thought and intellectual life of this city? The popular lecture, as it was then understood, has long been a thing of the past. It was needed

then and it served its day faithfully and well.

The history of the early amusements would not be complete without some account of the traveling circus. The Broadway circus was the first to pitch its tent within our gates, in the summer of 1840. Its announcement was characterized by that modest verbiage that has since become typical of the class, in testimony whereof, "Mr. Cadwallader, a Philadelphian by birth, and styled by equestrian artists the Colossal Rider. This gentleman's feats is truly wonderful, the apparent ease and grace maintained by Mr. Cadwallader while his fiery steeds are darting around the arena, have created the greatest sensation before the most fashionable audiences of N. Y. Master Jno. Glenroy, the Pride of the American Arena, and pupil of the great Cadwallader, whose extraordinary feats on the back of his rampant steed leaves the audience in wonder and amazement, who justly term him the Equestrian Roscius of America." Then followed the well remembered names of Howe's circus, with Dan Rice as clown, Rockwell & Stone's, with Levi J. North, the equestrian, and Herr Cline, the rope-walker; Spalding's, Van Amburgh's, Sand's, Rice & Lent's and Robinson's; sometimes four and five coming in a single season. Barnum came first in 1848. Some of the earlier circuses are advertised

to appear "near Brown's square, on the grass plat between Kent and Frank streets," one "on the open space on North Fitzhugh street." Falls Field became the favorite camping ground of these Arab tourists about 1847.

Simultaneously with the beginning of the lecture era there was a marked increase in the frequency of musical events, as well as a distinct advance in their character and quality. On the 21st of June, 1844, Ole Bull gave the first of his concerts here, in Concert Hall, the price of admission being raised to one dollar, the highest price that had yet been charged. In the local columns of the "Democrat" we find the following, one of its first attempts: "The concert was well attended, and he did here what he has done everywhere, astonished the natives. Like the eagle, he flies swift, soars high and lights on lofty peaks. If any one feels competent to write a scientific criticism of his performance here, we will publish it. We would as soon think of criticising the sun or the tumultuous bounding of the waters of the Niagara cataract."

Next in order came the first of many visits of those lesser stars, the Hutchinson Family, Abby, Judson, John and Asa, at the Morton House, with long hair, long collars, long programmes and long vowels. In their repertoire we find "The Old Granite State," "The Cot Where I was Born,"

and "The Grave of Bonaparte" again. From the frequency with which this latter piece was called into action, at this period, we can hardly wonder that the bones of the illustrious Corsican could find neither peace nor seclusion in a grave, about which so much noise was made, and deserting it, returned to France.

The next year the first troupe of Swiss Bell-Ringers, long a favorite guild here, came to Irving Hall; this party rejoicing in the name of Campanologian Brothers. This year also marked the advent of negro minstrelsy, which soon won the hearts of our fathers, entering upon a long reign of popularity, which survives in some degree to the present. The first performance of Christy's Minstrels was given in the Eagle Hotel assembly room Sept. 17th, 1845. The advertisement says, "Christy's far famed band of Ethiopian Minstrels, whose concerts have been received with approbation by the elite and fashion of the principal cities, will give selections from the most popular operas of the day, accompanied by banjo, tambourine, violin and bone castanets; in all of which they are unequalled in the world."

November 24th, 1845, heralded the first appearance of Mr. Dempster in a concert at the Eagle. Four days later he repeated this concert, the occasion being

the opening of "the new and splendid Minerva Hall," which was located on the east side of Main Street between St. Paul and Clinton, and became at once the scene of all the better class of entertainments. (This hall was burned in the disastrous conflagration resulting from the Atlantic Cable celebration, in the autumn of 1858, and was never rebuilt as a public hall.) Dempster returned here a number of times and was held in high regard by our citizens, deservedly so, for, in spite of his peculiar mannerisms he had a very sweet voice of great richness. He sang popular songs, such as the "Lament of the Irish Emigrant," "John Anderson my Jo;" his main reliance always being "The May Queen." All his songs were introduced by funny little interpolations delivered over his shoulder, while sitting at the piano. "The next song that I shall have the honor to present, ladies and gentlemen, was written by my cherished friend, Mr. Alfred Tennyson, whom I have recently left in England. It describes the gradual decay and premature death of a beautiful young girl. It is entitled the "Queen of May."

In 1846, the Christy's and Dempster came again, and also the pianist, Leopold de Meyer, and the ever popular Martinez, with his guitar, at Irving Hall.

In 1847, the Alleghanians first came, and soon after Henry Herz, the pianist, accompanied by Camillo Sivori, the violinist. Sivori was the favorite pupil and acknowledged successor of Paganini. During this past week the papers have chronicled his death, at the age of eighty in Genoa, the city of his birth. In 1848, the minstrels came at shorter intervals, the panorama flourished with increased vigor, and in August, at one of a series of concerts given by Miss Julia Hill, of this city, under the direction of her father, a teacher of music, Master Theodore Thomas, then known as a juvenile prodigy, was the extra attraction.

During this time of progress in musical art there is little to record in a dramatic way. Mr. H. P. Grattan, a member of the London Dramatic Author's Association, made an attempt, with the opening of 1845, to revive Dean's theater under the name of "The Dramatic Saloon," but with no stronger attraction than himself and Mrs. Madison in leading parts the effort was a short-lived one. The next year another futile attempt was made, in the same house, under the management of John S. Potter with a fair company, playing a variety of light plays, after which a season of tragedy with Mr. A. A. Adams in leading parts and again it

failed. Another short season was played at the Exchange Street place, under the direction, this time, of J. E. Powell, ending once more in disaster after playing a few minor stars, and then, this house drops entirely out of view.

The same summer, 1848, a new theater was fitted up in the Enos Stone building on South St. Paul Street, just south of Main, a site that has been continuously occupied for this purpose under different names, from that time until the present. This theater was much larger and more conveniently arranged. (The first building was burned during an engagement of Mr. Wallack, on the night of November 6th, 1869. It was immediately rebuilt by its owner, Judge Finck, of Brooklyn, and was again burned in February, 1891. The present Cook's Opera House having since been erected on the same site.) It was first opened in Christmas week, 1848, by Carr & Warren, then also managers of the Buffalo Theater, for a short mid-winter season. They continued to be the lessees for several years, bringing their Buffalo company here for two or three brief seasons each year, and playing also a few of the better class of stars.

It may be interesting to explain, for the benefit of some of our younger members that the dramatic combination companies,

traveling across the country at the present day, were then unknown. Each regular theater had a full stock company, orchestra and working force of its own, stage manager, scene painters, carpenters and property-men. These companies varied in numbers and strength according to the patronage, and were made up of a number of actors, each of whom was supposed to be proficient in some particular line of character, which was indicated by recognized technical names, as, for instance, leading man, leading lady, leading juvenile, first old man, first old lady, heavy man (who did the villains), first and second comedy, soubrette, or "singing chambermaid," chorus and "general utility;" i. e., available for all classes of minor parts. To these were usually added one or two forlorn little waifs, who did sleepy duty when the piece required a child part. These distinctions, then rigidly observed, have been well-nigh obliterated by the modern methods. The stars of that time came alone, relying solely upon the support of the local company. The poor stock actor then had frequently to study, dress from his own professional wardrobe, and perform six or seven new parts each week of the season. The minor parts, chorus and supernumeraries were dressed from a stock wardrobe that formed a part

of the belongings of every theater. When, as was frequently the case, the resources of the wardrobe were limited in quantity, and equally limited in quality, the effect produced upon the scene represented was often grotesque and comical in the extreme.

Each season began with the best star attractions obtainable, and later, as the interest waned, there followed several weeks of spectacular pieces and plays performed exclusively by the stock, finally dwindling down to a few nights of complimentary benefits to each member of the regular company in rotation, and the stage artisans, the terms of engagement being usually so much per week in the way of salary, and a half-clear benefit (one-half of the box office proceeds of the night), at the end of the season.

The stock company brought here by Carr & Warren was a good one, with Mr. Perry as leading man, Mr. Crisp, Ben Rogers, Dan Marble, Billy Forrest and others. The first stars that they played were Mr. and Mrs. James W. Wallack, the plays "Macbeth," "Othello," "Richard III," "Hamlet," "Romeo and Juliet," "The Hunchback," "Merchant of Venice," "Werner" and "The Stranger." Following this engagement Barney Williams gave a week of Irish comedy; C. D. Pitt, a week of legiti-

mate drama and tragedy; Mrs. Farren a week, and then Julia Dean, who was now coming into fame, appearing in "The Wife," "Evadne," "Fazio," "Lucretia Borgia," "Jane Shore," "The Hunchback," and "The Taming of the Shrew." In the next winter season George Ryer and Lesslingwell, both excellent actors, appear added to the stock. Among the stars are the names of Miss Duff, Mrs. Farren, again, Edwin Eddy, Mr. and Mrs. Pitt, Mrs. Mossop, The Wallacks and others. At other times the young actresses, Susan and Kate Denin, Susan, then scarcely more than a child, we find playing "Richard III," one night and Pauline, in the "Lady of Lyons," the next. Then came J. R. Scott, Miss Kimberly in higher comedy, Mrs. Wilkinson in tragedy, Mr. Couldock and Eliza Logan.

For several seasons Louisa Pray, a younger sister of Mrs. Florence, was engaged as a danseuse, appearing between the plays. Beginning on the 16th of February, 1852, Charlotte Cushman played a crowded engagement of a week in this house, presenting "Guy Mannering" (her greatest character was "Meg Merrilies"), "As You Like It," "Lady Macbeth," "The Stranger," "Pauline," "Romeo," and "Queen Catherine." Some weeks later Lola Montez, then at the zenith of her somewhat questionable fame, played six nights (the matinee was then unheard-of) and then the

new "Uncle Tom's Cabin" had a long run. The theater now became known as the "Metropolitan," and later passed under the management of Mr. C. T. Smith.

J. R. Scott, the Marsh family of juveniles, Frank Chanfrau in "Toodles," Eddy, the Denins, Mrs. McClure, and a season of dilute English opera by Caroline Richings were the attractions. The next April Mr. W. J. Florence first came with "Paddy Miles' Boy," "The Irish Lion," and similar Irish farce comedies. By his great ability as an actor in a new and very amusing school, as well as by his many amiable and lovable qualities as a man, he soon made for himself a warm place in the affections of very many of our citizens, a place that he ever occupied until the day of his death.

"Where be your gibes now, your songs, your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar?"

While we have been thus occupied with the growth of the new theater, it must not be inferred that the little public halls were idle. The attractions were multiplying so rapidly that we can now only hope to notice briefly some of the most interesting. In June, 1845, the "connoisseurs and amateurs of Rochester and vicinity are respectfully informed that a collection of ancient oil painting by old masters is now open for exhibition and

sale at the Mechanic's Hall, State street, comprising specimens from the pencils of Reubens, Salvator Rosa, Albrecht Durer and others." Probably there were more by "others."

The first pugilistic entertainment appears on the bills of 1848, soft gloves in those days, no doubt! Dr. Valentine, the celebrated humorist. The Viennoise children, a charming exhibition of fancy dancing, at the Blossom House assembly room. Rembrandt Peale's great picture of "The Court of Death." Professor Wise's first balloon ascension. A Shakespearean reading by Fanny Kemble Butler, at Concert Hall. A long season of the Aztec Lilliputians at Minerva Hall. Bayne's Voyage to Europe, one of the finest panoramas ever painted. Powers' great statue, "The Greek Slave" at Concert Hall. Dick Sliter's and the original Campbell's minstrels. A very interesting evening at Minerva Hall, by Dr. Colton, illustrating in detail the, then new, magnetic telegraph. A line was built around the hall with several stations, and the whole method of sending and receiving messages was explained. These were a few of the items of interest, with which the "Forties" closed. About this time the largely increased German population naturally felt the need of some place of amusement distinctively their own. A modest frame building was erected in the German

quarter, on the east side of North Clinton street. It was built by the society known as the Turuverein, and was occupied frequently for musical and gymnastic entertainments, generally followed by dancing, and for dramatic performances, usually on Sunday evenings. This structure, commonly known as "Lemon Hill," has since been replaced by the present Germania Hall.

We now come to the most interesting event in the history of the public amusements of this city, the building and opening of Corinthian Hall. Early in the year 1849, a number of small buildings occupying a low space in the rear of the Arcade were pulled down and the new structure erected by William A. Reynolds, Henry Searle being the architect and designer. With the exception of on the north the walls stand to-day as then built. Entrance to the hall was had by means of the first flight of stairs from Exchange place, located as at present, thence, through a long hallway extending the length of the building and dividing into two stairways, to the right and left, that led up to landings, from which the audience room was entered by doorways on either side of the stage, so that one came into the hall facing the audience instead of from the rear, as is common. The floor was on a level, seated with movable settees, while, extending around the outside of the hall, were six rows of raised

sofas, each tier a little higher than those in front. The stage was a simple platform, at the back of which was a shallow recess or alcove, curtained midway from floor to ceiling with red damask portieres supported by a gilded cornice. At the back of the stage stood two superbly modeled Corinthian columns, copied from those of the tomb of Lysicrates, one of the purest and most beautiful examples of Greek art. The building was originally called "The Athenaeum," but on the day before the opening upon consultation with some of the leading citizens, Mr. Reynolds decided to christen it Corinthian Hall, the name being suggested by the aforementioned columns. The second floor of the building was occupied, on the right as you ascended the stairs, by the reading room and library of the Athenaeum, and on the left by the law library, offices and by historic "No. 7," a room for many years redolent with very many delightful memories. It was the private office and parlor of Mr. Reynolds. It was tastefully furnished and decorated with pictures and the very air breathed the generous hospitality of its genial host. Into this cozy little retreat the favored few were almost nightly invited, after the entertainment up stairs, lecture or concert, was over, to meet the reigning star or stars of the evening and pass an hour, sometimes, it may be said, several hours, in social intercourse,

music, song and story. It is only a memory now. Few of the younger generation have heard of it, but to such as were among the fortunate ones, the recollection and associations of "Number Seven" will ever linger, recalling delightful hours. The hall had a seating capacity of about eleven or twelve hundred, as shown by the diagram, but when, as was often the case at popular lectures and great occasions, Mr. Reynolds and his faithful lieutenants, Fleming and old Charlie Cazeau, had packed with stools every aisle and the space around the outside of the hall and in front, up to the very doors, sometimes the platform itself, it then held 1,500 and even 1,600 souls. With every foot thus packed and with only those two doors for exit, and the narrow turning stairways, it was through Divine mercy alone that there was never an alarm of fire or a panic in the building in those days, else Rochester would have been called upon to mourn hundreds of its bravest and fairest.

The hall was opened with an evening of formal dedication on June 28, 1849. From that day it became the scene of all the leading entertainments. The smaller halls were deserted, one after another closed and was forgotten, or at least fell into "innocuous desuetude." To give anything like a chronological summary of the entertainments of which this hall was the theater, during the

years that followed, would be impossible in the space allotted to me. Only the briefest mention of a few of the most notable events is all that can be attempted, and I shall be done.

One of the earliest memorable happenings, associated as it is with Rochester's history, was the first public exposition of spirit-rappings, "the Rochester Knockings," as it was called elsewhere, on November 14, 1849.

The month of July, 1851, was one that must always be printed in red letters in the musical annals of this city. In the first week came the first grand concert, except Ole Bull's, that had ever been given here, by Madam Anna Bishop, accompanied by several lesser lights. Her fame had preceded her to such an extent that on her arrival, the day before the concert, she was met at the cars by the mayor in his official capacity, and escorted to her hotel. The concert consisted, so says the advertisement, of "selections from opera, partly in costume," a precedent that has been closely followed by some of our modern light opera companies, if we may believe the posters. The second week was marked by another grand concert, by Madam Theresa Parodi, under the management of the veteran impressario, Maurice Strakosch. This was his initial venture here and he was so pleased with his reception that Rochester

became one of his favorite stands and hither he brought, in the years to come, all of his attractions. Strakosch appeared himself in this programme, as did also his wife, Mad. Amalia Strakosch, the eldest of the gifted Patti family. The tickets were placed, for the first time, at two dollars. The house was rather a slim one, although an editorial next day informs us that the "audience seemed pleased with all the pieces." A repetition was given the next evening, at which the price was reduced to one dollar and the house was filled.

After this followed another concert by the irrepressible Hutchinsons, by way of contrast, and then, the third week of the month was ushered in by the greatest musical event in our history, the two concerts, on the 22nd and 24th of July, by Jenny Lind, fresh from her unprecedented triumphs in New York. She arrived on the 21st, leaving the cars at the foot of Goodman street, we learn, in order to avoid the troublesome throng of sightseers and was driven by a roundabout way to the Eagle Hotel. The price of tickets was fixed at \$2, \$3 and \$4. They were placed on sale in a store on State street, No. 56, near the corner of Market, a high board fence having been erected across the sidewalk to the ticket window. A mad struggle for seats ensued and every ticket was soon sold. So

much dissatisfaction resulted on the part of the disappointed ones that the sale of seats for the second concert was had by auction in the hall on the intervening day, high premiums being paid in many cases for choice. The great singer was accompanied by the pianist, Otto Goldschmidt, whom she afterward married, by Joseph Burke, the great violinist, and by Belletti, tenor. She sang "Come to Him," from the Messiah, an aria from "Somnambula," duo from Rossini, with Belletti, "The Bird's Song," "Comin' thro' the Rye," and her celebrated "Echo Song," in which she has never been approached.

On the second evening she sang an aria from "Der Freischutz," "Casta Diva," from "Norma," the Tyrolean Duet," with Belletti, the "Gipsy Song," "Mountaineer's Song," and "Home Sweet Home." Both evenings were hot and the windows of the hall were, of course, all open. The narrow streets about the building were densely packed and we read that every window in the neighborhood, rented at high prices, appeared to be a frame of human faces, while even the roofs of the adjacent buildings were crowded with people. So anxious were they to catch every note of the great cantatrice that the silence of this vast throng was so profound as to be almost painful. It is also seriously said that the "Echo Song" was distinctly heard at the corner

of Clinton and Andrews streets and again on Elm street. There were no trolleys then! On the day between the two concerts Jenny Lind was induced to visit the studio of Appleby, in the Arcade, where her daguerreotype was taken by that artist. If that picture is still in existence it should be owned by the Historical Society. After each concert the fair singer, about whom the town was fairly mad, was called out upon the balcony of the Eagle again and again and gracefully bowed her acknowledgements to the enthusiastic and cheering thousands.

There is an interesting fact in connection with the history of the second concert, one with which, probably, very few are familiar. The premium realized from the sale of the seats, over and above the regular price of the tickets, was presented by Jenny Lind to the charities of the city. It amounted to a little over \$2,500, and was distributed among the Female Charitable Society, the Rochester Orphan Asylum, the Catholic Orphan Asylum, Home for the Friendless, German Lutheran Church, and the Cartmen's and Firemen's Benevolent Associations. The Female Charitable Society received the largest amount, \$800, and this sum formed the foundation of the permanent endowment of that noble charity. For a number of years it was kept separately and

was known as the Jenny Lind fund, but it was finally merged in the permanently invested endowment of the society. So that, in each of the forty-three years that have elapsed since that concert, a number of the deserving poor and sick of our city have received benefit and relief therefrom and will continue to do so through all the years to come. It is a noble and lasting monument to the memory of that gifted artiste.

Passing, rapidly now, over the first appearance of Matilda Heron and Sir William Don, in October, a brilliant concert by Catharine Hayes, in November, we come to a concert by the wonderful Miss Greenfield, the Black Swan. The fame achieved by her in the east had reached here, and a card was published inviting her to appear in Rochester, signed by Levi A. Ward, D. M. Dewey, M. F. Reynolds, Freeman Clarke, Wm. H. Perkins, Isaac Butts and others. In response to this call she sang here May the 8th. Following, came the first troupe of Bohemian Glass Blowers, Whipple's Dissolving Views, just coming in with the perfecting of photography; Donetti's wonderful troupe of trained animals, which have never been equaled. We pause just long enough to note that the strawberry festival, as a distinct function, came into life in 1852. We come to another great concert by Ole Bull, at Corinthian Hall this time, on the

13th of November. This concert was under the management of Strakosch, and was distinguished by the first appearance of Adeline Patti, then eight years old. She sang "Comin' Thro' the Rye," several operatic selections, and the "Echo Song." The Advertiser chronicles the fact that "She is a better singer than nine-tenths of the grown ladies that have sung in public," and predicts a future for her.

The next week a grand concert by Madam Emma Bostwick, assisted by Henri Appy, late violinist to the king of Holland. The advertisement says, "Appy is unquestionably a violinist of talent, but he lacks that refined finish which time and study will give him." Time and study have certainly fulfilled that prophecy. On December 2nd came the great Madam Marietta Alboni with Arditi. At a delightful concert given the February following, by one who long held a secure place in the hearts of all Rochesterians, Miss Marion McGregor, Joseph Burke, the violinist, again appeared, and, in June, under the lead of Strakosch, came a memorable evening of song, Madam Steffenone, whose career was as brilliant as it was brief, assisted by Amalia Patti and the youthful violinist, Paul Julien, then but eleven years old.

From this date until the time that I have fixed in my mind as a stopping point, the Siamese Twins came and went—together.

P. T. Barnum gave a lecture for the benefit of the Female Charitable Society. Lola Montez lectured. The Peak Family of Swiss Bell Ringers appeared on the scene. Mrs. Macready gave a dramatic reading, and Bronson Alcott was heard in a transcendental exposition of "The Thusness of the May Be," or some kindred phase of the Concord School of Philosophy. Musically Ole Bull and Patti came twice, Little Adeline's skirts a little longer now and her voice growing in sweetness and power. The close of 1853 brought Madam Sontag with Paul Julien and Rocco. The next year came the never to be forgotten Louis Jullien with that grand orchestra; Burke again, this time accompanied, his first appearance here, by Richard Hoffman, the pianist of our day. Then Parodi, twice again. Adelaide Phillips came soon after in one of her many farewell tours, which she continued until a very advanced age. This was closely followed by Madam LaGrange, with her first came Louis Gottschalk, that breaker of strings and hearts. Dempster's last visit. The Pyne & Harrison Opera Company, in July, 1856; then Thalberg, and to a more masterly touch than his, the ivory key never responded. He was accompanied by Theresa Parodi, Madam Patti, Nicola and Mollenhauer. That was an evening to be remembered! The record of this line of artists closes with the graceful outline, the

sweet face and the superb, resonant voice of Piccolomini, on the 16th day of February, 1859.

While we have thus lingered for several years in Exchange place, the drama was slowly but surely increasing its foothold in the St. Paul street house, the Metropolitan, under the successive management of Forrest & Co., Henry Grattan Plunkett and, finally, Wellington Meech, Charlotte Crampton, the Zavisowski troupe of children in spectacular plays, the Keller troupe, whose magnificent series of tableaux vivants, set upon a gigantic revolving platform, have never been surpassed, in this country at least; the superb Shower of Gold and the Bridge of the Amazons, in bronze, stand out as clear cut as the recollection of last night's dream. The Florences, now playing "Toodles," "The Serious Family" and "Born to Good Luck." Maggie Mitchell in her pre-Fanchon days, in the "Wept of the Wish-ton-wish," saucy "Nan, the Good for Nothing," "The Pet of the Petticoats," "Satan in Paris," and "The French Spy." Mr. Neafie in "Richelieu" and the "Corsican Brothers." The first appearance of Edwin Booth in all those roles which he so long clothed with the personality of his great genius, the highest realization of American art. Matilda Heron came in Camille, that first venture, on this side of the ocean, into the clouded region of the modern French school. Then,

again the great Cushman poured forth the rapturous wooings of Romeo beneath Juliet's balcony and again, as the weird and wrinkled Meg Merrilies, proclaimed "Bertram's right and Bertram's might on Ellangowan's height."

This is a remarkable record truly, differing vastly from those crude beginnings in the old Carroll street barn and causing even Dean's achievements to be lost to view. Yet, when all is said and the record closed, the greatest interest and the fondest recollections gather, and must ever center, while memory lingers, to the generation that is passing rapidly now from the scene, within the precincts of the old Corinthian Hall.

I very much doubt if anywhere in the world, certainly not in America, there are four walls standing, within which, at one time or another, have been seen and heard so many people distinguished in every branch of art, science, letters. Many of the great opera houses of the world have held more great singers, many theaters, more great players, many parliaments and senates, more great orators, but when we reflect that across that narrow platform, for more than a quarter of a century, every school of thought and action sent its choicest interpreters, the story of those years is truly a wonderful one.

Since I have been engaged upon this work, the wish has come to me many times that,

with the potent wand of some mighty magician, we might conjure up from their resting places in the four quarters of the globe such of that long procession as have passed from the theater of human action, smooth away the wrinkles and the frosts of age from the brows of such as are still upon the scene of their triumphs, and, constructing the setting of a vast scene, bullded of the "stuff that dreams are made of," marshal in review, once more, all together in one grouping, that mighty host, singers and musicians, kings and queens of tragedy, sons and daughters of comedy, orators, soldiers, poets, statesmen, for one night only! the management confidently expressing the belief that such a bill was never before offered to a favored public! The audience re-peopled largely from that shadowy, silent land, are in their places. As the curtain rises upon the opening overture the leaders baton is taken up by Jullian and Arditi, Gilmore and Thomas, for no one conductor dare handle so large an orchestra. At a tier of grand pianos sit Thalberg, Gottschalk, Leopold de Meyer, Wehli, Anna Mehlig, Von Bulow and Rubinstein. We glance along the row of first violins to see that Ole Bull, Vieuxtemps, Sivori, Burke, Camilla Urso, Withelmj, Wienawski and Appy are in their places. Levy and Arbuckle hold their cornets ready for the first note. Ryan's

silvery head is seen bending above his clarionet, while back of these, are massed Dodsworth's, Jullien's and Gilmore's bands, 'Thomas' orchestra, the Mendelssohns and the old Philharmonics. The batons wave and then, there bursts forth a flood of the grandest harmony that the world has ever heard.

When this is done the orchestra retires and a simple reading desk is discovered, with branching gas-fixtures on either side, framing the figure of the speaker, while back of it, ranged in concentric semi-circles, sit the lecturers. Each orator must be limited by time, to a single paragraph or epigram, each poet to a single couplet, and, as it is uttered, the speaker retires, until but one is left, one whose memory will be cherished while the English tongue is spoken. A strong, sad, thoughtful face, hair and beard marked with silvering lines, an eye full of sympathetic, human kindness. In his button-hole he wears a red rose and in his hand is a ribbon-marked volume. He opens it and reads and—again, we wander and lose our way on English meadows with Little Nell—again, with Pickwick we keep Yule-tide festival at Mr. Wardle's—Sam Weller and Bob Sawyer and the Marchioness have a new meaning for us now and ever after, and we reverently bow our heads to the benediction of Tiny Tim—"a Merry Christmas to us all! God bless us, every one!"

The scene shifts. It is Commencement Day and we see the stalwart and venerated form of the old president, majestic in cap and gown, presenting little ribbon-tied rolls of parchment, accompanied by wise words of counsel, to a group of fledgelings before him, as they are about to go forth to conquer the earth.

As this scene fades, the benches are cleared away, the audience walking about, wear the costumes of thirty years ago, the outer circumference of the hall is lined with a brilliant row of richly decorated booths, in which appear a Congress of Nations, in bright costumes, the flower of Rochester's life in '63. It is the Soldier's Bazaar.

Again the floor is cleared, the booths have vanished and in their stead are long rows of tables ranged through the hall groaning beneath a weight of viands. The lady managers of the hospital board seem to be in charge. Yes, with tin box before her, at her little table yonder, near the door, sits the treasurer, receiving the willing offerings to our favorite charity, Captain Updike and Ham. Scrantom are sharpening their carving knives, a bevy of pretty waitresses, in coquettish caps and aprons are in attendance, and the gentlemen are coming in to spoil the symmetry of those fair tables. Ah, how many shoals of oysters, how many flocks of turkeys, what frost-

covered mountains of cake, what vast glaciers of ice-cream were here consumed for sweet Charity's sake!

Now the tables are cleared, and, pouring in through the open doors, in motley groups with shout and song, come the merry maskers of the Maennerchor times—knights and harlequins, queens and peasants, Gambrius and die Lorelei. Meyering leads the music and the dance is on.

As these sounds of revelry die on the ear, the audience is again seated—the curtain rises on a single scene of tragedy (for it must be getting late), with Forrest, Booth, Davenport, Wallack, Barrett and Salvini, Ristori and Jannauscheck, queenly Scott Siddons and Adelaide Neilson in the cast. Now comes a bit of comedy, in which Maggie Mitchell's shadow-dance and the mad pranks of quaint, winsome little Lotta seem strangely interwoven with the Irish wit of Paddy Miles's Boy, and the droll philosophy of lazy Rip, in the village of Falling Waters.

Now that grand orchestra once more take their places and all is in readiness for the final chorus, which shall call into force the entire resources of this company of dream-children. Forth they come, from the misty world far beyond, through those familiar, faded hangings of red damask—Jenny Lind and Parodi, Alboni and LaGrange, Anna Bishop and Piccolomini, Isabella Hinkley

and Steffenone, Christine Nilsson and Kellogg and Sontag. Then appears the generous form of Parepa with Zelda Seguin, led out by Castle and Sher, Campbell and Adelina Patti, staying with sisterly tenderness, the faltering steps of Carlotta. Here are Brignoli and Susini, Mario, Santley, Karl Formes, Campanini and Wachtel—until there is no longer room, even upon the stage of a dream. The musicians tune their instruments, again the baton falls, and, after the preliminary crash of the orchestra, there wells forth such a divine melody as hath not been since “the morning stars sang together.” The rolling tone-waves of the orchestra, as from the stops of some celestial organ and, high over all, the liquid sweetness of the *Casta Diva*—the plaintive cadence of the *Non ti scordar* of Brignoli’s *Miserere*, fading away to give place to the “*Last Rose of Summer*,” as Parepa, Castle, Campbell and Seguin come forward (who that heard it, will ever forget that last night of Martha?) Finally, all this melody merges and blends into one grand anthem, such as one might wish to hear when taking leave of earth, now as sweet as the rippling music of summer brooks, now rising and swelling, in giant crescendo, into surging, tumultuous billows of sound.

But, far too long, I fear, have I trespassed upon your patience; far too long have

I kept the poor ghosts of these memories before you, and will dismiss them. As they vanish into the mists, of which they were born, the lights burn dim. Obedient to the prompter's bell, the curtain slowly falls. The last notes of the music die away. The faltering echoes come fainter—and fainter still—and are lost—the play is done.



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