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The Grand Opera House (Third Varieties Theatre) of New Orleans, Louisiana, 1871 to 1906: a History and Analysis.

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THE GRAND OPERA HOUSE (THIRD VARIETIES THEATRE)
OF NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA, 1871 TO 1906:
A HISTORY AND ANALYSIS

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
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requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
The Department of Speech

by
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B.S., Loyola University, 1952
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of Tulane University; Boyd Cruise, Executive Director of the Vieux Carré Survey, an educational and historical project of the School of Architecture of Tulane University, established through a grant by the Edward G. Schlieder Foundation; Mrs. Dorothy (Robert C.) Whittemore, Reference Librarian of the Howard Tilton Memorial Library of Tulane University; Albert L. Voss, the late educator and theatrical historical collector, who was on the faculty of the Department of English of Tulane University; and V. L. Bedsole, Director of the Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Hill Memorial Library of Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

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Museum Library, New Orleans, Louisiana; and Mrs. Mary B. Ory and Mrs. Denise Sylvester at the Library of McNeese State College, Lake Charles, Louisiana. Much assistance was given also by Helen Harrell, Counselor, Graduate School, Louisiana State University. To each of these professional people who have been of invaluable aid, the writer offers profound appreciation. The author further acknowledges gratitude to the twenty-eight informants for this study, whose personal observations and experiences concerning the theatre as reflected in their respective interviews have added clarity to the history of the Grand Opera House. The names of these informants are included in the Introduction of the study.
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## CHAPTER

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ABSTRACT

In New Orleans in the latter half of the nineteenth century, no art medium was represented more brilliantly than the theatre, which brought to the city the greatest stars and productions to be seen anywhere in the South. The third Varieties Theatre was built after the first two Varieties were destroyed by fire. The third Varieties, on famous Canal Street, opened on December 4, 1871. Its name was changed in 1879 to the Grand Opera House. After a significant and picturesque career, the theatre closed on April 30, 1906, being replaced by an office building and mercantile establishment.

The purpose of this study was to present a detailed history and analysis of this most important and most enduring of the Varieties Theatres, which was also regarded as the most beautiful theatre in the entire South. The history spans a thirty-six year period and represents an excellent example of the major changes which occurred on the American stage during that time.

The study examined the following factors: nature and
merit of productions; actors who performed; composition of
the Variété Association which owned the theatre; analysis of
newspaper reviews; historical and socio-economic atypical con-
figurations that influenced the theatre, as the effects of the
Theatrical Syndicate; nature of audiences; merit and changing
trends of supporting companies; nature of summer amateur the-
atrical activity; managers and their individual influence
upon the theatre; and the significance of the theatre in the
history of the theatre.

The study is divided into eight chapters, coinciding
with major changes in the theatre's history. Concentration
was upon the dramatic activity, although other entertainments
were noted. Earlier New Orleans theatrical history, includ-
ing activity at the first two Varieties Theatres was reviewed
in order to establish that point in theatrical history at
which the third Varieties appeared. Major sources were news-
papers of the period. Additional insight and explication
were gained through personal interviews with former theatre
patrons who served as informants, from books of theatrical
and American history, biographies of actors, critics and
managers, and pertinent illustrative materials.

The Third Varieties Theatre (Grand Opera House)
brought to New Orleans a succession of illustrious actors from all over the world in a wide variety of plays. Among these renowned stars were Edwin Booth, Tommaso Salvini, Sarah Bernhardt and Henry Irving. The theatre flourished under many managers, but two towered significantly above all the rest—David Bidwell and Henry Greenwall. A major finding of the study is the fact that the Theatrical Syndicate was begun with money contributed by Bidwell to Marc Klaw and Abraham Erlanger in an effort to curb Greenwall and retaliate when Bidwell lost the lease of the Grand Opera House to the former. Greenwall was the most colorful, most enduring and most important of the theatre's managers. Before the Syndicate's boycott, he brought to the theatre the greatest stars in its history.

The nature of the supporting company changed from the initial resident stock company which supported all visiting stars, to the company that traveled with and supported one given star, and finally, to the reactivation of the resident stock company after the Theatrical Syndicate banned the appearance of stars at the theatre.

The Grand Opera House began as a "high-class" theatre, built by an elite group composed of the upper social strata
of New Orleans society, and catered to a select patronage. After the Theatrical Syndicate forced stars to abandon this theatre, it became a "popular" house. But it was unable to survive the effects of the Syndicate boycott and the economic and cultural changes that occurred in the first decade of the twentieth century.
INTRODUCTION

The theatrical activity of the nineteenth century in the city of New Orleans has served as one of the major contributions to theatrical history of the United States. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, New Orleans was the Broadway of the South. A great cultural center of the country in that time, New Orleans was a focal area for all the arts. But no art medium was represented more brilliantly than the theatre. Many first-class theatres existed during this era to serve to bring to the Crescent City the greatest stars and productions to be seen anywhere in the South. The third Varieties Theatre (Grand Opera House) was conceded to be the most elite and the most beautiful, not only in New Orleans, but in the entire South. This theatre, which is the subject of this study, was the third theatre by that name to be built by the Variété Association. The original Varieties Theatre, built in 1849, was known as Placide's Varieties Theatre, and stood on the corner of Gravier Street and Varieties Alley. It was destroyed by fire on November 21, 1854. The second theatre,
built on the site of the first theatre, opened in 1855 on December 1, and was known at first as the Gaiety Theatre. Its name was changed to the Varieties Theatre in 1858. This theatre burned to the ground on December 2, 1870.

The Variété Association built a third and finer theatre in 1871, on a site bounded by Canal, Dauphine, Customhouse (now Iberville), and Burgundy streets. This new theatre, called the Varieties, opened on December 4, 1871, and became nationally famous as well as being regarded as the most elegant theatre in the South. The name was changed in 1879 to the Grand Opera House, in an effort to differentiate the elegant legitimate theatre from the numerous inferior and sometimes disreputable music halls which staged vaudeville shows billed as "variety shows." The Grand Opera House had a picturesque career until it closed on April 30, 1906, at which time it was demolished and replaced by an office building and mercantile establishment. No attempt was made by the Variété Association to build another theatre, although the association continued for some time in the form of a social club.

The purpose of this study is to present a detailed history and analysis of the third Varieties Theatre from its
beginning in 1871 through its entire period of theatrical activity until its demolition in 1906. This period spans thirty-six years of major theatrical history, and represents an excellent example of the important changes which occurred on the American stage during that time. The study is important, therefore, not only as it pertains to New Orleans, but as a part of the theatrical history of the United States.

The study was intended to examine and determine the following factors: the productions given; the nature of the entertainments; the physical characteristics of the building; the actors and actresses who performed and their relative importance to the theatre, to New Orleans audiences, and in terms of theatrical historical criticism; prices charged for admission; the merit and acceptability of the productions; the composition of membership of and the purpose of the Variété Association which built and owned the theatre throughout its history and which governed the productions; analysis of the newspaper criticisms, including the nature and merit of reviews, biases and prejudices of reviewers by virtue of time and geographical location of writing: that is, post-Civil War South; historical and socio-economic
configurations of the period covered and this collective influence upon the theatre and its productions; the nature of the audiences that attended, including cultural attitudes, behavioral patterns and patterns of restriction and preference; trends of the times as shown in stock companies, including merit of companies and changing composition in time and place; relation of stars and supporting companies, including hierarchy policies; presentation of day by day entertainment, including the stress upon the professional season, with an examination of the amateur seasons and an analysis of the changing norms of the amateur summer seasons over the entire period; the different periods through which the theatre passed, and influences noted upon productions because of economic and historical atypical influences, as the devastating effect produced by the Theatrical Syndicate; the managers associated with the theatre during the periods of time which the study spans, and the value of the individual influence of these managers upon the theatre itself and upon theatrical history; and finally, the significance of the third Varieties Theatre in the history of theatre.

The study is divided into the following sections:

Chapter I—Background: Summary of theatrical history, the
first two Varieties Theatres, history of the site of the Grand Opera House, the grand opening of the theatre; Chapter II--The First Period: the first five years, fall, 1871 through summer, 1876, beginning with the management of Lawrence Barrett and through the co-management of Henrietta Chanfrau and Clifton W. Tayleure, and including a detailed tracing of summer amateur seasons; Chapter III--The Second Period: fall, 1876 through spring, 1879, beginning with the management of Charles Pope through the 1878-1879 season under the management of Thomas A. Hall, until immediately before the change of name of the third Varieties; Chapter IV--The Third Period: fall, 1879 through spring, 1883, beginning with the change of name to the Grand Opera House while still under the management of Thomas A. Hall and through the co-management of Brooks and Norton; Chapter V--The Fourth Period: fall, 1883 through spring, 1888, the era of David Bidwell; Chapter VI--The Fifth Period: fall, 1888 through spring, 1899, the dynamic era under the management of Henry Greenwall, the most productive era of the theatre, prior to the rise of the Theatrical Syndicate and before the Syndicate boycott took effect; Chapter VII--The Sixth Period: fall, 1899 through spring, 1904, the last five
years of the Greenwall era, after the effects of the Theatri-
cal Syndicate had manifested itself upon the Grand Opera
House; Chapter VIII—The Seventh Period: fall, 1904 through
spring, 1906, the final period, beginning under the manage-
ment of Charles Fourton and terminating under the co-manage-
ment of Lester Lonergan and Mortimer Snow.

Although all entertainments at the theatre have been
noted, concentration has been upon the dramatic activity.
The periods of activity of the first two Varieties Theatres
are reviewed in order to establish the point in theatrical
history when the third Varieties Theatre was built. A
brief history of the Variété Association is undertaken to
ascertain the purpose for building the theatre, rules for
governing performances and attendance at the theatre, and
assets and limitations imposed by the association through
the rules of its membership and purpose of its organization.
The period of theatrical history until this time is reviewed
briefly in order to ascertain historic and economic as well
as theatrical trends. Background of and influences of the
Theatrical Syndicate are traced, at the time in which the
Syndicate came into being during the latter part of the
theatre's activity.

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The major sources of material were the daily newspapers of the period. Personal interviews with former patrons of the Grand Opera House, books of theatrical history, of American history, of American economics, as well as magazines and periodicals of the times and related unpublished theses were consulted to amplify and provide an understanding of existing conditions. Additional insight was provided by biographies and autobiographies of actors and actresses who performed at the theatre, as well as managers and critics of the times. Additional primary source material, used in order to provide colorful supplementary graphic illustrations for the study, included original theatre programs, pictures and photographs, architectural plans, plan of seating arrangements, ticket from the theatre, plans pertaining to the original building, as secured from library collections and private collections and from the New Orleans notarial archives. Many of these illustrations, photographs, theatre programs and architectural plans have been duplicated for graphic presentation in the study.

More specifically, the theatre programs duplicated herewith are from two sources: (1) the "Collection of Grand Opera House Programs of Plays and Concerts" as found in the
Rare Books Room of Tulane University's Howard Tilton Memorial Library, from which collection theatre programs of the 1880's are to be found, mostly from Bidwell's era, and (2) the "Robert De Lapouyade Collection" in the Archives Department of the Louisiana State University Library, from which collection are duplicated the later programs from the Grand Opera House during the era of Henry Greenwall. The differences in the early and later programs are of particular interest. Two other collections that include Grand Opera House programs must be noted here: the collections of "New Orleans Theatre Programs of the 1880's and 1890's," also in the Rare Book Room of Tulane's Tilton Library and "Theatre Programs of 1873-1896" in the Louisiana Room of the New Orleans Public Library. All programs in the latter two collections can be found among the programs in the former two collections.

Photographs and illustrations duplicated herein were selected as follows: (1) Map of Vieux Carré showing location of the third Varieties Theatre, from Transit Guide and Street Map of New Orleans, New Orleans Public Service, Inc., 1964; (2) Original plan of lots of ground of the "Three Sisters" buildings, procured from Notarial Archives, Plan

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Book No. 104, Folio No. 31 A, June 2, 1829; (3) Original Architectural Plan of the "Three Sisters" multiple buildings, procured from Notarial Archives at New Orleans, Louisiana, Plan Book 23A, Folio Number 57, Plan Number 25, November 28, 1843; (4) Wood Engraving of the Exterior of the third Varieties Theatre, created soon after the completion of the theatre, as found in Jewell's Crescent City Illustrated, New Orleans, 1873, edited and compiled by Edwin L. Jewell, page 69; (5) Wood Engraving showing the Third Varieties with the Christ Church on the right and the edge of the "Middle Sister" to the left, from the collection of the Vieux Carré Survey, in the offices of Boyd Cruise, 533 Royal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana; (6) Floor plan of the third Varieties Theatre, also showing street locations, from Sanborn's Insurance Maps, April, 1876, procured from Tilton Library of Tulane University; (7) Seating Plan of the theatre, showing separate illustrations of (a) orchestra and orchestra circle and (b) the balcony, duplicated from The Illinois Central Railroad Diagrams of Seats of New Orleans Theatres, private printing, no date, duplicated as obtained from Tulane University's Tilton Library; (8) Ticket of third Varieties Theatre--Orchestra Circle, Chair Number 3, no date,
duplicated from the private collection of the late Albert Voss, at his home at 2814 Bell Street, New Orleans, Louisiana; (9) Photograph of the entrance to the Grand Opera House, showing the memorable stairway, during the era of Henry Greenwall, as duplicated from *The City of New Orleans: The Book of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Louisiana*, George Engelhardt, Publisher, New Orleans, 1894, page 101; (10) Photograph of the exterior of the Grand Opera House, in its later years, from the Meugnier Collection, Howard Tilton Library, Tulane University; (11) Replica of the famous curtain of the Grand Opera House, which was an exact copy of Becker's celebrated painting "Othello and Desdemona" (as described by informants Albert Voss and Flo Field), duplicated from *The Victor Book of the Opera*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1953, page 313, edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar; (12) Grand Opera House, showing block on Canal Street with neighboring buildings, from Teunisson Collection, Howard Tilton Library, Tulane University; (13) close-up of latter photograph; (14) Photograph of Charles Fourton at the entrance to the arcade of the Grand Opera House, during the last season at the theatre, the season of 1905-1906, taken during the week of Sunday, February 4, 1906, as duplicated
from the Meugnier Collection, Howard Tilton Library, Tulane University.

Although the New Orleans Picayune was the principal newspaper reference, many other newspapers of the period were consulted for several reasons: (1) in order to form a more objective evaluation from review materials by having several critical opinions; (2) in order to observe how critics might agree or disagree concerning the performance of a given actor; and (3) in order to have as much coverage as possible on important occasions. These additional newspapers include principally the New Orleans Republican, New Orleans Times, New Orleans Democrat, Times-Democrat (formed when the Times and Democrat united), New Orleans Daily States, New Orleans Bee (French-language newspaper), New Orleans Daily Item, Deutsches Taglich Zeitung (German-language newspaper) and the New York Dramatic Mirror. Other less important newspapers of the period are included in the bibliography. The newspapers which were used throughout the study were either bound original papers or on microfilm, and were found at the Howard Tilton Memorial Library of Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana; Louisiana State University Library, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; the New Orleans Public Library and
the Louisiana State Museum Library, New Orleans, Louisiana.

The reviewers of all the newspapers throughout the thirty-six year period remained anonymous. Evidently several different critics reviewed theatrical entertainments for a given major newspaper at one time. An actor might receive praise as a great and talented star in one newspaper review on a given date, and the following day or week, in the same journal, that actor might receive a negative criticism regarding his talent. For example, such conflicting reviews of Sarah Bernhardt and Bert Lytel are to be found from the Picayune in the study. Major George Tate Sheehan, the most important informant for this study by virtue of his close association at the Grand Opera House, recalls that George Galbreath had one job by day—as a telegraph operator, and at night, he reviewed plays for the Picayune, thus being a part-time employee of the newspaper. With five or six plays opening at as many theatres in one evening, it can be realized how a number of critics were employed of necessity by the Picayune and other newspapers; and it can be seen why a reviewer might praise a given actor at one production, while a colleague critic sent to catch the same actor at another production at the same theatre could disagree with
the first critic. Major Sheehan's testimony that John Galbreath was one of the Picayune's drama critics in the Greenwall era is the only source of information concerning the names of the critics of this era. However, it is stated in the Times-Picayune Centennial Edition (Monday, January 25, 1937, page 12), that Henry Guy Carleton was dramatic critic of the Picayune in the era of the 1880's and 1890's.

Although each newspaper of New Orleans used as source material is officially prefaced by "New Orleans"—as for example, New Orleans Democrat, that city's prefix is deleted in repetition of the manifold newspaper sources; and the New Orleans Daily Picayune is referred to in repetition as the Picayune.

The Variété Association was found to be listed in several ways at different times in source materials. Besides the title stated, which was the most repeated term found, the Association is sometimes listed as the Varieties Club or the Varieties Association, the English-language spelling of the French title.

Variety in the spelling of names of actors and actresses has been a minor problem: a given newspaper sometimes spelled an actor's name in one way on one occasion, and

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in another way upon another occasion. When an actor was well
known, it was a simple matter to verify the correct spelling
of the name in such a helpful work as Daniel Blum's A Picto­
rial History of the American Theatre or in other theatre
anthologies. When the actor was, however, a member of a
supporting company, he might not be listed in the index of a
theatrical anthology, and such verification was, therefore,
not always possible. Examples of contradictory spelling
were found, for example, in the cases of several members of
resident stock companies at the Grand Opera House. John
Bertin was listed as Jack Burtin on two occasions; Anna
MacGregor was called Anna McGregor on several occasions, and
Celina Lambert was also called Celia Lambert on several
occasions, to cite just a few instances.

John Kendall's Golden Age of the New Orleans Theatre
was found to be a controversial aid. While being very help­
ful in a general sense, this work contains inaccuracies in
many statements and dates concerning the Grand Opera House.
This study serves, consequently, as an extension and amplifi­
cation of Kendall's sketchy coverage of this era; and, in
fact, clarifies many of the inaccuracies found in that
author's work.
An important aspect of the study was that of the interviews with the twenty-eight people who served as informants for the study. The majority of these patrons are prominent and well-known citizens of New Orleans. Represented among these informants are lawyers, an architect, an import and export company executive, writers, retired teachers, a television personality, actors and other theatre personalities, philanthropists and housewives. Only one person interviewed no longer lived in New Orleans at the time of the interview, but was visiting her native city at that time. Most of these informants had been patrons of the theatre. A few of these informants, while not in the category of former patrons, were of valuable assistance in contributing pertinent information concerning the Grand Opera House. The most helpful informant in the latter category was Sam Wilson, Jr., whose aid in this study has been invaluable, particularly in the obtaining of illustrative primary source materials, such as architectural plans of the "Three Sisters" site, acquaintance with extant photographs of the theatre--such as that found in Jewell's Crescent City Illustrated and acquaintance with materials found in the New Orleans Notarial Archives. Mrs. Ethel Crumb Brett, the well-known technical director of Le
Petit Theatre du Vieux Carré is another informant of the later category who contributed the interesting information that the two bronze plaques of Shakespeare and Molière, which are now hanging in the lobby of the New Orleans Little Theatre, Le Petit Theatre, hung originally in the interior of the Grand Opera House. After the demolition of the theatre, the plaques had been stored in the new Maison Blanche Building before being presented to Le Petit Theatre.

The informants who attended the theatre are divided into three categories: (1) those who attended the theatre's productions during the era of the appearance of visiting stars, before the boycott of the Theatrical Syndicate; (2) those who attended both before and after the transition; and (3) those who attended in the latter period when resident stock companies occupied the theatre after the Syndicate boycott. Many of these former patrons of the theatre recall clearly their memorable experiences at the Grand Opera House. All information contributed by informants was checked as to the accuracy of dates and bookings. In several instances, names of actors or titles of plays were remembered inaccurately; but in the majority of cases, there was a high percentage of accuracy noted in the reminiscences despite
the many intervening years. While an arresting aspect of the study was that of interviewing the informants, certainly the most regrettable aspect has been that of learning of the deaths, shortly following their respective interviews, of several of these prominent New Orleans citizens including Albert L. Voss, Fred S. Weis, Theodore Glucksman, Julius Friend, Mrs. Joseph E. Friend, Mrs. Ray Aschaffenburg and Mrs. Marguerite Lavigne Whiteman. Major George Tate Sheehan, who knew and worked with Henry Greenwall and who met many of the stars who appeared at the Grand Opera House, has been an exceedingly valuable informant, contributing information concerning Henry Greenwall that was not available in any other source. Other valuable information has been contributed particularly by Mrs. Lil Sherman Popkin, James Dempsey, Louise Guyel, Zillah Mendes Meyer, Flo Field, the late Albert L. Voss and the late Julius Friend. Other informants, not already mentioned, who contributed to the study, include Waldo Pitkin, Louis B. Harris, Leo Van Os, Mrs. Corinne Schneider Guidry, Elizabeth Woods, Mrs. Josephine Johnston Tuckett, Mrs. Amelia Goldenberg Joseph, Mrs. Julius Cahn, Mrs. Mae Crumb, Mrs. Rose Sherman Marmelzat, René J. Le Gardeur, Jr., Mrs. Lucy Bing Rogillio and Mrs. Fred Lafon.
Complete information given in these interviews is supplied in the appendix of this study.

A note of clarification seems pertinent concerning the change in theatrical terminology since the days of the activity at the Grand Opera House and the present day. The term "manager" pertained to the equivalent of today's producer. The term "stage manager" referred to the equivalent of today's dramatic director, while the "assistant stage manager" was the equivalent of today's stage manager. "Soubrette" referred to a special type of ingenue, usually one who sang or was a comedienne and could enact the roles of young boys. "Old lady player" and "old man player" designated today's equivalent of character people. General business players were called "utility" people. The word "baritone" was spelled "barytone." Child actors were generally referred to with the prefix "Baby" before the first name of the child, and the last name omitted. Acting companies were often called "combinations." Benefits, no longer given as such in the theatre, were performances of plays that were presented to honor a given actor. At a given benefit, fellow actors in the cast donated their services, and the proceeds of the entire performance were
presented as a gift to the honoree. It was the custom for stars and principal actors of a given company to "take a benefit" toward the end of the run of a production. Stars were accorded benefit performances at the termination of an engagement, while principal players of stock companies took benefits toward the end of a given season. Amateur as well as professional actors were given benefits as a testimonial of service to the acting group. While benefits were a norm during the early and middle periods of the theatrical activity at the Grand Opera House, by the end of the nineteenth century, they had become a rarity. Theatrical terminology changed in many instances over the thirty-six year period. In 1871, for example, an actor was said to "personate" a role, instead of to portray or enact a role. Within a decade, the term "personate" was no longer used. Reviews themselves became less formal, less stilted and less ambiguous over the years. While reviews in the 1870's were generally vague, flowery and even pompous, by 1890, they had become informal, more specific, and filled with witticisms and even slang expressions.

Several studies have been done on theatres and drama in New Orleans, but no previous study has been conducted on
any of the Varieties Theatres. Other studies having been made relating to New Orleans theatre in or shortly before the period of the third Varieties Theatre include the following unpublished theses or dissertations: Paul Hostetler's study on James H. Caldwell, Faye Head's study on the Tulane and Crescent Theatres, Lucile Gafford's study on the St. Charles Theatre, Esther Kling's study on the Academy of Music—until 1861, Ina S. Reynolds' study on the Academy of Music—after 1861, Beverly Lyle's study on New Orleans theatre from 1800 until 1825, Marguerite Morrow's study on the English stage in New Orleans from 1817 to 1837, Charles H. Pickett's study on non-commercial theatre in New Orleans, Joseph P. Roppolo's study on the English-language theatre in New Orleans from 1845 to 1861, Nelle K. Smither's study on English theatre in New Orleans from 1806 to 1842 and Vivian D. Turner's study on the stage in New Orleans after 1837. Several unpublished theses have been written that provide general information concerning dramatic criticism of the period, and specific activities of the Theatrical Syndicate. These studies include Monroe Lippman's history of the Theatrical Syndicate, Kalman Burnim's work on the effect of the Theatrical Syndicate upon American drama, Leah Jones's
analysis of dramatic criticism in America, Sr. M. P. Koegh's analysis of attitudes in newspaper dramatic criticism in the United States--1900-1950, Charles Statham's history of early American dramatic criticism and elocutionary theory, and Max Griffin's bibliography of New Orleans magazines. This study amplifies information concerning the origin and function of the Theatrical Syndicate. Prior to this study, the activity of the Theatrical Syndicate was regarded to be centered only in the North and East. The very important clash between Greenwall and the Syndicate heads, with the New Orleans Grand Opera House as the setting of the fight, had been totally disregarded. This study amplifies the sketchy coverage given to the Syndicate's activities in the South and particularly in New Orleans which was neglected in prior studies of the Theatrical Syndicate. A complete listing of all primary and secondary references for this study will be found in the bibliography.
CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND LEADING TO OPENING OF THEATRE

AND OPENING NIGHT

No city in the United States of America has had a more colorful, a prouder, or a more romantic historical heritage than New Orleans. Originally, the city was settled by the French in 1717, which is, according to Stanley Arthur, a year earlier than commonly acknowledged in history books. Louisiana, named for King Louis the Fourteenth of France, had been settled originally in 1699 by two Canadian brothers, Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, and Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville. After the death of Iberville, Bienville was directed in 1717 to move the seat of government of the Louisiana colony from Biloxi to La Nouvelle-Orléans. The name was given in honor of King Louis Phillipe, duc d'Orléans, then regent of France.¹ Half a century later, in 1762,

France sold the colony to Spain. However, the latter country conceded that her new possession was unprofitable despite its rapid growth. Consequently, in 1800, Louisiana was returned to France. Yet the profound influences of the French and Spanish comingling served to become a permanent heritage and aspect of the culture of New Orleans. Only three years after Louisiana was returned to France, Emperor Napoleon sold the territory to the new country of America. But the Creoles, who were the descendants of the French and Spanish settlers, resisted all attempts to be absorbed into the American culture. They banded together to protect and preserve their own customs. French was the language of the Creoles, who observed strict norms also concerning class restrictions and the exclusion of Anglo-Saxon interaction. Moreover, they enjoyed an intense appreciation of the French arts. The French-speaking populace settled in the Vieux Carré, French for "old square." The section was so called because when King Louis's personal engineer, Adrien de Pauger, laid out

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3 Ibid., p. 131.
the original streets and limits of the city in the period from 1717 to 1721, the site took on the appearance of a huge square. The limits of the Vieux Carré were set as follows: east and west from North Rampart Street to the Mississippi River and north and south from Canal Street, the city's main street, to Esplanade Avenue.

When Louisiana was admitted into the Union in 1812, theatre was already flourishing in the Crescent City—so called because New Orleans forms the geographical shape of a crescent, since the Mississippi River makes a crescent there. Tradition describes the first theatre in the city as being founded in 1791 by a troupe of itinerant French actors from Santo Domingo, headed by Louis-Blaise Tabary, and called the St. Peter Street Theatre. However, according to René J. Le Gardeur, Jr., the first theatre in New Orleans opened actually on October 4, 1792, having been built and organized by Jean-Marie and Louis-Alexandre Henry, two brothers from Paris, France. This theatre was on a small lot situated on St. Peter Street between Royal and Bourbon


streets, and was called the Théâtre d'Orléans (New Orleans Theatre).\textsuperscript{8}

Throughout the nineteenth century, theatre flourished in New Orleans. Noah Miller Ludlow is reputed to have brought a group of players to the St. Philip Theatre in 1818.\textsuperscript{9} The advent upon the theatrical scene of James H. Caldwell and his dramatic company in 1820 proved to be of primary significance. The event marked the establishment in New Orleans of English-language drama as a permanent artistic institution. The theatre manager opened at the St. Philip Theatre in 1820, but he soon moved to the Orleans Street Theatre. In 1823, Caldwell built his own theatre, the Camp Street or American Theatre, which proved to be the first permanent theatre in the American sector of the city and outside of the Vieux Carré.\textsuperscript{10} In this theatre, Caldwell first introduced the celebrated tragedian, Junius Brutus Booth, in 1828. In 1835, Caldwell built the St. Charles Theatre, reputed to be the largest theatre in the country in its day. Booth, Forrest, Ellen Tree and Fanny Elssler

\begin{footnotes}
\item[9] Kendall, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 3-7.
\item[10] ibid., pp. 8-31.
\end{footnotes}
were among the stars who appeared on the stage of this theatre.\textsuperscript{11}

By 1837, New Orleans had three theatres, the St. Charles and the Camp, devoted to English-language drama, and the Orleans, which featured French drama. During the following decades, theatres were built, burned and were rebuilt, and new ones appeared. Among the most prominent of these were the New American, the first Varieties, the second Varieties and the Academy of Music. During much of the nineteenth century, New Orleans was a major theatrical center. Prominent managers like Caldwell, Ben De Bar, Dan Rice and George Holland brought to the city such celebrated actors as Edwin Booth, Joseph Jefferson, Jenny Lind, F. S. Chanfrau, Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Florence, James E. Murdoch, Maggie Mitchell, Mr. and Mrs. Dion Boucicault and J. H. Hackett.\textsuperscript{12}

Theatrical activity did not cease in New Orleans during the Civil War, despite Kendall's comments to the contrary.\textsuperscript{13} In fact, it is known that plays were produced at the Academy of Music all during the war, since the occupation forces

\textsuperscript{11}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 14-176.

\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 227, 270.

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 495-97.

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encouraged theatre throughout this period.\textsuperscript{14} In the decade after the Civil War, a theatrical depression was reputed to have hit New Orleans, resulting from the country's post-war declining economic prosperity. Anxiety over financial and political insecurity caused a decline in all amusement enterprises in the city at that time.\textsuperscript{15}

The Grand Opera House, or the third Varieties Theatre, as the playhouse was originally known, was evolved from the first and second Varieties theatres, each of which was consumed by flames. According to John S. Kendall, there is no New Orleans theatrical history more important than the collective one of the three Varieties theatres. ". . . They belong to one of the greatest periods in our dramatic history, and with them were associated some of the most distinguished names that the American stage has known."\textsuperscript{16}

The original Varieties Theatre, the first Varieties, was conceived by Thomas Placide of the well-known theatrical Placide family. The young actor left a $25-a-season job at the St. Charles Theatre in 1849, and ". . . announced with


\textsuperscript{15}Kendall, op. cit., pp. 467-86. \textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 321.
considerable brass that he would erect a playhouse 'equal, if not superior to any in the country.'"^17 With concerted energy and planning, the young actor recruited prominent New Orleans citizens from amid the ranks of the Histrionic Association, an organization specifically for the purpose of producing amateur theatricals. The group had been meeting in a theatre on Dryades Street, built in 1848. Placide presented to the Histrionic Association a plan to erect a theatre "... for the purpose of producing burlesque, vaudeville and farce." (Picayune, Sunday, May 13, 1906) Placide's plan was to form from the club's membership a stock-controlling nucleus of thirty people, with stock to be issued at $500 each, and the total capital to be $15,000.

The theatre was to be built and equipped in a style equal to, if not superior to any in this country. Mr. Placide was to be manager and to spare no exertion to produce the proposed entertainments with the best talent, costumes, scenery and appointments that could be procured. The subscribers were to have two boxes, or a parquet, and a retiring room for their exclusive use. They were to receive eight per cent on their original investments and free admission for each share. They were also to receive one-half of the profits at the close of each season. (Picayune, Sunday, May 13, 1906)

The proposal was met with conflicting reaction from the members of the Histrionic Association. Some approved enthusiastically and some met the plan with opposition, with the result that under the leadership of Peter Conery, the treasurer of the group, a number of the organization's members withdrew from the Histrionics and, on May 29, 1849, formed the Variété Association, for the dual purpose of building the theatre according to Placide's stipulations and of functioning as a social club of the most restrictive order. Peter Conery, Jr., was elected president, with C. W. Cammack as secretary and N. N. Wilkinson as treasurer. At the initial meeting it was resolved to build the theatre on ground leased for ten years from Glendy Burke, a prominent local banker, with the privilege to purchase the property or to renew the lease. (Picayune, Sunday, May 13, 1906.) Plans submitted by Placide were accepted and a building committee was appointed. It was agreed that the new theatre should be called "Placide's Varieties," and should be erected as "... a new theatre for professionals." (Picayune, Sunday, May 13, 1906.)

The new group preserved some of the peculiar social features of the old organization from which it broke away. The Variété Association was always strictly a social club.
with an exclusive meeting place for the stockholders which the actors appearing in its theatre could visit only upon invitation. Conversely, the members could not act in the theatrical presentations, and were present only as spectators. The theatre was leased to professional managers who must recruit their own acting companies and stars, must select and produce their own plays without help from the Variété Association, must charge an admission price sufficient to make the venture remunerative, and must endeavor to make their theatrical undertaking a financial success so as to earn enough to pay the rent stipulated by the Variété Association. These norms, determined immediately, were never altered.\textsuperscript{18}

The new theatre was erected on a site at 817-19 Gravier Street. Today the area is a parking lot. However, until 1951, it was the site of a brokerage house, and before that it was the site of the early New Orleans Cotton Exchange.\textsuperscript{19} As manager of the new theatre Placide superintended the construction. The number of shares of stock was enlarged from thirty to forty-two. Original subscribers to the stock,

\begin{footnotes}
\item[18]Kendall, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 326.
\end{footnotes}
who were original members of the Variété Association, were
James H. Caldwell--the well-known manager and at this time
president of the New Orleans Gas Light Company; Cuthbert
Bullitt--editor of the Picayune; James Robb--a banker; Peter
Conery, Jr.; John L. Lewis--later mayor of New Orleans; A. M.
Holbrook--later proprietor of the Picayune; John A. Dougherty;
M. O. H. Norton; Robert Ferguson; William H. Pattison; C. W.
Cammack; C. S. Cutter; Daniel Cobb; W. W. White; G. C.
Lawrason; A. J. Wedderburn; Minor Kenner; Joseph B. Wright;
N. N. Wilkinson; R. I. Ward; C. Fellows; M. Judson; R. M.
McAlpin; William S. Scott; R. A. Wilkinson; William Christy;
R. G. Hobbs; I. B. Steele; H. A. Norcross; J. L. McLean;
William P. Atwood; Thomas E. Adams; George T. Dunbar; A.
Foster Elliott; W. T. Vason; James Magee; and A. F. Dunbar.20

The matter of profits was revised quickly after the
theatre opened, when Placide found it was impossible to ful-
fill the requirements regarding eight per cent interest. The
Variété members thereupon agreed that the aim of the Associ­
ation should be to provide high-class entertainment and not
to declare dividends. The concession would not affect the
manager, who could keep his earnings. Later, in May, 1855,

20Kendall, op. cit., p. 330.
the ground on which the theatre stood was to be transferred to the Variété Association for the sum of $18,000.\textsuperscript{21} Placide promoted $15,000 himself to erect the structure.\textsuperscript{22} The cost of the theatre was $28,825.97. James H. Caldwell was given the honor of laying the cornerstone. When completed, the theatre was an attractive brick structure.\textsuperscript{23} Part of the building housed a club room for members, as was provided in both succeeding Varieties Theatres. Above the ground floor were two tiers, and the house seated about 1,200 persons.

\textit{(New Orleans Times, Sunday, April 11, 1880.)} The first Varieties Theatre, the first theatre in New Orleans to be erected by a joint stock company, opened on December 8, 1849. The original stock company, gathered by Placide, was headed by Charles Howard and his wife Rosina Shaw Howard, also known professionally as Rose Watkins, and Charles Bass, actor and stage manager. Throughout the winter, the entertainment at the Varieties consisted of light comedy, farce and variety.\textsuperscript{24}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{21}Kendall, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 331.
  \item \textsuperscript{22}Kleck, \textit{loc. cit.; Times-Picayune}, October 21, 1951.
  \item \textsuperscript{23}Kendall, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 332.
  \item \textsuperscript{24}Ibid., pp. 333-34.
\end{itemize}
In the second season at Placide's Varieties, W. H. Chippendale was engaged as acting manager, while Charles Bass was retained as stage manager. The stock company was displayed that season in comedy, variety, opera, farce, classic drama and ballet. In January, 1851, Thomas Placide presented his actor brother, Henry, for an engagement of four weeks. Thomas appeared with Henry in many classic English comedies in the latter's repertoire, including A Comedy of Errors and The Rivals. George Holland emerged that year as lead actor of the stock company. In the 1851-1852 season, the Montplaisir Ballet Troupe was retained for the whole season. The prominent troupe had recently scored a major success at the Broadway Theatre, New York. Charles Bass continued as stage manager. Again, the season featured light comedy and variety.

Highlight of the 1852-1853 season was the appearance at the Varieties of actress Lola Montez. The Spanish-Irish adventuress had risen from begging on the streets of Brussels to become the mistress of the King of Bavaria and the Countess of Lanfeld. The fiery lady had fallen from her high estate, was earning her living by acting, and appeared in a

\[25\text{Ibid.}, \text{ pp. 334-35.}\]
play depicting her own unique life. The drama was called
\textit{Lola Montez in Bavaria}. \textsuperscript{26}

Heading the company during the 1853-1854 season were
George Holland, Tom Placide, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Howard and
Mr. and Mrs. George T. Rowe. J. H. Calder was treasurer,
George Rowe was stage manager and Robert Myers was orchestra
leader. Highlights that season were a production of \textit{The
Rivals} with Mrs. Rowe as Mrs. Malaprop and the presentation
of the famous Bateman children who played the leads in
classical and popular plays, most notably in \textit{Richard III} and
\textit{Merchant of Venice}. The children were Kate, ten years old,
and her sister Ellen, only eight years. Their father
Colonel H. L. Bateman acted with the children who took adult
leads. They were presented by P. T. Barnum. (\textit{New Orleans
Times}, April 11, 1880.) The last season at the theatre
opened on November 19, 1854. Mr. and Mrs. Barton Hill were
engaged to replace the Charles Howards. Only three days
after the theatre opened, and before the Hills had an
opportunity to appear, while they were enroute to the
Varieties, the theatre burned to the ground. The Ravel
troupe, variety artists, were appearing in variety and

\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 338; \textit{Times-Picayune}, Sunday, October 21,
1951.
pantomime, and used fire in a number. It is thought that they accidentally began the fire on November 21, which not only destroyed the theatre but also half of a city block. The property loss was over $100,000. Placide had virtually no insurance, with only $3,000 of insurance on the completely destroyed wardrobe. The Hills hurried to New Orleans to join the company, and with the help of Caldwell, Placide and the Variété Association leased the theatre on St. Charles Street later known as the Academy of Music, then called the Pelican Theatre.  

Meanwhile, the Variété Association built a bigger and more beautiful playhouse on the site of the first Varieties. The new building, constructed of brick as was its predecessor, was four stories high, with the clubroom for Variété members built under the auditorium. The feature required theatre patrons to ascend a flight of stairs to reach the parquette. The new theatre was regarded as one of the most elegant in the country.  

At first, the second Varieties was called the Gaiety Theatre. Thomas Placide was not recalled immediately as manager. Dion Boucicault was chosen as the manager. The

27 Ibid., pp. 349-50.  
28 Ibid., p. 359.
actor-dramatist proved to be unsuccessful as a theatre manager, and his efforts to bring to the Gaiety the successes of the Varieties met with utter failure. H. G. Conway was Boucicault's stage manager and Fred N. Thayer served as assistant manager. Boucicault and his wife served as stars of the stock company, and took part in almost every performance, Mrs. Boucicault being billed under her maiden name, Agnes Robertson. The third chief member of the company was John E. Owens, the talented comedian, who was not only destined to become a celebrated comedy star, but was to play a large role in shaping theatrical history at the third Varieties as well as the second playhouse by acting for decades at the theatres. In only three months, Boucicault was said to have realized his error in attempting to serve as manager as well as actor, and on March 9, 1858, he broke his contract and left the city. The Variété Association secured the services next of W. H. Crisp, an experienced actor and manager. In less than a week after Boucicault's departure, Crisp opened in the double bill, Wreck Ashore and Faint Heart Ne'er Won Fair Lady. Both Crisp and his wife starred in the productions. Crisp brought to the theatre several prominent stars, including Matilda Heron, the English comedienne Mrs. Walter Cherri, Eliza Logan and the English
tragedian James Anderson. The next season proved a financial disaster, despite the fact that the excellent actor Conrad Clarke headed the stock company and despite the impressive succession of stars that visited the Gaiety that year. These included the names of such prominent players as Edwin Booth, Mr. and Mrs. John Drew and Miss J. M. Davenport. Financial crisis necessitated the abrupt closing of the theatre early in February, 1858.

When the Variété members realized at last their mistake in dismissing Placide and changing the name of their theatre, the double error was rectified in the season of 1858-1859. Tom Placide returned as manager, and the Gaiety reverted to its original name, the Varieties Theatre. Placide opened the season with the impressive bill of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*. Placide doubled as actor and manager, while John Sefton doubled as leading actor and manager of the company. During this season, Adah Issacs Menken appeared at the Varieties. The season proved to be unremunerative financially, and Placide gave up his lease. The Variété Association found it difficult to replace Placide since the new theatre had proved economically

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unsound for each of its past managers. At length, they hit upon the plan of managing the theatre themselves. According to an interview in 1906 with Henry W. Conner, a senior member of the Variété Association, published in the *Times Democrat* a special committee was appointed to manage the theatre. *(Times Democrat, Wednesday, May 2, 1906.)* Heading the committee were James J. Donnegan and Charles A. Taylor, two of the club's most important members. John E. Owens was appointed as dramatic director. Connor regarded the resulting combination as a move of genius, with spectacular results. Assembled was a brilliant company headed by J. H. Wallack as stage manager. "The company gathered was . . . the best ever assembled for a season," Connor reminisced.

. . . At that time long runs for one play were practically unheard of, but we put on 'The Cricket on the Hearth' with Charlotte Thompson as Dot. . . . It ran for six consecutive weeks, something usually out of the question in those days. *(Times Democrat, Wednesday, May 2, 1906.)*

Owens appeared in the play as Caleb Plummer for the first time. He later made theatrical history in the role. Other highlights that season included John Owens in *Everybody's Friend* as Major Wellington de Boots, a part he was to repeat many times at the third Varieties, and E. A. Sothern in *Our*
American Cousin. 30

The season of 1860-1861 recalled Owens as artistic director. Charlotte Thompson and M. W. Leffingwell headed the acting company that year. The season was disturbed by the prospect of War between the States. When the storm broke, the Varieties did not open for the 1861-1862 season, and Owens did not return to the theatre in a managerial capacity.31

After remaining dark for eighteen months, the second Varieties was reopened in 1862 by actor-manager John Lewis Baker. Baker's second season, 1863-1864, was more auspicious than his first; for in the summer of 1863 Baker formed a partnership with Lawrence Barrett, one of the most prominent names to be associated with the third Varieties Theatre. A third partner, actor Dan Setchell, joined the others to form a corporation, and the lease for the new season was transferred to the three. At this time, Barrett was still only an actor of great promise, but of small achievement, who had served as a Captain in the Twenty-Eighth Massachusetts Volunteers during the early years of the Civil War. Barrett

30Ibid., pp. 379-81.
31Ibid., p. 391.
made his debut on the New Orleans stage on October 31, 1863, as Alfred Evelyn in *Money*. The actor then made his debut on November 3, in *Hamlet*, which is claimed as a momentous episode in his career. For it was as Hamlet and in other Shakespearian roles that Barrett was to win international fame. Thereafter, Barrett appeared in *The Lady of Lyons*, *The Stranger*, *Richard III* and other serious drama. He became a favorite with the New Orleans public and attracted enthusiastic crowds wherever he appeared. Setchell's broad comedy style served, too, to attract throngs to the theatre. Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Baker and Joseph Barrett (unrelated to Lawrence) and his wife, Viola Barrett, were other prominent members of the company. The season was a financial and artistic success.32

During the 1863-1864 season, Barrett starred in a number of plays that were to become familiar as a standard part of his repertoire, such as *Rosedale* and *The Ticket of Leave Man*. This season ended amid great satisfaction for the three partners. Then Setchell surprised everyone by breaking his contract and engagements and leaving abruptly for Australia. Baker unhappily cancelled the lease of the

Varieties and left New Orleans. Ironically, while enroute to Australia, Setchell was drowned when his ship went down in a storm.

Baker's abrupt termination of the lease was an unlucky event also for the theatre and its patrons. A. S. Fenno, an actor with little knowledge of management, took over the theatre. The result was a year of artistic mediocrity and financial loss. Most important member of the company in the 1864-1865 season was Barton Hill. Hit of the season was Lawrence Barrett's return in March in classics and popular contemporary drama. Fenno retired from management at the end of the season.\footnote{Ibid., p. 399.}

For the next five years, beginning with the season 1865-1866, the Varieties was under the management of W. R. Floyd, regarded as one of the top actor-stage managers of his day. John Lewis Baker returned as assistant stage manager and character man. Heading the women of the company was Mrs. F. S. Chanfrau as leading lady. Mrs. Chanfrau, a distinguished actress, was to be featured prominently in the activities of the third Varieties Theatre, where she served as both manager and star. Leading man of the company was
Bernard Macauley. The 1866-1867 season, unlike the previous season, was not successful financially, despite the efforts of stars such as Joseph Jefferson, Maggie Mitchell and Edwin Adams. The outstanding members of the stock company in the 1867-1868 season were Mrs. William Gomersal and Lewis Morrison. The seasons of 1868-1869 and 1869-1870 were ruinous ones for Floyd financially and exhausted his finances. That manager began matinee performances on Saturday, a favorable idea with the public; but he made the mistake of discontinuing the popular Sunday night performances, a blunder that was said to cost him a fortune. Consequently, he rectified the error toward the end of the season. Mary Gladstone and Frank S. Chanfrau were the most popular members of the stock company that year. In Floyd's last season of 1869-1870 he brought to the Varieties such famous stars as Mrs. Scott-Siddons, John Brougham, Joseph Jefferson and Charlotte Thompson.34

The final season at the second Varieties Theatre began on November 8, 1870, with John Lewis Baker serving once again as manager. Early in December, there was excitement over the announced forthcoming production of The Three Guardsmen, a

34Ibid., pp. 404-16.
play, however, that was not destined to be performed. On December 2, 1870, about 4:30 A.M., the watchman at the Varieties discovered that the stage of the theatre was ablaze. Although he reported the fire instantly, the flames spread so rapidly, that the firemen were unable to save the building. Within a few hours, the second Varieties Theatre was only a mass of smoldering ruins. All of the theatre's scenery, properties and costumes were destroyed. More tragically, several prominent citizens who served as volunteer firemen were killed when a wall of the theatre collapsed, burying the victims in the ruins.35

The stock company which had only just begun the season was given a benefit by Lawrence Barrett, then appearing at the St. Charles; and Henry Greenwall, who was destined to become the most prominent manager at the Grand Opera House (the third Varieties), came to the rescue of the company by offering them all jobs at his theatre in Galveston, Texas.36

The Variété Association took their loss philosophically, and determined immediately to "build a third and finer theatre."37 The two lots on Gravier Street upon which the

36Ibid., p. 420.  
37Ibid., p. 421.
earlier two theatres had stood were sold on May 12, 1871—
one bringing a sum of $11,250 and the other $19,550, or a
total of $30,800. Added to this sum was $64,000 representing
the insurance on the destroyed theatre. With this capital,
the Variété Association now sought a new and more impressive
site for the building of the future playhouse, the theatre
which was to become the third Varieties Theatre. (Picayune,
Sunday, May 13, 1906.)

It was to the most prominent street in New Orleans,
Canal Street, which—then as now—was New Orleans' main
street, that the Association turned to find their ideal loca-
tion for the new theatre. Their search was successful, for
they were able to purchase in February, 1871, several lots
of ground on a site in the square bounded by Canal, Dauphine,
Customhouse (now Iberville) and Bienville streets. They
could not have found a more prominent location for their new
theatre. The precise location included a Grecian-type
building, the right-end building of the "Three Sisters," a
multiple cluster of buildings which had been one of the most
imposing structures in the city of New Orleans. The "Three
Sisters" was composed of several adjoining mansions, and the
structure's history is an interesting one. The "Three
I. VIEUX CARRÉ SHOWING LOCATION OF THE THIRD VARIETIES THEATRE
Sisters" was originally called Union Terrace, according to Gibson's Guide of 1840. The block of buildings is described as an elegant edifice "... now raising its beautiful Ionic facade on the lower side of Canal Street, opposite the State House." Of these several private residences, Gibson's Guide states that their "... interior arrangements and architectural taste are in perfect keeping with their exterior chastity of design." Of their origin, the Guide says that they were erected in the years 1836-1837 at a cost of $100,000, "... from the designs and under the immediate direction of Messrs. Dakin and Dakin, architects."^39

According to information obtained from the New Orleans Notarial Archives, George T. Dunbar, a civil engineer, made a drawing of the property of and adjacent to the multiple project. The site of the manifold structure was sometimes called, beside Union Terrace, Lafayette Terrace or Pritchard Row. The Daily True Delta of April 26, 1860, speaks of an


39Ibid.

40Plan Book 23A, Folio #57, Plan of Three Lots #25.
auction to be conducted at Pritchard Row next to Christ Church, of property belonging to Richard O. Pritchard. A legend has it that the multiple structure had been commissioned by a wealthy New Orleans citizen for residences for his three daughters, and that in less than a decade Canal Street had become too commercial an area to suit the elite sisters and they sought residences in more suburban areas. This legend has proved to be false, however. Actually, the multiple building was erected by several separate owners who exchanged the various parts of the property among themselves in a very complex manner. The several original owners were in fact Martin D. Bringier, Richard O. Pritchard, W. E. and James Henry Leverich, Seaman Field and H. Field, brothers, and later, William A. Gasquet. Many complex records in the notarial archives of the parish of Orleans show how the various lots of ground were sold back and forth, before the "Three Sisters" was built. For example, concerning one segment of the property, Notary William Boswell recorded the sale of lot 3 on Plan 25 by Leverich to Pritchard in January, 1833.41 James Leverich sold his property to William A. Gasquet.

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41 Vol. 38, f. 137, 28 January, 1836.
II. ORIGINAL PLAN OF LOTS OF "THREE SISTERS" BUILDINGS
Gasquet in June, 1833 and so on, back and forth. Tracing the change of hands of an actual portion of property forming the site of the Varieties Theatre, from the first recorded owner onward, is of more pertinent interest to this study. William Amadee Gasquet procured said property from Janes Harvey Leverich in 1835. Seaman and H. Field bought said property from William Gasquet in 1836. William Gasquet procured said property from Martin D. Bringier in 1836. Richard O. Pritchard procured said property from Gasquet in 1836. New Orleans Gas Light and Banking Company bought said property from Pritchard in 1837. The Bank of Louisiana bought said property from the New Orleans Gas Light and Banking Company, and the bank sold the property to Stephen D. McNeil in 1848. Mrs. Eliza Ann Kennedy sold said property

42 Vol. 34, f. 646, 14 May, 1835.
43 Notary William Boswell, May 14, 1835.
45 William Christy, Notary, March 15, 1836.
Returning now to the original owners of the "Three Sisters," William A. Gasquet acquired all the property from his various associates, Martin D. Bringier, Richard O. Pritchard, Seaman and H. Field, and W. E. and J. H. Leverich. Pritchard bought the section that became the Varieties Theatre from Gasquet on March 28, 1836. Seaman Field, who owned the adjacent section, mortgaged his part of the property with the buildings on June 26, 1837, to the New Orleans Gas Light and Bank Company for $25,000. When W. A. Gasquet sold the other end building on July 10, 1841, before the Notary L. T. Caire to Alexander Grant, the price of the property was $38,960. The New Orleans Republican gives an account on February 17, 1871, when announcing the purchase of the new property by the Variété Association:

The Variété Association has selected a site on Canal Street, between Burgundy and Dauphine, for its new theatre. The precise location is known as one of the "Three Sisters," a very imposing building, which was originally constructed for private residences, but which never pursued its destiny, because it was in a place which business demanded should be devoted to something more

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49 N. B. Trist, Notary, February 21, 1848, Vol. 98, p. 413.

50 Vol. 81, f. 458.
III. ARCHITECTURAL PLAN OF "THREE SISTERS" BUILDINGS
positive than the soft dalliance of domestic bliss. It has never been a profitable venture, we suppose, having failed first as a family altar, then as a grand hotel, and thirdly as a business resort. Its construction impairs its usefulness as one of the temples of trade. Fortunately, one end of it has fallen into competent hands as a restaurant, and now the other end of it has "come into its own" by being adapted as a theatre. It is supposable that between these two stools, the center building will soon drop into line and prove a benefit to the public and a profit to its owner.

The particular building or section of the "Three Sisters" which has been secured by the Varieties Association is that one next to Christ Church, and running back to an alley that connects with Burgundy Street, and to a vacant lot that fronts Customhouse Street. It is suspected that the Association will secure the vacant property, and thus give the new theatre three outlets, one on Canal, one on Burgundy and one on Customhouse Street. It is suspected also that the theatre itself will be built on the rear lot, something as Niblo's is constructed in New York, which is only reached after going through the Metropolitan Hotel. That is, the main entrance will be through the basement of the front building back to the theatre proper in the rear. The upper room of the main architectural adornment on Canal Street will furnish club rooms and private apartments for the association and the theatre; and if that building never saw any suppers and sights before, it is in a fair way to make up for lost time, now, for in the profound recesses . . . the Mystic Crew will hold its hidden artifices . . . (Republican, February 17, 1871.)

From the account above, it is seen that the "Three Sisters" had been after its days as an exclusive residence, a commercial hotel, and then a house of business, while the
left end was then a restaurant, identified in later accounts as Victor's Restaurant. Moreover, the left wing was identical with the right building purchased by the Variété Association for the front portion of the third Varieties. Just next to the Variété Association property on Canal Street, Christ Church stood. That the flurry at the Varieties might have caused a certain amount of disturbance to the peace and privacy of the church is seen in the fact that soon after the Varieties was opened, Christ Church erected a fence between the two properties. "Part of the repairs to Christ Church were authorized to include ... a fence installation between the church and the Varieties Theatre next door." 51

The Republican indicates that besides the Variété Association clubrooms established in an area above the playhouse, the exclusive Mardi Gras organization, the Mystic Club, had meeting rooms in the property.

The new property consisted of three lots on Customhouse Street with a long, narrow extension running to Canal Street. 52 The New Orleans Notarial Archives provide the records of the sale of the several properties to the Variété


52 Kendall, op. cit., p. 421.
Association from the private owners. In each transaction, Nicholas Browse Trist served as notary, and each contract bears the names of several of the officers of the Variété Association, notably that of M. O. H. Norton who was then president of the Club. The sale of two of the pieces of property was recorded on February 21, 1871, and the third was recorded on February 23, 1871. The first contract (Contract No. 379) was for the sale by Mrs. Eliza Ann Kennedy, widow of the late Stephen D. McNeil of a "lot of ground and all buildings and improvements thereon . . . in the square bordered by Canal, Dauphine, Custom House and Burgundy streets . . . measuring . . . thirty-three feet ten inches on Canal Street between Dauphine and Burgundy by 140 feet in depth being bounded in the rear by an alley twenty-two feet wide running parallel with Canal Street. . . ." The lots composed "the whole of lot number one and part of lot number two . . . on a plan drawn by Underhill and Strong, and William McCawley . . . on 20 June, 1829 . . . sale made for the sum of seven thousand dollars in part payment of 17500 dollars." The contract of sale was witnessed by Victor

Olivier, Jr. and Arch. Montgomery, representing the Variété Association; by Thomas K. Mc Neil, Joseph Mc Neil and Kate Mc Neil, representing the owner, and by Notary N. B. Trist.

On the same day, Trist drew up the contract (Contract No. 380) in which Smithson Higgenbotham Davis, Jr. sold to the Variété Association:

... a certain lot of ground with all buildings ... in the Second District, in the square bounded by Burgundy, Dauphine, Canal and Custom House streets ... measuring 30 feet six inches on Burgundy by 100 and 15 feet five inches ... as assigned on the 18th day of April 1868 at a sheriff's sale by virtue of a seizure and sale by Fifth District Court in the suit of Smithson H. Davis vs. Charles M. Strong ... the sale made and accepted for the sum of five thousand 600 dollars.

The contract was witnessed and signed by M. O. H. Norton, Arch. Montgomery, and Victor Olivier, Jr., representing the Variété Association; S. H. Davis, owner; and N. B. Trist.

The third and largest sale of property to the Association, recorded on February 23, 1871 (Contract No. 381), transferred to them property of Mrs. Eliza Julia Nixon, widow of the late Jasper Strong. The property sold as recorded is described as:

... in the Second District ... bounded by Custom House, Canal, Burgundy and Dauphine streets, measuring English measure, eighty-one feet front on Custom House by 160 feet six inches in depth ... composed of lot
number fourteen and the adjoining lot number thirteen on a plan of Joseph Pilie, city sur­veyor, dated December 10, 1827 . . . , and a strip of land four feet front on said Custom House Street being part of lot number twelve on said plan, with the aforesaid depth of 160 feet six inches. The said property was assigned by the present vendor as follows the undivided five sevenths from her late husband Joseph Strong by last will and testament . . . on the 20 day of June, 1866, and the remaining two sevenths she acquired by purchase from her daughter Mrs. Mertona M. Strong, wife of Harry Giburn . . . on the eleventh day of April, 1867. . . . This sale is made and accepted for . . . the price and sum of fifteen thousand dollars . . . whereas the Variété Association does assume the payment of two promissory notes . . . one note for the sum of 7000 dollars, the other for the sum of 5000 dollars, which notes have been reduced by partial payment to 8000 dollars.

This contract was signed by Messrs. Norton, Montgomery and Olivier, Jr., of the Variété Association; by Mrs. Strong, owner; and by Trist.

Within two days, consequently, the Variété Association had secured the three adjoining properties. A fortnight later, on March 8, 1871, the Association had hired B. M. Harrod, the foremost architect in the city, and recorded the building contract (Contract No. 384) for the new theatre with the firm of Aubert and Jordan for the sum of $37,000:

... William A. Jordan and Lemmel C. Aubert, builders, parties of the first part, and Mr. M. O. H. Norton, herein acting in his capacity of President of La Variété Association of New Orleans duly incorporated according to law, party of the second part. . . .
The contract stipulated that the building was to be of brick, and was to be built according to the specifications of B. M. Harrod, architect:

... The said parties of the first part do hereby agree and bind themselves "in solido" that they will in their own cost and charge furnish all the materials necessary for the purpose of making all the brickwork, of a theatre to be erected by said association on a lot of ground on Custom House Street between Dauphine and Burgundy Streets, in accordance with the plans and specifications made by B. M. Harrod, architect. ... It is agreed and understood that the whole of said work to be done by said parties of the first part shall be under the direction and supervision of the said B. M. Harrod. ... And in consideration of the said agreement and contract, the said La Variété Association binds itself to pay unto the said parties of the first part ... the sum of 37,000 dollars.

The contract was signed by William A. Jordan, L. C. Aubert, M. O. H. Norton, Arch. Montgomery, Martin Jordan, Jr., and by Notary N. B. Trist.

The joiners work of the theatre was given to the firm of Robert Huygee and Ambrose Burton; and by the contract (Contract No. 390), recorded on March 28, 1871, it is seen that a building committee had been appointed by La Variété Association of which Duncan F. Kenner was chairman, and that the job cost $5,500:

Contract between Robert Huygee and Ambrose Burton, builders, parties of the first part, and Duncan F. Kenner, Chairman of Building Committee of La Variété
Association, party of the second part. . . . The said parties of the first part do hereby agree and bind themselves "in solido" that they will at their own cost and charge furnish all the materials necessary for the Joiners work of the Theatre . . . and in consideration of the said agreement and contract the said La Variété Association binds itself to pay unto the said parties of the first part the sum of 5,500 dollars.

The contract for the stairway is of special importance, for when built, the theatre proved to be "... one of the most elegant in the South, famous especially for the magnificent staircase which occupied virtually all of the lot opening on Canal Street, rising in a series of easy flights to the level of the theatre, further back in the heart of the block." Many are the references to the stairway of the third Varieties or Grand Opera House in the newspapers of the day, periodicals, books and guide books; and one of the popular photos of the day depicts this stairway. This photograph is one of the more famous ones of the celebrated stairway, and was published originally in The City of New Orleans, the Book of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Louisiana. The contract for the third Varieties' stairway

54Kendall, op. cit., p. 421.

55The City of New Orleans, the Book of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Louisiana (New Orleans: Engelhardt, George, Publisher, 1894), p. 101.
IV. FLOOR PLAN OF THEATRE
(Contract No. 400) was made with Charles Lawson, on April 28, 1871. The Variété Association paid Lawson $4,550 for executing the artistic project. The contract reads in part:

... Contract for Stairway ... between Charles Lawson, party of the first part, and Duncan F. Kenner, Chairman, Building committee of La Variété Association ... to be built and supervised by B. M. Harrod, Architect ... in consideration of said agreement ... the Variété Association binds itself to pay the sum of 4,550 dollars.

The contract is signed by Charles Lawson; Duncan F. Kenner, Chairman, building committee; N. B. Trist, notary; and by Victor Olivier, Jr., and Arch. Montgomery, Variété members.

The final contract concerning building materials for the third Varieties as deposited in the Notarial Archives is the Coppersmith's contract (Contract No. 408), drawn up on May 10, 1871, and which names Philip McCabe as Coppersmith for the theatre, and assures him the sum of $800 for his work. The contract reads in part:

... Philip McCabe, party of the first part ... does hereby agree to furnish all the materials necessary for coppersmith's work for the theatre ... according to the plans and specifications made by B. M. Harrod, Architect ... in consideration of which the party of the second part ... Duncan F. Kenner, Building chairman, La Variété Association, agrees to pay the sum of eight hundred dollars.

The contract is signed by Duncan F. Kenner, Chairman; Philip
McCabe; N. B. Trist, Notary; and Arch. Montgomery and Victor Olivier, Jr.

From time to time, newspaper items during the spring and summer of 1871 kept the New Orleans public informed concerning the progress of construction of the third Varieties. Several items from the New Orleans Republican concerning the actual building, height and thickness of walls, and the origin and quantity of bricks used are of interest. On March 15, 1871, the newspaper states:

Behind the curtain of the Three Sisters, on Canal Street, the workmen are tearing up the ground and hunting in the earth for a solid foundation on which to rear the new dramatic temple of La Variété Association. No sign is visible from the front, nor need be, for which the auditorium and stage are being constructed in the rear, the public need not know how a rough and dismal marble yard, but yesterday filled with solid blocks of granite and ghastly tombstones, will tomorrow be transformed into bowers, and grottos. . . . Behind the curtain of stuccoed brick, on Canal Street, there is now taking place a transformation scene that will eclipse all the mechanical devices of the stage. And yet, there is no charge for those who go to see the show. We shall see the end of the act in the fall.

On April 8, the Republican commented:

The walls of the new Varieties Theatre are rising with surprising rapidity, being already from twelve to fifteen feet high. They are very thick, about thirty-four inches, and present the appearance of very great strength.

And on April 12, 1871, the same newspaper stated: "The bricks
for the Varieties Theatre are manufactured at Baton Rouge and brought here in steam barges. The order is for seven hundred thousand bricks." Other announcements in the Republican concerned the progress of building and bids and proposals for the varied and detailed work in the theatre. On April 13, 1871, the Republican announced: "To builders,—Sealed proposals will be received at the office of La Variété Association . . . for coppersmith work, slating, flooring and stair building of a new theatre . . . . B. M. Harrod." As a result of this announcement, Philip McCabe was chosen as coppersmith and Charles Lawson was chosen to build the beautiful stairway; the contracts for which have already been viewed.

By July, 1871, newspaper items noted much progress in the building of the new Varieties. On July 15, the Republican noted that "... the roof of the new Varieties Theatre is almost complete, and the brick work nearly finished. Brick Jordan will soon work himself out of a job. The roof can be plainly seen from the south side of Canal Street." On July 20, the same paper observed: "B. M. Harrod, architect of the new Varieties Theatre, invites proposals for the gas fittings of that edifice, until three o'clock next Wednesday."
An item of July 2, 1871, in the Republican noted that John Crickard, who was a member of the Variété Association, had leased the still uncompleted theatre. The Notarial Archives records the contract between the Variété Association and Crickard. This contract, although later rescinded when, before one season was over, Lawrence Barrett became lessee, proves interesting, for it gives the name of the new president and vice-president of the Variété Association:

Contract to Lease Theatre

... Thomas M. Simmons, President and Davidson B. Penn, Vice President, La Variété Association, party of the first part, and Mr. John Crickard, party of the second part ... to Mr. John Crickard ... the lease of the Theatre for two years, commencing with July 1, 1871, until July 1, 1873 ... the building known as the new Varieties Theatre of New Orleans ... for the sum of 8,000 dollars the first year and 10,000 dollars the second year ... to which the said Mr. Crickard agrees ... to keep, preserve and return all said building and its accessories and all ... scenery, properties and other things whatsoever. ...

Mr. Crickard is identified by Augustus Pitou, a member of the first stock company at the new Varieties, as a member of the Variété Club, who leased the theatre but engaged Lawrence Barrett as manager.  

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56 Contract No. 414, Notary Nicholas Browse Trist, Acts No. 3, July 5, 1871.

V. THEATRE IN 1873

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The actual opening date was anticipated correctly as December 4, 1871, as early as July 16, 1871. On this date, the Picayune's drama critic of the column, "The Stage, at Home and Abroad," states: "It is expected that the new Varieties Theatre will be opened for the season, on the fourth of December next, under the management of Mr. Lawrence Barrett." From this time, the Picayune revealed curiosity and interest in the future theatre, and speculated upon proposed policy. The booking of stars was standard policy of theatres of the day, in order to enhance interest from and patronage by the public. The anonymous drama critic of the Picayune showed concern lest Lawrence Barrett would assume the unfortunate policy at the new theatre of booking stars with companies that were poor in quality because they were underpaid. At the same time, the newspaper announced that John E. Ownes had been chosen to appear as the new Varieties' first star.

As the new Varieties Theatre (much to our disappointment) is to be given over to the run of "stars," we trust that Manager Barrett will furnish the genuine commodity. His first star has been well chosen. It is always delightful to meet Mr. John E. Ownes either on or off the stage. . . . Yet it would, we think, be sound policy in Manager Barrett to allow intervals through the season for stock representations, if only to show that he is not exclusively dependent on "stars" for the success of his theatre. (Picayune, Sunday, July 23, 1871.)
The new manager had secured, as early as July, the services of the leading star to open the theatre. The Picayune's concern over the caliber of the company continued. The newspaper stated that the new theatre was the subject of much concern and interest in theatrical circles all over the country. Prominent New York theatrical critics were taking note of the yet uncompleted New Orleans theatre and its future proposed activities in the summer of 1871.

We are privately advised that Manager Barrett has the ambition and is resolved to make the new Varieties a first-class theatre, and, publicly, per theatrical papers, that Mr. Morris Simmonds, dramatic agent in New York [sic], "Has already selected a full and strong stock company for the theatre." We hope so, for to run "stars" upon "sticks" is neither profitable nor reputable. We should be pleased to see the names of the company, at the manager's earliest convenience. . . . (Picayune, Sunday, August 6, 1871.)

It is learned from this newspaper article that Barrett was currently active at the Booth Theatre in New York, and at this time was attempting to serve his interests in New York and in New Orleans simultaneously. The article continues:

. . . The New York Express states that Mr. Lawrence Barrett's management of the new Varieties Theatre, New Orleans, will not cause a disruption of his relations with Booth's Theatre, New York. Now how can Mr. Barrett maintain his relations with Booth's Theatre, and manage the new Varieties in New Orleans? If he accomplishes the feat, a proverb will be broken. (Picayune, Sunday, August 6, 1871.)
By September, qualms of the Picayune were easing as the impressive theatre building neared completion. The paper noted on Sunday, September 3, "Varieties Theatre--The work on this building is rapidly approaching a state of completion."

And on Sunday, September 10, the same paper said:

The Varieties Theatre is . . . being pushed rapidly forward, . . . When completed, the Varieties will be one of the most beautiful theatres in the country. . . . Mr. Lawrence Barrett . . . has already engaged a stock company of acknowledged talent and deserved reputation in the country. . . .

On November 12, the Picayune and Times newspapers satisfied at last the mounting curiosity of the people of New Orleans and the theatrical circles of the whole country, when the papers published the names of the stars engaged for the first part of the forthcoming first season at the Varieties, along with names of members of the stock company and names of the top aides to Barrett. It was announced that John E. Owens, Joseph Jefferson, Edwin Adams and Lawrence Barrett had already been engaged as stars to appear during the first season. The staff of the theatre was announced as the following: Lawrence Barrett, Director; Lorraine Rogers, Business Manager; John Selwyn, Stage Manager. The stock company was announced as follows: Lizzie Price from
Wallack's Theatre, New York and Mrs. John Drew's Arch Theatre, Philadelphia; Marie E. Gordon from New York and California theatres; George Clarke from the Fifth Avenue and Wallack's New York theatres; Augustus Pitou from Booth's Theatre, New York; Dominick Murray from London and New York theatres; Stuart Robson from Boston and New York theatres; and Ione Burke, Emma Marble, Edith Challis, Emma Maddern, Rose Wood, Emma Cline, Mary Carr, Georgia Reynolds, Rose Telbin, Mrs. Frank Murdoch, Harold Forsberg, George Holland, Jr., F. Fisher, Frank Murdoch, T. J. Hind, T. Goodsen, George Ryer, H. Marston, John Howson, C. H. Freye, George Herbert, R. J. Browne and Mr. Breltford. (Picayune, Sunday, November 12, 1871.)

In his autobiography, Masters of the Show, Augustus Pitou gives a picture of the first season at the Varieties, and clarifies Lawrence Barrett's position as the first manager at the theatre:

In 1870 [sic] and 71, the Varieties Club of New Orleans was building on Canal Street in that city a theatre that was to be called the Varieties Theatre. One of the members of the club [John Crickard] leased the theatre and engaged Lawrence Barrett as manager, with the understanding that Mr. Barrett was to play his usual star engagements throughout the country, including a four or six weeks' engagement in New Orleans at the Varieties Theatre. Mr. Barrett, who at that time was supporting Edwin Booth at Booth's Theatre in New York, organized a large
company of capable persons, most of whom were New York favorites, and assigned two representatives to each of the important lines of business. I gladly accepted Mr. Barrett's offer to become a member of the company he was forming. . . .

The new theatre was first described in some detail in the German-language New Orleans newspaper, the Tagliche Deutsche Zeitung on September 5, 1871; and an even more detailed description appeared in the New Orleans Times on Sunday, November 12, 1871, with information concerning the theatre and its construction. Because the Times description is the most detailed and most minute account found in any newspaper of the city, and consequently is a valuable picture of the Varieties, it is duplicated here in almost its entirety:

THE NEW VARIETIES THEATRE In February last, the La Variété Club determined to erect a new temple of the drama, to take the place of the old theatre destroyed by fire in December 1870, and a site having been chosen on Canal Street, in the square bounded by Burgundy, Dauphine and Customhouse streets, directly in the rear of the buildings known as the "Three Sisters"; to Mr. B. M. Harrod was entrusted the charge of constructing and superintending the work. After having visited the leading theatres of the North with a view to observe the latest designs and improvements in theatre building, Mr. Harrod returned to the city, and on the first day of March, ground was broken for the erection of the new Varieties theatre, and with such rapidity has its construction gone forward, that

58Pitou, op. cit., p. 82.
now the building is fully complete for the inauguration which is fixed for December. As an ornament to the city and a monument to the enterprise of the gentlemen connected with the club, it is deserving of . . . notice. THE BUILDING, . . . is on Canal Street, adjoining Christ Church, built of brick, and presents an imposing appearance. It is sixty-nine feet in height, with a front of eighty and a depth of one hundred and sixty feet, surmounted by a slate roof, and in the gable-end of the front toward Canal Street, appears the letters "V. T.," curiously worked in the brick. The MAIN ENTRANCE on Canal Street, occupies the entire lower floor of the building next to the church, and is twenty-nine feet wide, extending a distance of seventy feet toward the theatre, where a grand stairway, sixteen feet wide, and consisting of twenty-seven steps in broken flights leads to the dress circle and parquette. In the center, about twenty feet distant from the doorway, is the box office, of an octagonal shape, and handsomely ornamented in white and gold. The walls of the entrance are beautifully decorated in fresco, and from each side a flight of stairs ascends to the second circle. Over the grand staircase, the space is open to the roof, with the exception of a gallery running along each wall, which affords communication to a restaurant located on the second floor above the Canal Street doorway.

DRESS CIRCLE AND PARQUETTE As remarked, this part of the house is reached from Canal Street. The plan observed is similar to that established in the old theatre viz: The parquette and dress circle are on one floor, divided by an iron balustrade with openings at intervals, to give access from one to the other. Here are placed eight hundred patent folding chairs, with cane seats and backs, the same style used at the Cooper Institute in New York. The walls are handsomely painted in French pearl, purple and gold, divided into panels . . . the effect is decidedly pleasing to the eye. That part appropriated to the orchestra is much lower than the body of the auditorium, thus securing an uninterrupted view to the audience near the stage. The boxes are twelve in number, upholstered in the highest style of art, and all . . . being accessible
by stairway from the dress circle. . . . The first
gallery is similar in decoration to the dress circle,
and contains four hundred and fifty chairs of a like
pattern. The second gallery is reached from Burgundy
and Customhouse streets, and being the cheap part
of the theatre, is furnished with benches, but tastily
[sic] decorated. The gallery fronts are of open iron
work, richly colored, and present a neat appearance.

THE DOME is a picture, and a model of the painter's
art, presenting a grand display of fresco, ornamenta-
tion surrounded by painted representations of the
great dramatic authors. Ten feet distant from the
ceiling hangs a magnificent prismatic chandelier, one
of the largest in the country, embellished with two
hundred and fifty burners . . . from which, reflected
by the myriads of glass prisms, will be sufficient to
illumine the house, and withal produces a brilliant
effect. . . . The only other light to be furnished
will be from brackets ranged along the walls

THE STAGE is of extraordinary size, being seventy-
eight feet wide by sixty-eight deep, while the pro-
scenium is thirty-six feet wide and twenty-six feet
high. Up in the "flies" the vast amount of machinery,
etc., requisite to work the scenery, seems of a
complicated nature, but all is so perfectly arranged,
that the labor will be quickly and correctly performed.
Here, too, is the scene paint store room, where all
the modern appliances and inventions, and scenes are
manufactured in short order. The grooves for the
scenery are a modification of what is called the
"telescopic" pattern, which will allow the edges and
sides of the scenes to be correctly profiled. This
is an invention of Mr. Harrod, the architect, and
presents many advantages over the old style. At the
left of the stage are the stage manager's office,
green room and property room, while beneath the stage
will be twelve dressing rooms.

THE CLUB ROOM is directly beneath the dress circle,
the apartment devoted to that purpose being sixteen
feet high by forty-eight in depth and sixty-eight
wide. It is furnished with every appliance for luxury
and comfort, and from which its members will obtain
ingress to the auditorium by means of stairway, on either side. The total seating capacity of the house is eighteen hundred, and as ample ventilation has been secured by means of the dome and windows, the house will be comfortable, even in warm weather.

Adjoining the theatre on Burgundy Street has been erected a two-story brick building, the lower floor of which is fitted up as a bar-room and restaurant, while the second story has been set apart for ladies' dressing rooms.

The total cost of the edifice has been ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS. And the temple of the drama worthy to be ranked with the first theatres in the country, has resulted in a work of which the people of the Crescent City may well feel proud. The company engaged for the coming season will be found to contain the names of many who have already made their mark as thorough artists, and as it is the purpose of the management to present a series of refined entertainments, similar to those which have made Wallack's in New York famous the world over, play-goers may look forward with anticipation of no little pleasure to the coming Varieties season.

This description of the third Varieties gives a clear picture of the care and forethought that went into the planning of the theatre's construction.

An excellent description of the drop curtain comes from another source. A patron of the Varieties (unidentified except for the anonymous signature of "The Big Policeman") in a satirical and amusing letter to the editor of the Picayune gives, several years after the theatre opened, a singular account of the original drop curtain at the Varieties. The writer relates:

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The drop curtain at the Varieties Theatre is the most pretentious piece of Thespian canvas in the city; it is undeniably a very beautiful affair but severe critical analysis will reveal many glaring defects in the picture. The greenness of the water as represented by the artist upsets all my ideas of the storied Tiber, with its deep sweep of yellowish mud, and likens that classical sheet to many of our swamp waters... and suggests ideas of mephetic odors. A rather modern looking bridge spans the river, and over it a pale cold melancholy moon throws a sickly coloring midway in the water... with a most unnatural touch.... The sides of the slope are relieved by occasional statues—doubtless intended for Roman heroes. My modesty always receives a cruel shock when looking at these fellows. There they stand in a most indecent state of nudity, looking down tranquilly on the little streams of water... as they rush headlong into the Tiber.... On looking at the picture, the idea forces itself that all Roman citizens lived in public institutions... for there is nothing to be seen but customhouses, freedmen's banks, patent offices and Smithsonian institutions.... In the foreground a woman stands on a piece of land which juts out into the river... as if she has come down for water to make tea or toddy. To the left of the water-woman are four men in rather suggestive positions. Two of them are clutching the third—as a modern policeman would a prisoner.... The fellow has evidently been in bathing and was caught in the act by the patrolman on the beat.... They had just time to put on their clothes when the woman came up for the jar of water.... Across the canvas, to the right, is written the name of the artist, Mr. Pigott. I remember when first I saw this curtain. I never heard of Pigott as a Roman Emperor, yet the conclusion forced itself upon me from the prominence of the name, that Pigott must have been somehow or other conspicuously identified with Rome. (Picayune, Sunday, October 3, 1875.)

The Mr. Pigott of whom the witty Varieties patron speaks is Joseph Pigott, scenic artist of the theatre. The letter remains anonymous since its author who calls himself "The
Big Policeman" admits only to being an amateur actor. This letter is significant since it is the only available description of the first curtain of the Varieties. (A later curtain that was used just prior to the closing of the theatre has been described by several Grand Opera House patrons who were interviewed.)

Imparting additional detail concerning the Variété Association club rooms, the Picayune of May 15, 1906, recalled "... the club rooms with the scenes of Coney Island painted on the wall, and the private entrance to the theatre from these rooms..." Also recalled is the entrance to the theatre "... with columns like those of King Solomon's temple." In his book, New Orleans Masquerade, Arthur Burton LaCour recalls the inner entrance to the theatre: "The entrance of the magnificent new theatre which extended from Canal Street well into the square, consisted of flights of stairs illuminated by gas jets in crystal chandeliers and upright standards." 59

Amplifying the description of the stairway of the theatre, the Picayune of May 13, 1906, reflected that "the magnificent stairway ... cost nearly $70,000." (This sum


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is considerably more than the $4,550 called for in the original contract to build the stairway alone.)

... It is, perhaps, the most unique and striking entrance of any theatre in the country, and its peculiar build was made necessary because of the exiguinity [sic] of the lot on Canal Street and the ample room to be had in the rear lots, upon which the theatre and stage were erected. The imposing flight of stairs, rising in three broad series and two wide rests, and flanked by magnificent carved balusters and ramps supporting at equal intervals at the beginning of each flight, two ornate and gigantic nine-branched chandeliers, giving a brilliant electric light is covered with a superb carpet, stretching from the bottom steps to the utter-most landing. (Picayune, May 15, 1906.)

A more intimate picture is given of the clubroom of the Variété Association, and the qualities of clannishness, excessive consciousness of social hierarchy and utter snobbery as reflected by the members of the Variété Club, all vividly portrayed by the same Picayune article:

... The clubroom of the Variété Association was different from the usual run of social headquarters, in the respect of being one large apartment, instead of being divided into the usual number of parlors, sitting-rooms, library and smoking-rooms and the like. But this room was furnished in most lavish style, with tables, chairs, settees, lounges, comfortable rockers, and racks upon which the principal newspapers and periodicals were on file. The walls were hung with many priceless oil paintings and

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60 At this writing in 1906, the gas jets were replaced by electric light.
water color views, etchings, crayon portraits by foreign and local artists, and some of the portraits and paintings have a real value to the Club besides their artistic worth for they were donated to the Club by visiting celebrities.

One of the pictures was painted by the famous actor, John Drew, and several sketches which are highly prized were presented by Nast, the celebrated artist who achieved such a reputation as a cartoonist for the Northern periodicals many years ago.

(Picayune, Sunday, May 15, 1906.)

John Kendall who visited the clubroom recalls some of the individual art treasures that hung in the exclusive chamber of the Variété Association within the theatre.

Joseph Jefferson painted a treasured landscape in oils that hung over the secretary's desk in the clubroom. There was a sketch by actor-painter Tim Murphy, who also contributed a caricatured miniature of the Jefferson landscape with himself in self-portrait gazing at the picture. Another treasure in the clubroom was a huge album containing one of the finest collections of photos and autographs of actors and actresses to be found in the entire country.61

The Picayune of May 13, 1906, describes the custom of La Variété members concerning the viewing of productions, and the proximity of the clubroom to the theatre proper:

... A unique feature of the clubroom was that it had communication with the theatre through a passage and doorway, so that the members could gain access to the seats during the plays without disturbing the audience. The best seats in the house were for the

61Kendall, op. cit., p. 423.
VI. EARLY PHOTOGRAPH OF THEATRE
WITH CHRIST CHURCH TO LEFT
exclusive use of the members, and it is, by the way, one of the most difficult tasks to become a member of La Variété Club, and to be entitled to free entrance and a stockholder's seat, because the prerequisite for eligibility is that one must be owner of at least one share of stock. As the shares were worth $2,400 [sic] each, it followed that the initiation fee in the La Variété Club was somewhat above the ordinary purse. The members were an exclusive set. They did not fancy intrusion on the part of men whom they did not consider their peers. [This element of social exclusion and restrictive aloofness as found in the Variété Club is duplicated today in many of New Orleans' most exclusive Mardi Gras organizations.] It happened some years ago, that a rich but objectionable man was promptly blackballed, and having applied to the courts for mandamus to compel the club to accept him or compel the association to let him have a stockholder's seat in the theatre, a decision was given in his favor. The members were inconsolable, but Colonel R. W. Simmons and the late Colonel Ed Toby hit upon a plan to get rid of the intruder. They leased all the stockholder's [sic] seats from the club for ninety-nine years for the sum of one dollar, in regular form before a notary, and when the elated litigant came to claim his seat he was immediately confronted with the legal lease and was uncercemoniously ejected. He never returned. (Picayune, May 13, 1906.)

It is difficult to believe that an organization could resort to such extremes of pettiness in order to remain "exclusive," but such was the structure of the group. The above account

62The shares were worth $1,000 at the time of the opening of the theatre; later, in 1872, as will be seen, the par value was raised to $1,600.

63The man's name was Dave Johnson, according to Kendall, op. cit., p. 424.
gives a striking example of the clannishness and consciousness of social superiority manifested by the Variété Association.

The Times-Democrat (Wednesday, May 2, 1906) relates that the restrictive principles upon which the theatre enterprise was founded almost forbade the establishment of a money-making theatre. "... In everything the wishes of the club took precedence. The best seats in the house were permanently set aside for the club members, and after they had been provided for, whatever was left was sold from the window of the box office to the general public." (Times-Democrat, Wednesday, May 2, 1906.) Such a policy was a serious drawback to the prosperity of the theatre. The Times-Democrat states that "managers of traveling combinations strenuously objected to this wholesale appropriation of seats which were often less than half-filled, while the rest of the house was packed, but the rule was invariably enforced, and managers for attractions booked for the Grand Opera House ... knew just what they could count upon." The Variété attitude always reflected their motto, "Devoted to art, not gain," despite the frustration of the theatre's managers. (Times-Democrat, Wednesday, May 2, 1906.)

Just prior to the time that the lots upon which the
new theatre stood were purchased, the charter of the Variété Association was amended and the members' shares of stock increased to 250, at the face value of $1,000 each. On June 7, 1872, a new charter was made by the members for ninety years; the shares were reduced to 200, at the face value of $1,600 each. Later, on May 11, 1888, the number of shares of members' stock was reduced to 120, at $1,600 each. (Picayune, Sunday, May 13, 1906.)

The Variété Club always remained stringent in its exclusiveness. Very few nonmember patrons were ever invited into the clubroom facilities. In the main chamber the privileged visitor could enjoy, according to John Kendall, the beauty of the white and gold columns "... rising out of the floor and vanishing into the ceiling without any apparent architectural justification." These columns indicated the curve of the orchestra wall which rested upon them. A popular feature of the private clubroom was a bar "... at which seductive alcoholic concoctions were served to the thirsty among the membership." In front of the bar were additional pillars "... that corresponded to the position of the parquet in the theatre above and which were the supports that carried the weight of the galleries of the
The only access to the exclusive clubroom was obtained by a "... narrow passageway running alongside of the grand main staircase, ... the theatre's superb feature." Just under the staircase were located a reception room and a small billiard room. Besides the main entrance from Canal Street, there was also a side entrance from Burgundy Street. It was through this entrance that patrons of the gallery were admitted. Many of the former patrons of the Grand Opera House in its latter years who were interviewed for their remembered experiences and associations at the theatre, recall passing through this side entrance as children on their way to the gallery when, with their small allowances, they could not afford the more expensive main entrance seats in the orchestra and dress circle. Others interviewed did enter and emerge through the main entrance, and have described graphically the entrance and stairway. From the collective experiences of these former patrons who were interviewed, an added concept of the beauty of the theatre emerges.

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64 Kendall, op. cit., pp. 422-23. 65 Ibid., p. 423.

66 The bulk of the collective reminiscences of interviewed patrons of the Grand Opera House will be introduced in the period in which these patrons actually attended the theatre, but it is felt that descriptions pertaining to the physical aspects of the theatre are pertinent here.
Theodore "Teddy" Glucksman, whose late brother, Touro Glucksman was a ticket taker and backstage employee at the Grand Opera House for many years, remembers that "... it was very complicated to get into the theatre; there was a long passageway in the front on Canal Street before you got to the theatre. There was a shorter entrance in the back around the side." It was at the latter entrance that Glucksman's brother Touro was stationed in later years of the theatre in order to collect tickets. Waldo Pitkin remembers "... the red carpet and the brass rails on either side of the steps in the beautiful vestibule as you entered. ... The brass rails led up the steps." Mrs. Julius Cahn recalls that the theatre "took up a whole block." Julius Friend (now deceased) recalls the "impressive structure," the "huge flight of steps going up to the upper levels from the vestibule," the "many galleries," and the fact that the theatre "was very big and imposing inside." Louise Guyel insists: "Your generation does not

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67 Interview No. 10, July 6, 1962.
68 Interview No. 1, June 30, 1962.
69 Interview No. 2, 1962.
70 Interview No. 3, Sunday, July 1, 1962.
know what it has missed not knowing the Grand Opera House." Miss Guyel remembers the long walk from Canal Street "from the entrance to the theatre itself." She recalls: "There was a red carpet all along the walk. At the far end of the vestibule was a wide grand stairway going up . . . ." A socially conscious girl when she attended the theatre, she remembers:

The mezzanine was the choice place to be seated, the dress circle it was called. It came way above and out over the parquett, but close to the stage. The beautiful impression made, and the beautiful stairway, I well remember. . . . One had to go up the beautiful red carpeted steps to reach the dress circle. That was the first landing; then the steps continued up to the balconies. . . . 71

Flo Field, writer, novelist and playwright, and a prominent New Orleans name, as a young girl acted upon the stage of the Grand Opera House. Mrs. Field, well known for her book and play, A La Creole, also remembers most vividly the "entrance of red velvet carpeting, . . . the beautiful candelabra, and a gorgeous parquette." Mrs. Field's memory allows her to become most enthusiastic, recalling that

. . . the dress circle was gorgeous. And there was an enormous stage. There were several balconies. . . . The entrance of the theatre was so elegant. The seats were so comfortable and

71 Interview No. 5, July 4, 1962.
plush, not the kind that flip up like today. A feature of the theatre was the orchestra; there was always a magnificent introduction to the plays.\textsuperscript{72}

James Dempsey, president of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, New Orleans Chapter, declared that:

\ldots the Grand Opera House stage was tremendous. There was so much storage space for costumes and props. Everything was kept; not as today, when you just wire to New York for costumes for a play.

Although Dempsey was too young to remember much about the theatre, from the pertinent information he has gathered he states:

\ldots The theatre contained a large property room, scene dock, where scenery was built and stored, and two paint frames for the painting of scenery, drops, and so forth. Very little velour or drapes was used at that time. Other than draperies, they used openings, windows, and so forth. A gas pressure plant was also included before the general use of electricity.\textsuperscript{73}

The late Fred S. Weis, an attorney of New Orleans who when interviewed at eighty-four years was still active in his law practice, adds pertinent information to the theatre's details: "\ldots Christ Episcopal Church was on the corner."

\textsuperscript{72}Interview No. 6, July 4, 1962.

\textsuperscript{73}Interview No. 7, July 4, 1962.
The theatre structure was next door. Flanking the building were two owls, one on either side. . . . Originally, the theatre was gas lighted." Weis recalled that ". . . a man came around with a long taper and lit the lights."74 Mrs. Joseph E. Friend, now deceased, and mother of the late Julius Friend, recalled also when the theatre was gas lighted, and when ". . . before the performance a man would go around with a long taper to light . . . the footlights. . . ."75 The late Albert L. Voss, prominent educator, who taught at Tulane University, and who was for years a collector of dramatic historical objects (and who was most helpful in the gathering of certain data for this dissertation), like the majority of those persons interviewed, remembered vividly the entrance: "I remember the four terraced landings, and the marble stairway. It was all marble. . . ."76 Mrs. Amelia Goldenberg Joseph, like Mrs. Lil Sherman Popkin, recalls that ". . . I didn't go through the front entrance." Instead, as a small child, she went through the "side entrance . . . to sit way up on top of the balcony."77 In discussing the

74 Interview No. 8, July 5, 1962.
75 Interview No. 9, July 5, 1962.
76 Interview No. 11, July 6, 1962.
77 Interview No. 12, July 12, 1962.
singular front entrance of the theatre, Sam Wilson, noted New Orleans architect, who, while not a contemporary of the Grand Opera House, is an architectural historian, throws light on the unique passageway. Wilson notes that the long arch passage through which one had to enter from Canal Street was deceiving, in that the theatre seemed from observation to front right on Canal Street. However, the bottom of the original Union Terrace, or "Lafayette Terrace" building (as Wilson refers to the original structure) was cut through in the interior, he explains, "... to form the beginning of the arcade through which patrons passed before entering the theatre building proper which rested on the back street parallel to Canal Streets." Mrs. Mae Crumb, prominent civic and social leader in New Orleans, recalls the long passageway through which she had to enter to reach the theatre proper. Mrs. Ethel Crumb Brett, daughter of Mrs. Crumb, and herself the Technical Director and Scenic Designer of Le Petit Theatre, although too young to be a contemporary of the Grand Opera House, offered information

77Interview No. 12, July 12, 1962.
78Interview No. 14, July 15, 1962.
79Interview No. 15, July 15, 1962.
concerning the two bronze plaques that once hung in the the­atre. The circular plaques, one of Moliere and one of Shakespeare, now hang in the lobby of Le Petit Theatre. Once a treasure of the Grand Opera House, when the theatre was torn down the plaques were stored for years in the attic of the Maison Blanche building (a building on the site of the destroyed theatre), before they were donated to Le Petit Theatre by the owners of Maison Blanche Department Store.Elizabeth Woods remembers, as do others, the most outstanding feature of the theatre being the "unique arcade passageway, and going up the big and beautiful staircase." The same association is uppermost in the mind of Mrs. Josephine Johnston Tuckett in recalling the theatre, and she makes an interesting comparison in remembering:

... the long entrance ... an arcade covered over on top ... the theatre steps way in back of this entrance, and the theatre spread way out in back ... with the front on Canal Street being not an intricate part of the building itself. ...

In this Mrs. Tuckett sees a striking resemblance to the present Civic Theatre in New Orleans, the one remaining

80 Interview No. 16, July 16, 1962.

81 Interview No. 18, July 18, 1962.
extant theatre in the city still used by legitimate dramatic traveling companies. Just as the Civic Theatre's entrance is on Baronne Street, the theatre itself being beyond a very long walk through an arcade, Mrs. Tuckett says that the Grand Opera House, too, was "... forty or fifty feet back from where the entrance of the theatre itself was." Major George Tate Sheehan, whose recollections and activity at the theatre in its later years adds helpful understanding of the era of Manager Henry Greenwall, recalls that the top balcony was called the pit. Major Sheehan recalls a marked contrast from the parquette to the pit where "there were just wooden seats ... no opera chairs. ..." The Major remembers that there was an alley about eight feet wide between the theatre and the Schwartz building next door. This building stood on the left side of the theatre, and comprised part of the area where the Maison Blanche building stands today. The stage entrance of the theatre was on Customhouse Street. Major Sheehan reflects that the orchestra members, who played in the orchestra pit, entered through a little door under the stage. Contrasting the Grand Opera House with the present

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82 Interview No. 19, July 22, 1962.
83 Interview No. 20, July 22, 1962.
Civic Theatre, René LeGardeur, Jr., executive of an export firm in New Orleans, adds a note. LeGardeur sees two main differences between the theatres. First, the Grand Opera House's entrance was not opened like the Civic's, but was "... all closed in." Second, unlike the Civic Theatre, "when you passed through the long entrance way, you walked into the back of the auditorium. The stage faced Canal Street." Recalling the entrance and "... magnificent stairway and the beautiful dark red carpet," LeGardeur says that "... next to the French Opera House, I think it was the most beautiful theatre I ever attended in New Orleans."84

The segments of the foregoing interviews, concerning the physical characteristics of the third Varieties Theatre, are related in a significant manner. The great majority of the former patrons of the theatre who were interviewed all remember certain aspects of the theatre, despite extreme youth or childhood at the time of their attending the theatre and despite the period of almost sixty years that have elapsed since the theatre closed in 1906. These unforgettable aspects include the magnificent stairway, the singular arcade passageway that formed the entrance from Canal Street,

84Interview No. 21, July 31, 1962.
the luxurious red carpeting, and the general impressive elegance of the theatre as a whole.

One of the final contracts made between the Variété Association and an individual was a lease to Louis Colomb for the two-story brick building belonging to the Variété Association and "... forming one of the dependencies of the Varieties Theatre ... fronting the south of Burgundy Street." This building was leased by Colomb for a bar and restaurant, "... for four thousand dollars per annum.""85

To understand the political frame of reference of the initial era of the third Varieties Theatre, it may be pointed out that Ulysses S. Grant was president of the United States when the theatre opened its doors in 1871. The Republican hero of the Civil War had defeated Horatio Seymour, Democratic nominee.86 Grant was re-elected in 1872, but his administration was rocked by political scandal. Republican candidate Rutherford B. Hayes defeated Samuel J. Tilden as president in the election of 1876 by one electoral vote. Hayes worked to end the vicissitudes of reconstruction and


to enact economic and social reforms. This was the era of new varieties of inventions, improvements in transportation, swelling immigration, mounting big business, and multiple reform movements.87

By the end of November, 1871, all New Orleans awaited with anticipation the opening of the third Varieties Theatre, scheduled for December 4. The New Orleans Times wrote on November 26, of the company and of the stars already booked for the season:

. . . In the names of the members of the stock company, we are promised a combination of artists rarely equalled on the boards of any theatre in America, yet to still further increase the attraction the management has offered engagements with some of the most famous stars in the country, among them being Jefferson, Owens, Adams, Sothern and others who are among the first in the profession. . . . (Times, November 26, 1871.)

Announced for the first time in the Times article was the name of the play chosen for the opening, Albury's four-act comedy, The Coquettes.

By November 29, the Times noted that "... most of the new company have already arrived," and that Lawrence Barrett had already scheduled a private dress rehearsal of the opening comedy, to be held "some evening during the

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87 Ibid., pp. 440-522.
present week." The Times complimented Barrett for his enthusiastic efforts in guaranteeing an active, vital first season: "Mr. Barrett is untiring and unremitting in his exertions to have the theatre ready in time, and with the exception of decorating the entrance of the theatre, will have everything in complete order. Of course, a brilliant season is anticipated." The Times called the forthcoming opening an event in the theatrical history of the city:

The opening of the new Varieties Theatre will be an event in the theatrical history of our city worthy of being long remembered, and none among the theatre-going public should omit being present on that occasion. Manager Barrett, who will recite the opening address, deserves an enthusiastic welcome from our people, not only for the sake of old and pleasant associations, but also to encourage him in the cause and career where his fortunes are now embarked. With a tithe of the energy, industry and good taste displayed in management that he has already exhibited in pushing the work upon the theatre to completion, a brilliant success will no doubt be assured. (Times, Wednesday, November 29, 1871.)

The opening address referred to was a monologue, written especially for the occasion of the opening of the third Varieties by E. C. Hancock, associate editor of the Times, for delivery by Lawrence Barrett. The opening of the theatre, the first-class company assembled for the first season, and the list of stars engaged for the initial season, were all due to the efforts of Lawrence Barrett.
It is appropriate at this point, with so much emphasis upon the zealous efforts by Barrett on behalf of the third Varieties, to consider the quality of the actor-manager whose star appearances at the third Varieties were to prove always a stellar attraction for decades after he ended his managership of the theatre. William Winter calls Lawrence Barrett "one of the noblest figures of the modern stage."

Amplifying this view, Winter says:

... In his thirty-five years on the stage, he was steadily and continuously impelled by a pure and fine ambition, and the objects that he sought to accomplish were always the worthiest and the best. ... His name is identified with the greatest plays in our language, and the spirit in which he treated them was that of exalted scholarship, austere reverence and perfect refinement. ... His stately head, his dark eyes ... glowing with intense light ..., his form of grace and his voice of sonorous eloquence and solemn music -- in compass, variety and sweetness one of the few great voices of his dramatic generation, ... his superb bearing and his invariable authority and distinction--united to announce a ruler and leader in the realm of the intellect. ... Barrett was the one American who served the theatre with an apostle's zeal because he loved it with an apostle's love. ... Few if any performances on the contemporary stage are commensurate with the embodiments that he gave Harebell and Gringoire in softness, simplicity, poetic charm and gentle tranquility. ... His one fault was the excess of his eager zeal which led him to over-elaborate points.

The achievement of Barrett as an actor was great, but his influence upon the Stage was even greater. ... The terrible exultation of Cassius, ... the
ecstasy of Lanciotto . . ., the delirium of Yorlick . . .; the rapture of King James . . .; those are among his distinctively great moments, and his image as he was in such moments is worthy to live among the storied traditions of the Stage. . . . The interpretation of character, and the elocutionary part of acting were made more conspicuous and important by him than by any other tragedian since Forrest and Brooke.  

Augustus Pitou concurs with Winter's view of Barrett's elocutionary powers in relating that "... his greatest charms were his voice, his perfect articulation and his intelligent reading."  

The announcement of the forthcoming opening of the Varieties was first published in the Picayune on Friday, December 1, 1871, on the front page of the newspaper. Included in the announcement was the price scale for seats, the sale of which was to begin on Saturday, December 2. Prices of admission were as follows: general admission, $1; private boxes, $10 and $12; reserved seats in orchestra stalls, $1.50; reserved seats in dress circle, $1.50; reserved seats in family circle, $1; reserved chairs in family circle (colored), $1; family circle admission, $1; family circle (colored), $1.  

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89Pitou, op. cit., p. 40.
The gala opening night at the third Varieties was a spectacular and successful event. Tickets for the inaugural performance were at a premium, for the elite of the entire city of New Orleans rushed to be among the first to glimpse the new theatre of which the detailed description in the city's newspapers had caused considerable curiosity in all artistic and social circles in the city. Consequently, the new theatre was the topic of discussion of the day. Besides the opportunity to see the new theatre, the first nighters were offered a bill to be presented for the first time in New Orleans—Alberry's new comedy Coquettes, which had recently played at Wallack's Theatre in New York. First nighters were offered, too, the opportunity to hear the original opening address that was written especially for the occasion by Times editor B. C. Hancock to be recited by the popular new "matinee idol" manager, Lawrence Barrett, as already noted. Also, the privileged audience would be the first to sample the talents of the new Varieties stock company recently assembled in New York. The company according to Kendall, "one of the largest and most capable that New Orleans had ever known,"\textsuperscript{90} included a number of

\textsuperscript{90}Kendall, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 425.
artists who later became stars and traveled all over the world. The members of the large company chosen to be featured in the Alberry comedy included Augusta Dargon and George Clarke, the leading lady and leading man of the company, who appeared as Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Minton, and Dominick Murray, Frank Murdoch, George Ryer, George Holland, Jr., C. H. Frye, R. J. Browne, T. J. Hind, John Howson, H. B. Bradley, R. M. Brelsford, George Hebert, F. Fisher, Marie Gordon, Ione Burke, Georgie Reynolds, Rosa Cooke, Mary Carr, Emma Maddern, Rose Wood and Edith Challis and Mesdames Shubert and Frank Murdoch. (Mrs. Murdoch was known professionally as Miss Murdoch.)

Augusta Dargon was already popular with New Orleans audiences, having been a member of the Varieties Company in 1870, just before the second Varieties burned. At that time, she became an established favorite. Ione Burke was the adopted daughter of Charles St. Thomas Burke, half-brother of the famous actor Joseph Jefferson. Stuart Robson made his initial New Orleans appearance in the opening play. He was to become the most famous of comedy actors of those in the company who would achieve star status, and he was to be billed many times as a star in later seasons at the Varieties. The stage manager, John H. Selwyn, was at one time manager of
the Boston Theatre, and, subsequently, of the Globe. The business manager, Lorraine Rogers, was at one time the husband of actress Charlotte Thompson, frequent star at the Varieties.

Among the members of the company who did not appear in the initial play were Rose Wood and Isabel Freeman. Extant is a letter from Lawrence Barrett written from his dressing room in the middle of the opening night performance to William Winter in which Barrett reports the initial success—with three thousand persons present. The newspapers of the city on the morning after the opening attest to the brilliance and success of the third Varieties' opening night. Most descriptive of these reviews is the arresting and minute account given by the Times (Tuesday, December 5, 1871), which gives not only a vivid description of the elite and excited audience as it filled the magnificent new theatre, but gives striking information about social and artistic behavior patterns of the day, including expectations of delay usually found in the opening night performance, the standard time at which the orchestra began to play, and the fact that the first orchestra leader at the third Varieties was Richard

\[91\text{Ibid.}\]
Maddern—grandfather of a then tiny girl who was to become a star in later years, Minnie Maddern Fiske. The *Times* account gives the entire inaugural address given by Lawrence Barrett and written by E. C. Hancock. It describes, furthermore, the scenes of the play which, it says, was mounted in a style surpassing any mounting of a play ever to be presented in the city.

**THE VARIETIES THEATRE—The Opening Night**

The opening of a new and elegant temple of the drama of course proved an event of no ordinary importance in the history of the Crescent City, and the multitude which last evening thronged the auditorium of the new Varieties was certainly as grace and *recherche* a gathering as has honored a place of public amusement within the year. The elaborate adornment and elegant appointments of the new building has long been a theme for universal surprise and gratulation, and even the most fastidious were not slow in pronouncing it a model of beauty.

Long before the hour fixed for opening, a throng assembled about the doors, which when opened, disclosed a picture of dazzling light and grandeur that broke upon the senses like a scene from fairy land.

The grand entrance commencing at Canal Street is twenty feet in width, and ascends to the dress circle, seventy feet distant, by way of a staircase of sixteen steps in broken flights. Along either side of the stairway is a massive balustrade, upon which at intervals are placed sixteen handsome upright girandoles, each surmounted by twelve burners and globes.

At the head of the stairway, facing the visitors, is a magnificent pier glass; while before it hangs a large chandelier with twenty-four globes. Standing above and looking downward at the ascending
throng and the rows of brilliant gas light, the scene presented last night was one which impresses one with a sense of beauty almost impossible to name. . . . In every particular the interior of the structure is perhaps unsurpassed by any dramatic temple in America. . . .

One of the noblest features is the grand sun light suspended from the dome, which with the light of the four hundred and twenty gas jets, reflected through myriads of glass prisms, sheds over the theatre a subdued and mellow light, without the glare incidental to the old fashioned style of placing the lights where the audience can see them. This sun light is said to be the largest and most beautiful now extant in this country, and as an ornament, is a striking feature of the theatre.

The audience assembled at the opening was perhaps one of the largest and most brilliant assemblies ever gathered within two walls of an American theatre. . . . This first night was in a great measure devoid of the usual annoyance to visitors, and excepting a trifling delay in seating the vast audience which rushed into the theatre like a torrent, everything before the curtain moved on in a manner satisfactory to all. At a quarter before eight o'clock, the orchestra, under the direction of Mr. Richard Maddern, struck up the overture—a selection from Flotow's "Stradella." . . . At the conclusion of the overture, Mr. Lawrence Barrett appeared before the curtain and delivered the following inaugural address, written by Mr. E. C. Hancock, associate editor of the New Orleans Times.

The molten flood, which down Vesuvius' side Poured desolation in resistless tide, And left Pompeii where the arts had birth— A tomb of ashes on the breast of earth Had yet its uses, since when time had sped Some weary cycles of his onward tread, Its enbalmed treasures from their abodes of fire, Bid distant ages wonder and admire. Through fell disaster they defied decay, And live, the glories of this latter day.
Thus lives the Drama. If the darkness fall,
Its rays of splendor pierce the inky pall;
Antoeus like, it only sinks to rise,
Renewed in vigor and in grander guise.
So when our temple crumbled in the breath
Of the fierce fiend, whose shriv'ling touch
is death,
Protesting ruins rose with giant might
To this proud dome 'neath which we meet to-night,
Behold its walls, where art and skill combine
To charm the eye and every sense refine;
No grander face where Tragic muse may tread,
Or fair Thalia raise her jocund head.
Above, beneath, around, on every side
Perfection's touch attests deserving pride.
All honor then to those whose bounteous aid
Is thus in Learning's noble cause displayed,
Whose fostering care makes wilds with blossoms
  glow,
And smites the rock whence living waters flow.

New on the threshold of awaiting fate--
A virgin future at the open gate--
'Tis well to pause--bestow a parting glance
On records past, which may in turn, perchance,
Unto our footsteps lend a cheering ray
To light them safely o'er the peril's way.
From these we learn the triumph of that rule
Which makes the theatre Refinement's school,
Disdains to wound or aim the thoughtless jest,
With barbed sting to poison virtue's breast,
But true to nature and to Honor's laws,
For merit only seeks to win applause.
So wrought the Vetrans who have gone before,
As we in turn the laureled pages o'er,
We find no name that lacks redeeming grace,
No stain or blemish that we would efface.
Then, as we enter through the portals wide,
Be this our duty as 't will be our pride,
To keep the path they have so nobly trod,
And win like them approval's hearty nod.

Kind friends, we come as strangers to your door,
The sock and buskin for our only store;
A wooden sceptre and a tinsel crown,
A pasteboard palace and a painted town,
Asant [sic] charms prefer, e'en in the realms of
Art,
To either thoughtful head or generous heart;
But when these frames with living Actors fill,
Who strive with earnest soul and tireless will,
The fleeting scenes of life to re-portray,
With men and manners that have passed away;
To hold before you human nature's glass,
They all may view their shadows as they pass,
Stony the bosum would such claims evade
To kindly feeling or approving aid.
Your smiles assure none such assemble here,
And in their radiance dies our last frail fear,
Such welcome falls like dews on thirsting earth,
When slumbering treasures start in blooming birth;
Within the bale of their cheering blaze,
Effort must warm to earn the meed of praise
That guerdon gained--no more is left to ask--
Since glory centres in the vanquished task.

Friends of the stage! this pleasing duty done,
Hope lights her torch with commendation won,
Our mimic scene on tip-toe waits her ray,
Ring up the curtain!—This, kind friends—the play.
(Times, Tuesday, December 5, 1871.)

The Times gave a favorable review to Coquettes, which was
described as a recent New York success. G. H. Clarke appeared
as Arthur Minton and was classed as unaffected and competent.
Dominick Murray, as Adolphus Norman Bowles, was regarded as
careful and painstaking in his art. Stuart Robson, as Sir
Kidd Parkhouse, was commended as being versatile. Augusta
Dargon, who had been a member of the second Varieties company
in 1870 at the time when the theatre burned, was described as
being the favorite of the audience. The rest of the cast was
said to have done well and to have made an entirely favorable impression. The sets rated particular praise: these included "Cottage of Adolphus Norman Bowles," "River and Boat-house near Minton's House," and "Apartments in Mr. Minton's Residence." Interior and exterior sets were described as "... gems of art." (Times, Tuesday, December 5, 1871.)

The Picayune of Tuesday, December 5, says that "... the new Varieties Theatre commenced the dramatic season under auspices more brilliant than perhaps ever attended the career of its predecessors." The Picayune comments add to the picture of elegance which was depicted on the opening night:

... Everything conspired to render the inaugural night enchanting. The long vestibule that leads into the theatre was resplendent with light and revealed a lavish magnificence of decoration and an exquisite taste that made it resemble a fairy land scene. ... Exquisite art has combined to make the auditorium magnificent. Light and beautiful columns sustain the dress circle and the galleries, while the walls are embellished with an elaborate beauty that attracts the eye and pleases the senses with its delicate harmony.

But the eye of the spectator wandered restlessly from these beautiful tints and exquisite devices to perhaps the largest audience ever assembled in New Orleans even on an opening night. Few of the circles of Metropolitan society but had their representatives. ...
The account relates that all the players were received with welcome, but that an especial warmth was reserved for Augusta Dargon. The account praises Miss Dargon's "elegance and refined grace." (Picayune, Tuesday, December 5, 1871.)

The Republican, agreeing with the other news accounts of the opening, calls the Varieties "... one of the most elegant theatres in the world." Using superlatives throughout the review, the paper says: "There is nothing in this country that surpasses it, and probably few, if any, that can equal it." The Republican account contributes the fact that the scenic artist was John G. Fleming. The paper says: "... Our friend, John G. Fleming, has excelled himself in artistic display. The architecture inside is very near to perfection, not only in the carving but the coloring. The stage is a fairy scene." (Republican, Tuesday, December 5, 1871.)

An interesting reaction to thwarted human nature is revealed in the review of the Republican critic. Given a bad seat, amid overcrowded conditions, the critic feels slighted and complains of the noise, the overcrowding and the improper heating of the theatre on opening night. Contributing the only negative comments of the collective reviews, the critic laments:
... A very uncomfortable inconvenient seat, from which the stage was pretty well hid, or only seen in glimpses between bobbing heads, and as nearly shut off from sound, drove us home at the end of the first act.

He goes on to complain:

... A cold northern blast sweeping down the side aisle, and a surging crowd of occupants of "standing room only" behind one's chair, are not specially inviting auxiliaries to the comforts of a theatre. There are, however, some very choice seats, but they are not in the "section E orchestra stalls, third row back. . . ." (Republican, December 5, 1871.)

The objection, obviously from a critic whose newspaper did not receive the same status as the other larger journals represented, and who therefore was given a less attractive seat than his fellow critics, shows nevertheless that there were some less than perfect conditions to be found in the theatre: (1) the acoustics were in fact ineffective in certain less choice sections of the house; (2) the stage was partially hidden from less choice orchestra seats, so that not every seat had a satisfactory view of the stage; and (3) the heating was inadequate for uniform audience comfort on chilly evenings.

Augustus Pitou says in his autobiography that everyone in the cast was favorably received with the exception of Stuart Robson. In this interesting view, Pitou gives his
reasons: "... His peculiar voice was strange to the audi-
ence and his comedy methods new to them. The only time he
made the people laugh was when he spoke a few lines of senti-
ment." The cool initial reaction was not to persist long
however, Pitou relates, for "... in less than a month
after he had played a number of comedy parts, the public
pronounced him the funniest comedian that had ever appeared
in New Orleans." He became a great favorite, "... and
his benefit toward the end of the season was the largest of
any member of the company." This pattern of acceptance was
not unique with Robson, however, for the actor told Pitou at
the time, "I've had the same experience in other cities.
The people have to get accustomed to my voice before they
think me funny."92

Pitou gives an account of the customary behavior of
the members of the Variété Club on opening night and for each
performance they attended subsequently during the season.
Pitou says that the Variété members' seats, the choice seats
"just behind the musicians," were reserved by being "railed
off." When the play was about to begin, and during the
warning period between acts, the prompter rang a bell located

92Pitou, op. cit., p. 87.
in one of the club rooms, which was a signal that the play or one of the acts was about to begin. Between acts, the members retired to their club rooms. However, in obedience to a rule of the club, they were always in their seats before the curtain went up. "There were never any late stragglers to disturb the playgoers or the audience."\(^{93}\)

\(^{93}\)Ibid., p. 87.
CHAPTER II

THE FIRST PERIOD: THE FIRST FIVE YEARS, FALL, 1871,
THROUGH SUMMER, 1876, MANAGEMENT OF
LAWRENCE BARRETT THROUGH CO-MANAGEMENT OF
CHANFRAU AND TAYLEURE

Despite the positive conditions of the first night opening at the Varieties, the next few nights saw only very small audiences, with "... a noticeable diminution of the enthusiasm that was evinced on the opening night of the Varieties." (Picayune, Thursday, December 7, 1871.) Perhaps one of the reasons for the initial fickleness of the New Orleans theatre-going public was the strong competition to the Varieties from the two other major theatres at this time, the St. Charles and the Academy of Music. During the opening week of the Varieties, the St. Charles was featuring Jane Coombs, popular comedy star and her company in Oxenford's comedy World of Fashion. Miss Coombs starred as Maria, with top support from Robinson and Bates; and the comedy received glowing reviews. (Picayune, Wednesday, December 6, 1871.)
The Academy of Music had, also, an outstanding bill, boasting the appearance of Mrs. D. P. Bowers as Donna Diana in *Love's Masquerade*, with able support from J. C. McCollum as Don Cesar. Mrs. Bowers' rave review in the *Picayune* commended her "superb acting." (*Picayune*, Wednesday, December 6, 1871.)

In any event, *Coquettes* drew so few people to the new Varieties on its subsequent performances on Tuesday, December 5, for the first Wednesday matinee at twelve o'clock noon on Wednesday, December 6, and on Wednesday evening, that the play was withdrawn abruptly; and on Thursday, December 7, *Camille* was substituted. Regretting the lack of attention which *Coquettes* commanded, the *Picayune* rationalized: "Of late we have had so much of novelty and such genuine excellence in our dramatic entertainments, that the public will scarcely bear a repetition of anything unless it is exceedingly good." (*Picayune*, Wednesday, December 6, 1871.)

Not only the public but even the press was inconstant to the Varieties that first season. After the enthusiasm of the initial reviews, subsequent reviews almost ignored the Varieties while giving long and detailed accounts of the entertainments at the St. Charles, Academy of Music, and the French Opera House. (The latter presented leading opera
VII. TICKET TO THIRD VARIETIES THEATRE
(Courtesy Albert L. Voss Collection)
stars in significant operatic productions.) To Camille, which opened on Thursday, December 7, the Picayune devoted only a few lines: it praised Miss Dargon's Camille, Ryer's Duval and Miss Murdoch's Nichotte. It did not mention who in the company played the remaining characters, and called the rest of the cast "only fair." Camille played only one night, and on Friday, the Varieties company switched to the comedy Money. (Picayune, Friday, December 8, 1871.) The new production drew both a better house and better notices than the preceding play. The Picayune (Saturday, December 9, 1871) reported that a good house witnessed a pleasing performance. The newspaper commented: ". . . With the assistance of the most powerful lorgnette, we were unable to detect a single inequality in the general smoothness of the action of the piece." The Picayune praised the well-rounded impersonation of the role of Clara Douglass by Miss Dargon and of the character of Alfred Evelyn by Clarke which ". . . was so unmeasurably superior to his Armand Duval of the previous evening that we scarcely recognized him." Also praised was Ryer's portrayal of Sir John Vesey. (Picayune, Saturday, December 9, 1871.)

The New Orleans French-language newspaper, the Bee or L'Abeille de la Nouvelle-Orleans, in summarizing the three
plays offered by the new Varieties during the first week of its first season, called the entertainments "brilliant."

Bestowing more praise than any of the other news journals in the city, the *Bee* critic bestowed applause upon both the leading lady of the Varieties company and every one of its members: "... Since Ellen Tree was in her prime treading the boards, there has been no superior here to Miss Dargon and rarely an equal." The *Bee* accorded success as "... due to every member of the company, with scarcely an exception." (*Bee*, Sunday, December 10, 1871.)

By the end of the first week at the Varieties, Lawrence Barrett had left the city to fulfill starring engagements throughout the country. In the star's complicated arrangement with John Crickard, the lessee and secretary-treasurer of the Varieties Association, Barrett was to act as manager despite the necessity of being away from the theatre most of the season. The understanding with Crickard was that Barrett must reserve a four-to-six-week starring engagement in New Orleans. However it was agreed that he could leave the theatre, when he must be away, in the charge of Lorraine Rogers, the assistant manager. Rogers had, in turn, the aid of director-stage manager John H. Selwyn. Barrett's absence from his managerial duties was the cause of concern of the
newspapers, and soon financial difficulties would alter Barrett's agreement with Crickard.

There was no Sunday performance in the early years of the theatre's activity. But there were matinee performances on Wednesday and on Saturday in addition to evening performances from Monday through Saturday evenings. Opening night was customarily on Monday. Later, however, Sunday performances at the theatre were not only instituted, but became the most popular performance day of the week.

John E. Ownes, the first star to appear at the third Varieties, commenced his engagement on Monday, December 11, 1871, opening in the double bill of Everybody's Friend and Solon Shingle, two of the favorites of his comedy repertoire. The star brought forth a full house that resembled that of the theatre's opening night. The Picayune reviewer revealed that "... but few seats were vacant in the house, and those were lost sight of in the enthusiasm." (Picayune, Tuesday, December 12, 1871.) Ownes peculiar comedy genius had already been revealed in the Crescent City many times in both plays, and the actor's merit as an artist was already established with New Orleans playgoers. The Picayune related that "... his Major Wellington De Boots was a spectacle of ludicrous absurdity, indescribable in its quaintness and
originality. Nor was its enthusiasm diminished when 'Solon Shingle' came on stage in search of his 'bar'l of apple sass.'" (Picayune, Tuesday, December 12, 1871.)

Lawrence Barrett had purposefully chosen the beloved comedy character John Edmond Owens to become the first star to appear at the new theatre. His appearance would of necessity assure success. He was a natural comedian who could not give a bad performance, and all audiences loved him. William Winter calls Owens "... one of the most comical men that have graced the stage." With Jefferson and Florence, Owens was a survivor of an earlier generation "... when humor revealed itself as an affluent and spontaneous force." Winter, who considered Owens to be "... the last comedian of that happy lineage," had seen the comic perform many times.¹ He describes Owens' art: "... His humor sparkled in his bright brown eyes, rippled in the music of his rich, sonorous, flexible voice, ... his elastic step, ... and his beaming smile."² Owens' performance as Solon Shingle and as Caleb Plummer first marked him

²Ibid., p. 218.
as a great comedian and established his rank beyond question. Augustus Pitou, who played with Owens during his initial Varieties engagement, called the actor "... a great comedian, and a genial gentleman of the old school of actors."  

The Bee's drama critic congratulated the Varieties management for their good fortune in being able to engage the comedian as the first star of the season. The Bee, reviewing Everybody's Friend and Solon Shingle, spoke of Owens' talent, and advised that in order to appreciate the actor the reader must go to see him since words alone could not do the actor justice. (Bee, Thursday, December 14, 1871.) On Thursday, Owens' bill changed, and he appeared as Bob Acres in The Rivals. The Picayune said of the role: "The essence of humor in the comedy artist's hands, is difficult to describe ... because it is so inimitable." (Picayune, Friday, December 15, 1871.) On Friday, December 15, Owens switched to London Assurance, playing the leading role of Mark Meddle, and attracting again a capacity crowd, as he did throughout his engagement. He repeated The Rivals for

3Ibid., p. 219.

the Saturday matinee, December 16; and on Saturday evening he played the double bill of *Married Life* and *Solon Shingle*, appearing as Mr. Dove in the first play and repeating the role of Solon in the second. Reviewing Owens' first week at the Varieties, the *Picayune* describes him as "... a genius, who will always be laughable and amusing." (*Picayune*, December 17, 1871.) The *Bee*, too, in reviewing the week, finds nothing but praise for the stellar comedian:

> The second week of the Varieties is a passage in life to be remembered long by those who had the pleasure of witnessing the delightful entertainments which the judicious director put upon the boards. "Major de Boots" and "Solon Shingle" are things that cannot be criticized as dramatic productions, but while they are the merest trifles, they are invested with the interest which Mr. Owens invests them, evidence of the extraordinary gifts of that gentleman. ... The gem of the week was Sheridan's "Rivals." We cannot see how the Bob Acres of Mr. Owens or the Captain Absolute of Mr. Clarke or the Sir Anthony of Mr. Ryer could be bettered. Every one was a finished effort by artists, whose professional efforts are undeniably of the highest order. ... (*Bee*, Sunday, December 17, 1871.)

On Monday, December 18, Owens began his second week at the Varieties, with his role of Mark Meddle in *London Assurance*. He was supported by Miss Dargon as Lady Gay. He repeated the comedy on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings to crowded houses, and on Wednesday matinee, for the pleasure of the predominantly feminine audience, he presented *Married*
Life. Matinees were, by custom, peopled predominantly by women, since, to attend the theatre in daylight hours, a lady need not be escorted. It was expected that a lady attending a theatre performance after dark be accompanied by a gentleman. Many ladies, as is the problem in any age, were unmarried or widowed, and did not have a convenient male to serve as evening escort. The matinee was the solution for the theatre problem of the fair sex, and from eight to eighty, the ladies flocked to the matinee performances at the Varieties during the thirty-six years of the life of the theatre.

On Thursday evening, December 21, Owens presented Grimaldi or the Life of an Actress. The Picayune said of his portrayal of the title role: "Mr. Owens' art is exhibited in its most exquisite form." (Picayune, Friday, December 22, 1871.) Owens was supported by Miss Gordon as Violet. Beside avowing that the actor made more of his roles than any other comedy artist, the Republican critic praised the "... fine scenery and handsome equipment at the Varieties ... that challenges the admiration of all who visit that elegant temple of the drama." (Republican, Wednesday, December 20, 1871.)

The Republican of Friday, December 22, 1871, declared the Varieties a success even at the end of only three weeks,
and had this to say:

... Located as this new theatre is, on the great thoroughfare and fashionable promenade of New Orleans, there is no wonder that the Varieties Theatre, with all its magnificence and splendor, has become at once a signal success. Everything about the house is peculiarly attractive, and the company now playing there hold high professional rank. (Republican, Friday, December 22, 1871.)

By the end of this third week a new establishment adjoined the theatre in the rear--a coffeehouse--opened to serve the crowds from the Varieties, as well as other citizens. M. Kernberger announced himself as proprietor. His advertisement in the Republican stated:

Varieties Exchange--corner of Dauphine and Customhouse streets in the rear part of the Varieties Theatre . . . a coffeehouse, where the choicest wines and liquors and excellent free hot lunch from eleven to one o'clock in the day and from 10 to 12 o'clock at night. Every Sunday, free concerts, commencing at 7 pm.

The Sunday concert idea could not conflict with the theatre, since Sunday was the Varieties' dark night.

The Bee (Sunday, December 24, 1871) frowned upon Dion Boucicault who was the playwright of both pieces in which Owens had appeared during the week. Although applauding Owens and the company, the Bee lamented Owens' choice of plays. The paper said: "... It is only when so capable an artist as Mr. Owens undertakes Mark Meddle that one can
realize the light caliber of the playwright and measure his defects." The account insisted that Boucicault's depiction of Mark Meddle was a "... monstrous, if not malicious conception of the profession of law." The Bee critic called Meddle "vile" and "unrelieved by a single intellectual quality." He concluded that only the merits of Owens and the company saved Boucicault's plays. These actors, at the hands of the Bee, received new heights of praise: "We venture to say that the pieces could not have been better rendered at any theatre on the continent." (Bee, Sunday, December 24, 1871.) Miss Dargon's Lady Spanker, Mr. Howson's Adolphus Spanker and Mr. Ryer's Sir Harcourt Hartley received special commendation for their portrayals in London Assurance in support of Owens.

Owens' third week began on Monday, December 25, on Christmas night, with his celebrated performance of Caleb Plummer in Dot, concerning which event the Picayune stated:

There are hundreds, nay thousands, of our citizens who cling with tenacious pleasure to the memory of the holidays of 1857-58 when 'Dot' was first presented at the old Varieties Theatre, on Gravier Street, under the management of Mr. John E. Owens. None can forget the ... Caleb Plummer of Mr. Owens. ... Again will our citizens enjoy the rare gratification of beholding Mr. Owens' delightful impersonation. ... (Picayune, Sunday, December 24, 1871.)
The Owens power showed no signs of diminishing after two weeks at the Varieties, and the crowds kept flocking to see him. The *Picayune* said:

The Patrons of the Varieties have turned out in force within the last few days, and the beautiful theatre has been literally crowded with pleased and appreciative audiences. "Dot" was put on for a Christmas piece, and Mr. Owens rendered with unusual power and effect his specialty, Caleb Plummer. Indeed the characteristics that made him so great in it in former times has taken a new lease of power, until it now appears the perfection of acting. No one should omit seeing it. It is a gem of art. (*Picayune*, Wednesday, December 27, 1871.)

Caleb Plummer in *Dot* was indeed one of Owens' two best comic portrayals, according to William Winter, and its popularity demanded that the comedy run the week. Appreciative audiences bought out the house at each performance. (*Picayune*, Thursday, December 28, and Saturday, December 30, 1871.)

The *Bee* insisted that *Dot* was not a valuable play, that it was difficult to stage, and that it was severe and commonplace. Moreover, "... it is a play which taxes all the powers of the best actors to render it passably interesting, and to give it as it has been given at the Varieties is a severe ordeal." The *Bee* then applauded the "... extraordinary sincerity with which Mr. Owens as Caleb Plummer renders a simple-minded self-sacrificing old man." The critic of the *Bee* complimented the naturalness of Miss Cooke
as Dot. The journal concluded that the experience of the first several weeks at the new theatre "... must have satisfied the public that whatever is put upon the boards at the Varieties will be given will all the effectiveness, capital acting, excellent scenery [that] judicious management can accomplish." (Bee, Sunday, December 31, 1871.) The Varieties had established itself as a major theatre in just its first month of operation. It was not only judged as the most beautiful theatre in the city, but was acknowledged as superior in artistic dramatic caliber.

Owens' fourth and last week at the Varieties coincided with the beginning of the Carnival season. He chose for the opener of his final week, on Monday, January 1, 1872, the double bill of two of his celebrated comedy roles not yet performed that season: Joshua Butterby in The Victims and Horatio Spruggins in Forty Winks. The Picayune, which had been sketchy with reviews up until now, mentioned only tersely that the double bill had to be seen to be appreciated. The two pieces played again on Tuesday, and at Wednesday's matinee Dot was repeated. On Wednesday evening, Solon Shingle was performed again, and on Thursday, January 4, Owens closed his engagement at the Varieties with the double bill of Dot and The Live Indian--the latter play being performed the only
time during his extended engagement.

On Friday, January 5, 1872, the Varieties company performed in the double bill of Jenny Lind, in which Miss Dargon and George Clarke assumed the principal roles, and the farce, The Ladies Battle. The performance began at the odd hour of four o'clock in the afternoon, so that the Variété Club members and the elite in the audience could be free in time to enjoy the parade and ball of the Twelfth Night Revelers. The parade of the select Mardi Gras organization (which no longer stages a parade) consisted of sixteen floats representing "Types of Humor." The Varieties scheduled no evening performance and the house remained dark so that Variété Club members could attend the lavish ball of the Twelfth Night Revelers that followed the parade and was given at the French Opera House. (Picayune, Saturday, January 6, 1872.) The Picayune said that the company acquitted themselves in an artistic manner. Both plays were repeated for the Saturday matinee, and on the evening of Saturday, January 6, the company performed in the comedy, Money.

On January 8, 1872, Joseph Jefferson, the second major star to appear at the new Varieties, began an engagement, presenting his famous representation of the title role in Rip Van Winkle, which he had been performing for years. The
Picayune praised the star's performance, an odd stand for a newspaper that was soon to reverse its position and become critical of the star in the same role. On Tuesday, January 9, the Picayune reported:

Like the beautiful creation of a painter, it rises before us exquisite and perfect in its truth and harmony. And what is even more remarkable than the artist's wonderful fidelity to nature, is that despite the reputation of the play, season after season, and year after year, the interest of the public never lags or diminishes. This peculiarity was illustrated last night. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 9, 1872.)

The Picayune praised also the collective performances of the company and the beautiful scenic effects.

The Republican agreed with the Picayune's first review, and said that Jefferson as Rip was the superior of any living actor. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 9, 1872.) Playing opposite Jefferson in the drama, in the leading feminine role, was Augusta Dargon. Rip Van Winkle played at the Varieties for a week's run with the exception of the Wednesday matinee, January 10, when the plays of Honeymoon and Perfection were offered by the Varieties company.

Suddenly, Jefferson's reviews took a sudden turn from initial raves to outright panning. On Friday, January 12, the Picayune first reversed its stand on Jefferson with a peculiar review in which, attempting not to contradict the
earlier critique, the paper began by stating that Jefferson was unparalleled as an artist, and concluded that his performance had decayed, yet was still that of a master artist. The review stands as the most glaring reversal presented by a critic during the thirty-six year history of the Varieties theatre:

Mr. Jefferson's "Rip Van Winkle" will of course attract fine audiences. Its reputation would do this if nothing else; but it is an artistic performance, yet which no other artist can equal or approach to. Still we are of opinion—we are reluctant in expressing it—that Mr. Jefferson is failing in the character. It is by no means what it was when he was here before. It may be that his enthusiasm is wearing away, but he is not so careful as he once was, but Jefferson's "Rip Van Winkle" no longer controls the hearts and sympathies of an audience with its infinitely touching beauty. But even in decay it shows the genius of a master artist. (Picayune, Friday, January 12, 1872.)

On Sunday, January 14, the Picayune backed down to say: "Jefferson was more animated than at any time during the present engagement, and his interpretation more like what it used to be." Jefferson remained at the Varieties for a second week to repeat Rip Van Winkle through Thursday, January 18. During the latter week, the reviews continued to be negative. The Picayune critic maintained that "... either 'Rip' is losing its hold on the audience or Mr. Jefferson is." (Picayune, Tuesday, January 16, 1872.) Kendall accuses Jefferson
of simply walking through Rip, with no attempt to please, during the engagement and of being interested only in drawing $500 per performance. 5

On Friday, January 19, Jefferson changed to a double comedy bill in which he played Dr. Pangloss in Heir at Law and Mr. Golightly in Lend Me Five Shillings. On Friday, the attraction was offered for the actor's benefit, and it was repeated for both performances on Saturday. Concerning the double bill, the Picayune says only that "... they were well received and admirable." (Picayune, Saturday, January 20, 1872.) The negative reviews in the Picayune concerning Jefferson's characterization of Rip almost surely influenced the public and aided in diminishing the sizes of the houses for his two-week run.

The program for the week beginning Monday, January 22, featured the Varieties company in Saratoga or Life at the Springs, a comedy featuring Augusta Dargon and Stuart Robson in the principal roles of Effie and Bob Sackett. The Picayune was noticeably terse in its scant review of Saratoga. In comparison with the review of the Academy of Music's presentation of Lydia Thompson's troupe in Blue Bird, to

5Kendall, op. cit., p. 427.
which the Picayune devoted forty-nine lines, the Varieties offering, opening the same evening, was allotted a scant four and one-half lines. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 23, 1872.) Augusta Dargon did, however, receive praise: "... Miss Dargon's Effie is really a splendid piece of character acting. This young lady has the happy faculty of rendering beautiful everything she touches." (Picayune, Wednesday, January 24, 1872.) On Thursday, the Picayune criticized Stuart Robson as Bob Sackett. Robson was accused of mistaking the role utterly, of making a "... brainless dandy of a cultured polished man of society." The critic blamed Robson for the poor houses the play was drawing.

Thursday night there was a change of program with Robertson's comedy, David Garrick, featuring George Clarke, Dominick Murray and Stuart Robson, followed by the burlesque of Mazeppa. The Picayune reserved its review of the new bill until Saturday, January 27, saying on Friday, January 26, only that the opening evening's performance was affected by cold and damp weather, and that the house was very small. The paper said: "... The bitter weather seemed to have thrown its chilling effects on the stage, and the pieces went off badly." (Picayune, Friday, January 26, 1872.) On
Saturday, January 27, the Picayune critic was more gracious to the cast. George Clarke and Miss Gordon essayed the leading roles in David Garrick of Garrick and Ada Ingot. Clarke was praised for his consistency throughout and for his vigor and intelligent coloring. Miss Gordon's Ada Ingot was viewed as a "... very nice piece of acting, harmonious in its simplicity, and delicate in the shading." (Picayune, Saturday, January 27, 1872.) The double bill was repeated on Friday and at both performances on Saturday.

On Sunday, January 28, 1872, an editorial appeared in the Picayune in the drama column "The Stage: At Home and Abroad." The editorial, entitled "Varieties Theatre," lamented the overt lack of support of the new theatre from the New Orleans theatre-going public. In seeking the cause, the writer criticized the increase at the beginning of the season of fifty cents on reserved seats, but the increase had already been repealed. The critic attacked the effects of the starring system and its effects upon the resident company; yet, each New Orleans theatre booked stars. Next, the Picayune lamented the absence of Manager Barrett from the theatre, but Lorraine Rogers had proved a capable substitute in Barrett's absence. The Picayune critic was free to place the blame for the public's lack of support on multiple factors.
that were incidental. Actually, the Picayune critic might have placed the blame upon himself, which he certainly failed to do. The Picayune reviews of the Varieties' presentations were, up until this time, as shown, scant and terse, while long and descriptive reviews were given to entertainments at the St. Charles, French Opera House, and Academy of Music. Moreover, the least conspicuous space was allowed the Varieties, usually at the very end of all of the other reviews. For example, at this time, on January 30, the St. Charles was reviewed first with thirty-seven lines, the French Opera House received the next review with twenty-six lines, the Academy of Music next with thirty lines, while the Varieties, last to be reviewed, was mentioned in only twelve lines.

The editorial follows:

Editorial: "The Stage at Home and Abroad" VARIETIES THEATRE

We note with regret a disinclination on the part of our citizens to sustain as it deserves the new theatre on Canal Street. This apathy is the more surprising for the reason that a popular judgment not long ago decided that a theatre on Canal Street was a necessity, as obviating certain theoretical objections to the St. Charles street location of the older theatres. Situation then being indisputably favorable to success, why have the fortunes of the theatre languished? The company cannot be justly changeable with producing the result which we deplore, for ... it is far above the usual caliber of the average stock companies seen in New Orleans. ... For the most part, too, the ladies and gentlemen of the company are conscientious
artists, who need but the inspiration of apprecia-
tion to stimulate them to do justice to themselves;
for how can a company play with any sort of spirit
to a sparsely inhabited dress circle and parquette?
The most meritorious cannot be expected to be very
brilliant under the depressing influence of dis-
couraging circumstances. This is the rule of human
nature, and we must remember that actors and
actresses are not exempt from its operation. . . .

Causes other than defects in the stock company
must be sought to account for the extraordinary
indifference with which the new Varieties Theatre
has been thus far treated by the public. . . . The
first mistake made by the management was that which
exacted at the onset of the season, an advance of
50¢, on reserved seats. This may seem a small
matter, but to the mind of the public, it had the
appearance of an imposition, and the multitude
expressed their disgust, in a unanimous jeer,
which may be expressed in this language: "You want
to make your theatre a rich man's theatre, eh? You
don't want the money of common people, we suppose?
Well, let the rich people support your theatre."
This was the powerful feeling, which has not been
altogether mollified by the subsequent repeal of
the distasteful tariff.

Another cause which occurs to us is one of the
evil effects of the "starring system." For the past
eight years this resource of managers to escape the
expense of maintaining competent stock companies has
been abused, to the detriment of stock talent. . . .
The public has become so schooled to the lamentable
belief that the appearance of a "star" at any thea-
ter is "prima facie" proof that the company is too
weak to run upon its own legs—as being, in fact,
perfectly worthless apart from the "star"—that one
of even fine abilities is classed in the same cate-
gory with those known to be feeble, and left to
struggle along without countenance whenever the
"star" sinks from view. The reason for this dis-
trust is obvious. "Stars" are notably burdened with
heavy pieces, into which the stock company is merci-
lessly plunged without regard to capacity and
adaptability for the work. . . . Our experience goes that this is the rule. Hence, the conclusion is easily reached, that wherever a "star" appears, there is sure to be found a stock company of "sticks." . . .

The absence of the ostensible manager of the theatre from his proper field of duty is also working injury to its interests. The new Directory just formed may, however, remedy this mistake. . . . We have stated the truth, particularly as respects the "starring" system. . . . The Varieties Stock company, . . . is not liable to the charge of incapacity. Three of the members have appeared upon other boards as "stars," and several of the other principals have been connected with "combinations" which have made a name in the theatrical world. Taking the company as a whole, it may be classed as a strong comedy company, with a clever element of melodramatic talent in it.

Let the Varieties be made the Wallack's of New Orleans. This can only be done by the liberal encouragement of our citizens. (Picayune, Sunday, January 28, 1872.)

During the week beginning Monday, January 29, the Varieties company changed bills every night. The opening bill included Tom Taylor's comedy Everybody's Friend, with Stuart Robson as De Boots, followed by the burlesque of Mazeppa. The Picayune (Tuesday, January 30, 1872) said of Robson's performance that while he was no John Owens, he performed better than usual. On Tuesday, January 30, Married Life and Jenny Lind were the attractions. Stuart Robson was given the role of Mr. Dove in the former play, which the Republican critic did not enjoy. Robson was criticized as
mistaking the role so much that he almost disguised the play. (Republican, Wednesday, January 31, 1872.) Again, after one performance, the bill was changed, and the tragedy, Camille, was offered with Augusta Dargon in the title role. Miss Dargon earned warm praise for her interpretation, which was called "bold, original and faultless," creating in the lead role a "creature of infinite grace, of tender impulses and natural affection." The Picayune praised Miss Dargon for fully sustaining "the high representation she has acquired," and for winning "... the right to be considered an accomplished and cultured artist," and announced boldly: "We do not exaggerate in calling it the best Camille we have had here in years." (Picayune, Thursday, February 1, 1872.) On Thursday, the bill changed again. The offering was Bulwer's comedy, Money, with Miss Dargon appearing as Clara Douglas. The actress repeated the noteworthy acting job that she had on the preceding evening. (Picayune, Friday, February 2, 1872.) On Friday, Stuart Robson had the lead in the comedy The Heir at Law, in which he took the part of Dr. Pangloss. The Picayune devoted only a few lines to the presentation, with this contradiction: "We did not admire the representation greatly, but it was nevertheless a creditable performance."
The versatile company showed their collective talents anew on Saturday night, February 3, in a stimulating performance of Sheridan's *The Rivals*. Finally, the *Picayune* critic allotted more than a few grudging lines to the Varieties performance, marking the first review from the newspaper comparable to the criticisms given the other New Orleans theatres since the opening night of the third Varieties. In the latest comments, the critic contributed the names of and parts played by all of the cast, instead of merely the leading players which had been the mode until this time. Stuart Robson, the Bob Acres of the production, received a negative mention, strangely garbled: "... Mr. Robson's execution was not so fatal to the effect of the impersonation, yet that impersonation was not so happily and nicely measured and embodied as consistent with this actor's reputation on the strength of many of his former representations." Ryer's Sir Anthony was ambivalently both panned and praised as "... somewhat heavy, but badly outlined and infused with a vigorous vitality." George Clarke's Captain Absolute was praised as the best piece of light comedy acting he had given so far that season. Pitou's Faulkland was likewise applauded as his best performance to date. Miss Gordon's Lydia Languish also impressed the critic as a fine portrayal. (*Picayune*, 110)
Sunday, February 4, 1872.

On Monday, February 5, another star arrived at the Varieties. The newest celebrity, and the third star to appear in the theatre's first season, was Edwin Adams, who began his week's engagement in Enoch Arden. With the advent of Adams upon the Varieties scene came the overt manifestation of a new Picayune policy of reviewing, as announced in the Sunday, February 4, 1872 issue. A preview of this policy was seen already in the review in the same issue of The Rivals, already mentioned. The new policy was to affect the Varieties reviews in length and in intelligence and aesthetic evaluation of the criticisms. The February 4, issue of the paper announced in a long editorial that as of February 1, 1872, the newspaper had begun to appear under new administrative auspices. The first improved review was, as has been noted, the review of The Rivals which appeared on February 4. This policy was to backtrack from time to time, and the reviewer maintained his anonymity; but, on the whole, the new theatre was to sustain the advantage of fairer criticism from the Picayune from then on. The second of the new type of review dealt with Adams' performance as Enoch Arden. Mention was made of the author of the dramatic adaptation of the Tennyson classic and of the stage setting,
and a more literary and aesthetic style was noted. The more intelligible review of the play, in which Adams was supported by Augusta Dargen, was as follows:

The playwright who succeeds in giving to a sentimental poem an interesting dramatic form is entitled to high praise. . . . Mme. de Marguerite has done this for Tennyson's popular poem, "Enoch Arden," in which Mr. Adams appeared last night, before a fashionable and well filled house. The setting of the play displayed the educated skill of the stage manager. . . . That was not only a good idea, but a natural suggestion to produce a realistic effect by strewing the stage with oranges and other tropical fruits, in the scene of the fourth act, representing the deserted island. . . . Mr. Adams is as conscientiously careful now, as when he first made the character a specialty. From a very ordinary poetic premise, he has deduced a dramatic conclusion which he has embodied in attractive form and feature. Miss Dargon's Annie Leigh was a fit companion to the star's Enoch Arden. . . . (Picayune, Tuesday, February 6, 1872.)

The Tuesday evening house, and every house thereafter throughout the week, was composed largely of ladies. "The pressure of so many ladies on such a night" (the critic referred to "the wretched weather") "must have been esteemed a very delicate compliment by Mr. Adams." (Picayune, Wednesday, February 7, 1872.) The Picayune discusses also in this review, in meaningful fashion, the relationship between star and stock company:

. . . It is seldom that we have seen such harmony in the action of a piece as that which prevails between "star" and "support" in the performance.
of "Enoch Arden." This is the result of a thorough rehearsal of "business" and textual accuracy. Hence, we are spared the aggravation of stock blunders and imperfections, which, as a general rule, characterize star and stock relations. In these particulars the Varieties stock company is a superior supporting company. The artists show themselves to possess a studious ambition to prove themselves capable of playing to and in a company with a star. (Picayune, Wednesday, February 7, 1872.)

The newer reviews helped to crowd the houses for Enoch Arden performances which had become, by Thursday, a sellout. On Friday, February 9, it was reported: "Last night Mr. Adams played before the largest and most fashionable house of his engagement. The parquette, dress circle and upper circle were peopled with ladies, whose tasteful toilets imparted a brilliant aspect to the appearance of the auditorium." (Picayune, Friday, February 9, 1872.) The enthusiastic crowds continued for the rest of the week.

Continuing the precedent of abundant criticism, the Sunday Picayune of February 11, featured an editorial on "Dramatic Taste of the Dramatic Critic." The editorial seems contemporary in its regretful lamentation concerning the declining aesthetic taste of audiences. The paper's premise is that "... in regard to dramatic taste, we have degenerated much of late years." The writer argues that the critic has a responsibility to the playwright to set high
standards of writing in order to "secure the purity of the public morals and the elevation of the public character."
The editorial recommends the norms of censorship on the stage in order to prevent moral and intellectual debasement. The character of dramatic productions are seen to be synonymous with the tastes of a people. Literary geniuses are seen to be products only of an age of enlightenment and not of an era of decline. The editorial laments that the stage was now usurped by the "leg drama" of women in tights and by burlesque. The writer sets the responsibility as falling upon those who encourage the current state of affairs. The editorial is reproduced in part:

DRAMATIC TASTE OF THE DRAMATIC CRITIC

... We cannot help thinking that in regard to dramatic taste, we have degenerated much of late years. "The chief glory of every people arises from its authors," says Dr. Johnson; and, with equal truth, it may be said that the greatest and most refined pleasure is derived from the theatre. While Dr. Johnson's words are true of all authors, they are especially true of those who make dramatic writing their specialty;... their influence must always be greater than that of any of the other class of authors, because the incidents which they relate in their pieces, and the maxims which their characters utter sinks deeper into the mind of the listener than they would if given in mere book form. What writer, narrating the story of Lear, could show so vividly "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child." Related in dramatic poverty, by such a genius as Shakespeare, fitted with all the accessories of scenery, and interpreted by actors worthy of their task, it makes
a deep and lasting impression upon the spectator; it teaches the parent the necessity of restraining his temper, and children the ruin which filial disobedience may work.

Since the drama is so powerful for good and, . . . equally powerful for evil, it is of the utmost importance that it should take the right direction, that its power should be wielded to secure the purity of the public morals and the elevation of the public character . . . by the cultivation of a pure and refined taste. . . . The position of critic is one of awful responsibility; for with him must rest the decision whether a nation shall have a good literature or not. . . .

We have somewhere heard the statement that criticism never yet improved a literature. We need no better refutation than to point to the early days of the Edinburgh Review, when its able criticisms did so much to drag the literature of England out of the slough of despondency into which it was fast sinking. What we need now more than anything else is a fearless, independent critic—like Maculay to criticize the shams to which the name of drama is given. One or two criticisms of such a man, exposing the utter worthlessness of the things people admire, would do much to stop the flood of corrupt taste that is fast deluging the land. The most flagrant abuse of the stage of late years, has been the extremely sensational character of the pieces given—pieces which naught else could rescue from merited obscurity. Now, the English language justly celebrated for its richness in that most pleasing style of the drama—gentle comedy; it possesses also, tragedies whose fame have become world-wide. Give us, then, one of these . . .; and cease to give us these burlesques, to appreciate which we must debase ourselves morally and intellectually, and which debase us when we have appreciated them. It is a problem worthy of serious consideration as to the policy of having a censorship of the stage; although it is contrary to our ideas of freedom of speech, yet it is certain that a board of censors, composed of
cultivated and refined men, could do much to elevate the character of the drama.

There is another reason why the drama should be kept up to an exalted standard. We are all aware that there are many who are opposed to theatrical representations on the grounds that they are immoral in their tendencies. . . . There is one great special reason why the corruption of the stage is, to every sober and thinking man, fraught with dangers which threaten society with dissolution. The character of their dramatic representations must, necessarily, be an infallible criterion of the tastes of the people. Euripides, Sophocles and Aeschylus, like Pericles, lived in the golden age of Greece. The age which produced a Bacon and a Spenser also gave wing to the soaring genius of a Shakespeare. Louis XIV gave the French the most splendid era . . . and the same age which produced a Turenne and a Vauban also produced a Corneille, a Racine, a Voltaire and a Moliere. When too Germany had risen to a front rank among nations, the realms of her literature were enlightened and the mine of intellectual wealth opened by the genius of Goethe and Schiller.

. . . It may be safely asserted that the state of the drama is a true measure of the material and intellectual prosperity of a people. Wherever you can find a portion of a population sufficiently numerous to support a temple dedicated to the real drama, you may rest assured that great dramatic authors will spring up, the public taste be brought to a higher degree of purity by the contemplation of faultless models. . . .

. . . Since the dramatic taste of a people is an infallible criterion of their moral and intellectual condition, let us apply this test to our own case and see at what conclusions we shall arrive. We know that the stage is usurped by the leg drama; that men, known to be possessed of good, sound sense, go night after night to hear repeated inanities from which, if said elsewhere than behind the footlights and by any one else than a woman in
tights, they would turn in disgust; . . . we are in a state of social and political anarchy. We can confidently ask the people of Louisiana whether our reasoning was correct. Those who give us this style of drama are by no means to be blamed; but it is with those who encourage it that the responsibility must rest. Now, let us take a cursory view of the arguments of those who favor the burlesque and leg drama; they will tell you that a man, after toiling at business through the day, goes to the theatre merely to laugh and be amused. Admitting this to be true, does it not suggest itself to them that it were better to laugh at something which gives sustaining food to the rational part of man's being, while it excites his laughter—that it is better to enjoy the wit of Sheridan than the utterances of a mere buffoon?

The proper office of comedy is to "correct the follies of the age by exposing them to ridicule." True comedy holds up the mirror so faithfully to nature that man is forced to recognize himself therein; burlesque shows a mere distortion of the human countenance, which no one will recognize as his own. . . . There was a time when an actor was denied Christian burial, and there was a time when a man, although he produced pieces destined to live for all time, could not earn a respectable living, neither period is buried very deep in the past. That time has passed away. But the American people will never have a dramatic literature as long as they continue to prefer the burlesque and the circus to the productions of the most gifted minds of this and preceding ages. . . . It is to be hoped that the time is near at hand when intellectual acting will receive due appreciation, when the stage will be used as an engine for the correction of abuses which can be reached so effectually by no other means. America will doubtless never have a Shakespeare. His was an intellect which the Almighty gives to but one man in the history of a world; but, with a pure taste, she may have hosts of clever, dramatic writers who instruct and at the same time amuse the people. When this is the case there will rise, too, a national literature, which,
embodying the aspirations and dreams of the conquerors of a continent may hand them down to later ages and extend still farther the sway of the great English language. . . . (Picayune, Sunday, February 11, 1872.)

Enoch Arden remained for the opening night, Monday, February 10, of Adams' second week at the Varieties. On Tuesday, the play was cancelled for one evening for the exciting event of the Varieties' first Mardi Gras ball. An honor for the theatre, the Varieties was chosen as the place at which the exclusive ball of the Krewe of Comus would be held. Comus, then as now, was the most exclusive carnival organization in New Orleans. As today, Comus staged in 1872 a parade on the evening of Mardi Gras day, as the traditional last significant event of Mardi Gras before the beginning of the Lenten season on Ash Wednesday. The select "by invitation only" ball followed the colorful street parade of the elite organization. The theme of the parade and ball was "Dreams of Homer," and the floats bore such titles as Venus, Paris and Helen; Agamennon, Nestor and Briseis; Neptune; the Odyssey; Dreams of the Iliad; and other such provocative titles.

The Krewe (or cast members) entered the Varieties Theatre by the Customhouse Street entrance about ten o'clock for the elaborate Comus Ball. The first scene of the private
ball's tableau was laid on Mount Ida, and the action described the Judgment, the masked characters representing Venus, Juno, Minerva, Helen and Paris and other Greek characters. The second tableau depicted "The Combat of the Ten Years' War," and revealed masked figures representing Diomede in a Grecian chariot drawn by fiery steeds, Mars and Hector fighting side by side in the Trojan chariot, and other such noble figures as Ajax, Menelaus and Thersites. The third tableau depicted "Trials of Ulysses, the Odyssey"; and revealed a scene in the infernal regions, with Pluto sitting on his throne, flanked by slain suitors of Penelope, killed by Ulysses. The fourth tableau, the last, revealed the "Battle of the Frogs and Mice." All masked characters joined then in a grand march, led by King Comus, King of the Ball; after which the privileged invited "call out" guests were bidden to dance. The ball lasted until dawn. The theatre was described as being arrayed in the most glorious attire, with an extra pressure of gas having been let on. Jaeger's orchestra played for the affair, and among the honored guests was the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia. (Picayune, Wednesday, February 14, 1872.)

On Wednesday evening, the Varieties had returned to normal, and the last performance of Enoch Arden was given.
On Thursday, February 15, Adams appeared as Ned Macdermot in John Brougham's drama, *The Red Light, or The Signal of Danger*. The *Picayune* praised the performance and Brougham's play, which the critic found to be lively and clever in dialogue, containing many good situations, and with a believable romantic involvement. The review complimented the "crowning excellence of the stock company of the Varieties," in that "their rehearsals are so thorough, that their first performances of a play are as perfect as the fifth or fifteenth." (*Picayune, Friday, February 16, 1872.*) On Friday, February 16, *The School for Scandal* was produced for Adams' benefit, with Isabel Freeman appearing as Lady Teazle and Adams as Charles Surface. The *Republican* (Saturday, February 17, 1872) stated that the Adams benefit was filled to overflowing with adoring ladies. The reviewer praised Adams for "naturalness bordering on life," and found Miss Freeman both charming and vivacious. The *Picayune*, however, complained that Miss Freeman's Lady Teazle was "somewhat too vigorous, not to say boisterous, in the scenes with Sir Peter." This critic lamented Adams' "state of continuous war with an obstinate hoarseness," despite which, however, his portrayal of Surface was found to be sparkling and lively. (*Picayune, Saturday, February 17, 1872.*) On Saturday, February 17,
Edwin Adams closed his engagement that first season at the Varieties in Brougham's comedy, The Red Light, repeating his part of Ned Macdermot. The review of the closing performance in the Picayune is noteworthy for its length. (Picayune, Sunday, February 18, 1872.) This review of The Red Light was one hundred eleven lines, the longest review to be tendered a performance at the new theatre up until this time, and a prime example of the Picayune's new editorial policy of more thorough coverage of the theatre's dramatic activity. The critic noted the simplicity of the plot and acting of the cast. The play's excellence, he found, lay in its "absence of mystery and intricate labyrinth," and the actors were praised for making such simplicity interesting, a feat which is called "an artistic triumph." In this review is found the first effort of the Picayune to discuss the entire cast of a third Varieties performance. The reviewer gave top feminine mention to Miss Gordon's characterization of Annie Steele. She was praised for being able to fit herself into each of her roles, and for her pleasant and uneffected manner. Ione Burke's characterization of Lady Arlington was applauded for moderation and resisting the temptation of exaggeration. Miss Carr's Mary Steele was noted for sincerity in portraying the autocratic but kind-hearted aunt.
The critic complained that Stuart Robson's style as Sharkey was peculiar, while every other member of the cast was praised. Edwin Adams as Macdermot was found to give a perfect piece of light comedy acting. Clarke's Paul Maynard was regarded as the most artistic impersonation he had given that season. Both Murdoch and Bayne were praised. But, Stuart Robson was panned with the words:

There is a certain puzzling unchangeable mannerism about Mr. Robson which clings to him like a shadow, and follows him into every character which he assumes. This is most aggravating, because behind this hazy atmosphere can be discerned the labor of a clever mind... (Picayune, Sunday, February 18, 1872.)

Augustus Pitou confides that Robson confessed to his friend and fellow actor a personal disappointment over the limitations of his physical vocal mechanism and accompanying style. These limitations denied him the freedom to expand his scope as an actor, and made him misunderstood by audiences and critics alike. Pitou relates:

Stuart Robson, the successful comedian, was a man of culture and a student of Shakespeare. He once said to me, "My professional career has been a disappointment. I have clearly defined in my mind my conception of Hamlet, and Shylock. I have the soul of a tragedian with the high squeaky voice of a low comedian. When in some part I have had an emotional speech to deliver I have felt the meaning of the lines, and tears have come into my eyes, but when I spoke, the audience laughed."^6

^6Pitou, op. cit., p. 105.
Immediately following Edwin Adams' engagement, Fanny Davenport opened on Monday, February 19, in the then sensational drama, *Divorce*. Miss Davenport's role as Fanny Ten Eyck was regarded by the *Picayune* as a success, but the top honors of the drama's performance were bestowed, conversely enough, upon Stuart Robson, who was applauded for his ludicrous portrayal of the unscrupulous lawyer, Templeton Jilt. George Clarke's role as Alfred Adrianse was regarded as his best to date, and as a role in which his "... good looks, splendid figure and graceful acting are shown to that excellent advantage which made him so popular in New York."

The role assured and reaffirmed Clarke's envied position as a favorite of the company. Fanny Davenport's review as Fanny Ten Eyck was overtly lukewarm. The *Picayune* regretted the star's appearance in the role of Fanny instead of as Lu Ten Eyck, which the drama critic regarded as "more suitable to her coquettish nature." (Picayune, Wednesday, February 21, 1872.) The play was performed all week to very crowded and appreciative houses. On Wednesday evening, Murdoch became ill and was forced to cancel his appearance in the play. Another member of the company substituted for him, reading his part, a feat which the anonymous actor performed rather poorly. (Picayune, Thursday, February 22, 1872.)
A comment reflecting the prevailing social attitude on divorce was aired by the Picayune critic's urging that "... the timorous need not be frightened at the title, as the play is not such a one as would shock the nerves of the most fastidious. On the contrary, it points a moral that independent young women ... aye, and mothers-in-law, might profit by." (Picayune, Friday, February 23, 1872.) By the sixth performance of the play on Friday, Divorce had become so popular with New Orleans theatre-goers that the Picayune stated: "This merited success has never been surpassed in this city, since the war at least!" (Picayune, Saturday, February 24, 1872.) The drama was among the latest productions of Augustin Daly and a recent New York sensation, being presented for the first time in New Orleans. The Republican praised the manager of the Varieties for securing such a choice drama for the theatre's patrons. The latter newspaper regarded Miss Davenport's impersonation of the beautiful but wayward young wife Fanny in more optimistic terms than the Picayune. The Republican called the star "... charming and accomplished," and regarded her performance as "a choice bit of acting" and "a perfect rendition." (Republican, Saturday, February 24, 1872.)

Reflecting the post-war agitation at the carpetbagger...
rule in Louisiana, the Picayune's major editorial of Tuesday, February 27, lamented the condition in which "... the 'white trash' are running State governments, and newspapers, bureaus and plantations." The editorial called upon its Negro readers to reform Republicanism by placing in office none but honest men, "regardless of color or condition."

The article referred to the 80,000 or 90,000 new Negro voters in the State, and implored the new citizens to restore the prosperity of the country by throwing out the "white trash" carpetbaggers. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 27, 1872.)

Meanwhile at the Varieties, the smash hit of Divorce was being performed for the second week, and it was announced that Murdoch had returned for the performance of Monday, February 26, entirely recovered from his recent illness.

During the second week of Miss Davenport's appearance in Divorce, there was no lessening of the surging crowds which packed the Varieties nightly. By Saturday, March 2, the Picayune announced: "Miss Davenport cannot but entertain pleasant recollections of her sojourn in our city. She has succeeded in attracting large and brilliant audiences, whose appreciation of her merits has been unmistakable in its expression. ... The Varieties has been crowded nightly."

The news event of the important week beginning Monday,
March 4, 1872, was the long awaited return of Manager Lawrence Barrett to the Varieties in his capacity as star as well as active manager. The actor could not have chosen more appropriate timing for his "on cue" appearance. He was needed greatly at the theatre to assume active production duties. Augustus Pitou recalls the financial dilemma of the Varieties during that season:

The expenses of this theatre were probably larger than those of any other in the country at that time, and though the patronage was good, the weekly losses continued to accumulate. At the end of a few months, the manager notified Mr. Barrett that he had no more money to lose, and that he would have to return.7

Fortunately, the crisis came for Barrett as he was scheduled to return. Ironically, just before his return, the Varieties had experienced a hit with Fanny Davenport's Divorce. Yet, the Varieties' expenses exceeded profits. When Barrett returned for his starring engagement, he was quick to act to protect his financial investment, and he showed economic wizardry in the actions he took. Barrett assumed the personal management himself.

He cut down the expenses by curtailing the company, giving two weeks' notice to each member as he had a legal right to do, and he continued the season without

7Pitou, op. cit., p. 88.
further loss and without reducing the salaries
of those members of the company that he retained.
The elimination of his own salary of $250 a week
was a big item in itself.8

Barrett took over the Varieties as lessee, replacing Crickard,
to become sole lessee and manager. The lease of the theatre,
as recorded in the Notarial Archives, Orleans Parish Civil
Court House, New Orleans, states in part:

. . . Thomas Simmons and Edward Rigney, President
and Vice President of La Variété Association . . .
lease to Mr. Lawrence Barrett the building known
as the new Varieties Theatre . . . for four thousand
eight hundred dollars rental for the first five
months of the present lease, from the first of Febru­
ary to the first of July next 1872, and for the
remaining four years of the lease, the annual rental
of eight thousand dollars. . . .9

The lease was signed by Lawrence Barrett, and representing
the Variété Club: Thomas Simmons, Lawrence H. Kennedy and
Edward Rigney; and Notary N. B. Trist.

Barrett opened his starring engagement at the Varie­
ties on Monday, March 4, in Shakespeare's tragedy, Hamlet,
appearing in the title role. Isabel Freeman was engaged to
appear as Ophelia. The versatile actor-manager announced a
different bill for every night during the week. On Tuesday,

8Ibid., p. 88.
9Contract No. 472, N. B. Trist, Notary, April 25,
1872.
Barrett starred in *Marble Heart*; for the matinee on Wednesday, March 6, he appeared in the comedy, *Money*; and on Wednesday evening, he appeared as Shylock in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. On Thursday, March 7, Barrett appeared in the title role in the popular drama, *Richelieu*; while on Friday he repeated his celebrated role of Hamlet. At the matinee on Saturday, March 9, the star appeared in the title role of Shakespeare's *Richard III* and on Saturday evening, Barrett wound up his vigorous week's engagement, by reappearing in *Marble Heart*.

The *Picayune* failed to review Barrett's opening night as Hamlet, but the paper did comment on Wednesday, March 6, that the young actor-manager was drawing excellent houses, and the critic spoke of the unmarked appreciation for *Marble Heart* on Tuesday. Otherwise, the review was not praiseworthy. Barrett played the lead role of Raphael, while Ione Burke rendered the part of Marco. The reviewer said that Miss Burke had the necessary power only at times, while Barrett had too much power, "indulging too expensively at times in heavy tragedy in a play which can scarcely be called a drama."

Biggest honors were given to George Clarke's impersonation of Volage, which was called "excellent." (*Picayune*, Wednesday, March 5, 1872.) Conversely to the critical review of
Marble Heart was the reaction to Barrett as Shylock on Wednesday evening, March 6. The Picayune commented that "... the finish which Mr. Barrett brought into the part surprised even his most intimate acquaintances." Misses Freeman and Murdoch were praised for their contributions to rendering Merchant of Venice a success. An afterplay, John Wopps, followed the Shakespearian work. The latter piece featured Stuart Robson in the comic character of a policeman gnawed by jealousy. (Picayune, Thursday, March 7, 1872.)

As Richelieu on Thursday evening, Barrett was equally impressive. It was stated that his effort was splendid and that Barrett's popularity increased nightly. Hamlet's second performance on Friday was not reviewed, nor were the second performance of Marble Heart on Saturday matinee, nor the first performance of Richard III on Saturday evening.

The first Sunday performance to be given at the new Varieties was announced for Sunday, March 10, 1872, when a benefit was given for Lee Lynch, the treasurer at the theatre. London Assurance was the bill for the evening. The play was followed by an added attraction called The Talking Machine, described only as "one of the wonders of the period, to surprise the uninitiated." (Picayune, Saturday, March 9, 1872.)
The production received no review, and no more is known about the exhibition of *The Talking Machine*.

On Monday, March 11, Barrett opened his second week at the Varieties, appearing as Elliott Grey in *Rosedale*, one of his most popular characterizations. A slim but glowing review noted the performance:

The performance of "Rosedale" last evening attracted a very large and fashionable audience. The main feature of the evening's performance was the appearance of Mr. Lawrence Barrett as Elliott Grey, a character in which he has excited the admiration of everyone, here and elsewhere. *(Picayune, Monday, March 11, 1872.)*

A comment referring to the morrow's matinee notes the pattern of social restriction as already mentioned. The reviewer noted that "... the ladies are all atwitter over prospects of the matinee tomorrow—those many ladies who do not go out alone to the evening performances!" *(Picayune, Tuesday, March 12, 1872.)* But feminine independence was noted to be moving forward, for in the very next day's issue of the *Picayune*, the following interesting comment on the changing status of women was featured as an editorial:

**THE FEMALE WORLD MOVES**

The mails have informed us that Miss Charlotte E. Ray, a graduate of the Howard University Law School, has been admitted to practice in the courts of the District of Columbia; and is now the cynosure of male and female eyes at the national capitol, as the first female who has ever been
allowed to practice the law in that city of social and political phenomena. These same mails inform us also that at the commencement of the Medical Department of the Iowa State University, two ladies graduated as M.D.'s. Their names are Mrs. Whitfield and Mrs. Shepherd. Their names will go down to posterity as the first lady graduates of a regular medical school in the Northwest. And now comes Mrs. Utie Caklin Broker, who lectured on the 6th at Cooper Institute, New York, on "What I Know about Free Love! . . ." (Picayune, Wednesday March 13, 1872.)

The Republican hailed the presentation of Barrett in Rosedale with praise for the high standards of histrionic entertainment at the Varieties, citing many of the numerous worthy aesthetic efforts viewed at the beautiful new theatre.

. . . If the management, enterprise and energy of the Varieties should fail to enforce the liberal support of the people--the varied succession of plays presented to the public should command a generous patronage. We have had in regular progression . . . all the phases of the drama from the sensational to the tragical . . . Within the honored limits of this temple, . . . nothing but what is legitimate or has received the highest histrionic sanction, is permitted to enter. This the Varieties has always been a nucleus of attraction to those who . . . gather about the shrine of the true divinities of the drama. . . . Of the caliber of stars that have illumined its horizon, . . . no brighter lights than Owens, Barrett, Adams and Jefferson have appeared in their respective specialties. . . . We have felt the genial touches of Dickens in the immutable personation of Caleb Plummer, laughed over the eccentricities of Solon Shingle, revisited Irving's famed Sleepy Hollow from which . . . good-natured Rip Van Winkle emerged; and dreamed with Tennyson the beautiful vision of poesy illustrated by Enoch
Arden, ... hailed with delight ... the more exalted creations of dramatic genius, while listening to ... Hamlet, Shylock and Richelieu.

And now as a relief to sterner incidents ..., we are permitted to enjoy a melo-dramatic interlude in ... Lester Wallack's spirited comedy of "Rosedale." ... In the whole range of Mr. Barrett's repertoire, Elliot Grey may be recognized among his best personations. ... (Republican, Wednesday, March 13, 1872.)

Rosedale, an acknowledged hit, played through Thursday evening and on Saturday's matinee. Barrett changed the program on Friday, March 15, appearing for a third time as Hamlet, while on Saturday evening, he concluded his second week by scheduling a double bill, The Robbers of the Forest of Bohemia, featuring Barrett, and repeating the farce John Wopps, featuring Stuart Robson. Only after Barrett's third appearance as Hamlet was the tragedy reviewed finally by the Picayune. The reviewer called Barrett's performance as the noble Danish prince "... one of the finest pieces of acting and reading that not only he but any of his peers is capable of." The review said that the actor's effort was "... one of the grandest that has ever been seen on any stage." The reaction of the audience was so enthusiastic that the reviewer had seldom witnessed such electric effect, and on every face was revealed positive expressions of satisfaction throughout the vast audience. (Picayune, Saturday, March 16, 1872.)
While the Varieties flourished anew under Barrett's direction, the Variété Association met from time to time in official capacity for stockholders' meetings. These meetings were announced via advertisements in the newspapers. Through such an advertisement in the Picayune, on Thursday, March 14, 1872, it is learned that thirteen directors were appointed annually to head the association. Two meetings were announced in the Picayune of that date. The first announced: "La Variété Association: The stockholders of this association are notified that an election for the thirteen directors to serve during the coming year, will be held at the club-room, on Monday 18, between 7½ and 9½ P.M." The second stated: "La Variété Association Stockholders: Stockholders in this Association are notified that a special meeting will be held at the club-room on Friday evening next, the 15th, at 8 o'clock."

Barrett opened his third week at the playhouse in his latest hit, Man o' Airlie, described as "a sensational drama," which he had played recently for eight weeks at Booth's Theatre in New York, creating the original role of James Harebell, the leading character of the play. Opening on Monday, March 18, the play was followed by a new burlesque, Blue Eyed Susan, with Stuart Robson in the leading comedy
role of the piece. *Man o'Airlie* received warm reviews. The play was a dramatized history of the Scotch poet James Harebell. The *Picayune* critic acknowledged that the play was "... incontestably one of the most beautiful that has ever been presented. ..." The play was considered to be "... sentimental without monotony, and a poem in the full sense of the word." Its merits as a drama were considered to be equal to its other qualities, and Barrett was said to have won fresh laurels for himself in the lead role. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, March 19, 1872.) The *Republican* 's avowal of the merits of the play was even more vociferous in its praise of Barrett's portrayal. This newspaper said that the result was life-like and perfect, and established Barrett as an actor of uncommon versatility of talent and even of genius. Ione Burke, playing the feminine lead opposite Barrett, as Mary Harebell, was said to enact a picture of a handsome, kind and true wife. (*Republican*, Wednesday, March 20, 1872.) The double bill remained throughout the week as decided twin hits. The farce *Blue Eyed Susan* was said to be "irresistable" by the *Picayune*. (*Picayune*, Friday, March 22, 1872.)

For Barrett's fourth week, a new play was introduced, and members of the company began to take benefits, although the end of the season was still many weeks away. On Monday
evening, March 25, George Ryer, comedian in the stock company, took his benefit. Featured was the comedy *Wild Oats*, in which Lawrence Barrett appeared as Rover. As was customary for benefits, all members of the performing cast donated their services without charge. Also, as was often customary for benefits, amateur as well as professional actors combined to offer their services. Volunteering their acting services for *Wild Oats* were, in addition to Barrett, George Ryer, the beneficiary, as Sir George Thunder, Stuart Robson as Sim, and Miss Gordon, all in featured roles; popular amateur actors B. Onorato as John Dory and D. C. Johnson, also in an important role; and members of the acting company. The *Republican* noted that the benefit was a great success, bringing forth a large and fashionable audience. (*Republican*, Tuesday, March 26, 1872.) The *Picayune* noted that the entire company played well, while Barrett played with his usual finish. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, March 26, 1872.)

On Tuesday, March 26, the offering was the popular drama, *The Romance of a Poor Young Man*, starring Barrett, plus the amusing burlesque, *Camille or the Cracked Heart*, with Stuart Robson as Camille. A capacity house greeted the first performance. As Manuel, the hero, Barrett was admirable, the part being played with "purity and finish," and
"the highest artistic accomplishments he could demand." Also commended was the manner in which the play was mounted, and the acting of the whole cast, which provided "one of the great dramatic treats of the season." (Picayune, Wednesday, March 27, 1872.) The reviewer enjoyed heartily the after-piece burlesque of Camille or the Cracked Heart in which Stuart Robson and Howson "made no end of merriment." Despite favorable reviews, the play lacked support for the remaining performances, presented all the rest of the week. The houses were reported to be only "fair," when "the merit of the performers should have crowded it." (Picayune, Friday, March 29, 1872.)

Barrett's fifth week at the Varieties opened on Monday, April 1, with an impressive production of John Brougham's dramatic work, The Duke's Motto, which had been in active preparation for several weeks. Barrett was seen in his celebrated part of Henri de Legardere, in which he had appeared for more than one thousand times previously. The Picayune reported an excellent house for the opening of the drama, and praised the performance of Barrett as Lagardere. The interest of the play centers in the main character, which, the report said, was performed by Barrett with "great finish, subtle vigor and fiery merit." George Clarke, Marie E.
Gordon, Ione Burke and Stuart Robson were cited as being particularly excellent in their supporting roles. The production's set was costly and in a style of grandeur, the critic said. (Picayune, Tuesday, April 2, 1872.) The play ran nightly through Saturday, April 6, and attracted good houses. At the matinee of Wednesday, April 3, The Rivals was given. On Friday, April 5, George Clarke took a benefit, the proceeds of The Duke's Motto being donated to the popular actor on that occasion. Every seat in the house was filled. (Picayune, Saturday, April 6, 1872.)

On Monday, April 8, Stuart Robson, who by now had become the hit of the Varieties company, took a benefit, appearing in four comedy pieces: a parody of Hamlet, Everybody's Friend, The Seasick Tobacconist and Jones's Baby. To publicize the hilarious occasion, clever and unique advertisements were devised. These were the most singular advertisements ever to introduce a dramatic performance at the Varieties. The first of the clever announcements appeared on Tuesday, April 2, in the form of the following satire:

Mr. Stuart Robson's Benefit: Monday night there is going to be an immense amount of fun at the Varieties. . . . Only four pieces will be given. The gentleman in black, known among the vulgar as Hamlet, will appear as Mr. Stuart Robson and Mr. Robson will reciprocate the attention. This trouble will commence the evening's agony. Major
Wellington de Boots, "Everybody's Friend," will be visible shortly after Hamlet retires, amid frantic yells and demoniac howls of applause, notwithstanding the presence of a heavy police force. Mr. Robson is to tell his beloved hearers what he thinks of himself. . . . Tobias Shortcut, who is in the tobacco line and remarkably "self made" will be seasick for this occasion only having jumped into Robson's skin for that purpose. "Jones's Baby" will lift up its voice towards the end of the evening, and Jones will explain through Mr. Robson the close of the misery, "Robson toi qui j'aime." (Picayune, Tuesday, April 2, 1872.)

On Thursday, April 4, another amusing advertisement appeared in the Picayune.

On Monday evening next, the 8th of April, a Carnival of Fun, Stuart Robson's benefit. "Hamlet or Wearing of the Black." . . . Hamlet, a character to whom no tragedian ever succeeded in doing justice, except Stuart Robson. "Robson's grandeur appalls one"--Booth. "His Hamlet has never been equalled"--Barrett. "So like mine"--Fechter. Also, last act of "Everybody's Friend": Major Wellington de Boots, Robson. During the evening, Mr. Robson will appear in front of the curtain, and in a few classical remarks will tell the audience what he thinks of himself! Also a sea-sick tobacconist--Tobias Shortcut, Robson. Also Jones's Baby--Mr. William Jones--Stuart Robson.

On Saturday, April 6, the Picayune ran a third clever advertisement for the Robson benefit:

"Do I sleep? Do I dream? Do I wonder and doubt? Are things what they seem, or is visions about? Is Robson's great fun night approaching, and are all of us ready to shout?"--Bret Harte. Robson will play Hamlet, Robson will play Jones, Robson will play the Deuce, Robson will play the swaggering Major, Robson will play Shortcut!
New Orleans, March 26, 1872
Mr. Stuart Robson: Dear sir: Can you play
Hamlet?--J. B.

New Orleans, March 26, 1872
My Esteemed J. B.: Your query has made me smile.
of course I can.--S. R.

... Robson in a sea fight, Robson in a sea
speech, Robson in new songs, Robson in new dances.
During the evening, he will be summoned in front
of the curtain--if he has luck--he will make a few
touching remarks, which for eloquent delivery and
classical expression, will be unequalled in the
annals of oratory. Shakespeare wrote this of
Robson: "Burbage was seene by mee to playe last
night ye Hamlet whyche was writ by me; he played
not well, but as if to compensate for my disap­
pointment--which was sore--I dreemed that one
Stuart Robson by name, a youth of rare conceit,
woulde assault ye worlde in centurie 19th, who
would knowe more about ye Dane thane I do nowe."
--Shakespeare to Ben Jonson, 1576.

... Like a grate full of coals I burn, A great
full house to see
And if I prove not grateful too, A great fool I
shall be--Robson.

Displaying genuine affection for the popular comic,
the Republican prefaced the announcement of Robson's benefit
by featuring a biography of the actor on the first page of
the Sunday, April 7, edition. In part, the first page spread
said:

... Mr. Stuart Robson's first appearance before a
New Orleans audience was on Monday, December 4, 1871,
at the inauguration of the Varieties, where he still
remains a pleasure to the admirers of refined comic
acting. ... The genial Robson presents his benefit
to-morrow evening. ... Carpenters are hammering,
musicians playing, actors studying, the stage manager distracted and Robson looking pale and care worn, and anything but the funny gentleman he really is. The great preparation is for his affair. . . . (Republican, Sunday, April 7, 1872.)

All the combined publicity for the Robson benefit resulted in a capacity house. The Picayune reported the event, stating that the house was so crowded that the reviewer could not see the stage a great part of the time. The reviewer commented that Robson sustained each of his four roles with his "admirable talent for the ludicrous" and with great precision of memory. The performance was a success in every particular. (Picayune, Tuesday, April 9, 1872.)

Barrett's popularity during his sixth week at the Varieties did not wane but was stronger than ever. The Duke's Motto resumed again on Tuesday, April 9. Barrett's delivery was electrical in effect, according to the Picayune, particularly the lines in the last act: "Laugh away, gentlemen, you cannot anger me!" and "After the hirelings, then the master!" The first lines reflected dignified scorn and the latter generated sheer fierceness. The play was performed again for the Wednesday matinee. (Picayune, Wednesday, April 10, 1872.)

Marie E. Gordon was given a benefit on Wednesday evening, when the actress appeared as Jeanie Deans in
Boucicault's dramatization of Sir Walter Scott's *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*. The Republican reported that Miss Gordon's reception was so enthusiastic and genuine that it interrupted the business of the characters onstage for a full minute. The Republican stated that judging from the crowded houses on the different benefit nights, the artists at the Varieties proved that they had succeeded in winning the hearts of the public. (Republican, Thursday, April 11, 1872.) The Picayune revealed that the whole cast of *Jeanie Deans* performed well, and that the play's set was admirable. An afterpiece completed the evening's entertainment, a farce entitled *The Wandering Minstrel*, highlighting the hilarious comedy of Stuart Robson. There was a crowded house present. (Picayune, April 11, 1872.)

On Thursday, April 11, Mr. and Mrs. Murdoch took their joint benefit, performing in an original play, *Bohemia or the Lottery of Art*, written by Murdoch. The actor-author took the part of Bob Tangent, and his actress wife played the role of Mrs. Augustus Poole. George Clarke, Stuart Robson and Marie Gordon were other principals appearing in the play. The script won warm praise for its merit. The Picayune said: "The plot is simple and effective, the dialogue spirited . . . and the moral excellent." The drama
depicted the inner life of various professions, with an artistic perception. The *Picayune* insisted that plays with not a hundredth part of the merit of *Bohemia* ran hundreds of nights and made fortunes. The critic advocated frequent repetitions for the drama. (*Picayune*, Friday, April 12, 1872.)

On Friday, April 12, *Julius Caesar* was presented for the first time that season to a capacity audience. The crowd flocked to see Barrett in his celebrated part of Cassius, and were not disappointed. The *Picayune* noted that the actor's performance showed "one of the most artistic and powerful results of scholarly intellectual interpretation combined with the polished dignity, and subtle force ... peculiar to Mr. Barrett's own style of acting, which is marked by uncommon finish and fire." Particularly compelling were the interview between Cassius and Brutus in the first act, the conspiracy scene and the death scene of Caesar, all regarded as "... superb dramatic pictures, painted with a master hand." George Clarke as Brutus and Ione Burke as Caesar's wife received the main supporting reviews. Stuart Robson was considered unsuited to his role, being thought too droll for tragedy. Messrs. Murdoch and Howson played Mark Antony and Caesar, respectively. (*Picayune*, Saturday,
April 13, 1872.) The drama was repeated at both performances on Saturday to large, enthusiastic houses; and was held over as the attraction for the benefit of business manager Lorraine Rogers, on Monday, April 15. To advertise the drama, a clever announcement in the **Picayune** stated:

> Julius Caesar—Whether in the graceful flowing robes of the antique Roman, or in "completer steel" as assumed by Cassius, after the death of Caesar, a likeness of Barrett, in his great cast, would be at once a memory and a souvenir. Not an ordinary transcript of the fiery and impetuous foe of Julius, but a perfect transcript, such as only Anderson of 183 Canal Street can make. The Rembrandt style might be clever, . . . but the crowning glory of artistic taste . . . would be the "crayon photograph" . . . one which would set off the rich toning and delicate shades . . . of Cassius. . . . (Picayune, April 14, 1872.)

Thus, a local artist, Anderson by name, advertised his skill commercially, in terms of Barrett's most recent role. The **Republican** was even more fulsome in its praise of Barrett as Cassius than the **Picayune**. The **Republican** insisted that "not in our time was there such a Cassius." The critic stamped Barrett's portrayal as genius:

> . . . Irrespective even of the drawbacks of age . . ., he rises so readily to the lofty dignity and power of the characterization, that we forget the naturally detracting tendencies of his young manhood in the maturities of culture, study and aptitude. . . . The delineation is so sharply outlined and smoothly rounded that the performance is . . . the effort of genius. To the profound analyst there are the deeply furrowed marks of
intense application, sincere mental labor, thought and research. ... Mr. Barrett's Cassius is a masterpiece of dramatic power. ... The facial expression and power, too, of Mr. Barrett is so wonderful, it is a property essentially inherent in dramatic impersonation. ... There are palpable manifestations of greatness. If then, the theatrical sky is already so lustrous with the scintillations of this satellite, what may we not expect of glory and glow when the starry promise realizes its planetary fulfillment? (Republican, Thursday, April 18, 1872.)

On Sunday evening, usually a dark night, between performances of Julius Caesar, the Varieties was booked by the Mariotti Italian Opera Company, on April 14. The company made their first appearance in New Orleans that evening, appearing in Verdi's opera, La Traviata. Among the distinguished members of the cast were Mme. Eugenia Bellini Mariotti, prima donna soprano from La Scala Opera Company, Milan, and the London opera; Mme. Elina Corani, Signor Pietro Baccei, Signor Henri Nicolini and Signor Nicalio Briscol, all of La Scala. The troupe had just completed a brilliant tour in South America and in the North and West.

Following Rogers' crowded benefit of Julius Caesar on Monday, Lawrence Barrett opened in The Streets of New York as Badger on Tuesday, April 16. The choice of this insignificant role in a play of small merit was a disappointment, coming as it did after Cassius and Julius Caesar. The
Picayune lamented:

Mr. Barrett is much more in his element in the higher walks of the drama, particularly tragedy, that it is to be regretted that he should blunt his talent with so comparatively an insignificant part as Badger, which is entirely too small for so distinguished an actor. . . . (Picayune, Wednesday, April 17, 1872.)

The play was produced at every performance through Thursday, April 18. Several cast members received particular mention, including Howson as Dan, Stuart Robson as Mr. Puffy and Ione Burke as Lucy. On Thursday, George Ryer was given a benefit, on the evening of the last performance of The Streets of New York.

On Friday, April 19, Barrett appeared in Man o’ Airlie as James Harebell, repeating his popular characterization, and Stuart Robson was featured in Jones’s Baby. At the Saturday matinee, Barrett repeated his performance of Hamlet, while on Saturday evening, April 20, he appeared in his role of Raphael in The Marble Heart.

The week beginning Monday, April 21, was a varied one, with benefits being the major activity now that the season was almost over, and with a celebration for Shakespeare’s anniversary and the beginning of Charlotte Thompson’s starring engagement. On Monday evening, a benefit was performed in honor of Lawrence Barrett. The honoree played the role of
Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*; and the Shakespearian tragedy was followed by a farce, *Skeleton Captain*. The *Picayune* related that Barrett was greeted by a "... tremendous house."

(*Picayune*, Tuesday, April 23, 1872.) The *Republican* said that not only was every seat occupied, but many people were standing. The tragedy was performed, moreover, according to the latter journal, in a manner "never equalled on the boards in this city." The drama was performed so well, according to the *Republican*, that the critic stated: "We can hardly find words to adequately praise it." After the performance, Barrett was called before the curtain, and in answer to repeated requests, made a short speech in which he thanked the public for their generous support, and in which he promised a brilliant future for the theatre. As he was about to leave the stage, Stuart Robson came onstage and presented to Barrett, on behalf of the company and personnel of the theatre, several costly gifts. (*Republican*, Tuesday, April 23, 1872.) A gold-headed cane was presented to the honoree as a token of regard and esteem by Lorraine Rogers, George W. Wang, Fred Hyatt, A. O. Bourdon, W. J. Barker, C. H. Asmus, A. Brummel, James Clinchey, W. L. Hamlet, W. H. Webb, Dick Brennan, Julius Rohders, John Kearney and M. C. Berry, all production personnel of the Varieties. A clock and a pair
of costly vases were presented from gentlemen members of the company, and others attached to the theatre, such as scenic designer Joseph Piggott, Mary Carr, C. Bruschi, G. Minieri and orchestra leader R. Maddern. Finally, Barrett received, on behalf of the ladies of the company, an elegant cigar case. (Picayune, Wednesday, April 24, 1872.) The cast of the memorable performance of Romeo and Juliet was as follows: Romeo..Lawrence Barrett, Juliet..Ione Burke, Mercutio..George Clarke, Capulet..T. J. Hind, Peter..Stuart Robson, Benvolio..Frank Murdoch, Tybalt..Augustus Pitou, Friar Lawrence..George Ryer, Apothecary..John Howson, Paris..H. B. Bradley, Page..Mattie Maddern, Nurse..Mary Carr.

Following Barrett's benefit, the Picayune, in commendation of the popular Varieties star-manager, devoted to him a prominent story on the front page of the issue of Wednesday, April 24, which was, incidently, the day before it was recorded in the Notarial Archives that Barrett took over as lessee of the Varieties. The nature of the commendation as well as the prominence on the cover page of the Picayune attests to the popularity of the young theatrical magnate, on the eve of his departure following his first season at the Varieties as star-manager. The tribute stated:

It is rare that a manager has risen so rapidly
as Mr. Lawrence Barrett has in the confidence and respect of this community, and in the personal esteem of those around him as employees and artists. When he took charge of the Varieties Theatre, some months ago, it was almost a theatrical corpse; but he touched it, and it sprang to its feet, a living, breathing, dramatic fact. The untiring energy, cultivated taste, the uniform courtesy, and a certain grave dignity of manner he has always exercised and exhibited, have made him hosts of friends, on and off the boards, among people whose good will is worth having. He has done more than anyone else to put the entertainments upon a firm and popular foundation. ... He has succeeded in putting the drama upon that high footing it held in older times; ... The appreciation and substantial proofs of public approval and favor have been sufficient to show that his merits have taken deep root in the public mind.

... In those parts like Cassius, Hamlet and the hero of the play "The Romance of a Poor Young Man," Mr. Barrett is not surpassed, and scarcely equaled by an actor on the American stage. His Cassius is as classical as an antique head in marble by a great master, in its severe calmness at times and subtle vigor and impetuosity of expression at others. Cassius is a scholarly creation, warmed into life by genius, tact and taste, and then endowed with all of the Roman attributes of character a Cassius should have. Mr. Barrett's Hamlet is marked by the same intellectuality that distinguishes his Cassius. He gives us an original, metaphysical, philosophical and psychological study of the unhappy Prince as a student, friend, son and lover. ... It is as the lover that Mr. Barrett shows us a new beauty of Hamlet's character. His very silence on the subject of Ophelia through much of the play is all the more eloquent. "They who feel most utter least." The depth and strength of Hamlet's love, so long pent up, burst forth, however, at last in that magnificent scene in the grave yard where he challenges Laertes to prove his brotherly love for Ophelia. His intense scorn of mere brotherly love...
when compared with his (Hamlet's) love for Ophelia is powerfully brought out by the intonation of his voice and the expression of his face when he says the words, "forty thousand brothers." In "The Romance of a Poor Young Man," Mr. Barrett have [sic] us one of the most finished and beautifully drawn characters of the day—one rich in feeling, principle and manhood.

Mr. Barrett closes his engagement tomorrow with "Romeo and Juliet," and then leaves for other triumphs in other fields. Those who have the pleasure of knowing him socially or professionally will be very loth to part with so polished a gentleman, so true an artist. (Picayune, Wednesday, April 24, 1872.)

On Tuesday evening, April 23, the Shakespeare Club, an organization of amateur actors of social prominence in New Orleans, gave a performance at the Varieties of an original play about Shakespeare, on the occasion of the Bard's 308th anniversary. The play, Swan of Avon, was produced at much expense, and featured elaborate sets by Joseph Piggott, the scenic artist of the Varieties. The Kenilworth scene was reputed to be the most elaborate scenic display yet witnessed in New Orleans. The production featured the combined talents of leading players from the several top New Orleans theatres, plus prominent actors from the Shakespeare Club. In principal roles were Mr. Raymond as young Shakespeare; Alice Grey, leading lady of the St. Charles Theatre, as Mabel; George Ryer of the Varieties as
Sir Thomas Lacy; Marie Gordon of the Varieties as Shakespeare; Judge Braughn of the Shakespeare Club as Urban Delapola, Earl of Suffolk; D. C. Johnson and B. Onorato of the Shakespeare Club as Tarleton and the Earl of Leicester, respectively. The audience on the occasion was composed of the city's first citizens and their families. The play was a great disappointment; it dragged unmercifully. Ironically, only two members of the cast reviewed praise, Marie Gordon, cited for looking beautiful, and Judge G. H. Braughn, who, as Lord Urban, showed himself to be a fine actor, and outacted all of the professionals in the cast. The Republican said of the Judge, "There is no theatre in this country that would not find his services an acquisition." (Republican, Wednesday, April 24, 1872.)

On Wednesday, April 24, Lawrence Barrett appeared for the last time that season at the Varieties, repeating the role of Romeo in Romeo and Juliet. On Wednesday evening, Charlotte Thompson replaced Barrett as star in the play Divorce, which had caused such excitement earlier that season when performed by Fanny Davenport. Lorraine Rogers took over as acting manager of the Varieties at Barrett's departure. Making a charming impression as Fanny Ten Eyck, Miss Thompson had lost none of the personable manner which had made her a
favorite in New Orleans years before. She was said to possess an elegance and restraint that was immensely charming in comparison with the stage violence exhibited by some actresses of the day. Charlotte Thompson received a hearty welcome back from a large audience. Heading the supporting cast was Alice Grey, a new acquisition to the Varieties company, and the late leading lady of the St. Charles Theatre who had also been a member of the company of the second Varieties. Alice Grey appeared as Sue Ten Eyck, Ione Burke as the mother-in-law, Stuart Robson as Templeton Jilt, Ryer as De Witt, John Howson as Mr. Barrett, and George Clarke as Alfred Advianse. *(Picayune, Thursday, April 25, 1872.)*

Charlotte Thompson's good taste in costuming was the envy of all the ladies in the audiences. Much was made of the Dolly Varden walking stick parasol that she handled with elegance and grace. The play was a hit and drew crowds all week long. All of the supporting cast acted well, but Stuart Robson's Templeton Jilt, the lawyer, was so poignant and life-like that he received particular mention. When a second benefit for the comedian was announced to be held on Sunday, April 28, the newspapers ran elaborate advertisements announcing the forthcoming event, with as much zany originality as marked the announcements of Robson's first benefit. The benefit
was advertised to be a lecture on twenty-one different sub-
jects, "... all of vital interest, more or less." The
event was predicted to be "... like potatoes, smoking hot."
(Picayune, Tuesday, April 23, 1872.) A droll bit of poetry
advertised the event:

STUART ROBSON'S LECTURE
Is it so what you say?
Has it true come to pass,
Is brains turned to whey,
And is Robson an ass?
Has the New Orleans Actor gone crazy,
Or the modest man turned into brass? . . .

On the stage I have seen him
Queer shakes at the best,
His light-waisted acting
Much worse than the rest.
And I cried when the other folks sniggered,
For his fun was most solemn at best. . . .

But how startled I am
When the tongue of the press
Tells the tale of a "blow"
Not to say of a mess
Which this misguided youth is inflicting
On a public full sore with distress. . . .
(Picayune, Friday, April 26, 1872.)

Following the "poem" were amusing supposed indorsements of
the actor by celebrities of the ages:

OPINIONS: His searching analization of my works
is thorough but heartful to my vanity--Josephus
O, wise young head, Demosthenes
Oh, for the eloquence of this man in the time of
my people--Confucius
Whence comes such another--Shakespeare
He owns a tongue of silver and a golden soul--J.
Fisk, Jr.
Telegraph your terms--Boston Lecture Club
The modern William Pitt--Beau Hickman
He is a jewel--Janauschek
The young man is eloquent--Henry Clay
He touched my heart--Ben Butler
My oratorical nose is out of joint, at the eloquence of this profane stageplayer I was exceedingly wroth--H. B. Beecher
His words are music to my soul, but discord to my pocket--Olive Logan
The humorous purity of his delivery wreathed my face in smiles--Schuyler Colfax
I never smile--U. S. Grant
(Picayune, Friday, April 26, 1872.)

On Saturday, the Picayune's satire regarding the Robson benefit took a new turn, and announced that "... in response to the urgent desire of many applicants, Mr. Robson will in addition to his lecture, give a Grand Concert on a small scale:" Programme:

"You May Talk"--(medley)--Mozart
"Bacon and Greens"--Beethoven
"Chestnut Girl"--Handel
"Oh, Shattered Lung"--Haydn
"A Horrible Tale of the S. Robson Family"--Ole Bull
"Ten Little Injuns"--Crazy: Prima Donna ... Mr. Robson, Tenor ... Mr. Robson, Baritone ... Mr. Robson, Contralto ... Mr. Robson, Chorus ... Robson. (Picayune, Saturday, April 27, 1872.)

To celebrate her second week at the Varieties, Charlotte Thompson pleased the theatre's patrons with a round of her most popular roles. On Monday, April 29, she began with The Hunchback; on Tuesday and on Wednesday matinee, The Lady of Lyons; on Wednesday evening, Ingomar; Thursday
through Saturday matinee, *Fanchon*; and on Saturday evening, *Little Treasure*. The press commented that the day for florid over-emotionalism had passed, and that naturalness was the norm. Concerning Sheridan Knowles' *The Hunchback*, the *Picayune* stated that the drama was "... stilted and vehement," but had stuck to the stage "... with the tenacity of barnacles." It was regarded to have been written at a time when "... playgoers rejoiced in having their emotional cuticles scarified and their feelings plowed and cross-plowed," and appeared in 1872 to be "florid and glaring." But Charlotte Thompson was given all the more praise for doing such a realistic treatment of the part of the haughty and repentent Julia. She played with such spirit and feeling that the reviewer commented that he wanted to punch Sir Thomas Clifford's head in when he would not make up with the tender lady at the point when she appealed "Clifford, why don't you speak to me." The whole cast was reported admirable and the play well mounted. Particularly outstanding were George Clarke's Sir Thomas Clifford, Stuart Robson's Fathom and George Ryer's Master Walter. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, April 30, 1872.)

The *Picayune* thought much more of Bulwer's ability as a playwright than Knowles. According to the critic, the
appeal of *The Lady of Lyons* lay in beauty of language and
poetry of plot and a strong undercurrent of feeling that
attracted the sensitive and romantic. Charlotte Thompson,
as Pauline, was attractive, with an earnestness that was
never violent, but always effective. As Claude Melnotte,
the French soldier hero, Frank Murdoch was considered unequal
to the heavy part. George Ryer as the Colonel was the most
outstanding support to Charlotte Thompson. *(Picayune,
Wednesday, May 1, 1872.)* The *Picayune* reviewer reprimanded
the capricious public who did not fill the house for the
performance of *Ingomar* on Wednesday evening, May 1. Here
was, according to the reviewer, "... a beautiful play,
admirably performed, with one of the best actresses of the
day in the leading part, supported by the best stock company
in the city, given to a small house." It is significant here
that the critic regarded the Varieties company the best in
the city. The city's playgoers were reprimanded for going
to the theatre "... in fits and starts, irrespective of
the merits of the piece or the reputation of the actors."
As Parthenia, Charlotte Thompson gave one of the best por-
trayals of the part seen in the city since Julia Dean's day,
while George Clarke as Ingomar and John Howson as Polydar,
could not have been more effective. *(Picayune, Thursday,
May 2, 1872.) On Thursday, May 2, Charlotte Thompson appeared in the title role in the play, Fanchon, in which she was said to be natural and engaging, and was well supported by Murdoch, Robson, and Ryer. (Picayune, Friday, May 3, 1872.)

On Saturday, May 4, a benefit was given to John Crickard, former lessee of the Varieties, although he had already signed over his lease to Barrett. Crickard was, however, a La Variété member, so a large and fashionable house turned out to fete him. For the occasion, Charlotte Thompson closed her second starring week at the Varieties appearing as Little Treasure, one of her best parts. (Picayune, Sunday, May 5, 1872.)

For Charlotte Thompson's third week at the Varieties, beginning with Monday, May 6, the star was featured in the spectacular Irish drama, Eileen Oge or Dark's the Hour Before Dawn. The play was in four acts with many sets all prepared expressly for the play by Joseph Piggott, the theatre's scenic artist. The play had been running in London for over a year, as well as in New York, Boston and Philadelphia; and was now making its first appearance in the South with the Varieties debut. (Picayune, Saturday, May 4; Sunday, May 5, 1872.) As Eileen Moriarty, the heroine of
the sentimental drama, Charlotte Thompson drew additional raves. She gave an engaging picture of Irish constancy, and invested the part with her extreme personal attractiveness. Top supporting plaudits went to Miss Murdoch who, as Dolly Vardon, was said to be natural, merry and roguish. George Clarke as Patrick O'Donnell, and John Howson and Stuart Robson were other outstanding cast members, and Piggott's sets drew much attention. (Picayune, Wednesday, May 8, 1872.) The play ran all week except on the last night of the week, on Saturday, May 11, when the Irish drama was replaced by a double bill, Betsy Baker and Ruy Blas, presented on the occasion of a joint benefit for Mr. and Mrs. Murdoch. With this performance on May 11, 1872, the regular dramatic season closed, ending the first season at the third Varieties. Charlotte Thompson ended her official engagement that afternoon with the final performance of Eileen Oge. The attendance for the joint Murdoch benefit was only fair, and not as liberal as "... the merits of the artists deserved." (Picayune, Saturday, May 11, 1872.)

Although the official season was over, Charlotte Thompson and the entire Varieties company remained at the theatre to appear on Tuesday, May 14, in a benefit performance of the comedy, Victorine or I'll Sleep on It, sponsored by the
Ladies Benevolent Association of Louisiana for the purpose of completing the Confederate Tomb in Greenwood Cemetery. Charlotte Thompson offered her services gratuitously for the event. The play was followed by a gala ball. Admission to the play was $2 for reserved seats and $1 general admission. Ball tickets were $1 additional for gentlemen, with ladies admitted free; but no lady unaccompanied by a gentleman was allowed upon the dancing platform. This was a means of defeating the efforts of "scandalously" unescorted ladies to "crash" the ball. (Picayune, Tuesday, May 7, 1872.) A supper was provided at the ball following the performance. The menu consisted of cold meats, salads, berries and cream, served at popular restaurant prices. A huge outpouring of people of social status attended the affair and packed the theatre from pit to dome. Charlotte Thompson played the principal role of Victorine, and she and the supporting Varieties company were said to have performed admirably. The cast was warmly applauded by the impressive audience composed of a brilliant array of fashion and beauty that exceeded any audience seen that season. (Picayune, Wednesday, May 15, 1872.)

With the closing of the first dramatic season at the Varieties, the stock company moved to the St. Charles Theatre.
for a short professional summer season in which Dion
Boucicault's drama, *The Octoroon* or *Life in Louisiana* was
produced. The production featured Isabel Freeman as Zoe and
George Clarke as George Peyton, with the full Varieties com­
pany in supporting roles. (*Picayune*, Saturday, May 18,
1872.)

It is difficult to separate the beginning of the
amateur season at the Varieties and the end of the profes­
sional season, since the Shakespeare Club had already begun
its amateur season with its original Shakespeare play,
engaging the Varieties for an evening while the professional
season was still in active production. One reason for the
overlapping of the professional and amateur seasons is the
extreme length of the professional season that first season
at the Varieties. It will be seen that ordinarily, the
professional season ended in April; and that the amateur
season usually did not begin until after the professional
season was over.

More professional-amateur overlapping ensued during
the summer of 1872. On Monday evening, May 13, prior to the
regular amateur season, the Shakespeare Club booked the
Varieties for the occasion of their second entertainment of
their summer season. The large invited audience witnessed a
creditable performance of *The Long Strike*, which the amateur actors were said to perform with smoothness and ability, displaying the ease of professionals. (Picayune, Tuesday, May 14, 1872.)

Prior to the official inauguration of the summer amateur season, the theatre enjoyed one final week of professional entertainment. Booked beginning Wednesday, May 15, was the Italian Opera Company, performing a varied week's program of Italian opera. This opera company opened on Wednesday with Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. On Thursday, May 16, Verdi's *La Traviata* was the offering. On Saturday matinee, *Lucia di Lammermoor* was repeated; and on Saturday, May 18, and Sunday, May 19, Bellini's *Norma* was the feature. On Tuesday, May 21, the Italian troupe presented Verdi's *Il Trovatore*. After an interval of several evenings, the Italian Opera Company returned on Saturday, May 25, to present a performance of *La Traviata*, as a benefit for Mme. Elena Corani, prima donna soprano with the troupe. On Monday, May 27, the opera company presented *Lucrezia Borgia* as a benefit for Signor G. Nicalao, musical conductor. On Tuesday, May 28, the Italian troupe's last performance of *Il Trovatore* was held, the occasion of which was a benefit for Signor Pietro Baccei, primo tenore. Principal members of
the company, besides those mentioned, were Mme. E. Bellini De Marriotti, prima donna soprano; Alele Ad Alberti, contralto; Mme. Beudro, comprimaria; Alica Boschi, seconda donna; L. Jourdan, tenor; Enrico Nicolini, tenor; Giovani Reina, primo baritone; Giulio Paolini, second baritone; E. Dubose, primo basso; Signor Bolivar, orchestra leader; and technical staff: Carlo Bruschi, costumer; Louis Mariotti, manager, and A. G. Cambridge, business manager. The company was warmly received, despite the high prices as compared to dramatic performance prices at the Varieties. General admission was $2, while boxes for eight for five performances were $10, $15, and $20 each. The gallery was 75 cents admission. (Picayune, Sunday, May 12, 1872.) Despite the excellent performances of the company, the fine chorus, the creditable orchestra and the beautiful scenery and costumes, the high admission cost allowed only the elite to patronize the troupe. Then, on Saturday, May 18, the opera company realized their mistake and lowered prices drastically, making general admission $1 and reserved seats $1.50.

When the Italian Opera Company closed on Monday, May 27, 1872, the professional season at the Varieties Theatre was officially over, and amateurs took over the theatre for
spasmodic bookings of nonprofessional plays throughout the summer. At this time, in the decade of the 1870's, amateur theatre was at its height in the Crescent City. Several amateur dramatic societies flourished in New Orleans at this time. These organizations afforded social as well as aesthetic status, and were extremely popular as meeting places for those of upper social status. Among the foremost of these groups were the Shakespeare Club (already mentioned), the Orleans Dramatic Association and the Variety Club (not to be confused with the Variété Club). In addition to the organizations which sponsored their group efforts, there were from time to time performances by individual performers who either paid for their own expenses, and by charging admission for their amateur performances, hoped to make expenses; or who were fortunate enough to find sponsors to assume all expenses for total production costs. The dramatic organizations met during the winter months to make plans for the summer season. But it was only in the warm months when the theatres were free from professional engagements and were "dark" that the amateurs were able to find suitable theatres in which to produce their efforts. Besides, confining their activities to a time period when there was no competition from the more auspicious professional organizations afforded
a greater opportunity for community support and for guaranteeing audiences.

On Monday, June 17, an individual amateur performer began the official amateur season at the Varieties. The entertainer was Sadie Vivian, a girl in her early teens who announced a double bill. She appeared as Sam Willoughby in The Ticket-of-Leave Man and also took the title role in the farce, Little Pickles or The Spirit Child. Several members of the Shakespeare and Orleans Dramatic clubs supported the youngster in the plays. (Picayune, Wednesday, June 5; Sunday, June 16, 1872.)

On Friday, July 5, the Orleans Dramatic Association presented a double bill of comedy at the Varieties, including Two Can Play at that Game and Nobody's Child. It was announced that the parquette, parquette circle and dress circle were reserved exclusively for invited ladies and their escorts. (Picayune, Thursday, July 4, 1872.) No activity was scheduled at the theatre during the torrid month of August. But on Friday, September 13, the Orleans Dramatic Association presented another double comedy bill, Henry Dunbar and The Irish Emigrant. There were no reviews of these plays.

On Wednesday, September 25, the Shakespeare Club

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presented a double bill at the Varieties, Tom Taylor's drama, *Plot and Passion*, and William Broughm's comedy *The Comical Countess*. The event was the occasion for a benefit for Blanche De Bar, who was described as a talented and popular young actress, who had been most active in the entertainments of the Shakespeare Club during the summer season, and who was about to embark upon a professional career in Philadelphia. *(Picayune, Wednesday, September 25, 1872.)* The event received a prominent review, the first amateur event at the Varieties to be so covered all summer. The orchestra, parquette and dress circle were described as crowded with the elite of the city, including many patrons who had been strangers to the entertainments of the summer, having just returned from "... gracing the watering places of the North and Virginia." The most prominent praise of the evening's entertainment was accorded Mr. Cowen, who was said to give a masterly impersonation of the lead character of Fouche in *Plot and Passion*. Other leading amateur actors who appeared were E. Onorato as M. Desmarts, D. C. Johnson as the Marquis de Cevennes, Judge Braughn as De Neuville, Mr. Stumpf as Griboule, and W. H. Coteman as the Prince of Neufchâtel. Ironically, the honoree, Blanche De Bar, was said to be entirely disappointing in her part. Yet, when the
entertainment was at an end, the lady was presented with an elegant gold locket with heavy gold chain by Judge Braughn on behalf of the dramatic club. (Picayune, Thursday, September 26, 1872.)

On Monday, October 7, a benefit was given for Mrs. G. C. Pearce by the combined members of the Shakespeare, Orleans Dramatic and Variety clubs. The honoree was described as a painstaking artist who had done much to render agreeable the entertainments of the various amateur clubs of the city. The program chosen for the event was a double bill, a drama, Husband of an Hour, and a musical extravaganza, Jenny Lind at Last. Tickets were advertised at $1, with the gallery at 50 cents. Mrs. Pearce took the leading part of Julie in Husband of an Hour, and her performance won warm enthusiasm. Esther Blumenthal, a leading young amateur actress of the city, played the double role of Honore and the Dowager Comtesse, and received plaudits for her versatility, while Lulu King, another well-known young actress of the amateur groups, won praise for her support. In the second piece, the musical extravaganza, Mrs. Pearce and Little Sadie Vivian shone in songs and dances. (Picayune, Sunday, September 29, 1872; Tuesday, October 8, 1872.)

In reviewing the first season at the third Varieties,
it can be concluded that Lawrence Barrett was the shining light behind the theatre in its first year. Barrett brought together one of the largest and most capable stock companies that the city had ever known. John Crickard, lessee and member of La Variété Association, was entirely unsuited to his undertaking, and the brunt of running the theatre, when Barrett was absent from the city filling engagements elsewhere, fell upon stage manager John H. Selwyn and business manager Lorraine Rogers.

Impressive and celebrated stars were engaged for the first season of 1871-1872, including comedian John E. Owns in a familiar repertoire of his most successful comedy roles; Joseph Jefferson whose familiar role in *Rip Van Winkle* failed to delight critics and audiences as it had done in earlier years; Fanny Davenport in a sensational production of *Divorce*; Lawrence Barrett, himself, who upon his return to New Orleans early in March not only presented an extended, varied and memorable starring engagement, but assumed the task of becoming lessee of the Varieties as well as manager; and Charlotte Thompson, with an arresting style, colorful costumes and a variety of plays. At the close of the dramatic season at the Varieties, the Italian Opera Company opened at the theatre in May for a week's run. The *Picayune* began by
giving the Varieties terse, disinterested reviews, but midway during the season reversed its policy and devoted more conscientious reviews to the theatre's efforts. Later in the season, however, the newspaper reverted to shorter reviews which were not as inconsequential as the first reviews, yet not as meticulous and literary as those reviews written just after the change of editorial policy.

From June until October, with the exception of the month of August, scattered amateur performances were produced at the Varieties. While amateur entertainments were still being booked at the Varieties as late as the second week of October, the professional fall season had already begun at the Academy of Music, where as early as September 9, 1872, the stock company of the latter theatre opened in The Palace of Truth.

The disturbed political situation that erupted continually during the next year complicated Barrett's career as manager of the Varieties Theatre during the season of 1872-1873. A bitter struggle was in progress between the Republican or Reconstruction party and the Democratic or home-rule party which led to rioting in the streets. The state tax rose to five per cent. The state debt was more than
$41,000,000, a staggering sum for that era. By March, 1873, the political and economic condition was so grave that Federal troops were used to hold back outraged New Orleans citizens who attacked police stations in an effort to drive out the Reconstructionists in possession of them.10

Barrett had no way of knowing that the bad political situation was to grow worse in the ensuing season, and he hoped optimistically that careful management would bring success to his second season at the new theatre. The 1872-1873 season opened on Monday, October 21, 1872, with the booking of the Zavislowski sisters--Christine, Emmeline and Alice--who were featured in a selection of burlesques, and were supported by their own comedy company and a complete ballet troupe. The opening burlesque production was The Merry Men or The Glorious Days of Robin Hood. The theatre was redecorated, even after only one year, as the owners were eager to keep the Varieties the handsomest and best appointed place of amusement in New Orleans. The orchestra was enlarged, now consisting of fourteen performers under the leadership of Professor Philip Greuling, of wide musical reputation. New scenery and calcium lights were prepared by

10Kendall, op. cit., p. 429.
Joseph Piggott. The Zavislowski sisters, since last visiting New Orleans three years previously, had toured as far away as New Zealand and Australia. In the latter country, the actress-sisters were such a hit their scheduled six months engagement was extended to a year. The sisters were supported by Henrietta Granger, an Australian actress and singer. Robin Hood sported music of Offenbach's operas as well as Strauss' waltzes. The chorus sang well, with the most popular musical number being "La Paloma" sung in the first act in the prison scene and greeted by rapturous applause. The burlesque was played all week.

On Monday, October 28, the burlesque, Ixion or Man at the Wheel, was presented by the Zavislowskis and Henrietta Granger. The four lead players were praised for spirited acting, but the support was found to be faulty. In top roles, Emeline portrayed Ixion, Alice was Mercury and Christine played Jupiter. The biggest impression was made, however, by Henrietta Granger, found to be graceful, with good taste, and a fine singing voice. (Picayune, Tuesday, October 29, 1872.) The presentation lasted through Thursday, October 31.

On Friday, November 1, 1872, Henrietta Granger took a benefit, appearing as Venus in Ixion and as Kate in the farce, Perfection. On Saturday evening, November 2, the Zavislowskis
closed their two-week engagement with the double bill of *Cinderella* and *Robin Hood*. That afternoon at the matinee, they appeared in *Perfection* and *Cinderella*. Reflecting upon the engagement of the Zavislowski sisters troupe, the *Picayune* regretted that this group drew only slim audiences during the two-weeks stay, and blamed the perturbed state of public feeling. (*Picayune*, Sunday, November 3, 1872.) The closing performance was reputed to be an elaborate affair at the end of which an elegant wreath was handed to the sisters, while white doves came fluttering down upon the stage. (*Picayune*, Sunday, November 3, 1872.)

The Varieties remained closed from November 3, until November 18, when the regular season began officially with an engagement of the popular star, Clara Morris, of the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, in her first New Orleans appearance. Clara Morris appeared in Augustin Daly's dramatization of Wilkie Collins' *Man and Wife*, presented for the first time in New Orleans. With the 1872-1873 season, the *Picayune*, in reviewing the plays at the Varieties, began a new policy of giving the plots of the plays, which had not been done previously. Clara Morris was a dramatic star of foremost standing, and according to William Winter, was one of the most individual actresses to appear on the American stage in that time.
Her most famous roles were as Mercy Merrick in *The New Magdalen*, Cora in *Article 47*, Mme. D'Artignes in *Jezebel* and Magdalen in *No Name*. Her passionate individuality was indicative more of nervous force than brilliant characterization, according to Winter.\(^\text{11}\) John Rankin Towse gives more credit to Clara Morris' acting ability than does Winter. Instead of individuality, Towse credits the actress with genius, while yet acknowledging her great acting flaws. Towse says that the actress was barely respectable in elocution; crude and unrefined in pose, gesture and utterance; possessed of distracting mannerisms; and never modifying her individual personality. Yet, she illuminated her roles with such a blaze of vivid truthfulness that she became perfectly identified with them. Thus, to Towse, Clara Morris possessed genius.\(^\text{12}\)

In *Man and Wife*, Clara Morris assumed the leading role of Ann Sylvester, supported by Frederic Robinson as Geoffrey Delmaine and J. W. Norton as Arnold Brinkworth. The new stock company made a favorable impression in this first play of the season, and proved to be not inferior to the previous

\(^{11}\)Winter, *op. cit.*, pp. 562-69.

one. Ione Burke, a favorite of the previous season, returned, and shared honors, as Lady Lundie, with the star. Other members of the company were Frederic Robinson, J. W. Norton, W. H. Southard, James Barrett, Harry Pearson, F. G. White, W. J. Stanton, F. O. Rose, Willie Seymour, John Long, J. Carner, C. Dade, F. Melton, Walter Birch, H. Sheppard, R. J. Browne, E. Davenport, M. Thornton and Misses Jane Rignold, E. Phillips, Jenny Clifford, Imogene Vandyke, Georgie Reignold, Mae Roberts, Kate Tyson, Annie Tyson, Alice Wilson, Maggie Rowe, Mrs. L. E. Seymour. In the initial play, chief supports to Clara Morris, besides Ione Burke, were Miss E. Phillips as Hester, Jane Rignold as Blanche Lundie and Harry Pearson as Sir Patrick. Good houses greeted the play throughout the week, with main enthusiasm shown for the acting of Misses Morris, Burke and Phillips. The Picayune critic complained at the practice in the city's theatres of turning down the lights in between acts, and said that the practice made it difficult for friends at the Varieties to see each other at intermission. (Picayune, November 19, 1872.) The comment shows a considerable departure from the full lights that characterize today's theatre intermissions.

Lawrence Barrett was announced as sole lessee of the theatre for the season, with Lorraine Rogers as director.
The scale of prices, slightly less than that of the previous season, was as follows: private boxes, $10, $8, $5, according to location; single seats in boxes, $1.50 or $1; orchestra and orchestra circle, $1; balcony circle, 50 cents; family circle for colored, 50 cents; family circle, unreserved, 25 cents; Wednesday and Saturday matinees at noon, all seats 50 cents; children under nine, 25 cents. (Picayune, Tuesday, November 12, 1872.) (It is interesting to note that today's children's prices are usually stipulated as under twelve years, instead of nine years.)

The Bee commented upon Clara Morris' success at the Varieties, and applauded the star's natural talent. (Bee, Thursday, November 21; Saturday, November 23, 1872.) During the second week of her two-week engagement, Clara Morris appeared as Cora, her celebrated role in the drama, Article 47. For the production, Joseph Piggott created lavish sets. Supporting the star in the strong drama of passion, jealousy and intrigue were Frederic Robinson, leading male player of the company, as George Duhamel and Jane Rignold as Marcelle. The play was said to be inferior to Man and Wife, but it afforded more room for the display of Clara Morris' talent. Her mad scene was called a triumph of dramatic art. (Picayune, Tuesday, November 26, 1872.) On Friday, November 30,
Clara Morris took a benefit. Article 47 played through the week. Large crowds flocked to both performances on the star's last day of her engagement on Saturday, May 31.

Immediately after Clara Morris' departure, John T. Raymond opened on Monday, December 2, 1872, at the Varieties, making his first bow to a local audience in the domestic comedy, Forbidden Fruit, adapted from Emil Augier's French play, Gabrielle, by Forsmann and Florence. The play itself was weak, with only a faint shadow of a plot, and saved only by the artful way in which it was produced, according to the Picayune of Tuesday, December 3, 1872. Raymond played the leading part of Joe Barber, a retired tanner with a fondness for art and poetical quotations: and the star proved himself a capital comedian. Chief supporting roles were taken by Ione Burke, admirable as Anne Barker, Joe's wife; and by Jane Rignold and Frederic Robinson. The reviewer censured those rude people in the audience who would not wait until the final curtain falls to leave their seats, "... but start from their seats and rush pell mell for the door, interrupting those who are interested. ..." (Picayune, Tuesday, December 3, 1872.)

Because of its negative review, the mediocre play did not draw, and on Thursday, December 5, the play was replaced...
by Only a Jew, an original drama by actor Frank Murdoch, inspired by Lessing's Nathan, the Wise, and presented for the first time on any stage. The leading part of Uncle Nathan was taken by Raymond. The play was presented to a large appreciative audience, and was found by the reviewer to be a fine play with good plot and one affording much display for individual excellence in all the roles. In this play Raymond could more adequately reveal his skill as an actor. As Uncle Nathan, the kind hearted old Jewish character, Raymond gave one of the most touching performances seen in New Orleans for some time. The Picayune critic felt that the play deserved many more performances than the three days allotted for it. (Picayune, Friday, December 6, 1872.)

With the versatility shown in the two performances in his first week, John T. Raymond established himself in his first appearance in New Orleans as a worthy star. Raymond was, according to William Winter, a competent actor. His humor was rich and jocund, and he had a singular command over composure of countenance. His most popular role was reputed to be that of Colonel Sellers in The Gilded Age, but his most artistic portrayal was as Ichabod Crane in Rowe's Wolfert's Roost. He possessed a humor which was akin to pathos, and
could cause a laugh that was close to tears.\textsuperscript{13}

On Monday, December 9, Raymond was starred in the spectacular drama, \textit{Pygmalion and Galatea}, a current hit which had been a major success in New York and London, playing for 400 nights in the latter city. New and elegant scenery was prepared for the play by Piggott. The reviewer found the play to be a combination of comedy, burlesque and mythological drama, and noted that it was the most beautiful play to grace a local stage for years. Frederic Robinson played the leading role of Pygmalion with force, while Jane Rignold enacted the part of Galatea with care and feeling. Ione Burke, acknowledged as the most finished member of the company by the \textit{Picayune}, made a favorable impression as Cynisca, Pygmalion's wife. The critic lamented the fact that Raymond subordinated himself in the small role of Chrysos, the vulgar patron of the arts, instead of assuming the lead role of Pygmalion; and wondered why the star chose such a poor role in which to exhibit his talents. (\textit{Picayune}, Wednesday, December 12, 1872.) The above play was followed by an after-piece, the farce, \textit{The Conjugal Lesson}. On Friday, December 13, Raymond took a benefit at which event the company

\textsuperscript{13}Winter, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 294-303.
presented the star with a gold watch and chain. The two plays were produced at every performance during the week.

On Monday, December 16, 1872, Charlotte Thompson opened an engagement at the Varieties, appearing in the title role in the dramatization of Bronte's *Jane Eyre*. Charlotte Thompson was found by the *Picayune* to have improved very much since her visit to New Orleans the previous season. She gave a beautiful performance and her reception was a hearty one. Frederic Robinson appeared opposite Charlotte Thompson as Rochester, and gave a favorable impression. Other top supporting roles were taken by Miss E. J. Phillips as Mrs. Reed and Miss Vandyke as Lady Ingram. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, December 17, 1872.) The *Bee* applauded Charlotte Thompson's role, calling her an actress of strong talent and one greatly appreciated by the audience. This drama played through Wednesday evening. (*Bee*, Wednesday, December 18, 1872.) On Thursday, December 19, Charlotte Thompson changed to the play, *One Wife*, appearing as Mrs. Van Dyke. The drama was presented for the first time at the Varieties. The plot was found to be exceptional, the dialogue crisp and sparkling, full of pathos and passion. Charlotte Thompson made a strong impression as Mrs. Van Dyke, giving a characterization full of delicacy and passion, with musical and flexible voice,
and carriage that of a well-bred woman of society. (Picayune, Friday, December 20, 1872.) Miss Phillips as a woman of the world and Miss Rignold as Mrs. Hoffman, an unprincipled siren, made favorable impressions. This play was offered through Saturday. On Monday, December 23, Charlotte Thompson chose Sea of Ice as her next offering. In the drama, the star assumed the dual role of Louise De Lascours Ogarita. The drama was given a gala production, with gorgeous sets by Piggott, including the ship scene, the sea of ice with the aurora borealis in the distance, and the coast of Mexico. The lavish production was a proper choice for Christmas week, and the play remained throughout the week, with the exception of Friday, when the star took a benefit. On Christmas Day, Wednesday, December 25, a Christmas toy matinee was given, at which in addition to viewing Sea of Ice, the patrons were given 5,000 Christmas presents from "old Kris Krinkle." (Picayune, Wednesday, December 25, 1872.) The stage settings caused comment in the newspapers throughout the week. Of particular merit was the clever stage machinery which caused the breaking of the sea of ice in the second act. (Picayune, Friday, December 27, 1872.) On Friday, December 27, Charlotte Thompson was given a benefit, offering on that occasion, She Stoops to Conquer, and playing the role of Kate
Hardcastle. On Saturday, December 28, for the matinee, Charlotte Thompson repeated *Jane Eyre*, and in the evening, she terminated her engagement with a repeat of *Sea of Ice*.

On Monday, December 30, 1872, a benefit was performed for the Henry W. Allen Monument Fund, by the amateur actors of the Shakespeare Club, joining on the occasion the amateur actors of the Shakespeare Club and the professional Varieties company in the play *London Assurance*. The proceeds of the evening went toward building a monument over the remains of the Louisiana statesman. The cast included Sir Harcourt Courtley, Fred Thayer, Charles Courtley, Theodore James, Max Harkaway, Ben Onorato, Adolphus Spanker, John Stumpf, Dazzle, George H. Braughn, Meddle, F. W. Wilson, Martin, James Given, Lady Gay Spanker, Ione Burke, Grace Harkaway, Jane Rignold, Pert, Jennie Clifford. The appearance of Theodore James and Fred N. Thayer, two outstanding amateurs, was their first bow on a stage for many years, and was a marked event in local amateur theatre annals. The performance was a gratifying success, with every seat in the theatre filled.

*(Picayune, Tuesday, December 31, 1872.)*

On Tuesday, December 31, 1872, Ione Burke took a benefit, performing the part of Pauline in Bulwer's *The Lady of Lyons*. Miss Burke was ably supported by Frederic Robinson.
and the Varieties company. The play was repeated for the New Year's gift matinee on Wednesday, January 1, 1873, when 5,000 toys were presented to Varieties patrons.

On Wednesday evening, January 1, Lawrence Barrett made a long awaited return to his theatre, playing the lead role of Romeo in Romeo and Juliet. All the newspapers joined in giving highly favorable reviews of the performance. The Times called his portrayal forceful, delicate and artistic in every respect, hailed his return with pleasure, and voiced the assurance that Barrett's appearance guaranteed exceptional entertainment. (Times, Thursday, January 2, 1873.) The Times held that no acting vehicle served more to manifest Barrett's genius than in his masterly realization of this role. On Thursday, the star appeared as Hamlet, and again all the press had favorable notices. The Times certified that Barrett interpreted the vague idealism of Hamlet as it had rarely ever been interpreted anywhere, and that his skillful handling of the lines of Hamlet was delicate, forceful, intelligible and lovely. (Times, Friday, January 3, 1873.) The Picayune said that the performance was exceptional, finished and life-like; and found equally beautiful the star's portrayal of Romeo on the evening before, holding that Barrett's Romeo was spirited, had great warmth
of feeling and was toned exactly in accordance with the
dreamy nature of the role. (Picayune, Thursday, January 2;
Friday, January 3, 1873.) The paper called Barrett's han-
dling of the soliloquies "... wonderful in their effective-
ness, with manifold shadowing and marvelous effects of
climax"; and concluded that Barrett's Prince was passionate,
bitter, impetuous, introspective and uncontrolled. (Pica-
yune, Friday, January 3, 1873.) A Sunday editorial in the
Picayune on January 5, 1873, welcomed Barrett back in super-
latives, holding that the star's return signaled a gratifying
revival of legitimate drama, and proved a local appreciation
for elevated works of art, judging by the overwhelming
crowds flocking to see the star. On Friday, Barrett took
the title role in Richelieu, a production praised in the
Sunday Picayune, as well as the Romeo and Hamlet of the able
young star. On Saturday matinee, Romeo and Juliet was
repeated to a house so uncomfortably crowded that all standing
room was sold, and every available inch of space was occupied.
On Saturday night, Barrett took the title role in Richard II,
a performance regarded by the Picayune as another triumph.
(Picayune, Sunday, January 5, 1873.) The paper held that
Barrett in this role achieved the ultimate of Shakespeare's
intent, preserving the superficial peculiarities of Richard,
while endowing the character with "... commanding intellect, wide knowledge of human nature and affairs, a craftiness of mental action worthy of Iago and the burning temperament of a man of imaginative and electrical genius." The report stated that Barrett brought forth Richard's duplicity, tremendous purpose and courage with a distinctness and force that was thrilling. The account ascertained that "... it must remain worthy to be considered among the best of the few Richards of the present age." (Picayune, Sunday, January 5, 1873.)

On Sunday, January 5, the night of the week on which the theatre was usually dark, the Varieties was given over for one evening to a performance by De Castro, a well-known magician, who in addition to his feats of magic, distributed to his patrons, one hundred fifty costly presents. (Picayune, Sunday, January 5, 1873.)

The second week of Barrett's engagement opened on Monday, January 6, with the production of Lester Wallack's comedy, Rosedale, in which the actor was seen in his noted impersonation of Eliot Grey. Again, superlatives of praise rang forth in the press reviews. The Picayune described Barrett's performance as cool "sang froid" under the most trying circumstances, determined and dashing bravery, and...
electrical acting that personified the ideal of a hero to the romantic mind. His scene with the child Arthur was said to bring tears to the audience's eyes. The setting was called particularly striking "... even for this house which has seen some of the most exquisite stage pictures in America." (Picayune, Wednesday, January 8, 1873.) On Wednesday, January 8, Barrett appeared in his popular role of Cassius in Julius Caesar, and again rave notices greeted him. The Picayune credited Barrett with being a genius who by the vast audiences' recognition of his genius, proved that he had reawakened New Orleans' long dormant love for good drama. Cassius was conceded by the Picayune to be Barrett's masterpiece. The role was lifted to fame the year before when acted at Booth's Theatre in New York. This characterization had, the paper said, served to link the actor's name with the greatest actors on the American stage. The glowing report concluded with the statement that "... no greater histrionic triumph has ever adorned our stage, and in this part there are none who ask to divide honors." (Picayune, Thursday, January 9, 1873.) Audiences jammed the Varieties for each performance to see Barrett as Cassius, and flattering notices kept appearing for the star every day of that week. The Picayune acclaimed: "His Cassius is one of the most
signal dramatic triumphs known to the present century."

(Picayune, Friday, January 10, 1873.) The acclaim afforded Barrett as Cassius encouraged him to "expand" the role, and on Thursday, January 9, Barrett incorporated Marc Antony's crowning speech as Cassius' dialogue, and himself delivered Marc Antony's address over the dead body of Caesar. There were mixed reactions to the innovation, although the Picayune vowed that "... in its delineation and delivery the actor gave us a piece of matchless eloquence that one rarely hears in a lifetime..." (Picayune, January 10, 1873.)

One patron at least dared to voice displeasure at the usurping of the lines in a bold letter to the editor of the Picayune featured by the paper as an editorial and given prominent space. The anonymous editorial is signed merely "An Old Stager." The well-written comment said in part:

... Mr. Barrett is a very strong Cassius—so strong that he might have refrained from filching Marc Antony's best speech from him. This is an impertinence—in the primary sense of the word—for which I can find no excuse. What! To make the very man who had compassed Caesar's death deliver that soul-stirring oration against his slayers, and weep over his body! We shall next have Macbeth "borrowing" Macduff's lament over his murdered wife and children, Othello doubting Iago, and Shylock annexing Portia's lines upon the quality of mercy! For so legitimate an actor as Mr. Barrett, I did not expect such an incongruity... But if the assumption has been deliberately made for the sake of display... if two diametrically opposite
characters have been confused to pander to an actor's greed for preeminence and applause, then an offense has been committed which merits the severest censure from anyone pretending to be a critic. . . . (Picayune, Saturday, January 11, 1873.)

On Friday, Barrett changed to his role of Raphael in The Marble Heart, and in keeping with his artistic record gave a finished portrayal of the romantic hero and brought out a full house. The same play was performed at the Sunday matinee; and on Saturday evening, Barrett was seen again as Cassius in Julius Caesar.

The third and last week of Barrett's engagement began on Monday, January 13, 1873, with the romantic drama, Under the Palm, an adaptation by Barrett of Tennyson's Enoch Arden. In the title role as Enoch, Barrett displayed great power, the crowning climax of intensity of pathos coming in the beginning of the fifth act when Enoch returns from exile and encounters Mariam, as a stranger to his home and loved ones, completely unknown. Piggott's sets were noteworthy for their beauty. John W. Norton gave outstanding support to Barrett in his role as Philip Ray. The play was repeated at the Wednesday matinee. On Wednesday evening, Barrett appeared again as Romeo in Romeo and Juliet; and on Thursday, January 16, the star took a benefit, appearing as Richelieu. The
anonymous writer, "An Old Stager," in a letter to the editor of the *Picayune*, printed on Friday, January 18, 1873, gives a significant reaction to Barrett's portrayal of Romeo, from a patron's point of view. Crediting Barrett both with excellent elocation and intelligence, but finding "... a certain woodenness"; nonetheless the patron says that the audience, at the end of the play, left the theatre in almost solemn silence: "... They felt what they saw, and there were a good many handkerchiefs out." Since it was not yet the policy of the newspapers at this time to print the casts of the plays, the "Old Stager's" comments are furthermore important in supplying the names of supporting cast members of the Varieties company in *Romeo and Juliet*. Ione Burke played Juliet, according to this patron, and was tender and passionate in the role. Miss Phillips was the Nurse, but was disappointing to the anonymous patron, while Frederic Robinson, as Mercutio, was "rather bulky."

Concerning Barrett's benefit in Bulwer's *Richelieu*, the *Picayune* praised John Norton's performance as De Mauprat, as the most outstanding of the supporting cast. (*Picayune*, Friday, January 16, 1873.) On Friday, January 16, *The Duke's Motto* was the offering, with another capacity audience in attendance. Again, Barrett shone in his role. The play was
to remain for two performances on Saturday which were to close Barrett's engagement. However, the star was suddenly stricken seriously ill on Saturday morning, and was unable to appear for the last two performances of his spectacular engagement. Instead, *The Lady of Lyons* was substituted in place of *The Duke's Motto*, with Frederic Robinson and Ione Burke taking the chief roles. The nature of the star's illness was not revealed, but it was regretted that Barrett must end his outstanding engagement in such a way. (*Picayune*, Sunday, January 19, 1873.)

Monday, January 20, 1873, was an important day for the Varieties, for it marked the beginning of the engagement of the dramatic star, Charlotte Cushman, whose reappearance in New Orleans after fifteen years was regarded as "... one of the most signal dramatic events ever known in the history of the New Orleans stage." (*Picayune*, Sunday, January 19, 1873.) William Winter describes Charlotte Cushman's acting as "... massive with imperial power," causing some critics to resent her dominance as "masculine," and "unladylike." She possessed, according to Winter, an innate grandeur; and she was able to rise with great authority to any occasion that called for liberated power: "... and to make that occasion superb." Her three greatest impersonations were...
regarded to be those of Meg Merrilies, Lady Macbeth and Queen Katherine; and in these roles she infused radiant "intrinsic light." For the Varieties opening, Charlotte Cushman chose to present her celebrated enactment of Meg Merrilies in the drama, Guy Mannering, the part which she made famous years before, and in which she was reputed to have achieved her greatest dramatic triumphs. One thousand five hundred people jammed the Varieties to greet the long-absent star upon her return on Monday evening. The Picayune hailed her as "... the foremost of all living actresses." (Picayune, Tuesday, January 21, 1873.) The play, Guy Mannering, was adapted from Walter Scott's novel of the same name, and was dramatized by Daniel Terry, a close friend of Scott's, with the assistance of the novelist. Music accompanying the drama was composed by Sir H. R. Bishop, a well-known English composer. Charlotte Cushman made her first appearance as Meg at the Broadway Theatre, New York, years before. The star made an auspicious return with reviews that surpassed former superlatives used by the local press. The Picayune held that although Charlotte Cushman had been gone for so many years, she had retained the same remarkable vigor of mind and body

that marked her last triumphs in the city. Her entrance on opening night caused an enthusiastic response in the audience beyond any demonstration seen in the Varieties. Every member of the audience demonstrated expressions of feeling. The weird and striking picture that the actress presented as the gypsy is told vividly by an account in the Picayune:

... In the second act when Meg is first seen, we are treated to a pathos and tenderness unexpected from the general impression touching the attributes of the hideous looking gypsy. In singing the song "Rest thee Babe," there was a depth of feeling, an exact imitation of the infirmities of old age in the cracked and broken voice ... that but revealed a faithfulness to one's own ideal of nature itself. Again was the power of her acting expressed in her scene with young Bertram, when in an ecstasy of dumb devotion, she fondles his hand and seeking to express the greatness of her emotion, can only speak in broken accents. ... Her very greatness was evidenced in her careful attention to what seemed the most trivial requirements of the portrayal. ... At the third act she carries her acting to a climax in the closing scene ... which Miss Cushman fairly electrifies by her genius. Standing in the cave, Dirck Hatterick reproaches her with being his rock-ahead during life. ... Miss Cushman, knowing how to feed the expectancy and imagination of her auditors ... advances the length of the stage with slow and measured strides, her eyes fixed with a dreadful glare on her cowering victim. The hardened ruffian shrinks and collapses before the long skinny forefinger. ... There is a moment of terrible silence, in which the auditors feel their flesh creep. ... At last the slow intense words: "The gallows is your rock a head." The effect is electrifying, and in that moment betrays at once a sense of the actress' power. ... The death
scene she makes painfully vivid in its earnest and terrible reality. It is a picture which once seen... remains a lasting impression. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 21, 1873.)

The Times paralleled the Picayune's excitement, and avowed:

"Miss Cushman's entrance was the most electrical sight we ever saw upon a stage... That she has lost none of her supremacy as an actress... is evident... She reappears as a new revelation of tragic power." (Times, Tuesday, January 21, 1873.) The initial drama played all week to packed houses and to daily raves in the city's newspapers.

The Picayune was the first journal to announce Charlotte Cushman's plans to retire. That paper exclaimed that Cushman's "... laurel wreath is as green today as it was twenty years ago," on Thursday, January 23, while lamenting in the next breath that in the height of her power and triumph, the actress had announced her intention to retire and live abroad. The unhappy knowledge afforded added impetus to the crowds who flocked to see the star all week.

For Charlotte Cushman's second and final week at the Varieties, it was announced to the excitement of Varieties theatre goers that Lawrence Barrett would join the actress to co-star with her in Shakespeare's Macbeth and Henry the Eighth. The announcement brought the comment: "... Such
a combination has rarely been equaled on the American stage. It may never occur again on our stage!' (Picayune, Friday, January 24, 1873.) It is interesting to compare the lengthy Picayune review of the opening performance of Macbeth on Monday, January 28, 1873, with the scant reviews of the Varieties dramas by the same newspaper during the previous year in the same month. It took two days and two reviews to cover all the comments concerning Macbeth. The first, dealing with Charlotte Cushman's performance alone was 180 lines long. Charlotte Cushman played Lady Macbeth to Barrett's Macbeth. Her conception of Lady Macbeth was regarded as an original one in which was reflected the highest scope of her genius, replete with intense energy and the strong will and determined resolution of the character. Her conception revealed a belief in her husband's advancing insanity, from the time of the first murder, as though his mental state was the significant reaction to the realization of his terrible crime. She made Lady Macbeth not a lover of blood but one who is led by the wealth of her wifely devotion; and after Macbeth became the aggressor in crime, she became purely womanly. Charlotte Cushman's conception showed qualities possessed in greater degree, according to the Picayune, than any living actress. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 28, 1873.)
Another lengthy review was devoted, on the next day, to Barrett's handling of Macbeth. The star had not appeared in the role in some years. In the interim, Barrett the scholar had made a profound study of the role. The actor interpreted a metaphysical Macbeth, and replaced the traditional black curly wig with a light-haired one and a beard of the same hue. The physical appearance aided the revelation of a Macbeth of mental superiority, devoid of gross attributes. This performance was reputed to be exceedingly intellectual and artistic, free from rant and bluster and very forceful. Barrett's Macbeth was no coward, but a man struggling between ambition and conscience. In the banquet scene when he encounters the ghost, Barrett achieved a histrionic triumph, the Picayune stated. (Picayune, Wednesday, January 29, 1873.)

On Thursday, January 30, 1873, Macbeth was scheduled to be replaced by Henry the Eighth, with Charlotte Cushman as Queen Katherine and Barrett as Cardinal Wolsey. However, on Thursday, Charlotte Cushman was stricken suddenly with a severe illness and could not perform that evening. Instead, Richelieu was substituted hastily, with Barrett repeating his popular title role. It was announced regretfully by the physician in attendance that Charlotte Cushman was severely ill, and that she must cancel the remainder of her engagement.
immediately. The residue of the week, beginning on Friday, *Henry the Eighth* was produced with Barrett playing his scheduled role of Cardinal Wolsey and Miss E. Phillips being cast to fill Cushman's role as Queen Katherine. (*Picayune*, Friday, January 31, 1873.) All New Orleans theatre goers were said to bemoan the unfortunate event, for Queen Katherine was one of Cushman's grandest roles, and this drama was to signify the aging actress's last appearance before her retirement. Barrett rose to the unexpected occasion and performed with rare dramatic flair. Wolsey's character was much simpler to portray than the role of Macbeth, and Barrett strode confidently through the role. He was regarded as brilliant in the closing scene where the Cardinal's downfall affords scope for rare display of dramatic power, and he portrayed with depth the Cardinal's agonies of wounded pride. Miss Phillips as Queen Katherine could in no way compensate for the void left by Cushman's illness, and a review of her performance was, in charity, not even attempted. (*Picayune*, February 1, 1873.)

The tragic muse gracefully abdicated in favor of Comus, God of mirth, and on Monday, February 3, jovial John E. Owens returned to the Varieties for a round of his comical portrayals. Over one thousand two hundred people assembled that
opening performance to greet the star in two of his happiest efforts: Major Wellington De Boots in Everybody's Friend, and Solon Shingle in the play of that name. In the latter part, Owens had appeared already over one thousand times. The comedian had brought with him his own comedy company, which gave a finished, even performance in both plays.

Theodore Hamilton, leading man at Booth's Theatre, New York, during the previous season, was seen as Featherly and as Mr. Howard. Marie E. Gordon, a favorite at the Varieties during the previous season, played Mrs. Swandown. The only member of the current Varieties company to be given a role was Jane Rignold. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 4, 1873.) On Tuesday evening, two comedies, Coleman's The Heir at Law and The Happiest Day in My Life, were presented with Owens appearing in his familiar roles of Dr. Pangloss in the former and Mr. Gilman in the latter. A large crowd again assembled. At the matinee on Wednesday, February 5, Owens appeared in Everybody's Friend and in The Rough Diamond, and on Wednesday evening, the star assumed again two roles, appearing as Solon Shingle and as Butterby in Tom Taylor's Victims. According to the Picayune, Owens appeared as fresh in his old personalities as he had twenty years previous. He was sparkling as Butterby and as Gilman, in Victims and The
Happiest Day of My Life, respectively, both new additions to last year's repertoire. (Picayune, Thursday, February 6, 1873.) On Thursday, Owens appeared in the lead roles in Poor Gentleman and Forty Winks; on Friday, his offerings were Paul Pry and Live Indian; at the matinee on Saturday, February 8, Owens appeared in Victims and Dumb Bell; and on Saturday evening, the comedian presented a marathon of three roles in The Happiest Day of My Life, Solon Shingle and Live Indian. Each performance during the week was a tribute to Owens' comic skill, with vast crowds assembled in the theatre, and "... from the going up of the curtain until the final lowering, vociferous merriment reigned supreme." (Picayune, February 8, 1873.)

For the second and closing week of his stay, Owens offered more comic fare. On Monday, February 10, he led off with Dickens' David Copperfield in which he acted the role of Micauber, and which played through Wednesday matinee. An immense audience gathered to witness the representation. The comical veteran was said to act majestically the eccentric character with the inexhaustable capacity for making everyone laugh at his dolorous misfortunes. Owens was well supported by Theodore Hamilton as Steerforth. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 11, 1873.) On Wednesday evening, February 12, Owens
presented *Married Life* and *Solon Shingle*; on Thursday, he appeared in *Everybody's Friend* and *Forty Winks*; and on Friday and Saturday, February 14 and 15, Owens closed his engagement with the offering of *Dot*, in his familiar role of Caleb Plummer. The latter performance was heralded as one of the most touching personations known to the American stage. Jane Rignold made a charming Dot, while Marie Gordon supported well as Bertha. The play, as the others in the group, was mounted in costly style by Piggott. (*Picayune*, Saturday, February 15, 1873.)

On Monday, February 17, comedy gave way to opera bouffé, with the spectacular singing star, Marie Aimee, making the first of many appearances at the third Varieties; bringing with her her opera troupe in a round of opera bouffé presentations. The inaugural performance on Monday was *La Grande Duchesse*, followed by *Le Petit Faust* on Tuesday and Friday, *La Grande Duchesse* again on Wednesday evening and at the Saturday matinee, and *Barbe Blue* on Thursday and Saturday evenings. The singing and acting were reported by the *Picayune* to be "superb." Mlle. Aimee was later to become a straight acting star. Aimee, just previous to the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, three years before, after a sojourn in Brazil, became the director and star of the
Varieties Theatre in Paris. She was young and attractive, with a beautiful singing voice of much power. Offenbach's opera, Les Brigands had been written especially for her. The star was supported by an excellent company, including Mlle. C. Roland of the Palais Royal in Paris, M. Juteau from Bouffes Parisiens who also had had great successes in Vienna and St. Petersburg, M. Gabel, M. Duchesne, M. Constant Lecuyer of Paris Varieties, M. Leon Marcas of Theatre des Salies Dramatiques, M. Nardin of Paris Varieties and Mlle. Bonelli. Mlle. Aimee and M. Juteau, soprano and tenor, sang the lead roles throughout the engagement. Aimee presented no Wednesday matinee; instead, on Sunday evening, February 23, she presented for the first time in New Orleans, Lecocq's new opera, Les Cent Vierges, latest Paris hit, which had run for 200 nights in Paris, Vienna and St. Petersburg. Aimee excelled as Gabrielle in the production, which was repeated on Monday, February 24. Tuesday, February 25, was Mardi Gras Day, and the Varieties on that evening was taken over by the exclusive Mystic Krewe of Comus for that Mardi Gras organization's lavish ball. The ball was, traditionally, on the evening of Mardi Gras Day, and followed the gala evening parade of Comus, as is still the tradition. Theme of the parade and ball was "The Darwinian Theory and the Survival
of the Fittest." The theatre was said to be packed with an elegant assembly of ladies of society. The first tableau of the ball revealed on the Varieties stage a scene at the bottom of the sea. The dazzling scene revealed snowy coral reaching upward with branching arms from where the alligator lay and the snail, while shark and whale held council. In the second and last tableau, the gorilla, crowned, was seated on his throne, while the animal and vegetable world crowded toward the royal presence. (Picayune, Wednesday, February 26, 1873.)

On Wednesday, February 26, Aimee starred in Offenbach's Perichole; Les Cent Vierges was repeated on Thursday; on Friday, February 28, Aimee took a benefit, playing the title role in La Belle Helene, with M. Juteau appearing as Paris. La Perichole was repeated at the matinee on Saturday, March 1; while La Belle Helene was repeated on Saturday evening. A celebrated new opera bouffé, Genevieve de Brabant, was offered for Aimee's third and final week at the Varieties, beginning on Sunday, March 2, and on Monday, March 3, 1873. On Tuesday, March 4, Offenbach's Les Brigands was offered, with Aimee playing Florela, the role especially created for her by the composer. Wednesday at the matinee, La Belle Helene was repeated again; while on Wednesday evening, La
Perichole was repeated. On Thursday, *Le Petit Faust* was repeated; on Friday, March 8, M. Juteau and Mlle. Rolland took a benefit, with *Orphée aux Enfers* and the gendarme scene from *Geneviève de Brabant*. On Saturday, to close her engagement, Aimee offered *Geneviève de Brabant* at the matinee, and *La Grande Duchesse* on the Saturday evening of March 9.

On Saturday evening, March 8, 1873, Lawrence Barrett returned to New Orleans, after a prolonged tour of the Southeast, where in Mobile, Montgomery, Savannah, and Charleston, the star received great praise. For instance, in Savannah, as reprinted by the *Picayune*, the *Savannah News* reported:

> The Barrett fever rages in Savannah as it did in Charleston. No other tragedian save Edwin Forrest has visited Savannah since the war who is in any way to be compared to the brilliant and youthful Barrett. He is now the only rival of Booth on the American stage. His success in Charleston and the other cities he has visited since leaving Savannah has been uninterrupted and overwhelming. . . . (*Picayune*, Sunday, March 9, 1873.)

As additional evidence of Barrett's favor on his tour, the following amusing incident was published in the *Montgomery Advertiser* and *Mail* of March 8:

> The effort to hold a night session of the Senate last Thursday proved a failure. One of the Senators in moving to adjourn until morning, said: "There is something better than all this going on down the street. Barrett is there playing Hamlet, and as we have only three minutes
to go there in by the clock, I move we adjourn and all go down to see him." The gentleman carried his point. (Picayune, Sunday, March 9, 1873.)

Barrett's return signaled his reappearance at his elegant theatre on Monday, March 10, 1873, in the lead character of the Scottish poet, James Harebell in W. G. Willis' Man o'Airlie, as played at the theatre the previous season. Again the star was a decided hit in the role. Barrett was well supported by Frederic Robinson as Sir Gerald Hope and by Ione Burke and Jane Rignold. The play ran through Wednesday evening. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 11, 1873.) On Thursday and at Saturday's matinee, Barrett presented the Duke's Motto, in costly style. Barrett was said to be impressive and compelling as Captain Henri de la Gardere; and was well supported by Ione Burke as Blanche. On Friday, March 14, The Merchant of Venice was staged with the star doing an impersonation of Shylock that the Picayune regarded as "superb." The play was well mounted by Piggott. In chief supporting roles, John W. Norton was Gratiano, Frederic Robinson played Bassanio and Jane Rignold appeared as Portia. But Ione Burke's portrayal of Jessica was the most outstanding supporting acting job, far outdoing Jane Rignold's Portia. (Picayune, Saturday, March 15, 1873.) On Saturday
evening, *Julius Caesar* was given, with Barrett appearing again as Cassius, as he had on other occasions.

Barrett opened his second starring week on Monday, March 18, by appearing as Hamlet. The *Picayune* found that the majority of the company was better in comedy than in tragedy, and except for praising Miss Phillips as the Queen and Robinson as the Ghost, the paper found the rest of the cast wanting. Particularly criticized was the weak acting of Jane Rignold as Ophelia, Pearson's Polonius and Melton's Claudius. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, March 18, 1873.) On Tuesday, Barrett appeared admirably as Elliot Grey in *Rosedale*, with Ione Burke as a coquettish Rosa Leigh, Jane Rignold as Lady May and Frederic Robinson as Miles McKenna. On Wednesday matinee and evening, Barrett appeared as Cardinal Richelieu in Bulwer's drama of that name, being well supported by Robinson as De Baradas, with Messrs. Long and Norton disappointing as the King and De Mauprat, respectively. (*Picayune*, Thursday, March 20, 1873.) *Marble Heart* was the offering on Thursday, March 20, with Barrett's Raphael being cited as excellent. Good support came from Ione Burke as Marco, Jane Rignold as Marie, and Frederic Robinson as de Volages. (*Picayune*, Friday, March 21, 1873.) On Friday, March 21, a benefit was offered for Barrett, when for the
first time in many years in the city, *Wonder* was produced, with Barrett as Don Felix. A large and enthusiastic audience greeted the star on the occasion, and Barrett was said to have given an exceptional performance that was lively, smooth, finished, and had a dash of humor. Ione Burke was seen as Viotinta, and was excellent. Bouquets of flowers were showered upon the beneficiary at the conclusion of the performance. (*Picayune*, Saturday, March 22, 1873.) At the matinee on Saturday, *Hamlet* was repeated, and on Saturday evening, *Wonder* reappeared.

The next week brought a succession of benefits. On Monday, March 24, Frederic Robinson took a benefit, appearing as Farmer Allen in Reade's dramatic adaptation of Tennyson's poem *Dora*. A disappointingly small audience greeted Robinson for his performance, despite the fact that he had proven himself to be a painstaking and conscientious actor. He portrayed the noble old farmer in a life-like, finished style; and was well supported by Misses Burke and Rignold and by Mr. Norton. In the afterpiece, *Perfection*, Ione Burke and Messrs. Thayer, Cowan and Stumpf did well. The names of the latter gentlemen will be recognized as those of leading amateur actors of the city. *Dora* was repeated on Tuesday. There was no Wednesday matinee that week; but on Wednesday
evening, Lorraine Rogers, Barrett's manager at the Varieties, took a benefit. The play was *Jane Eyre*, starring Charlotte Thompson, who was Mrs. Rogers, in the title role; with Frederic Robinson as Rochester. A large house gratified the honoree, and Charlotte Thompson received much applause for her deft handling of her role. (*Picayune, Thursday, March 27, 1873.*) On Thursday, March 27, a benefit was held for Lynch of the Varieties staff. The drama, *Divorce*, was given, with Norton disappointing as Alfred Adriance; but excellent performances given by Ione Burke as Lu Ten Eyck, Jane Rignold as Fanny, E. Phillips as Mrs. Ten Eyck and Pearson as De Witt. (*Picayune, Friday, March 28, 1873.*) Ione Burke took a benefit on Friday, March 28, when the beneficiary appeared in the title role in *Colleen Bawn*. The vivacious young actress, easily the most talented actress in the Varieties company, who, according to reviews, had never been seen in a bad performance, was excellent as always in her role; and she displayed a charming singing voice. The *Picayune* reviewer went on record by stating "... Miss Burke stands A No. 1 amongst the actresses of the American stage." (*Picayune, Saturday, March 29, 1873.*) *Divorce* was repeated at both performances on Saturday, March 29, 1873.

On Sunday, March 30, 1873, the intention of Barrett
not to renew his lease was made known in the Picayune when an advertisement appeared offering the Varieties Theatre for rent for the 1873-1874 season. It was announced that the Variété Association was soliciting proposals to lease the theatre until June 1. Interested parties were asked to address E. Rigney, current president of La Variété Association.

Barrett took over again as star at the Varieties on Monday, March 31. Recognizing the superior reviews given Ione Burke, over the secondary reviews given Jane Rignold, who for most of the season had been given the lead feminine roles of the company, Barrett finally promoted Ione Burke to leading lady status, and on Monday, T. W. Robertson's David Garrick was produced with Lawrence Barrett in the title role of the noted English actor, with Ione Burke as Ada Ingot. Barrett showed in the drinking scene that he could be as humorous as he could be dramatic in heavier roles. (Picayune, Tuesday, April 1, 1873.) This play continued until Thursday, when Robertson's comedy, Home or Across the Atlantic, was produced, with Barrett appearing as Colonel John White in his usual artistic manner. Barrett's best support came from F. G. White as Captain Mainraff. (Picayune, Friday, April 4, 1873.) The bill was repeated on Friday, and for the Saturday
matinee on April 5, Wonder was repeated. On Saturday evening, A. O. Bourdan, gas engineer of the Varieties was feted with a benefit. The evening was a red-letter occasion, for Lawrence Barrett appeared for the first time anywhere as Damon in Damon and Pythias. In the new role, the star won new laurels, receiving great praise. Norton as Pythias was considered good but too stagey. Chief support came from Messrs. Seymour as Lucullus and Milton as Dionysius. The play was repeated on Sunday, April 6, 1873. (Picayune, Sunday, April 6, 1873.)

Continuing the very long season, on Monday, April 7, for the first time that season, Bulwer's popular comedy, Money, was produced, with Lawrence Barrett appearing as Alfred Evelyn. Barrett sailed through the difficult role with ease. The Picayune noted that "... his rendition was as fine a piece of acting as we have ever witnessed in a play of this kind." (Picayune, April 8, 1873.) On Tuesday and Thursday, Wonder was repeated; and on the matinee Wednesday, and on Friday, Home was repeated; while Wednesday evening, Damon and Pythias was repeated. The latter part of the week was slow, being Easter holy week, with business very light on Holy Thursday and Good Friday but picking up again on Saturday, April 12, 1873. On this evening, William Seymour took a benefit, with The King of the Commons as the offering.
Seymour played the role of Mungo Sewall admirably. (Picayune, Sunday, April 13, 1873.)

More benefits held precedence for the final week of the season. On Monday, April 14, John W. Norton took a benefit with the double bill of Tom Taylor's comedy, *Still Waters Run Deep*, and the drama, *Don Caesar de Bazan*, being presented. In the latter play, Norton appeared in the title role. The audience was large and Norton performed well. (Picayune, Tuesday, April 15, 1873.) On Tuesday, April 15, *David Garrick* was repeated with Barrett in the title role; on Wednesday evening, April 16, Harry Pearson took a benefit, the offering being the drama, *Charles the Twelfth*, and the farce, *Fortune's Frolic*. In the drama, Pearson appeared as Adam Brock, and in the farce as Robin Roughhead, doing well in both roles. The theatre was said to be literally jammed, and Pearson received many flattering testimonials in the form of floral offerings and enthusiastic applause. Lawrence Barrett enriched the affair by his participation, reciting in an intermission, "Shamus O'Brien," with such fire he brought down the house. (Picayune, Thursday, April 17, 1873.) On Thursday, April 17, the double bill of *Home* and *The Wonder* were presented. On Friday, April 18, Lawrence Barrett took a benefit, appearing in selections from several
of his popular tragedies, including *The Merchant of Venice*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, and *Richelieu*, in all of which he was impressive and up to his usual excellent standard and was well sustained by the Varieties company. A capacity audience was present. (*Picayune*, Saturday, April 19, 1873.) For the final performance of the professional 1872-1873 season, *Divorce* was performed as a benefit for George Wang, the Varieties' treasurer, with the young amateur actress, Sadie Vivian, appearing as Alfred. It was announced that Sadie Vivian was to begin a professional tour to the West and North with Lawrence Barrett, at the conclusion of which she would go to New York to prepare for the professional stage. (*Picayune*, Sunday, April 20, 1873.) The attendance was large on this final evening of the season.

In review, the 1872-1873 season had been significant in the stars that appeared, one after another, all season. The foremost of these was the dramatic star, Charlotte Cushman, in her first visit to the city in fifteen years, and what was to prove her last. Her engagement, more crowded with vast audiences than any other star commanded that season, ended abruptly with the serious illness of the star. Lawrence Barrett, the Varieties' star-lessee, made appearances at his theatre that were, too, well received and were always...
crowded. Barrett realized, however, that it was impossible to continue in the dual position that had been his role the past two seasons. In justice to the theatre and to himself, he must choose to remain either star or full-time manager of the Varieties. He did not continue his lease; but, as a visiting star, the theatre was to be graced by his presence frequently through the years.

The 1873 summer amateur season began at the Varieties after the close of the professional season. As differing from the preceding summer season, the majority of amateur plays warranted full reviews in the newspapers. This season saw a great increase in the number and elaborateness of productions and the caliber of the acting of the amateur entertainments. On Friday, April 25, a young New Orleans actor, J. H. Soery, made his semi-professional debut at the Varieties. Soery changed his name to J. Harry Siddons, got support and backing from the Variety Dramatic Club, and presented The Marble Heart, taking the lead role of Raphael Duchatletin. Siddons charged $1 admission in an effort to make expenses, and attracted a fashionable house. The aspiring actor merited a prominent review in the Picayune, in which he was described as a fine actor with much promise.
Siddons received able support from prominent amateur actors, including Louise Hawthorne as Marco, Lulu King as Clementine, and Ben Onorato as Diogenes. In other roles were Frankie McClellan, Misses Neuse and Mealy and Messrs. J. Davidson, D. Dalsheimer, and W. Belden. (Picayune, Saturday, April 26, 1873.)

On Friday, May 9, 1873, the first complimentary performance of the amateur season of the Orleans Dramatic Association was given at the Varieties. The double bill offered consisted of The Corsican Brothers and Sketches in India. A full house was in evidence, and the production was accompanied by an orchestra. Yet, the double performance was rated by the Picayune as only fair. The cast of Corsican Brothers was as follows: Fabien Del Franchi..C. F. Buck, Louis Del Franchi..Harry Pickles, Renaud..C. W. DeCamp, Maynard..E. M. Stella, Baron Martelli..G. Santini, Baron Montigon..St. Clair Johns, Orlando..O. S. Bablick, Colonna..W. H. Beanham, Griffo..T. A. Gleason, Sanola..N. E. Bailey, Jr., Tomaso..Dr. John Angell, Surgeon..M. D. Gardner, Emilie de Lasparre..Louise Hawthorne, Salvalia Del Franchi..Esther Blumenthal, Marie..Lulu King. The cast of Sketches in India included Sir Mathew..E. M. Stella, Captain Dorrington..M. G.
Beanham, Dick Milton. Dr. John Angell, Lady Scraggs. Esther Blumenthal, Sally. Frankie McClellan, Poplin. Lulu King. In the first play, Pickles, Buck and Johns were cited for outstanding performances, and in the latter play Misses Blumenthal, King and Hawthorne made the most favorable impressions. *(Picayune, Saturday, May 11, 1873.)*

On Thursday, May 15, the Shakespeare Club presented the drama, *Don Caesar de Bazan,* and the melodrama, *Robert Macaire,* for the benefit of Louisiana Relief. The production drew a large house, and the participants did creditable acting jobs. Particularly outstanding in the first piece were George H. Braughn in the title role, Louise Hawthorne as Maritina and Frankie McClellan as Lazarillo. *(Picayune, Friday, May 16, 1873.)*

On Friday, May 16, A. E. Griswold rented the Varieties for one night to present an evening of comedy. Calling himself "The Fat Contributor," Griswold conducted a comical lecture entitled "Injun Meal." His audience was large, and he rated constant laughter over his many puns. *(Picayune, Saturday, May 17, 1873.)*

The Shakespeare Club's second entertainment was presented at the Varieties on Friday, May 30, at which time, *The Wife, a Tale of Mantum,* was presented. An arresting
notice accompanying the advertisement in the *Picayune* stated that "... gentlemen unaccompanied by ladies will be admitted through the Burgundy Street entrance only," meaning that all "stags" must sit in the second balcony. This was the seventh annual series of the prominent dramatic club. Judge George H. Braughn, the group's leading actor, received glowing praise as Julian St. Pierre. Others who rated special mention included Ben Onorato as Antonio, Fred N. Thayer as Leonardo, Louise Hawthorne as Mariana and Miss Hillman as Floribele. It was noted that D. C. Johnston's Bartolo was well drawn, but that the fellow's acting effect was negated since he dared to publicly insult a fellow actor in view of everyone in attendance "... which greatly marred the effect of the entire play during the evening and cast a feeling of distraught over the audience that no amount of good acting could have done away with." (*Picayune*, Saturday, May 31, 1873.) Others in the cast were R. G. Eyrich, J. A. Lee, R. J. Browne, J. Meager, H. F. Given, Jr., and Messrs. Coleman and Thomas.

On Tuesday, June 3, a benefit was presented at the Varieties for Mark Kaiser, a young New Orleans violinist who was studying in Paris. The comedy *Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady* preceded a comic-drama called *Husband to Order*. 
The event was given by the combined efforts of the several dramatic organizations existing at the time in New Orleans. Standouts of the evening were Esther Blumenthal and Lulu King. Miss Mercier and Tyler pleased, also, and Professor Hoffner charmed everyone by presenting his orchestra in musical oleos. (Picayune, Wednesday, June 4, 1873.)

Third entertainment of the Shakespeare Club was presented at the Varieties on Wednesday, June 25, 1873. The double bill included a dramatized version of Sir Walter Scott's poem "The Lady of the Lake" and the comedy, A Conjugal Lesson. The house was crowded and the play successful. Artist William Hyland created elaborate sets for the production that were greeted by warm applause. Professor Vogel and his orchestra performed. In the first play, those receiving special recognition included G. H. Braughn as King James V of Scotland, T. O'Neile as Roderick and Louise Hawthorne as Ellen Douglas. Others doing well were Frankie McClellan, Carrie Foster, A. Hillman and Shubert and Ben Onorato, E. A. Cowan, M. O'Rorke, John Stumpf, F. H. Wilson, Will Coleman and H. F. Given, Jr. In the second play, Frankie McClellan and Frank Wilson did well. (Picayune, Thursday, June 26, 1873.)

On Friday, June 27, 1873, the Shakespeare Club,
assisted by twenty-five leading lady amateurs of the city, presented the Hebrew tragedy, Esther, in costly style. The success was called "magnificent" by the Picayune, and the full house applauded vociferously. Leading honors went to Esther Blumenthal as Elise, sister of Esther, in playing with her usual care and grace; to G. H. Grant as Ahasuerus, the King, forceful and effective; to Ben Onorato as Haman, excelling with smooth, effortless acting; and to Conen as Mordecai, spirited and truthful in his role. Others in the cast were: Miss T. Cannon.. Queen Esther, Miss Forester.. Zares, Coleman.. Hydaspes, Gibbons.. Asaph, and Messrs. Brown, Bryant and Evans.. Persian prophets. (Picayune, Saturday, June 28, 1873.)

On Monday, June 30, the St. Joseph's Literary Association presented at the Varieties a combined literary and musical entertainment, featuring the Star Cornet Band.

On Monday, July 21, the Variety Dramatic Club performed in a double offering consisting of Eustache Baudin and the farce, Unfinished Gentleman. In the former piece, getting special mention were A. M. Llambias, A. H. Brown, D. Dalshheimer, P. R. Angelovich, B. A. Michel, J. B. Cefalu, L. A. Davidson, B. W. Belden, P. LaCamare, E. Zintgraff, P. Torre, Jr., A. F. Michel, W. N. Hammett, J. M. Conway, E. Dever, Mrs. K. Shubert and Esther Blumenthal, Mammie Woods, Lulu...

The next performance of the Shakespeare Club was given on Wednesday, July 23, when the drama, Clouds and Sunshine, by James Anderson was performed. The group gave an impressive performance, with the lead role going to Judge George H. Braughn. The Judge played the double role of Edgar Dunois and his twin brother, Henri. Other noteworthy performances were contributed by Louise Hawthorne as the Duchess of Nairne and E. A. Cowen as the Marquis de Marcilly, with other plaudits going to Esther Blumenthal and Frankie McClellan and W. H. Coleman, Frank Wilson, A. Campbell, H. F. Given, Jr., Ben Onorato and R. G. Eyrich. (Picayune, Thursday, July 24, 1873.)

The fourth complimentary entertainment of the Orleans Dramatic Association was given at the Varieties on Thursday, August 7. The house was so crowded that standing room was at a premium. First piece of the evening was Morton's one-act comedy, Morning Call, with Louise Hawthorne and Harry Pickles appearing as Fanny and Sir Edward, respectively.
The concluding play was Lewis' drama in three acts, *The Bells*, produced for the first time in the city. The cast was as follows: St. Clair Johns..Mathias, O. S. Babcock..Father Wallace, Brooks Carnes..Hans, Harry Pickles..Christian, E. M. Stella..Mesmerist, D. M. Gardner..Dr. Zemmer, W. B. McLean..Notary, J. Corprew..Judge, J. McMartin..Clerk, N. E. Bailey, Jr...Karl, J. R. Neville..Tony, F. Holyland..Fritz, Esther Blumenthal..Catherine, Frankie McClellan..Annette, Lulu King..Sozel. The drama was exceptionally well acted and well mounted. (*Picayune*, Friday, August 8, 1873.)

Copying professional patterns of behavior of that era, it is interesting to see that benefits were in order occasionally for amateurs. Frankie McClellan was accorded a benefit jointly by the Orleans Dramatic Association and the Shakespeare Club, on Thursday, August 14. The program included the one-act farces, *Who Speaks First* and *The Comical Countess*, and the two-act comedy, *The Crown Prince*, in each of which Frankie McClellan appeared in the leading roles, doing them well. The support was termed excellent. (*Picayune*, Friday, August 15, 1873.)

On Wednesday, August 27, the Shakespeare Club performed at the Varieties in *The Hunchback*. Again Judge Braughn excelled in a lead role, playing Sir Thomas Clifford, while
T. O'Neile as Master Wallace and Louise Hawthorne as Julia, did other top roles well. Gaining special mention, also, were John Stumpf, Will Coleman and Frankie McClellan. (Picayune, Thursday, August 28, 1873.)

On Thursday, September 11, the fifth complimentary entertainment of the Orleans Dramatic Association took place at the theatre. The offering was the drama A Life's Revenge. On Thursday, September 18, this same organization and the Shakespeare Club presented jointly an elaborate production of Romeo and Juliet, and dedicated the event as a benefit to Louise Hawthorne. The honoree appeared as Juliet. The production attracted over 1,500 people to the performance. T. O'Neile distinguished himself by his fine portrayal of Romeo, while Louise Hawthorne was convincing as Juliet. Other standouts included C. F. Buck as Mercutio and Kate Schubert as the Nurse. The fortunate honoree was presented by Joseph Horner at the end of the evening with an expensive pair of diamond bracelets. (Picayune, Thursday, September 18, 1873.) Another joint endeavor by the Orleans Dramatic Association and the Shakespeare Club occurred at the Varieties on Wednesday, September 24, when Bulwer's Money was presented as a benefit for Shreveport sufferers of the yellow fever epidemic, with tickets priced at $1. The severe epidemic was raging in
Shreveport, but had not hit New Orleans at this time. Fred N. Thayer played Evelyn with Louise Hawthorne as Clara Douglas. Others playing well were Lizzie Maddern (the mother of Minnie Maddern Fiske) as Lady Franklin and W. H. Beanham as Graves. (Picayune, Thursday, September 25, 1873.)

The Shakespeare Club's final performance of the season was Bulwer's Richelieu. The drama was performed at the Varieties on Monday, September 29. The crowded house was filled with the city's society. Since the gentlemen members of the club did not disclose their identities in their respective roles, it was not stated who played the title role. As Julia, however, Louise Hawthorne performed well, with Frankie McClellan and Kate Schubert in leading feminine supporting roles. (Picayune, Tuesday, September 30, 1873.)

In this very active and lengthy summer season, it is seen that the amateur players continued to perform throughout October and November, 1873. On Saturday, October 18, the Variety Dramatic Club gave a benefit entertainment for the relief of the Shreveport yellow fever epidemic, under the auspices of the Howard Association. For the occasion, the group presented at the Varieties, Douglas Jerrold's three-act domestic drama, The Rent Day, a play which had not been seen in New Orleans in many years. The affair concluded
with J. M. Morton's one-act farce, *Lend Me Five Shillings*.

The offering was meritorious in every respect. Esther Blumenthal and Lulu King appeared in prominent feminine roles and gained much praise. The leading gentlemen actors, also volunteering their services, included A. H. Brown, B. A. Michel, J. B. Ofalu, L. A. Davidson, M. H. Redon, A. M. Llambias, W. N. Hammett, A. F. Michel, E. J. Angell, P. La Comar, P. R. Angelovich, E. Zintgraff and A. Redeau. (*Pica-yune*, Sunday, October 19, 1873.)

Interrupting the amateur season for two weeks commencing Monday, October 20, and including Saturday matinees and Sunday performances, a professional group of minstrels moved into the theatre. They were the Duprez and Benedict New Orleans Minstrels. The group was then on its twenty-second annual tour, and performed with great skill the art of Negro minstrelsy. The popular group performed through Tuesday, November 4, 1873. Leading players were Lewis Benedict, Thomas B. Dixon, Mrs. Frank Kent, George H. Edwards and Messrs. Fox and Ward.

While amateur entertainment still continued at the Varieties, the other leading theatres had already begun their professional fall seasons. The St. Charles and Academy of Music opened in October, and the French Opera House opened
its doors on November 6. On Wednesday, November 5, Lulu King and Esther Blumenthal were honored at a benefit given jointly by the Variety Dramatic Club and the Orleans Dramatic Association. Three plays were on the bill: the comedy, The Rough Diamond; Craven's drama, Meg's Diversion; and the farce, The Little Sentinel. Lulu King and Esther Blumenthal appeared in each play and were delightful in each. At the end of the evening, Lulu King was presented with a gold watch and chain and Esther Blumenthal was given a set of coral jewelry. The gifts were presented by Sam Hart on behalf of both clubs. (Picayune, Thursday, November 6, 1873.)

On Wednesday, November 26, the Orleans Dramatic Club presented at the theatre the double bill of Corsican Brothers and Morton's Sketches in India, given as a benefit for the family of Captain Joseph Fry. The late captain was a hero in the Civil War, a naval officer, and the commander of the Virginius, who had died in poverty in New Orleans. The club members were supported by three professional actresses of the St. Charles Theatre company who volunteered their services. They included Jenny Cook, Hattie Vallee and Minnie Doyle. (Picayune, November 27, 1873.)

The foregoing description of summer amateur theatrical activity at the Varieties during the summer of 1873 shows a
significant increase over the preceding summer in scheduling of productions, in length of season, in caliber of acting, and of production. Much activity was devoted to paid admission benefits for charitable causes and for individual actors, as well as the presentation of complimentary entertainments.

The season of 1873-1874 was a traumatic one for the Varieties. When Barrett failed to renew his lease, the Variété Association had difficulty in finding a new manager. At first, there was talk during the summer of 1873 that the elite theatre would be turned into a music hall, but the Varieties was leased finally by T. C. DeLeon, a theatrical magnate of Mobile, Alabama, who was not to fare well. By February, DeLeon was to be replaced as lessee by the more significant producer, Maurice Grau, who took over, however, only briefly. Physical conditions were to reflect the managerial and financial instability; for on January 10, 1874, a devastating fire was to destroy Victor's Restaurant which was located in the left "Sister" building, and swept to take hold of the middle "Sister." Only a miracle and fast-thinking firemen prevented the Varieties from being destroyed.

Prior to the official opening of the fall season, the well-known comedians Rose and Harry Watkins began, on
December 15, an engagement in the Irish drama, *Kathleen Mavoureen* or *Under the Spell* supported by the child actress Amy Lee and the Watkins' own company. The *Republican* confided that Rose Watkins was a famous old star who had appeared as leading lady at the old Varieties, under the management of Thomas Placide, when she was then known as Mrs. Charles Howard. The star had remarried and now used her new husband's name. It was said that she returned with the same charm of manner, acting and singing ability that had endeared her to local audiences in former days, and was warmly greeted by a large audience of old fans. Harry Watkins was described as a clever comedian. He was a well-known Irish actor who had won considerable reputation on the European stage. Little Amy Lee was called "... a remarkably brilliant child actress," and the company was a good one. (*Republican*, Tuesday, December 16, 1873.) This inaugural performance was actually an auspicious occasion, with Harry and Rose Watkins appearing in their original characters of Kathleen and Terrence in the Irish drama which had made its debut in Dublin and had played for over a thousand performances in the principal cities of Europe and America. (*Picayune*, Saturday, December 13, 1873.) Little Amy Lee recreated her original role of Meg Murdock. The
Picayune praised the performers as far surpassing most Irish characterizations seen on New Orleans' stages, with the sincerity of acting of the simple, open-hearted Irish peasants which they portrayed. Rose Watkins was called a "finished actress"; and her rich, strong voice was heard in the beautiful ballads "Come to Me, Darling," and "Kathleen Mavoureen." The reception of the three principals was warm and generous. (Picayune, Tuesday, December 16, 1873.) On Wednesday evening, the bill was changed to The New Magdalen, despite the popularity of the Irish play. Rose Watkins starred as Mercy Merrick. Again, on Thursday, the bill was changed, and an Irish drama, Trodden Down or Under Two Flags was presented for the first time in the city. Harry Watkins appeared in the lead role of Fergis McCarthy, an Irish patriot and outlaw. He developed his character with a unique mixture of levity, humor, philosophy and sentiment. The Picayune said that not many actors could manifest the versatility to act such a many-sided character. Little Amy Lee appeared as Blanche Desmond. (Picayune, Saturday, December 20, 1873.) Beginning their second week, on Monday, December 22, Harry and Rose Watkins produced the Scottish comedy, Our Daisy or Only a Woman's Heart, adapted from the comedy of Caste. Harry Watkins appeared in the Scottish comedy as
Miles Hupp, a coffin maker, and created a role well suited to his comedy style. Rose Watkins played the leading feminine role of Daisy Maynard, wife of a political magnate. She was regarded as gracious and poised, while Watkins kept his audience in a constant flow of laughter with his keen sense of the ridiculous. (Picayune, Wednesday, December 24, 1873.) The play was followed by the farce, To Oblige Benson, in which Watkins played the role of Trotter Southdown.

For this holiday week the prices of admission to all performances at the Varieties were lowered considerably. General admission was put at 75 cents; dress circle, 50 cents; and family circle, 25 cents. For Christmas Day, Thursday, December 25, 1873, a gala toy matinee was given, with presents for all children. For the holiday event, Rose and Harry Watkins appeared in the comedy, Santa Claus at Home. On Thursday evening a double bill was presented: Pioneer of America, and It Takes Two to Quarrel. On Friday, Rose Watkins took a benefit, performing again in the Irish drama, Trodden Down. The play was filled with exciting situations, and the star distinguished herself in the dual role of the wife and daughter of Macarthy. (Picayune, Saturday, December 27, 1873.) Saturday, December 27, was the last day of the Watkins' engagement. For the matinee and the evening, Hidden
Hand was the presentation, featuring Rose Watkins as Capitola, the frolicsome heiress of Hurricane Hall, with Watkins as Wool, the humorous Negro footman, and little Amy Lee as Jim.

After a lull of over a week, the official fall season at the Varieties got under way on Wednesday evening, January 7, with John T. Raymond as star. A first-class company was gathered for the season, the most prominent of whom were Marie Gordon, a favorite of two seasons before, who returned as leading lady, after a year at the Park Theatre, New York; Charles Walcott, leading man, former leading man of the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia; Lulu Prior, formerly of the Union Square Theatre, New York, and known as one of the most beautiful actresses on the American stage; Carrie Dalton of Hooley's Theatre, Chicago; and Isabel Freeman, well-known local actress. Lee S. Lynch, already well-known behind-the-scenes man at the Varieties, was announced as manager with Lawrence Barrett as business manager. Barrett was soon to be replaced, however, since his steadily mounting theatrical reputation created constant demand for his presence elsewhere. Opening play was W. S. Gilbert's A Wicked World, a current hit at the Haymarket in London. Joseph Piggott, who was retained as scenic artist, prepared elaborate sets for the initial production. The play was described as a fairy drama
in three acts, with action taking place in fairyland over a period of twenty-four hours, its characters being nine fairies and three mortals. The opening audience was an immense one that reacted with favor to the pleasing production and the impressive company. The Picayune regarded Piggott's sets as the most beautiful ever seen in New Orleans. Outstanding in the cast were star John T. Raymond, Charles Walcott, Carrie Dalton, Marie Gordon and Isabel Freeman. (Picayune, Thursday, January 8, 1874.) The initial production played all week, including Sunday night.

Then, on Saturday morning, January 10, 1874, about four o'clock in the morning, a raging fire destroyed Victor's Restaurant in the "Sister" building at the opposite end of the Varieties, at 185 Canal Street. The fire swept riverward, taking hold of the middle "Sister," at 183 Canal owned by D. F. Kenner, the lower floor of which was occupied by the Howe Sewing Machine Company, and the upper floor, by Anderson, the photographer. The fire raged past the other side of Victor's, catching the property at 187 Canal Street, owned by G. Foster, and which was occupied by Casey and Blood as a café. It was a miracle that the Varieties was not destroyed, but the theatre was saved by the firemen who dashed in and stopped the blaze just at the wall of the
theatre. (Republican, Sunday, January 11, 1874.)

On Monday, January 12, Joseph Jefferson began an engagement at the Varieties, appearing in his celebrated role of Rip Van Winkle. Again, as formerly, the Picayune roasted Jefferson's performance, finding that the actor was unrealistic as Rip as an old man "... moving around in an agile manner that Rip's rheumatics would never have allowed."

(Picayune, Tuesday, January 13, 1874.) On Thursday, the bill changed to The Heir at Law and Lend Me Five Shillings. On Friday, Jefferson appeared in Sheridan's The Rivals and the farce, The Regular Fix. The afterpiece was the hit of the evening, and Joseph Jefferson's acting ability in the latter was loudly applauded. (Picayune, Saturday, January 17, 1874.) On Saturday, January 17, at the matinee, Joseph Jefferson concluded his short engagement by appearing as Rip Van Winkle with Marie Gordon as Gretchen. On Saturday evening, Lee S. Lynch of the Varieties management, took a benefit; and the event was important in that it marked the debut of Charles Jefferson, the son of Joseph Jefferson. The young actor appeared as Tobias Shortcut in the farce, The Spitfire. Also on the bill was the comedy, The American Cousin featuring Marie Gordon and Charles Walcott. Young Jefferson was found to have much promise, and his reviews
were exceedingly more generous than those given his celebrated father. *(Picayune, Saturday, January 17, 1874.)*

Because of the repeated bad reviews, Joseph Jefferson was infuriated, and when he left New Orleans at the conclusion of his engagement he vowed not to return to the Crescent City, keeping that promise for many years. Two years later, on Sunday, April 23, 1876, the *Picayune* printed an editorial carrying news of a rebuke from the *St. Louis Republican* in which the newspaper censured the New Orleans press and public for not appreciating Joseph Jefferson. In the account the *Picayune* quoted the St. Louis journal as saying:

> New Orleans could see nothing in Joe Jefferson's "Rip Van Winkle." No one there wanted to see him. Mr. Jefferson has not been in New Orleans since and could not be dragged there. . . .

The *Picayune* retorted that the St. Louis paper was unfair in its criticism, saying that the actor had brought upon himself the censure of New Orleans by hurrying his formerly careful performance of Rip by merely walking through the play, and by assuming an indifference which seemed like contempt for the public. The *Picayune* added that it had been astounded in the change in the actor. *(Picayune, Sunday, April 23, 1876.)*

On Monday, January 19, the San Francisco Minstrels
opened a week's engagement at the Varieties. They drew good
audiences with headliners Messrs. Birch, Walmbold and Charles
Backus. The latter was a clever actor whose imitations of
famous actors was said by the *Picayune* to be sensational and
requiring great ability and talent. His portrayal of For­
rest, Barrett, Jefferson, Charlotte Cushman and Maggie
Mitchell were avowed to be excellent. (*Picayune*, Wednesday,
January 21, 1874.) The minstrel group played through Sunday,
January 25.

On Monday, January 26, Lawrence Barrett returned
triumphantly to the Varieties for a two-week engagement.
The young star, who had been touring throughout the country,
had, according to the *Picayune*, won fresh and added fame in
half of the cities of the continent. Papers in St. Louis,
Chicago, and Louisville had declared Barrett as "... the
greatest living actor," and along the Atlantic coast cities,
his success had surpassed that of any artist who appeared in
those cities for many years. (*Picayune*, Sunday, January 18,
1874.) At this time, Barrett was under the personal manage­
ment of T. C. DeLeon who had leased the Varieties. On
Monday, January 26, Barrett appeared as Richelieu, in
Bulwer's drama of the same name. He made an impression even
greater than the year before; his diction had improved and
his performance was exceptional. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 27, 1874.) On Tuesday, Barrett played Raphael in The Marble Heart, again drawing a capacity house. In the scene of great mental suffering with Marco, when the proud artist fights to conceal his love, by restraining his passion, Barrett was said to have achieved histrionic heights. The effect was electrifying. Norton was excellent as Voltage. (Picayune, Wednesday, January 28, 1874.) At the Wednesday matinee, Barrett appeared as Romeo, and in the evening as Hamlet, drawing capacity houses on both occasions. His Hamlet surprised everyone. Barrett had revised his interpretation, with features of Booth's Hamlet, yet with his own striking touch. (Picayune, Thursday, January 29, 1874.) On Thursday, Barrett performed his success of Henri de Lagardere in The Duke's Motto. In the role, the Picayune said that he had no rival and that no actor was his equal. (Picayune, Friday, January 30, 1874.) Messrs. Norton and Kilbourne and Louise Hawthorne gave excellent support. The name of Louise Hawthorne will be recognized as that of one of the city's most prominent amateur actresses, who now was appearing professionally in the Varieties stock company. On Friday evening, Lawrence Barrett took a benefit, performing as King Lear. The event was regarded as his greatest success of the current
engagement. In the play's latter scenes when the old King's mind is gone, Barrett's plaintiveness was said to render the character utterly touching. (Picayune, Saturday, January 31, 1874.) On Saturday matinee, Barrett performed The Marble Heart, and in the evening acted as Richard III, again drawing capacity houses. Many unhappy ladies were refused admittance at the matinee, when standing room gave out. As Richard, the Picayune found Barrett lacking, and held that this was not his best role. (Picayune, Sunday, February 1, 1874.) At each performance all week, Barrett drew capacity houses.

On Monday, February 2, 1874, beginning his second week, Barrett appeared as Elliot Gray in Rosedale, and was regarded as being excellent. On Tuesday, Barrett appeared again as Richelieu, with Louise Hawthorne as Julie de Mortimer, and Norton as de Mauprat. At the Wednesday matinee, Barrett appeared in The Duke's Motto, and in the evening he excelled in Bulwer's Lady of Lyons. On Thursday, by popular request, he appeared again as Elliot Gray in Rosedale, to a packed house, with Marie Gordon as Lady Florence May, Louise Hawthorne as Rosa Lee and Raymond as Bunbury Cobb. (Picayune, Friday, February 6, 1874.) On Friday, Barrett appeared in his greatest tragic role, that of Cassius in Julius Caesar. Again the star took liberty with Shakespeare's script and
delivered Antony's funeral oration over the body of Caesar. The Picayune noted the departure, and said that despite the question of propriety, nothing could be said against Barrett's elocution or acting power. In fact, after the speech, the cheers and yells were so loud and prolonged, that Barrett had to interrupt his scene to take repeated bows. This did not satisfy the impassioned audience, and cries for "speech" became so intense, that Barrett yielded to their demands and made a short speech, thanking the crowd and expressing his pleasure over such a testimonial. (Picayune, Saturday, February 7, 1874.) On Saturday, February 7, Barrett's triumphant engagement closed with a performance of Rosedale at the matinee and King Lear in the evening. His final performances on Saturday were said to have drawn the largest crowds to the Varieties that had ever been recorded. (Picayune, Sunday, February 8, 1874.) The Picayune commented that Barrett's comedies were such a success that the actor should include more comedy in his repertoire, and drop some of his tragedies, particularly that of Macbeth. Barrett's "... neatness of style, flexible elaboration and vivacity of spirit impart a picturesque embellishment," the Picayune stated in its plea for comedies like Rosedale and The Duke's Motto to balance Barrett's tragic plays. (Picayune, Saturday, February 7, 1874.)
The important star to replace Barrett, on Monday, February 9, 1874, was the renowned international dramatic actor, Tommaso Salvini. At the time that it was reported that the great Italian tragedian was coming to the Varieties for an engagement, it was also announced that Maurice Grau, the theatre magnate, was the new lessee and director of the Varieties, replacing T. C. DeLeon. D. De Vivo was announced as the theatre's new business manager. Salvini was heralded as the greatest name to hit the Varieties. Only superlatives greeted Salvini wherever he appeared, the Picayune stated. Robert Browning called him "... the best living actor," the New York Times was quoted as regarding him "... the greatest of all actors," and the New York Herald commented about him: "... the most powerful artist and original performer the world has ever seen." (Picayune, Tuesday, February 10, 1874.)

John Rankin Towse says:

Tomasso Salvini was not only incomparably the greatest actor and artist I have ever seen, but one who has never had an equal, probably, since the days of Garrick. In physical endowment, in diversity of histrionic genius, and training, he excelled all his contemporaries. ... 15

William Winter says that the actor's most extraordinary natural endowment was his voice: "In vocal force and variety,

15Towse, op. cit., p. 15.
he has not been surpassed on the stage except by Edwin Forrest and Gustavus V. Brooke." Winter relates that Salvini's presence was majestic: "No one who ever saw him could forget the grandeur, the pathos, the power, the splendid dramatic expression. ..."\textsuperscript{16} Henry James was another prominent figure who used superlatives in describing Salvini. Discussing the great actor's performance of Othello, James says: "It has from the first, the quality that thrills and excites. ... The last two acts constitute the finest piece of tragic acting that I know."\textsuperscript{17}

Maurice Grau was able to secure Salvini's booking at the Varieties while the actor was on tour with his Italian company of forty players enroute to Havana and Mexico from the North. Salvini and his company performed entirely in Italian. Commencing on Monday, February 9, Salvini produced the romantic drama, \textit{Ingomar}. Oddly, only a fair house greeted the opening of the star. Although the company performed in a language unfamiliar to most of the audience, the troupe made themselves understood and each displayed true artistry.

\textsuperscript{16}Winter, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 287.

The Italian manner of expression gave zest to the performance. Although Salvini was unable in the title role to show his full power, he exhibited enough explosive passion to indicate a reserve of volcanic strength. The play introduced Salvini's leading lady, the fine actress, Signora Piamonti, who as Parthenia, showed the full sweep of her talent. The *Picayune* reviewer stated that "... for unanimity of purpose and independence of personation ... necessary to a perfect whole, we have not seen a troupe so well schooled." (*Picayune*, Tuesday, February 10, 1874.) The *Times* was displeased at the small audience that greeted the great star with the worldwide reputation upon his first appearance in the city of New Orleans. The *Times* hoped that it was the play only, a minor one in Salvini's repertoire, that held the crowds back. The *Times* critic said of Salvini: "... powerful physique, a deep sonorous voice, a graceful carriage, and a wonderful power of facial expression—all these are his, and to all these are added a naturalness that is charming." (*Times*, Tuesday, February 10, 1874.) Salvini's repertoire was varied; on Tuesday, February 10, he presented Giacometti's *La Morte Civile* (*Civil Death*), of which the New York *Times* had said: "... His death scene stands alone in the history of acting," and on Wednesday, February 11, he presented his celebrated
Othello, which Charlotte Cushman had praised as "... the greatest Othello the world has ever seen." (Picayune, Tuesday, February 10, 1874.) As Conrad in La Morte Civile, Salvini achieved in his death scene the climax of a performance most touching and sympathetic. The character dies of a broken heart. The scene is described by the Picayune:

"... Physiologically, deaths from such a cause are apt to be free from excruciating pain, and occur suddenly. Thus it was with Salvini. The whispered tone, sinking lower and lower, gave notice of the approaching dissolution. ... As Conrad made a feeble but desperate effort to embrace his daughter, death arrests the purpose, and he rolled from the chair to the floor. Salvini's action shows a scientific knowledge of the effect which death produces upon a body. ... (Picayune, Tuesday, February 10, 1874.)"

Throughout the play, Salvini was noted to be vigorous without rant, or tender of pathetic as the scene required. He commanded great admiration from the audience and received repeated calls before the curtain. Signora Piamonti infused a spirit of tenderness and nobility as Rosalie. (Picayune, Wednesday, February 11, 1874.)

Salvini had no Wednesday matinee. As Othello, on Wednesday evening, the star portrayed a real man of flesh and blood, endowed with a warm, trusting, generous nature, and cursed with deadly passions. Salvini was neither ranting nor intellectual. The Picayune said:
... This was the most splendid Othello seen in New Orleans in many years, if ever before! Salvini's Othello comes upon us like a new revelation in dramatic art—the most pathetic in its tenderness and the most volcanic in its explosions of passion. When Othello is goaded to desperate passion by Iago, there ensued a scene of rage and startling vehemence. Salvini seized Iago by the throat and hurled him to the stage and menaced him with his foot, as though he would trample him to death. Then suddenly regaining his self-possession, he raises him from the floor and in a paroxysm of shame and regret for the undignified assault, paces the stage in an agony of confusion. ... The terrible accusation with which Othello overwhelms Desdemona was delivered with a fiery and biting tone. ... In reaction (to Desdemona's death) when the truth is made known, Salvini's expression of remorse was a triumph of impassioned art as was his death scene. (Picayune, Thursday, February 12, 1874.)

Signora Piamonti's Desdemona was an altogether fit companion to Salvini's Othello.

On Thursday, February 12, Salvini took a day's respite from performing, and on that date, Marie Gordon took a benefit with the comedy Caste being performed. Marie Gordon was charming in the leading role, with Raymond performing ably as Old Eccles. The popular actress was overloaded with bouquets and flowers. (Picayune, Friday, February 13, 1874.)

On Friday, February 13, Salvini appeared as Hamlet. The actor's depiction of Hamlet was regarded as being different from any known conception. First, in his production, Salvini omitted the scene with the instruction to the players, and
also the scene with the King at prayer, while the Ghost appeared by rising through a trap. As for his interpretation, Salvini created a unique and striking Hamlet, but one not as great as his Othello. He embodied the character of the Prince with great felicity of expression and with a pleasing outward form. (Picayune, Saturday, February 14, 1874.) Salvini took the day off on Saturday, February 14. For the Saturday matinee, Dot was performed; with John T. Raymond taking a benefit on Saturday night. Three plays were performed on the latter occasion, including Toodles, The Spectre Bride and My Neighbor's Wife, in each of which Raymond and Marie Gordon appeared in the lead roles.

Beginning his second week on Sunday night, February 15, Salvini appeared in one of his greatest roles, that of Samson; and on Monday, he produced Francesca da Rimini. In Samson, Signora Piamonti's Delilah was regarded to be the gem of the cast, overshadowing Salvini's fine portrayal of Samson, with electric effect. (Picayune, Monday, February 16, 1874.) On Tuesday, as Francesca da Rimini, Signora Piamonti revealed dramatic heights in her passionate scenes. Her facial expressions and actions were "charged with fire." Salvini, as Paola, was the ideal lover, bold, reckless, tender and aggressive. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 17, 1874.)
Tuesday, February 17, 1874, being Mardi Gras Day, there was no dramatic performance at the theatre. Instead, Comus held again its lavish ball at the Varieties. The theme was "Nations of the Earth," and the first tableau depicted North and South America, while the second tableau depicted Europe, Asia and Africa. Following the tableaux, the elaborate ball was held. (Picayune, Wednesday, February 18, 1874.)

On Wednesday, February 17, 1874, Salvini repeated Hamlet, while on Thursday, the actor took another day off and the theatre was dark. On Friday, February 20, Othello was repeated, this being the last appearance of the fine actor in the city for the engagement. The Picayune regretted that the great actor could not have had Edwin Booth to appear as Iago to Salvini's Othello, the two being the supreme compliment to each other's art. (Picayune, Saturday, February 21, 1874.)

On Saturday, February 21, at the matinee and evening performances, the celebrated Davenport Brothers, spiritualistic mediums, performed at the Varieties, and caused a sensation with their seances. The theatre was dark all the following week, beginning Monday, February 23, with the exception of Thursday, February 26, when the popular Davenport
Brothers returned for one more seance at the playhouse. The Varieties company had departed at the beginning of Salvini's second week, after John Raymond's benefit on Saturday, February 14, 1874. The season ended abruptly without prior notice. There was a new turnover in this the most uncertain managerial season at the third Varieties in its entire history. Starr Morrissey was announced as new manager of the theatre in the Picayune on Sunday, February 22. The Davenports' third appearance at the theatre on February 26, marked the end of the short season, with the exception of one later week. The house, on the occasion of the Davenports last performance, was filled with spiritualists and anti-spiritualists, the latter faction being led by a Professor Housah who endeavored (without success) to disclaim the mediums, and the former, eager to witness the startling spiritualistic manifestations of the famed brothers. (Picayune, Thursday, February 26, 1874.)

With one of the shortest professional seasons on record at the Varieties over—with the exception of one week of booked professional entertainment, the summer amateur season was able to get an early start; and it lasted longer than the professional season; from Friday, March 13 through Thursday, August 27, 1874, with the exception of the week
beginning Monday, March 16, when the theatre was given over to a traveling professional company. The summer season began on Friday, March 13, when the Shakespeare Club and the Orleans Dramatic Association gave a joint production of Bulwer's comedy, *Money*, as a benefit for the Grant Parish Prisoners. Fred N. Thayer played Alfred Evelyn in excellent style, and was ably supported by E. M. Stella as Sir John Vesey, W. H. Beanham as Graves, Frankie McClellan as Lady Franklin and Minnie Maddern as Clara.

On Saturday, March 14, 1874, the Variety Dramatic Club gave a benefit for the St. Mary's Orphan Boys' Asylum. The two-act drama, *Charles II*, and the farce, *Who Speaks First*, were the double offering. One dollar admission was charged for the charity affair. The Varieties was packed for this worthy benefit. Shining as actors of the evening were Mr. Conway, who played Captain Charles, Miss Etta Graves as Smart and Misses Sparhawk and Pearce.

On Monday, March 16, the amateur season was interrupted for a week at the theatre, when a professional company moved into the Varieties. Frank McEvoy's *Hibernicon* made its first appearance in the city at this time. The novelty performance concluded with the farce, *The Haunted Guide*, starring the Irish comedian, W. F. Lawlor, supported by Kate Byrnes of the
Dublin theatre, Mary McCrea a contralto singer, and Kate Reilley, soprano. An orchestra under the direction of Professor Moeslin accompanied the production. Admission was held at only twenty-five cents to five cents. The Hibernicon consisted of a panorama of views of Ireland, carrying the audience on a tour of Dublin, Cork, Killarney, Londonderry and Wicklow, with songs and dances by the members of the traveling company. The production closed on Saturday, March 21, after which the theatre was dark for a month before the amateur season resumed.

After the closing of the McEvoy's Hibernicon, the short professional season was officially at a close, a season of a mere ten weeks. The Academy of Music had a full professional season through May 27, while the St. Charles season lasted through April 11. An important statement, comparing the financial outcome of these three most important English-speaking theatres in New Orleans, was published by the Picayune, at the collective conclusion of the professional season of 1873-1874. The statement declared that the season just closed did not show a very flattering result, at least for the Varieties and St. Charles. The Academy showed far ahead of the other two theatres, in fact taking in more money than both of the others combined. The Academy had a season
of thirty-six weeks and the St. Charles, twenty-three weeks, compared to the Varieties' mere ten weeks. The Varieties fared as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Commencing</th>
<th>Business</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 20.</td>
<td>Fair Duprez Minstrels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 27.</td>
<td>Very poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 3</td>
<td>Closed to December 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 15.</td>
<td>Poor (even at 50 cents Rose and Harry Watkins dress circle and 25 cents family circle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 22.</td>
<td>Very poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 27</td>
<td>Closed to January 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 4</td>
<td>Poor J. H. Raymond Closed to 7th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 12.</td>
<td>Fair Joe Jefferson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 19.</td>
<td>Poor San Francisco Minstrels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 26.</td>
<td>Good Lawrence Barrett</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2</td>
<td>Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 9.</td>
<td>Fair Salvini</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 16 to 20</td>
<td>Poor Davenport Brothers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 21</td>
<td>Closed to March 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 16.</td>
<td>Poor (even at 5 days of McEvoy's Hibernicon cheap admission: 25 cents and 5 cents)</td>
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</tbody>
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Compared to the Varieties' poor record, the Academy's season ran from September 8 to May 21, doing big business with such attractions as Lucille Weston, Lydia Thompson and The Black Crook Company. The St. Charles season ran from November 2, 1873 through April 11, 1874, and did well with only one or
two of its attractions. The comparison is made between the Varieties and its two leading competitors to establish how much poor management and poor planning affected the third season of the new theatre, which season, with the exception of big business with Lawrence Barrett, and despite the bookings of Salvini and Jefferson, hit an all-time low. (Pica-yune, Sunday, May 31, 1874.)

The Shakespeare Club, which had been so active the previous season at the Varieties, was giving its plays during the summer of 1874 at the new Globe Theatre, a second-class theatre which had formerly been the National Theatre. The next summer program at the Varieties was not until Monday, April 27. On that date the Orleans Dramatic Association presented Schiller's drama, The Robbers, as a benefit for the Grant Parish prisoners.

On Wednesday, April 29, a concert was given at the theatre by Professor Van Hufflen and Mme. Nelville Mercier-Hier, with Miss K. Thayer, soprano; M. Delacroix, pianist; M. Madier De Montjan, violinist and M. Gadilhe, tenor.

On May 8, the Variety Club presented at the theatre the drama, Ambrose Gwinett. Redon played the title role with Ben Onorato as Greyling. Then on Friday, May 15, a benefit was tendered to C. Gerber, well-known singer with the French
Opera Company, by the Shakespeare Club jointly with Le Club Dramatique Louisianais. *Don Caesar de Bazan* was the evening's main fare, with Judge Braughn excelling in the title role, and all cast members being of the Shakespeare Club. After the Shakespeare Club's presentation, several plays in French were offered by the Club Dramatique Louisianais. These included *Le Repentir*, *Le Pian de Berthe* and *Les Femmes Qui Pleureat*. Gerber was honored as being one of the founders of the French dramatic club. On Monday, May 18, the Orleans Dramatic Association opened its dramatic season at the Varieties with the drama, *The Three Guardsmen*, adapted from Alexandre Dumas' popular story.

On Friday, May 22, a British elocutionist and orator, Dr. J. Clark, gave a program of dramatic readings at the Varieties. Dr. Clark was sponsored in the appearance by Archbishop Perche, and his program included readings from Shakespeare, Dryden, Dickens, Sir Walter Scott, Moore, Tennyson, Pope, and Hood.

On Thursday, June 11, the Variety Dramatic Club presented Dion Boucicault's drama, *The Long Strike*, to a capacity audience at the Varieties, with standing room at a premium. Ben Onorato excelled as Noah, with Mr. Llambias as Jem Starkee, Mr. Brown as Richard Readley, Mr. Cohen as the
London Gentleman, Jane Learoyd as Amelia Waugh and Etta Graves as Betsy. (Picayune, Sunday, June 14, 1874.) Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing was presented at the Varieties on Wednesday, June 17, by the Orleans Dramatic Association. The group received a panning from the Picayune who advised them "... not to venture into Shakespearean waters lest they sink therein to rise no more." (Picayune, Thursday, June 18, 1874.) One more month passed before the next summer event at the Varieties, the complimentary performance by the Orleans Dramatic Association, on Wednesday, July 15, of Marsden's comedy, Clouds. The "plum" acting of the evening was performed by Miss Doyle as Ella Randall, Mr. Beanham as Billy Buddles and Mr. Pickles as Fred Town. (Picayune, Thursday, July 16, 1874.) Another month passed before the Varieties reopened for the Orleans Dramatic Association's next event, a benefit tendered to Louise Hawthorne. On this occasion, Octave Feuillet's play, La Tentation, was presented, with tickets at one dollar. Louise Hawthorne appeared as Camille, with Miss Doyle as Helene, Esther Blumenthal as the Dowager, Miss Stroudback as Mme. de Saulien, all as standouts, and Miss Graves as Mme. Dumesnil, and Messrs. Buck and Beanham. Lucky Miss Hawthorne was presented with earrings and matching pin of gold with amethyst gems, by George Stern, representing...
the dramatic club. (Picayune, Wednesday, August 19, 1874.)

On Thursday, August 27, the Variety and Southern Dramatic Clubs presented a joint benefit for Amelia Waugh at which the double bill of Baccabet and The Comical Countess were presented. This was the final summer activity held at the Varieties. 

During the months of September and October, the theatre remained completely dark. This had been a spasmodic and disappointing summer season for the Varieties. During the summer of 1873, most of the major amateur groups scheduled their performances at the Varieties; but the summer of 1874 found other theatres, particularly the Globe and the St. Charles, scheduling many entertainments reserved formerly for the Varieties. David Bidwell was now the proprietor of the Academy of Music, and that theatre skyrocked financially under that magnate's direction and became the Varieties' foremost competitor. Additional competition now appeared on the theatrical scene from new theatres in New Orleans. The Globe, formerly the National Theatre, an old theatre with a new name and a face lifting, entered the theatrical atmosphere with a scurry of activity, having already taken away much of the Varieties' summer fare. On October 3, 1874, additional competition was manifested with the opening of the new Gaiety Theatre on Baronne Street at the corner of
Common. Both the Globe and the Gaiety were variety houses—
presenting elaborate productions of burlesque and variety
entertainment. The trend toward variety is significant in
that "variety" appeared more and more, becoming a competitive
name; and finally, within several years, the trend forced the
Varieties Theatre to change its name. While the Varieties
remained inactive throughout October, the legitimate dramatic
season was already flourishing at the Academy and the St.
Charles. Behind the scenes, activity was not at a standstill
at the Varieties, for a covert managerial transformation was
underway.

The 1873-1874 season had been a disappointment to the
members of the Variété Association, and Charles Howard, who
had just become the new president of the organization at this
time, decided to take the situation into his own hands.
Howard was a wealthy man who made his money with lottery,
this form of gambling being at the time a legal and popular
vogue for people of all classes in the city. Howard had come
to New Orleans from Baltimore in 1852, and in 1868 had been
one of the incorporators of the Louisiana State Lottery.
The new Varieties president could well afford the luxury of
managing the Varieties, and he undertook this task in an
effort to extricate the theatre from the financial dilemma in which it was placed from the poor and transient management of the past season, the increased competition from other theatres and the continuing political-social unrest. Since Howard was himself not a theatrical man, he selected the noted actor-manager John E. Owens to perform the task of organizing the stock company and selecting and producing the plays of the forthcoming 1874-1875 season. The popular comedian accepted the challenge offered him, and provided New Orleans with one of the most artistically satisfactory theatrical seasons it was ever to know.\footnote{Kendall, op. cit., p. 436.} Owens was already identified with the Varieties as the theatre's first star of its first season. He was born in Liverpool in 1823 of Welch parents, but the family moved to Philadelphia when John was a child. He always longed to act, and landed his first part when he was seventeen years of age despite parental objections; being given his first "break" by William E. Burton, manager of the Arch Theatre. Burton not only tutored the youth in theatrical techniques, but at the Arch, Owens first proved his great potential as Peter Poultrie in The Ocean Child, and as Caleb Plummer in The Cricket on the Hearth, a
part that became a celebrated one in his standard repertoire. Owens' first season as manager of the Varieties had occurred during the season of 1859-1860 at the first Varieties. Consequently, the new challenge was simply a "return home" for the veteran star. Owens had first visited New Orleans back in 1846 when he appeared as Sampson Low in The Wind Mill, and had been a favorite with New Orleans audiences since that early time, appearing at the old Varieties many times. The now famous star had managed his own combination during the years 1871-1873, visiting 135 cities in 36 weeks in the single season of 1872-1873 alone, with profits exceeding that of any star of his day. The Variété Association was fortunate, indeed, to secure the managerial services of the dynamic actor-producer. Despite his great skill and experience, Owens had anything but "clear sailing" ahead, however. The explosive political situation in New Orleans became, that season, more chaotic than ever. With the dissolution of the state legislature by General Sheridan, and with the institution of martial law, New Orleans faced a political crisis indeed. The ensuing anxiety hampered theatrical interests, in as much as it was difficult for citizens to relax and enjoy the theatre. Despite the crisis, Owens was undaunted, however, and with a fine company which he gathered
selectively, he achieved artistic success. Owens chose production associates with care. As business manager, he selected the well-known actor Theodore Hamilton, and as stage manager, he chose E. B. Holmes, formerly of the stock company of the Boston Theatre. George Tirrell was engaged as scenic artist, and Richard Maddern as conductor of the orchestra. The prime stock company was composed of such notable artists as Frank Chippendale, Edwin F. Thorne, Theodore Hamilton (who doubled as actor and business manager), E. B. Holmes (who doubled as actor and stage manager), Colin Stuart, M. O'Neil, J. J. Wallace, E. F. Knowles, J. L. Carhart, Walter Benn, Hunter Smith, E. Lockhart, J. Chapman, R. J. Brown, W. A. Hall, Laura Don (leading lady), Anna Ince, Ada Gilman, C. Fisher and Mrs. J. C. Carhart. Chippendale was usually leading man of the company.

The season began on Wednesday, November 4, with Owens himself starring in Sheridan's comedy, The School for Scandal. The cast was as follows: Sir Peter Teazle..John E. Owens, Sir Oliver Surface..Frank Chippendale, Charles Surface..Edwin F. Thorne, Joseph Surface..Theodore Hamilton, Sir Benjamin Backbite..Colin Stuart, Sir Harry Bumper..M. O'Neil,

19Ibid., pp. 437-46.
Mr. Crabtree..E. B. Holmes, Moses..J. J. Wallace, Careless..
E. F. Knowles, Rowley..J. L. Carhart, Snake..Hunter Smith,
Trip..E. Lockhart, Joseph Surface's Servant..J. Chapman, Sir
Peter's Servant..R. J. Brown, Lady Sneerwell's Servant..W. A.
Hall, Lady Teazle..Laura Don, Mrs. Candour..Mrs. J. C. Car-
hart, Lady Sneerwell..Anna Ince, Maria..Ada Gilman, Lady
Sneerwell's Maid..C. Fisher. A large house greeted the new
company and its star-manager. The Picayune was not alto-
gether kind to Owens, saying that Sir Peter had touches of
comedy that were solely characteristically Owenish, including
even the Solon Shingle shuffle. The new leading lady, Laura
Don, who failed to please the press from the beginning,
received a mention that may be termed extremely negative.
Her best scene, the screen scene, was found to possess many
crudities, and lacked experience in treatment. (Picayune,
Thursday, November 5, 1874.) The Republican concurred with
the Picayune in its criticism, finding the stage settings
and costumes more striking than the acting. The latter
criticism stated that the company had taken liberties with
the script, altering it so as to allow action of an entire
act without change of scene. (Republican, Thursday, November
5, 1874.) The Bee was kinder in its review of Owens' effort,
calling the star "a consummate artist of comedy." It
referred to the large crowd that greeted Owens, proving, it
said, his great favor and the high esteem of his auditors.
(Bee, Sunday, November 8, 1874.)

The second week of the season, beginning on Monday,
November 9, Owens appeared in a continuous round of his most
popular repertoire. On Monday and Tuesday, Victims and
Solon Shingle; Wednesday matinee, Victims and Object of
Interest; Wednesday evening, Heir at Law and Object of Inter­
est; Thursday, Everybody's Friend and Forty Winks; Friday,
Poor Gentleman and Solon Shingle; Saturday matinee, Every­
body's Friend and Saturday evening, Paul Pry and The Good
for Nothing. In these, his more familiar repertoire, Owens
shone, and the reviews of both star and company were all
praiseworthy. Most ably supporting the jovial comedian as
Joshus Butterby in The Victims were Colin Stuart as Fitz­
herbert, J. J. Wallace as Curdle, E. B. Holmes as Muddlemist,
Mrs. J. C. Carhart as Miss Crane, Laura Don as Mrs. Merry­
weather and Ada Gilman as Mrs. Fitzherbert. (Picayune,
Tuesday, November 10, 1874.) The Picayune did not enjoy
Owens as Dr. Pangloss in The Heir at Law, preferring the
characterizations of J. J. Wallace as Zekial Homespun and
Laura Don as Cicily. (Picayune, Thursday, November 12, 1874.)
Considering the constant changes of plays and the double
bills every performance including twice a day on matinee days, it is a wonder that Owens could last through the week. Kendall points out that the overly ambitious actor constantly overtaxed his strength during this season, and made necessary frequent periods of rest and recuperation which, after the 1874-1875 season at the Varieties, interrupted every subsequent season in which Owens acted.²⁰

The week beginning Monday, November 16, was taken over by the new stock company. Tom Taylor's romantic drama, Clancarty, was produced through Thursday, November 19. On Friday and Saturday evenings, the company performed in Holcroft's old English comedy, Road to Ruin, while on Saturday matinee, the bill was The Marble Heart.

On Monday, November 23, the dramatic actor, John McCullough, began an engagement at the Varieties in a repertoire of tragedy. McCullough was a heroic actor, whose directness and truthfulness in his approach to his acting, according to William Winter, reflected the simple, honorable and high-minded man he actually was. Winter describes the tragedian's two greatest roles as Virginius and King Lear.²¹ Towse applauds McCullough only within restricted limits.

The critic feels that the actor was successful in broad, physical-type drama, but that he did not have the breadth for subtlety. Towse states:

He excelled in broad strokes . . . but was not intellectual, imaginative or analytical. . . . He was inferior to Barrett in character, intellect, subtlety, ambition and range.22

McCullough made his debut at the Varieties and his first appearance in New Orleans as a star, in his celebrated role of the title part in Knowles' tragedy, Virginius. Both the public and press greeted the star with open admiration and praise. The Picayune called McCullough "... a master in his art--an artist of scholastic method, of ease and grace of manner and of proficient executive skill." The journal warmly related that the actor embodied the Roman father as Knowles drew him, "... in all his paternal tenderness and playfulness, in all his stern patriotism, and in all the grandeur of his insulted dignity." His emotion had warmth, color, breath, and fire, the Picayune held, and concluded that the actor achieved a triumph. (Picayune, Tuesday, November 24, 1874.) The Republican screamed plaudits for McCullough, also, avowing that:

Virginius . . . will live so long as such

22Towse, op. cit., p. 222.
actors as Mr. McCullough lend to the hero their genius... He has about him all the elements of a great tragic actor—dignity and fine appearance, a flexible voice to express the rush and fury of passion, the tenderness of heartbreaking despair. (Republican, Tuesday, November 23, 1874.)

McCullough's glory did not lessen with his enactment of Othello on Tuesday. The Picayune marveled that the actor's creation was remarkable in its vigor and passionate fervor, its consistent and conscious power. The journal stated that the star's ease in all the complex moods of the play—tender love, doubt, burning fury of jealousy, terrible remorse—were conducted with "superb art." (Picayune, Wednesday, November 25, 1874.) In supporting roles, Edwin Thorne as Iago and Laura Don as Desdemona were both disappointing. Virginius was repeated for the matinee of Wednesday, November 25, and on Wednesday evening, McCullough appeared as Hamlet. Again the newspapers applauded. The Picayune reviewer declared that seldom had he seen so admirable, elegant and sympathetic a Hamlet, "... so charged with the lofty dignity of human sorrow and the pervading sense of bereavement." The critic swore that no Hamlet he had ever seen had ever managed the ghost scene with such propriety. The star's manner with Ophelia was also lauded for the care with which he allowed Ophelia to escape direct indignity, and the spasms
of tenderness which pervaded the roughness of his assumed manner. (Picayune, Thursday, November 26, 1874.) Laura Don played Ophelia. Changing his bill again on Thursday and Friday, McCullough presented The Gladiator, appearing as Spartacus. The star attracted, as he had all week, a vast audience, and the press did not cease their praise. The Picayune compared McCullough's Spartacus with Forrest, saying that not even that great actor imbued the role with more vigorous life or genuine human feeling. Great honors were given also to Edwin Thorne's Phasarius. (Picayune, Friday, November 27, 1874.) At the Saturday matinee, McCullough appeared as Iago in Othello instead of in the title role, and on Saturday evening, he appeared as Richard III. For the first time, the Picayune failed to respond to a McCullough characterization in the star's portrayal of Richard, finding the role uneven and bombastic, and unable to be compared to his other great roles. The critic rationalized, however, that the lapse must be due to fatigue, with the actor presenting two taxing roles in one day. (Picayune, November 29, 1874.) All week the star attracted houses reputed to consist of the most refined, intellectual and cultured people in the city, and the trend continued for McCullough's second week beginning on Monday, November 30. On Monday through Wednesday
matinee, the actor repeated his role as Spartacus in *The Gladiator*, considered "... one of his most heroic and magnificent impersonations." (*Picayune*, Tuesday, December 1, 1874.) On Wednesday evening, December 2, McCullough played the part of the Cardinal in Bulwer's *Richelieu*, amid more superlatives of praise. The *Picayune* said:

A very long period of years has elapsed since we have seen the ideal Richelieu brought up to the standard of the anticipation of the dramatist. This dramatic achievement possessed an historic element and presented Richelieu in fuller dramatic form than Bulwer has furnished the key for. ... He made the picture sublime ... and wrought a triumph which a house resounding with applause acclaimed. (*Picayune*, Thursday, December 3, 1874.)

McCullough took a benefit on Thursday, December 3, 1874. For the occasion he chose to recreate his favorite role of Spartacus, and played to a full, appreciative house. Never had the New Orleans public paid more attention to a new star. He became the darling of the public and the press in the Crescent city.

On Friday, December 4, he appeared in the title role in Shakespeare's *King Lear*. The *Picayune* continued its praise with such a phrase as "... he has written his work in brilliant characters upon the scroll of celebrities whom New Orleans delights to honor." The actor's art, felt to be so keenly perceptive, was said to fill the great scenes of
the third and fourth acts with the figure of a distraught king and father, "... so pitiable in his madness and distress, so full of the dignity of woe, that the actor transformed an ideal into a living form." (Picayune, Saturday, December 5, 1874.) At the Saturday matinee, McCullough appeared again as Hamlet and for his last appearance on Saturday evening, December 5, the star was seen again in Virginius.

Seldom had an actor gained such consistent praise, as had McCullough during his first two-week engagement at the Varieties. The newspapers all had sweeping commendation for him at his departure. The Picayune lamented that McCullough was of a school that had "... now alas! only veteran exponents." The houses which the actor drew were considered in themselves a high compliment and supreme endorsement of his versatile talent. (Picayune, Sunday, December 6, 1874.) The Republican ventured that "... he has established himself here, as elsewhere, as a great actor." (Republican, Sunday, December 6, 1874.)

On Monday, December 7, John E. Owens presented Boucicault's drama, Belle Lamar, considered by the Picayune to be the weakest of Boucicault's plays. Owens directed the drama which depicted an event in the life of General Stonewall
Jackson. Laura Don was impressive in the title role of Isabel Lamar, and Edwin Thorne did well as Colonel Bligh. This opus played all week.

In the week beginning Monday, December 14, Owens returned to the stage of the Varieties, presenting Boucicault's drama Dot, or Cricket on the Hearth. The Picayune received the characterization by Owens of the role of the old toy maker, Caleb Plummer, as a "beautiful dramatic picture," and a

... reproduction imbued with soul and feeling, with quaint and bubbling humor, with a sense of the poverty which distresses but does not degrade, with a profound and tender paternal love and a joyous spirit.

The Picayune marveled at Owens' "... recreation in living form one of the most lovable of Dickens' idealizations."

(Picayune, Tuesday, December 15, 1874.) Ada Gilman was delightful as Dot, while Laura Don as Bertha was utterly unbelievable. Theodore Hamilton appeared convincingly as John Perrybungle. (Picayune, Wednesday, December 16, 1874.) The fragile drama held the boards all week.

For Christmas week, as his holiday present to Varieties patrons, Owens presented Mrs. D. P. Bowers, well-known dramatic actress, who at this time was at the height of her powers as a tragedienne. Mrs. Bowers retained for the stage
the name of her first husband, actor David P. Bowers, even though she later married a Dr. Brown of Baltimore. During her life, Mrs. Bowers starred all over the country, appearing on the stage as early as 1846.\textsuperscript{23} She brought with her as co-star, J. C. McCollum, and on Monday, December 21, Mrs. Bowers opened her Varieties' engagement appearing as Julia in Sheridan Knowles' beautiful drama, \textit{The Hunchback}, in which McCollum appeared as Master Walter. According to the \textit{Picayune}, the veteran actress carried the ingenue role as convincingly as if she herself were a young girl. Mrs. Bowers imbued the heroine with all the changes through which she must pass, from the artless, innocent country girl to the frivolous city belle, and on to conflict between love and pride. The mental and emotional changes of mood were grasped with artistry, with delicate touches and with passionate fervor. (\textit{Picayune}, Tuesday, December 22, 1874.) The \textit{Republican} reviewer was less kind than the \textit{Picayune} to the veteran actress, finding distracting "... a peculiar mannerism and intonation sometimes harsh." (\textit{Republican}, Tuesday, December 22, 1874.) On Tuesday evening December 22, Mrs. Bowers was seen in the title role in Mary Stuart, showing herself again,

\textsuperscript{23}Kendall, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 447.
according to the Picayune, as a supreme mistress of her art, particularly in the interview scene in Fartheringay Park between the two queens, where reviled Mary Stuart recovers with the outburst of invective. The star rose to the demands of the scene with great power. (Picayune, Wednesday, December 23, 1874.) For the Wednesday matinee, Mrs. Bowers played as the heroine of Lady of Lyons, and on Wednesday evening and Thursday, the versatile actress appeared as Lady Isabel in the melodrama, East Lynne. The Picayune critic described the latter play as one he could "... cheerfully assist at a bonfire of," finding the play "detestable." Mrs. Bowers' Isabel was restrained, "... a model of refinement of style and pathetic energy." (Picayune, Thursday, December 24, 1874.) The star was supported most helpfully by Mrs. J. C. Carhart as Cornelia and Edwin Thorne as Carlyle. On Christmas day, Friday, December 25, there was a special holiday matinee with Mrs. Bowers appearing in An Object of Interest, followed by the farce, Nan, The Good For Nothing. On Friday evening, the star played the title role in Elizabeth, Queen of England, with J. C. McCollum co-starring as Essex. On Saturday, December 26, completing her first week at the Varieties, Mrs. Bowers appeared at the matinee in East Lynne and on Saturday evening, the ambitious lady appeared in the title role in
Lucretia Borgia, with Taming of the Shrew following. In the former play, Mrs. Bowers was supported by McCollum as Gennaro. As Lucretia, Mrs. Bowers was said to fill the dramatic ideal of a beautiful devil completely. The two warring elements of the character of maternal love and the vengeance of fury were presented with skill and forcefulness. McCollum's Gennaro distracted, it was said, because of the odd trick which the actor performed of "... inhaling his breath."

In Taming of the Shrew, Laura Don appeared as Katherine while J. C. McCollum played Petruchio. (Picayune, Sunday, December 27, 1874.)

The second and final week of Mrs. Bowers appearance at the Varieties began on Monday, December 28, 1874, with the presentation of the drama, Lady Audley's Secret, with the star in the title role. It was said that she depicted the double nature of the character, the combination of "... purring cat and preying tiger" with consummate skill --depicting mood after mood of affected frivolity, unscrupulous purpose or ruthlessness. Particularly striking was Mrs. Bowers' remarkable facial mobility. Laura Don supported well as Alecia, with J. J. Wallace doing nicely as Luke Marks. (Picayune, Tuesday, December 29, 1874.) Changing the bill again on Tuesday evening, Mrs. Bowers appeared as Margaret
Elmore in the drama, *Love's Sacrifice*, with McCollum as Elmore. The play was regarded by the *Picayune* as being old fashioned, out of date and prolonged, and dragged by tedious dialogue. Nevertheless, the two principal characters were well drawn and held the rapport of the audience. For the Wednesday matinee on December 30, *Lady Audley's Secret* was repeated, and on Wednesday evening, *Camille* was performed with Mrs. Bowers in the title role. In the subtle expression given the constant war in the character between the good and evil of her nature, Mrs. Bowers was compared to the late Julia Dean, the *Picayune* saying that only these two actresses could capture the difficult interplay of mood. On Thursday, December 31, 1874, *Love's Sacrifice* was repeated. Greeting the New Year, on Friday, January 1, 1875, Mrs. Bowers took a benefit, repeating the lead role in *Elizabeth, The Queen of England*. The *Picayune* noted the latter performance as the best of Mrs. Bowers' excellent impersonations, applauding the passion, regal dignity, weaknesses and imperious spirit with which the actress animated the role. (*Picayune*, Sunday, January 3, 1875.) For her closing performance on Saturday evening, January 2, Mrs. Bowers chose Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, appearing as Lady Macbeth. The *Picayune* regarded the role as the least successful of her repertoire, falling short of the
measure of the Bard's great character. McCullum, as Macbeth, also failed to please. "The character was abominably read, and the beauty of the language was lost in a cruel mangling of the text which was worse than the murder of Duncan."

(Picayune, Sunday, January 3, 1875.) It was regretted that Mrs. Bowers' final performance should be her least satisfying one.

On Monday, January 4, 1875, the Fifth Avenue Theatre Combination made its debut at the Varieties in a varied repertoire. The group opened in Divorce, playing Monday and Tuesday evenings and Wednesday matinee and showed thoroughness in training, artistic finish, and much strength. Shining in the drama were Miss Langley as Fanny, Miss Monk as Lu, Miss Newton as Mrs. Ten Eyck, Mr. Boniface as Alfred, Mr. Porter as Captain Lynde, Mr. Sanger as Reverend Duncan, Mr. Loveday as DeWitt, Mr. Hawk as Templeton, and Mr. Farren as Burritt. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 5, 1875. The first names of the players were not given.) On Wednesday evening January 6, and on Thursday, January 7, an English translation of the French drama, Alixe, was presented by the visiting company for the first time in New Orleans. Leading the cast were Miss Langley as Alixe and Mr. Boniface as Henri de Kerdran. Their characterizations were smooth and strongly
lined, and their love scene was a highlight. (Picayune, Thursday, January 7, 1875.) On Friday, Saturday matinee, and Saturday evening, Article Forty-Seven was produced by the New York Company. Miss Langley assumed the leading role of Cora, was an instant hit, and was greeted by prolonged applause and frequent curtain calls. Mr. Boniface disappointed as Duhamel, with utter lack of flexibility, while Miss Pike was successful as Marcelle. (Picayune, Saturday, January 9, 1875.)

On Monday, January 11, the Fifth Avenue Theatre Company began their second week at the Varieties in Dumas' Monsieur Alphonse. This play was important in that it introduced professionally for the first time to the third Varieties, a local child actress, Minnie Maddern, who was to grow to become the famous star, Minnie Maddern Fiske, and to return years later as a star to the same theatre. Important in the plot of the Dumas drama is the contest over the possession of the child Adrienne. The part exacts from a child-actress difficult qualities of acting and intelligent perception. Little Minnie Maddern showed nobly that she had the capacity to put into execution the ideal of the author. The Picayune stated:

We cannot withhold applause from the little girl who gave so clever an impersonation of Adrienne. There was nothing mechanical about
it. She exhibited skill, intelligence, fluency and discrimination. Little Minnie Maddern was surrounded by first rate interpretations including that of Miss Langley as Raymonde, Miss Monk as Madame Guichard, Mr. Boniface as Montaglin, Mr. Porter as Octave and Mr. Hawk as Jovin. The play continued through Wednesday matinee. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 12, 1875.)

Led Astray was the offering on Wednesday evening and Thursday. Miss Langley excelled again in this drama as Armande, depicting deftly the character's weaknesses, but purity of soul. Mr. Boniface's Rudolph was his best role during the company's two-week engagement. On Friday, and for both performances on Saturday, Mons. Alphonse was repeated, by popular demand of the city's patrons, and little Minnie Maddern shone in triumph among her adult co-players. The group of players performed deftly and attracted large audiences during their two-week engagement. (Picayune, Saturday, January 16, 1875.)

Beginning Monday, January 18, Lawrence Barrett returned to the Varieties as its favorite son. The Picayune noted that the popular actor had first appeared at the old Varieties as leading actor of its stock company in the winter of 1862 and 1863, and remained faithful to the theatre, despite his growing fame, with his frequent returns. (Picayune, Sunday, January 17, 1875.) Barrett opened in Richelieu, to
a house largely composed of ladies who applauded long and loud for their favorite. On Tuesday, Barrett played the title role in Hamlet. In this role, the Bee compared Barrett with Salvini, and the Picayune applauded it as one of the most even characterizations ever seen. Miss Brooks appeared as Ophelia. (Bee, Wednesday, January 20, 1875; Picayune, Wednesday, January 20, 1875.) For the Wednesday matinee, Barrett appeared in the Lady of Lyons, and Wednesday evening, he excelled in The Duke's Motto as Henri de Lagardiere. The Bee shouted of Barrett's "grandeur" and said "... He occupies today deservedly, a rank celebrated and high on the American theatrical scene ... and is an eminent artist." (Bee, Thursday, January 21, 1875.) Miss Brooks appeared as Blanche, Miss Craig as Zillah and Miss Phillips as the Princess. On Thursday evening, Barrett assumed the title role in King Lear, displaying "majestic pathos." (Picayune, Friday, January 22, 1875.) On Friday, January 22, Barrett appeared in his popular role of James Harebell in The Man O'Airlie, and went with ease from the tragic role of the previous evening to the role of the simple domestic hero. At the Saturday matinee, Barrett appeared in The Marble Heart, and on Saturday night, he took the title role in Richard III. The Picayune found him wanting again that year in the latter
Barrett began his second week at the Varieties on Monday, January 25, recreating his famous role of Cassius in *Julius Caesar*, and on Tuesday, January 26, he appeared as Elliot Gray in *Rosedale*, with Miss Brooks as Lady Florence, Miss Hudson as Sarah and Mr. Meredith as Miles McKenna. For the matinee on Wednesday, January 27, Barrett performed in *Man O'Airlie* and Wednesday evening, he repeated *The Duke's Motto*. On Thursday, his offering was *Hamlet*, and on Friday, he performed again in *Richelieu*. On Saturday, January 30, Barrett bid New Orleans farewell with superior performances at the matinee in *Rosedale*, and in the evening as Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*. Barrett had grown in stature and was, at the end of his engagement, more cemented in the affections of the New Orleans press and public than ever.

The *Picayune* stated:

> Mr. Barrett has been more of a surprise to us than any actor we have ever known. . . . His engagement just closed, revealed . . . a more imposing aspect of the analytical student who seeks to dissect the motive and the spring of action, delves into thoughts and moving passions, and combines his discoveries into intelligent forms. His methods of combination have shown scholarship and a proficient intimacy with the philosophy of human nature. (*Picayune*, Sunday, January 31, 1875.)
On Monday, February 1, actor-manager John Owens commenced a week's engagement at the Varieties, appearing as John Unit in Bateman's comedy, *Self*. In the characterization, the veteran actor displayed a combination of the best qualities of his humor and pathetic power, to bring out the tenderness and dry humor of the role. Good support was given by Ada Gilman as Mary Apex, and J. J. Wallace as Aunt Chloe. The latter played in black-face the part of an old Negro nurse. *Self* played through the Wednesday matinee. *(Picayune, Tuesday, February 2, 1875.)* On Wednesday evening, Owens performed in two plays, *The Happiest Day of My Life* as Mr. Gilware and as *Solon Shingle*. On Thursday evening February 4, Owens appeared in two more roles as Henry Dove in *Married Life* and as Horatio Spruggins in *Forty Winks*. Owens had first performed in the former comedy at the old Varieties in 1857. Continuing the strenuous double billing, on Friday, Owens appeared in *The Heir at Law* as Dr. Pangloss and again in *The Happiest Day of My Life*. It was said that he excelled in bringing out all the humorous qualities of the two roles. At noon on Saturday, February 6, Owens appeared in *Married Life* and on Saturday evening he appeared in *Paul Pry* and *The Live Indian*. The manager-star was considered delightful at each performance during the week's engagement. The *Picayune* stated that "... no actor with
whom we are acquainted. can concentrate in a look so much significance." (Picayune, Sunday, February 7, 1875.)

On Monday, February 8, J. K. Emmet opened his first engagement at the third Varieties, appearing in his familiar title role in Halliday's adaptation of the comedy, Fritz, Our German Cousin. The comedian's characterization showed signs of careful study and elaboration, and he displayed versatility by his song and dance scene in the second act, a scene that furnished the spice to relieve the melodramatic tone of the piece. The play had been improved since its last appearance in New Orleans by a score of new songs and musical accompaniment. Ada Gilman aided the performance, playing the part of Katrina, a foil to Fritz. Annette Hall did well also as the adopted daughter. The comedy played all week and was so successful that it was held over during Emmet's second week, playing Monday, February 15, through Wednesday, February 17. On Thursday, February 18, Emmet appeared in J. H. Byron's domestic drama, Philip, The Foundling, playing the title role. The new character afforded opportunity for fuller dramatic treatment than Fritz, and Emmet made his first serious impression of his engagement, as an actor of dramatic ability. His transition from young Phil to old Phil proved his capacity for flexibility and
truth of execution. (Picayune, Friday, February 19, 1875.) Phil was repeated through Emmet's closing performance on Saturday evening. Ada Gilman warranted much praise in her role as Oileen. In the scene where she learned that Phil loves another, her face was said to mirror all the emotions which such a sudden disappointment would naturally produce: "... unspeakable surprise, anguish of spirit and a sickening sense of desolation." The young actress's performance led the Picayune to state: "We have not seen for many a day, so versatile, so apt and so intelligent and apprehensive a little actress as Miss Gilman of the Varieties Stock Company." (Picayune, Sunday, February 21, 1875.)

On Monday, February 22, Jane Coombs opened a two-week engagement at the Varieties, supported by J. W. Norton. For the opening play, Jane Coombs was presented in London Assurance as Lady Gay Spanker, with Norton as Charles Courtley, F. Chippendale as Max Harkaway, H. Colton as Dazzle, J. J. Wallace as Meddle, Colin Stuart as Dolly Spanker, Theodore Hamilton as Sir Harcourt, Ada Gilman as Pert and A. Hall as Grace. Jane Coombs' Lady Gay reflected high comedy and was sparkling and spirited without any exaggeration. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 23, 1875.) On Tuesday, the star was seen as Julia in Knowles' The Hunchback, and negated the high
opinion she created as Lady Gay, with a dull, uneven presenta-
tion of Julia. Ada Gilman as Helen stole the show. For the
Wednesday matinee, London Assurance was repeated, and on
Wednesday evening, Jane Coombs appeared as Lady Teazle in The
School for Scandal. The actress proved herself spirited and
at ease again in high comedy and proved to be much better in
comedy than in tragedy. She was particularly effective in
the screen scene. J. W. Norton supported as Charles, with
Theodore Hamilton as Joseph, Frank Chippendale as Sir Peter
and J. J. Wallace as Moses. On Thursday, February 25, The
Lady of Lyons was the offering, with Jane Coombs as Pauline
and Norton as Claude. The actress delighted in her role,
giving a realistic portrait of the spoiled beauty subdued
into the loving woman. Norton gave his best performance of
the week as Claude. (Picayune, Friday, February 26, 1875.)
On Friday, February 26, Jane Coombs took a benefit, appearing
as Mrs. Haller in Kotzebue's drama The Stranger and as
Juliana in The Honeymoon. The Picayune reviewer, who did
not like Kotzebue, gave a negative review of the play, which
he described as containing "... morbid sentiment and
drivel inanity." As Mrs. Haller, the critic related, Jane
Coombs lifted the character above the commonplace, but
because of the playwright's limitations, failed to make it
interesting. The critic enjoyed the actress in the comedy, *The Honeymoon*. (Picayune, Saturday, February 28, 1875.) On Saturday, February 28, at noon, Jane Coombs repeated *School for Scandal*, and in the evening appeared as Parthenia in *Ingomar* with Norton in the title role. Both players were said to excell in the heavy drama.

Jane Coombs opened her second week at the Varieties in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, as Juliet, with Norton as Romeo. Jane Coombs invested her role with an air of girlishness, while Norton's Romeo was amorous and ardent. Theodore Hamilton's Mercutio was found to be too heavy. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 2, 1875.) The tragedy was repeated on Tuesday and at the Wednesday matinee. On Wednesday evening Jane Coombs appeared in Sheridan Knowles' comedy, *The Love Chase*, playing Constance with humor, and vivaciousness. (Picayune, Thursday, March 4, 1875.) On Thursday, March 4, she played Blanche de Chellis in the drama, *The Sphynx*. The actress played with fine effect, ably supported by J. W. Norton as Savigny. The play was repeated on Friday, March 5, as a second benefit for the actress. For the last day of her engagement, on Saturday, March 6, Jane Coombs reappeared at noon in *Ingomar*, and in the evening in the comedy, *The Love Chase* as Constance, preceding the drama *Metamora*. Theodore
Hamilton gave a careful and distinctive impersonation of the title role in the latter play, giving the best performance of the season. (Picayune, Sunday, March 7, 1875.)

On Monday, March 8, John E. Owens reappeared as John Unit in Self with Ada Gilman as Mary Apex, Phillis Glover as Mrs. Apex and Theodore Hamilton as Mr. Apex. Owens and Ada Gilman pleased audiences in the piece through the Wednesday matinee. On Wednesday evening March 10, Owens appeared as Dr. Ollapod in The Poor Gentleman and as Horatio Spruggins in Forty Winks; on Thursday, March 11, the star doubled again as Joshua Butterby in The Victims and as Solon Shingle; on Friday, March 12, he appeared as Tony Lumpkin in She Stoops to Conquer and in Betsy Baker. As Tony Lumpkin, Owens was said to project boisterous mischief; was coarse but good natured and was thoroughly imbued with humor. Ada Gilman was charming as Miss Hardcastle, and able support was given by Colin Stuart as young Marlowe, Frank Chippendale as Hardcastle, and Mrs. J. C. Carhart as Mrs. Hardcastle. (Picayune, Saturday, March 13, 1875.) On Saturday, March 13, Owens charmed again as Caleb Plummer in Dot at noon, and in Paul Pry or The Live Indian, in the title role, in the evening. Ada Gilman, acknowledged now as the best actress in the company, warranted another lead with the part of Phoebe, and
was found to be delightful, "... with inimitable spirit and roguishness." It was now evident that Laura Don, disappointing as leading lady, with poor reviews, had left the company earlier in the season, leaving the way unobstructed for the more capable Ada Gilman to show her mettle in lead roles.

The final important star of the 1874-1875 season was Mrs. F. S. (Henrietta) Chanfrau, who opened at the theatre on Monday, March 15, in Clifton W. Tayleure's new melodrama, *Was She Right?* This lady was to become subsequently, during the next season, for a short time, the only lady manager of the Third Varieties. An actress of merit, Mrs. Chanfrau's reputation was already established in the city. She played the leading role of Emily Steadman, later Lady Presbury, whose misery results through her union with a degenerate baron and through a villianous scheming uncle. The play ends on a scene of triumphant virtue, and proved to be a success with the audiences. Mrs. Chanfrau was called "... an actress of superb natural qualities." Theodore Hamilton's Dr. Walton was disappointing in that in his love-making he was totally artificial, and the critic asked "... why do you not ... make love like a man?" (*Picayune*, Friday, March 19, 1875.) The hit remained onstage all week.
On Monday, March 22, Mrs. Chanfrau entered upon the second and final week of her engagement, performing in Clifton W. Tayleure's melodrama adapted from the French called Jealousy, but the Picayune critic insisted that the plot was that of East Lynne, diluted. Mrs. Chanfrau played the lead role of Clara Northrup, and was a personal success, but the critic abhorred the play and asked: "... Cannot Mr. Tayleure put Mrs. Chanfrau into a more lively play?" The actress's talent shone through the mediocre play, and she depicted humanity and sympathy in the role. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 23, 1875.) The play remained through Wednesday. On Thursday, March 25, through Saturday's performances on March 27, ending her engagement, Mrs. Chanfrau appeared in Tayleure's adaptation of Charles Reade's novel, Christie Johnstone. This domestic drama was the most successful of Tayleure's plays and proved to provide the most delightful character vehicle for the actress of her entire engagement. The part of Christie called to mind Mrs. Chanfrau as Jeanie Deans which she had performed at the old Varieties. Her Christie was regarded as a model of simplicity-tender and sympathetic. (Picayune, Friday, March 26, 1875.)

Easter week, beginning Monday, March 29, was the final week of the season, and for the event John E. Owens reappeared
on the stage of the Varieties. On Monday, he appeared as Tony Lumpkin in *She Stoops to Conquer*, followed by the comedy, *Nan, The Good For Nothing*. On Tuesday, March 30, he appeared as Pemberton Pembroke in Bartley Campbell's new play, *Risks*, performed for the first time in New Orleans. The new role did not show the deft handling of Owens' older, often performed parts. Mrs. Carhart's Bertha, Ada Gilman's Dorothy, and Phyllis Glover's Bella, were Owens' top supports. (Picayune, Wednesday, March 31, 1875.) On Thursday, April 1, Theodore Hamilton appeared in *Metamora* in the title role, performing with vigor, but with unevenness. The drama was followed by *An Object of Interest*. On Friday, April 2, Bulwer's *Money* was the offering, with Wallace's Graves done with eccentric effect; Hamilton's Alfred Evelyn, the best performance ever seen by that gentleman; and Phyllis Glover's Clara, pleasing and accomplished. It had been announced that Owens would perform at every performance that week, and on Friday, his name appeared in advertisements as scheduled to play the role of Graves in *Money*. There was no explanation for the substitution of J. J. Wallace in the part, and the jovial comedian did not appear after Wednesday, during the last week of the season. On Saturday, April 3, last day of the season, the double comedy bill, *Wreck Ashore* and *My
Neighbor's Wife were performed by the company.

The Varieties was the first theatre to close that season, with the St. Charles, Academy of Music, Gaiety, and French Opera House still going strong. It had been a season of fluctuation and financial disaster to the management, but was generally brilliant in dramatic achievement. The company was a good one, and the standard of its performances was judged as being excellent. (Picayune, Sunday, April 4, 1875.) Although business at the theatre had not been profitable, this condition was no personal affront, according to the Times, as all over the country theatrical matters suffered sorely from a blight, with fewer successful seasons at theatres "... than has been the case in any year of the history of the American stage." (Times, Sunday, April 4, 1875.) It was announced on Sunday, April 4, that Mrs. F. S. (Henrietta) Chanfrau and C. W. Tayleure would become the new managers of the Varieties for the 1875-1876 season.

At the close of the season, on Monday, April 5, John E. Owens left with the Varieties Company on a tour of Southern cities, giving their final performance in Baltimore four weeks later.
The summer amateur season of 1875 saw performances by several new amateur groups, including the Garrick Club and the New Histrionics. The Shakespeare Club which slighted the theatre the previous summer disbanded during 1875, its members going over to the Garrick Club. The Varieties welcomed back performances by the Orleans Dramatic Association.

On Friday, May 7, and Saturday May 8, Jeannie Patterson gave a program of dramatic readings, as the first amateur event at the Varieties. She charged an admission of fifty cents. Miss Patterson was described as a Mississippi socialite who was a pupil of Frank Murdoch, the actor. (Picayune, Thursday, May 6, 1875.)

The New Histrionics made its debut in New Orleans on Thursday, May 13, at the Varieties, presenting an original historical drama, Prince Carlos, written by H. W. Williams, a member of the club. The new group made an impressive beginning with good actors in an interesting presentation. The cast included Brooks Carnes as King Philip II, Walter Keplinger in the title role of Carlos, Emanuel Weil as Duke of Rosa, A. H. Brown as Duke of Alva, Joseph Spearling as Domingo, Maggie Stroudback as the Queen and Isabel Freeman as a noblewoman. (Picayune, Friday, May 14, 1875.) The Orleans Dramatic Association opened their summer season on
Wednesday, May 19, by presenting Robertson's five-act drama, *Society*, for the first time in the city. E. M. Stella, Harry Pickles, R. H. Olive and W. H. Beanham filled the leading male roles, while Isabel Freeman, Maggie Stroudback and Mamie Ward presented the feminine roles. An upper-class house greeted the group's initial presentation. (Picayune, Wednesday, May 19, 1875.) On Thursday, May 20, the Orleans Dramatic Association gave a benefit for the Crescent Relief Association and Battery A of Louisiana Field Artillery. The comedy, *The Little Sentinel* was given, along with the one-act plays, *The Wounded Soldier* and *The Soldier's Life*. W. H. Beanham, O. S. Babcock, J. M. Allen, Flora Burton and Maggie Stroudback appeared in the feature presentation; Harry Pickles, Fred N. Thayer and G. Santini appeared in the first one-act; T. D. Kane, O. S. Babcock, Alfred Baker, John Hisgen, E. B. Jennings and O. F. Peck acted in the second playlet. An immense house, filled from pit to dome, witnessed the program. (Picayune, Friday, May 21, 1875.)

On Monday, June 21, the New Histrionics presented their second complimentary performance when they gave a double bill consisting of the comedy, *First Love*, followed by the comedy-drama, *Won At Last*. The excellent performance certified the group as being already among the leading
amateur groups of the city. In the first play, Theodore Hamilton played Hugh Livingstone and Maggie Stroudback played Emily. In the second play, W. S. Kiplinger as Ferdinand was the favorite of the evening and was regarded as rivaling the best amateurs of the city. Joseph Sperling, Isabel Freeman, E. N. Collom, Jr., Charles Pitts and Willie Summers completed the cast. (Picayune, Tuesday, June 22, 1875.)

On Wednesday, June 23, the Orleans Dramatic Association presented their third offering, with two plays, Robertson's comedy, Home, and the comedy afterpiece, The Artful Dodger. In the principal play, George Stern appeared as Mr. Dorrison, with J. M. Allen as Bertie and Harry Pickles as Alfred, W. H. Beanham as Captain Montraffe and Isabel Freeman as Mrs. Pinchbeck. John Beanham, J. A. Cairnes, O. S. Babcock, E. H. Corkery, Maggie Stroudback and Flora Benton acted in the second piece. (Picayune, Thursday, June 24, 1875.)

On Friday, June 25, 1875, the Garrick Club acted for the first time at the Varieties, presenting a benefit performance of London Assurance for the Louisiana Relief Association, for the needy of the state. Tickets were $1.00. The group specially engaged Rose Osborne as its leading lady for the entire season, and she did admirably in her first appearance as Lady Gay Spanker. Members of the club in the cast included
E. A. Cowan, Ben Onorato, G. H. Braughn, C. F. Buck, S. J. Hart, J. Stumph, Jr., and E. M. Stella. Many of the above names are recognized as being members of the Shakespeare Club. (Picayune, Saturday, June 26, 1875.)

On Wednesday, July 7, the Orleans Dramatic Association presented a benefit for the Louisiana Relief Association, charging fifty cents to see Tobin's comedy, The Honeymoon, and the afterpiece comedy, The Artful Dodger. In the first play, Harry Pickles, W. H. Beanham, C. M. DeCamp, George Hern, J. M. Allen, O. S. Babcock, T. A. Gleason and Esther Blumenthal, Isabel Freeman and Maggie Stroudback appeared. In the afterpiece, John Beanham took the lead role.

On Friday, July 9, the Garrick Club presented the comedy, Cloud and Sunshine; on July 28, the same group presented the drama, Romance of a Poor Young Man. The group attracted large audiences to both events. In the cast of the latter play were B. Onorato as Dr. Demarets, Judge Braughn as the hero, C. F. Buck as Laroque, Rose Osborne as Marguerite, Mrs. Vernon as Heloise and Kate Roberts as Madame Laroque. Welcome additions to the entertainment were an excellent orchestra under the direction of Louis Mayer, courteous ushers and the distribution of iced water during intermissions. (Picayune, Sunday, August 1, 1875.)
On Wednesday, August 18, Isabel Freeman was given a benefit by the Orleans Dramatic Association and the New Histrionics Club. The play given was Gilbert's drama, *Pygmalion and Galatea*. Isabel Freeman appeared in the role of Galatea, with Harry Pickles as Pygmalion.

The Garrick Club produced the drama, *Narciss*, on Friday, August 20. Judge Braughn excelled as the Captain, and C. F. Buck did well in the title role, as well as rating praise for his adaptation of the play from the French.

The New Histrionics performed on Wednesday, August 25, at the Varieties in the drama, *Love's Sacrifice*. The Orleans Dramatic Association performed on Wednesday, September 22, in the drama, *No Thoroughfare*. Harry Pickles did well as Walter Wilding with Isabel Freeman excelling as Margareite, Maggie Stroudback, good as Sarah, and W. H. Beanham, the hit of the evening as Joey Ladle. An upper-class audience watched the performance. (*Picayune*, Thursday, September 23, 1875.)

On Thursday, September 23, leading amateurs banded together under the auspices of the Washington Artillery for a benefit for the sufferers of western Louisiana, hit by a recent storm which desolated the Texas coast. The leading amateur actors who performed in the *Two Buzzards* included Esther Blumenthal and Maggie Stroudback and O. S. Babcock,
Harry Pickles and W. H. Beanham. Seen in *The Wounded Soldier* were Harry Pickles, George Stern and Fred N. Thayer. *Box and Cox* featured Esther Blumenthal, Fred N. Thayer and Theodore James. Louis Mayer led the orchestra. Mr. DeVil-lasana arranged, in addition, two beautiful tableaux. *(Picayune, September 24, 1875.)*

This was the last scheduled event at the Varieties found for the summer season. Since there was no tendency for the amateur clubs to advertise in the newspaper their events in 1875 as they had done previously, it is difficult to determine whether any events at the Varieties have been missed. Moreover, the "amusements" column of the *Picayune* was not published that summer.

Owens' financial disappointment over the Varieties' season of 1874-1875 and the labors of the season and the summer tour, so fatigued the comedian, that it was necessary for him to spend a year on the Pacific Coast in an effort to regain his strength. He never ventured again into the managerial field.24

Henrietta Chanfrau was not discouraged by the financial woes of the previous season at the Varieties, and set about

24Ibid., pp. 448-49.
her task of becoming the theatre's first and only lady manager. She associated her manager-author, Clifton W. Tayleure, to handle the executive details of the business, while she managed the artistic end. Henrietta Chanfrau was a distinguished member of the theatrical profession. Her maiden name was Henrietta Baker, but in 1858 she married the popular comedian Frank S. Chanfrau, and preferred the latter name professionally. Her first appearance in New Orleans was at the old Varieties in the season of 1865-1866, when she was leading lady of the stock company, and through the intervening years she had remained a favorite in New Orleans. Henrietta Chanfrau's tenure at the Varieties as manager lasted only one season. Nevertheless, her managerial reign was important in the United States. Only Laura Keene, Mrs. Sefton and Mrs. John Drew had been significant lady managers up until this time. Henrietta Chanfrau was only thirty-three years old when she became the Varieties' new director. Mrs. Chanfrau and Tayleure acquitted themselves well as managers, artistically speaking, but like their predecessors, they were forced to contend with a social and political post-war situation outside the theatre which nullified most of their efforts.

\[25^{\text{Ibid.}},\ pp.\ 450-51.\]

\[26^{\text{Ibid.}},\ p.\ 450.\]
Tayleure was well known as a former actor, who had also been a lawyer in Baltimore, and a playwright. It was when he became attorney and business manager for John E. Owens in the 1860's that he had his first experience as a manager. Subsequently, he was business manager of such important theatres as the Olympic and the Grand Opera House, both in New York. In 1871, he had taken over the business management of both Mr. and Mrs. Frank S. Chanfrau and wrote for Mrs. Chanfrau several plays and adaptations.\textsuperscript{27}

From the foregoing understanding of the backgrounds of the new co-managers of the Varieties, it can be seen that the Variété Association had every reason to be proud in its success in securing so experienced a team to take over the new theatre. To publicize the theatre, the new lady manager decided to add to the theatre's name the phrase "The Ladies' Theatre." This idea in no way averted the financial reverses of the season; the co-managers were forced after one season to give up their lease.\textsuperscript{28}

Early in June, 1875, Mrs. Chanfrau was busy engaging the best talent she could find in New York for the Varieties stock company. These included Ada Monk, Eliza Long, Belle

\textsuperscript{27}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 454-55. \textsuperscript{28}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 455.
Bailey, Amy Thompson, Anna Bleakley, Fanny Pierson, Mr. and Mrs. T. F. Egbert, Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Thompson, Frank Mor- daunt, J. B. Polk, George Morton, C. W. Sutton, W. F. Burroughs, Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Moreland, Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Vanderen, A. F. Chipman, A. Torriani, Jr., W. F. Dulaney, R. F. Browne, and R. Jones. (Picayune, Sunday, June 6; Sunday, August 13, 1875.) Mrs. Chanfrau worked with her new company during the summer, and before presenting them at the Varieties, she took the group on a fall traveling tour commencing on September 13, at Ford's Opera House, Baltimore. Subsequently, the Varieties company played at theatres in Louisville, Cincinnati, Shreveport, and in many other cities.

In Henrietta Chanfrau's absence, Tayleure conducted affairs at the Varieties at the beginning of the fall season; and visiting companies were booked. The 1875-1876 season began on Monday, November 1, when Chizzola's Opera Bouffe Troupe inaugurated a season of four weeks. The impressive opera company had been engaged in Paris, and were to appear only at the Varieties and at the Lyceum Theatre, New York. In the company were eminent artists who made their first appearance in New Orleans, including Mles. Marie Nardynn, Florence Dupare, Julie Hosdez, Lucie Faye, Mles. Cherzy, Nelcy, Cureau, Vandelet, Rodon, Julien, Vandamme, Deribarpre, Noe,
Lamaire, Ingelberg, Hartman, Soret and Gower, and Messrs. Gabriel DeQuercy, Eugene Roger, Charles Dorcy, Emile Duplan, Bertrand Ladovie, Alexis Castel, Adrien Valter, and Messrs. Benedick, Leclerq, Cuerra, Davalis, Grazzini, Adorcy, Cattanio, Fraisse, Kramer, Ruffino, Milano, Gerard, Coiardini, and Thuillart. The orchestra was under the direction of Messrs. Rosenbloom and Von Ghele. The company opened on Monday, November 1, in Lecocq's *Girofle-Girofla*, which was also performed to large audiences on Tuesday, Wednesday matinee and Wednesday evening. On Thursday, November 4, and Friday, November 5, and Saturday, November 6, Lecocq's *La Fille de Madame Angot* was presented. At the Saturday matinee and on Sunday, November 7, *Girofle-Girofla* was repeated. On Monday, November 8, Tuesday, November 9, and Wednesday matinee, for the first time in New Orleans, *Le Canard a Trois Becs* (called The Wonderful Duck, but literally, The Duck With Three Beaks) was presented. On Wednesday evening and Thursday, Offenbach's *Madame L'Archiduc* was presented for the first time in New Orleans. For Friday, November 12, and Saturday evening, November 13, for the first time in New Orleans, Offenbach's *La Jolie Parfumeuse* was presented. For the Saturday matinee, *La Fille de Madame Angot* was repeated.

Beginning their third week at the Varieties, the
French Opera Company presented on Sunday, November 14, Madame L'Archiduc; on Monday, November 15, La Fille de Madame Augot; on Tuesday, November 16, Madame L'Archiduc; Wednesday matinee, November 17, La Jolie Perfumeuse; Wednesday evening Girofle-Girofla; Thursday, November 19, La Jolie Perfumeuse; Friday, November 19, and Saturday evening, November 20, La Grande Duchesse; Saturday matinee Madame L'Archiduc.

Beginning their fourth week, the opera bouffe company presented on Sunday, November 21, La Jolie Perfumeuse; Monday, November 22, and Tuesday, November 23, Le Petit Faust; Wednesday, November 24, Le Canard a Trois Becs; Thursday, November 25, two performances: noon, La Grande Duchesse; evening, Madame L'Archiduc; Friday, November 26, and Saturday, November 27, both performances, La Perichole.

On Monday, November 29, Augustin Daly's New York Fifth Avenue Theatre company moved into the Varieties for a two-week engagement. Big Bonanza, a Daly drama which played in New York for two hundred performances, was the opener. Prices for the dramatic season at the theatre were announced as: general admission, $1.00; balcony circle, 75 cents; family circle, 50 cents; quadroon gallery, 50 cents; gallery, 25 cents; matinees, 50 cents. Cast of Big Bonanza was as follows:
Johnathan Cadwalader by D. Whiting, Professor Cadwalader by Owen Fawcett, Uncle Rymple by E. Chapman, Bob Ruggles by James Hardie, Dr. Jack Lyner by B. T. Ringgold, Alphonsus by George Devere, Mouser by F. Chapman, Tafferty by W. Beckman, Mrs. Cadwalader by Nellie Mortimer, Eugenia Cadwalader by Sara Jewett, Caroline by Carrie Jamison, Virgie by May Nunez. Leading lady of the company was Sara Jewett; while May Nunez was featured ingenue. The latter had the previous season attracted wide attention at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, appearing with Edwin Booth in Shakespearean roles. Owen Fawcett was leading man of the group. Fawcett performed his role of the Professor with impressive individuality; Sara Jewett displayed zest; and May Nunez, more subdued than Sara Jewett, was poised and tasteful. (Picayune, Tuesday, November 30, 1875.) The play was performed through Wednesday, December 1.

The Two Orphans was the bill beginning Thursday, December 2. Daly adapted the play from the French original, and did not do a substantial reconstruction. His version lacked vigor and poignancy, and the cast suffered by being limited in the stilted vehicle. Sara Jewett played the Blind Girl, Carrie Jamison was Mother Hundred, George Devere appeared as Jack, and James Hardie was Ralph, the cripple. The above
cast members earned special mention for strong characterizations. (Picayune, Saturday, December 3, 1875.) This drama was performed the remainder of the week and on Monday, December 6. On Tuesday, The Big Bonanza was repeated. For the Wednesday matinee, December 8, The Two Orphans was repeated, and on Wednesday evening Monsieur Alphonse was performed with Sara Jewett appearing with distinction as Raymonde, and little Minnie Maddern (the future Mrs. Fiske) repeating her former success at the Varieties as the child Adrienne. On Thursday, The Big Bonanza was restaged; and on Friday, December 10, Divorce received a smooth production, with Sara Jewett excelling as Fanny. The Fifth Avenue Company closed their engagement on Saturday, December 11, in the third performance of the latter play.

Finally, on Monday, December 13, Mrs. Chanfrau and the Varieties Company, freshly returned from their country-wide tour, opened in the drama, Parted, at the Varieties. The company had been regarded as excellent by the press in the many cities visited by the group. (Picayune, Sunday, December 12, 1875.) In the opener, Mrs. Chanfrau assumed the lead part of Grace Shirley. The play had beautiful settings, but was weak in plot. Frank Mordaunt supported the star in the lead male role of Dorsey Shirley, while Ada
Monk appeared as Mrs. DeWoolf, and George Morton was Courtlandt DeWoolf. Mrs. Chanfrau was greeted by many floral tributes on her opening performance. (Picayune, Tuesday, December 14, 1875.)

On Friday, December 17, and Saturday, December 18, Boucicault's London Assurance was the offering, and for the first time with an adequate vehicle, the company showed what they could do. The Picayune said: "... We have seen few representations of the play which surpassed that of last night." (Picayune, Saturday, December 18, 1875.) Mrs. Chanfrau as Lady Gay showed a sprightly piece of comedy, while Frank Mordaunt's Sir Harcourt brought out the rheumatic eccentricities of that character. Ada Monk was piquant as Grace Harkaway, while others satisfying were C. W. Sutton's Cool, J. B. Polk's Meddle, and Eliza Long's Pert. (Picayune, Saturday, December 18, 1875.) Parted was repeated at the Saturday matinee.

On Monday, December 20, Mrs. Chanfrau introduced the first visiting star of the season in the person of John McCullo'gh. The actor, who had made such a decided impression upon New Orleans theatre goers in his prior visit to the Varieties, commanded a large house for his opening play, Virginius. On Tuesday, December 21, McCullough appeared as
Richelieu. The press marveled at the star's growth in the latter role from the previous season. (Picayune, Wednesday, December 22, 1875.) Ada Monk was impressive as Julie. For the Wednesday matinee, the company performed in *Parted*, featuring Mrs. Chanfrau; and on Wednesday evening, McCullough repeated *Virginius*. On Thursday, December 23, the actor appeared as King Lear, and drew rave notices. Supporting exceptionally well was Mordaunt as Edgar. On Friday, December 24, McCullough appeared as Othello. Superlatives of the press compared McCullough with Salvini as the Moor. Mordaunt performed with high merit as Iago. (Picayune, Saturday, December 25, 1875.) On Christmas day, 1875, a gift matinee was presented, and among the toys being distributed to the children in the audience were five expensive Parisian dolls, richly costumed. On that occasion, McCullough presented *The Taming of the Shrew*, appearing as Petruchio. Admission for this performance, with a toy for every child assured, remained at only 50 cents. (Picayune, Friday, December 24, 1875.) On Wednesday evening, December 25, McCullough appeared as Gloster in *Richard III*, and performed his only role that disappointed the press.

Beginning his second week at the Varieties on Monday, December 27, McCullough took the title role in *Spartacus*, The
Gladiator, pairing "magnificently" with Mordaunt as Phasarius. (Picayune, Tuesday, December 28, 1875.) On Tuesday, December 28, and Wednesday evening, December 29, The Gladiator was repeated with the actor in the lead role. At the Wednesday matinee, December 29, Mrs. Chanfrau and McCullough teamed for the first time to appear in the lead roles in Romeo and Juliet. This event proved to be the most auspicious performance of the two-week engagement. The house was crowded to the doors and the two stars were assailed with recalls. (Picayune, Thursday, December 30, 1875.) On Thursday evening, McCullough appeared as Damon in Banim's drama, Damon and Pythias, and on Friday, December 31, by popular demand, McCullough and Mrs. Chanfrau repeated their triumph in Romeo and Juliet. The press was enchanted with the McCullough-Chanfrau combination, citing the performances in Shakespeare's tragedy of young love as ones of exceptional excellence. The Picayune was surprised and delighted with McCullough as Romeo, having seen the star associated previously only with robust and aggressive roles. The Picayune said:

. . . We were agreeably surprised when we found a Romeo played with youthful fire, deliciously flavored with poetic spirit and fervor of boyish love and adorned with the air of the high spirited gentleman.
Of Mrs. Chanfrau, the paper said, "... It has been a long time since we have seen so frank, so ingenious a Juliet as Mrs. Chanfrau." (Picayune, Saturday, January 1, 1876.) At noon on Saturday, McCullough and Mrs. Chanfrau, responding to the demand made by their combined acting, appeared together in The Lady of Lyons, and on Saturday evening, January 1, for the final performance in his engagement, McCullough appeared as Jack Cade, in the play of the same name. It was a bad choice for his final play, since he was weak in the character. (Picayune, Sunday, January 2, 1876.)

McCullough so impressed the New Orleans press, on the whole, during his second visit to New Orleans and the Varieties, that he rated a glowing editorial in the Picayune on the evening of his departure from the city. (Picayune, Saturday, January 1, 1876.) The paper said in part:

... To be a great actor, requires constant and laborious study... Thus few men have succeeded. ... How then must be the satisfaction of Mr. John McCullough, to feel that he has triumphed over art, with so full a symmetry as to excite the admiration of all who see him. No actor of this age has been more careful in his study. He has lived with his characters until they have become his intimates... full of vitality and soul. He is Richelieu, the weak old Cardinal of France, whose mighty brow controlled an empire. He is Sparticus, the heroic Roman who with a martyr's strength plunges the dagger into the bosom of his daughter, dearer to him than life itself, to save her from dishonor... But of
all his characters, perhaps his triumph is Othello. . . . McCullough has all the noble bearing of dignity of Salvini, with a warmth of passion equally as strong, though more subdued. . . . He is indeed an artist. . . . We advise all who love art to see the grandeur of his representations. (Picayune, Saturday, January 1, 1876.)

On Monday, January 3, George Fawcett Rowe became the second star of the season presented to the Varieties' public by Mrs. Chanfrau. The actor appeared on that date in Holliday's dramatization of David Copperfield, called Little Emily. Rowe appeared as Wilkins Micawber, and the Picayune's reaction to the performance was highly favorable. It said that "... the character seems to have stepped from the pages of David Copperfield." Rowe's presentation was original in business, make-up, and expression, with subtle lights and shades reflected and a spontaneous drole spirit. Dividing honors with the star was Mardaunt's Peggotty, a characterization described as "really beautiful." (Picayune, Tuesday, January 4, 1876.) The stock company performed memorably in the play with the best acting yet to be seen that season, particularly outstanding being J. D. Polk's Uriah Heep, Belle Bailey's Martha, George Morton's Ham, Ada Monk's Rosa, Anna Bleakley's Little Emily and Mrs. Vanderen's Betsy. (Picayune, Wednesday, January 5, 1876.) The hit
remained on stage all week, including the regular matinees on Wednesday, except for Saturday evening and a special matinee presented on Thursday, January 6, at which Rowe appeared in the character of Aminadab Sleek in the comedy, *The Serious Family*.

On Saturday evening, Rowe changed roles in the latter play, being seen as Captain Murphy Maguire, and offered an additional comedy, *Cool As A Cucumber*, in which he was seen as Plumber. As far as the *Picayune* was concerned, Rowe should have kept *Little Emily* through the final evening of the week. The actor's performance in both of the pieces offered Saturday evening were to that newspaper, exceedingly disappointing. (*Picayune*, Sunday, January 9, 1876.) But the *Democrat* enjoyed both acting endeavors, calling Rowe's performance of Captain Maguire, "a decided success," and of Plumber, "a fine piece of acting." (*Democrat*, Sunday, January 9, 1876.)

To begin his second week at the Varieties, Rowe presented on Monday, January 10, Tuesday, January 11, and Wednesday matinee, January 12, his own drama, *The Geneva Cross*, in which he appeared as Riel de Bourg. Seldom had the *Picayune* given such a "panning" as was accorded to Rowe in this play. It said that ". . . much of the effect of Mr. Rowe's characterization was impaired by his rapid and often indistinct
enunciation. The impersonation lacked breadth and strength and was fitful in its presentation." (Picayune, Tuesday, January 11, 1876.) That newspaper did at least like Rowe's play. (Picayune, Wednesday, January 12, 1876.) The Democrat, paralleling the reviews of the Picayune, called the play a touching drama but found Rowe not as good in serious roles as in comedy. (Democrat, Tuesday, January 11, 1876.) Embarrassingly enough for the star, while the press frowned on his performance, they applauded the supporting cast of the Varieties company, finding in these performances conspicuous merit. (Picayune and Democrat, Tuesday, January 11, 1876.) Chief support came from Ada Monk as Gabrielle, J. M. Polk as Simon, Mrs. E. Vanderen as Cassandre, Eliza Long as Martagon and Anna Bleakley as Fraizette. On Wednesday evening, Rowe reappeared as Wilkins in Little Emily, and on Thursday, he starred as Bob Brierly in The Ticket-of-Leave-Man. In the latter drama, Rowe was sympathetic but, compared with Lawrence Barrett in the same role, was found wanting. (Picayune, Friday, January 14, 1876.) This play was repeated on Friday, January 14, for Rowe's benefit, and was seen also at the Saturday matinee. Rowe closed his engagement on Saturday evening, January 15, by repeating The Geneva Cross. Having created a very negative opinion
generally, Rowe received an icy epitaph from the *Picayune* on the eve of his departure, which presented a glaring contrast to the praise accorded to John McCullough at the end of the latter's engagement, just prior to Rowe's booking. The *Picayune* lamented that "... outside of Micawber, Mr. Rowe has won no reputation in New Orleans, and that measure of success that has attended his engagement is due more to the intelligence and strength of the Varieties stock company than to his own achievements. . . ." (*Picayune*, Sunday, January 16, 1876.)

Beginning the week of Monday, January 17, the Varieties company was presented in a lavish production of D'Ennery's drama, *The Two Orphans*, which played through Saturday matinee, January 22. Anna Bleakley's Louise was the outstanding characterization of the performance. Other cast members acting capably were George Morton as Jacques, W. F. Burroughs as Picard, Amy Thompson as the Countess, and Mrs. E. Vanderen as La Frochard. On Saturday evening, Edward C. Hancock's drama, *Captain Fanny*, was presented at the Varieties for the first time on any stage. The playwright was a New Orleans citizen, and this was his first dramatic effort. The *Picayune* found the play faulty in dramatic invention with few believable characters. Mordaunt played the lead.
role of Captain Duke. (Picayune, Sunday, January 23, 1876.)

Beginning on Monday, January 24, 1876, the Varieties company staged a new original play, Colonel Willoughby, which showed a trend of the day in opening a play before it was ready. The drama revealed insufficient rehearsal. Since it was performed all week, by Wednesday, the action was smoother. Mordaunt played the double roles of Col. Willoughby and Silas Jarrett, Burroughs appeared as Robert Arnold, Polk as Jake Snipe, Ada Monk as Margaret Armitage and Anna Bleakley as Alice Armitage. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 25, 1876.)

On Monday, January 31, John T. Raymond returned to the theatre and performed in his celebrated role of Colonel Mulberry Sellers in The Gilded Age. The comedian was ably supported by Ada Monk as Laura Hawkins. The comedy remained all that week, and because of its popularity was held over through a second week, playing through Saturday evening, February 12, 1876, with the exception of the Wednesday matinee February 9, when Raymond took a respite and The Two Orphans was repeated by the company. During the entire two weeks, Raymond's popularity as Sellers never abated. The star was greeted nightly by full houses. (Times, Friday, February 4; Picayune, Thursday, February 10, 1876.)

On Monday, February 14, Mrs. Chanfrau returned to the
stage of the Varieties, being seen as Lady Presbury in Tayleure's drama, Was She Right?, performed through Wednesday evening. On Thursday, February 17, she appeared in the title role of Tayleure's adaptation of Charles Reade's Christie Johnstone. The simplicity and noble nature of the fish girl were finely depicted by Mrs. Chanfrau. Her impersonation was described as "exquisitely beautiful." (Picayune, Friday, February 19, 1876.) The drama played through Saturday evening, February 19, with the exception of the Saturday matinee, when Was She Right? was performed. On Monday, February 21, the lady manager of the Varieties appeared in Tayleure's melodrama, Jealousy or The Outcast Wife. The only saving grace of this weak play, which the Picayune labeled as a "... dilution of that adulterous monstrosity, 'East Lynne,'" was the performance level of the cast, particularly that of Henrietta Chanfrau in the role of Lady Clara Northrop, in which the star revealed "... the whole gamut of a woman's sorrow." (Picayune, Tuesday, February 22, 1876.) The play was repeated through the Wednesday matinee. On Wednesday evening, February 23, Parted, Tayleure's comedy-drama, was performed, with Mrs. Chanfrau appearing as Grace Shirley, and the best support coming from Frank Mordaunt as Dorsey Shirley. There was a special matinee of the play on
Thursday, with no performance on Thursday evening. On Friday and Saturday evening, Henrietta Chanfrau appeared as Dora in Charles Reade's drama, Dora, a part in which she had appeared in Boston for 200 nights. The vehicle permitted an "... exquisite characterization of ... constant sympathy," and co-starring with great effectiveness was Mordaunt as Farmer Allen. (Picayune, Saturday, February 26, 1876.) At the Saturday matinee Christie Johnstone was given, with Mrs. Chanfrau in the title role. Of her repertoire during the two weeks, the star-manager was declared as the most compelling in Dora and Christie Johnstone. Dora was the actress's most celebrated role all of her life. An impressive testimonial wreath was presented to Mrs. Chanfrau at the conclusion of her performance on Saturday evening, as a tribute for her beautiful characterization of Dora.

Beginning on Monday, February 28, Mardi Gras week, Mrs. Chanfrau presented as star, her husband, Frank S. Chanfrau, for a limited engagement. The actor appeared in his popular comedy creation of Sam in the title role of that play, which he had played for 300 nights in New York. Because the Varieties was given over to the Comus Ball on Tuesday evening, and there was thus no theatrical performance that evening, a special matinee was held on Monday, February
28, preceding Chanfrau's opening, with the Varieties company appearing in The Two Orphans. Frank Chanfrau's opening on Monday night commanded the largest house of the season. The occasion was brightened by the appearance of Rex, King of Carnival, in a specially draped private box. Chanfrau achieved a triumph in his well-known role of Sam. It was said that the actor's embodiment of the laughable but noble-natured character attested to his consummate art. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 29, 1876.)

Comus' ball tableaux at the Varieties on Tuesday night, February 29, carried out the theme of "The Chosen People." The first tableau represented the Garden of Eden, with Adam and Eve as the central characters; the second and final tableau portrayed famous biblical characters from the Old Testament—including King David, Samuel, Saul, Queen of Sheba, Simeon, Joshua and others.²⁹ (Picayune, Wednesday, March 1, 1876.)

Beginning again on Wednesday, Sam was performed the balance of the week to large houses. On Monday, March 1, Chanfrau began his second week at the Varieties as the lead character in Kit, the Arkansas Traveler. In Kit, Chanfrau

²⁹It is ironic that the exclusive organization of Comus had an audience filled to overflowing to witness the pageant honoring famous Hebrew characters, when no Jews were invited to Comus balls.
showed all the combined virtues and defects of the uncouth Arkansas man, displaying his versatility as an actor. His was a spontaneous, easy acting style. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 1, 1876.) The play was repeated through Thursday night except for the Wednesday matinee, when the company performed in The Two Orphans. On Friday, Chanfrau took a benefit, appearing for the first time at the theatre on a bill with his famous wife. Chanfrau acted in two acts each of Sam and Kit, supplemented by Mrs. Chanfrau's appearance in The Rough Diamond, in the lead role of Margery. The latter performance was fresh and sparkling, and the benefit commanded a large house. This combined bill was repeated at both of the performances of Saturday.

On Monday, March 13, May Howard commenced a week's engagement as Mercy Merrick in Wilkie Collins' drama, The New Magdalen. The actress made her bow to New Orleans in this role and was said to display a promising talent. As Mercy, she showed the complex elements of the role—hostility to society, pious paroxysms, audacious spirit, and inspired nature as stimulated by Lady Janet. These salient points were contrasted with skill. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 14, 1876.) The drama was performed through Thursday, March 16, and created for May Howard applause from large houses, while the press applauded her for the thoroughness she showed in her art. (Picayune, Friday, March 17, 1876.) On Friday,
March 17, she took a benefit, appearing in the title role in *Camille*, and made an impression as a gracious and pathetic Camille. The characterization cemented her reputation with press and public alike. The *Picayune* commented:

... Coming as she did, unheard of before us, all the more can she be grateful at the reception of the critical audience which was impressed and thrilled by powerful acting which strained after every effect. ... She will carry away a reputation second to none who has ever visited our city. ... *(Picayune*, Saturday, March 18, 1876.)*

*Camille* was repeated at the Saturday matinee, and on that evening of March 18, May Howard closed her engagement by performing in *East Lynne* as Lady Isabel, a part and a play which the *Picayune* considered loathesome, no matter by whom it was performed. That journal's critic had this to say:

"... The better Lady Isabel is played, the more grows our disgust for the play. Miss Howard has added another degree of bitterness to our antipathy." *(Picayune*, Sunday, March 19, 1876.)*

On Monday, March 20, another young actress made her debut at the third Varieties and to New Orleans. The latest new star was seventeen-year-old Mary Anderson, who, unlike May Howard, made an almost ruinous and unfavorable impression upon the *Picayune*. Mary Anderson, who, ironically, was
to become a big star and receive glowing notices from the Picayune in later years, chose the role of Julia in The Hunchback in which to open. At this time, the girl had been on the stage only four months. Mrs. Chanfrau gave her the booking when a production of Jarrett and Palmer's Henry VIII, scheduled for an appearance at the Varieties at this time, failed to reach New Orleans. Of her initial performance in Sheridan Knowles's drama, the Picayune said:

... She is too young to the stage to venture upon the characters which she selects for performance. ... When such an immature talent as that of Miss Anderson ... copes with so exacting a character, its shortcomings are harbingers of what study and experience may develop. ... Her Julia was unequal and inharmonious. ... Incoherence is the child of immaturity and inexperience. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 21, 1876.)

On Tuesday, Mary Anderson appeared as Bianca in Fazio, and never was the press more divided in its reviews of a play. The Picayune panned the performance, while the Democrat voiced superlatives for the new star's performance. The Picayune condemned the girl for ranting and overacting, found wide breaks and weaknesses in her portrayal, but found even this poor effort an improvement over the initial performance. This paper advised Mary Anderson to follow Hamlet's advice to

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30 Kendall, p. 457.
the players: "to acquire and beget temperance." (Picayune, Wednesday, March 22, 1876.) In diametrical opposition to the Picayune was the Democrat's review. This paper called Mary Anderson, in the heading of a long and glowing review, "A New Star in the Histrionic Firmament." The review began:

In the histrionic firmament a star has been born which lights up the whole vast ioncave [sic] with a brilliancy and splendor unsurpassed by any that now reigns. . . . The brightness of her spirit shines through and colors the passions of her characters, tingling them with vivid hues of glory. . . . Hers is the rich, soft touch of the master. . . . (Democrat, Wednesday, March 22, 1876.)

But the commendation advised the girl to forego comedy, finding her stiff and unnatural in that medium, while excelling in tragedy. In the latter medium, the critic swore that the actress brought back to the stage "... the days of Elizabethan rule, to the time of Garrick, Siddons and Kemble." (Democrat, Wednesday, March 22, 1876.) This account concluded with the prediction that Mary Anderson . . . will be borne upward to the highest pinnacle [sic], where she will stand an imaged queen . . ., shedding a rich radiance through the darkened decaying temple of the drama, lighting up its gloomy corridors with a deathless flame. (Democrat, Wednesday, March 22, 1876.)

At the Wednesday matinee, Henrietta Chanfrau appeared
again in Dora. On Wednesday evening, Mary Anderson appeared in the title role of Evadne, which the Picayune praised mildly, calling it her best role, one in which she showed "pathetic beauty." (Picayune, Thursday, March 23, 1876.) On Thursday, March 23, Miss Anderson appeared as Juliet in Romeo and Juliet, with W. F. Burroughs as Romeo. In this role, the actress failed again to please the Picayune, which announced: "We regret to say that Miss Anderson does not seem to comprehend the profoundly passionate nature with which the great dramatist endowed Juliet. . . ." (Picayune, Friday, March 24, 1876.) On Friday, March 24, the occasion for her benefit, the young star appeared as Meg Merrilies. Again, the girl surprised the apprehensive Picayune critic by achieving a balanced characterization. She was vigorous and surprisingly well modulated. The only element lacking was a proper management of the aging of the voice of the character. (Picayune, Saturday, March 25, 1876.) At her benefit, Mary Anderson was presented with a gold pin and large basket of flowers, on behalf of the Washington Artillery. At the Saturday matinee, Mary Anderson reappeared as Evadne, while she closed her initial engagement by repeating her success of Meg Merrilies. Even when Mary Anderson reached the height of fame, she remained a controversial figure, stirring as much variety of
reaction among critics as she had done during her initial appearance at the Varieties, only four months after she had gone on the stage. Towse calls Mary Anderson "one of Fortune's darlings," a lovely girl who had more luck than talent. As a mere novice, she was placed by her adoring public on a pinnacle from which she never fell, Towse says. She had many natural attributes—beauty, graciousness, intelligence, refinement, and a spotless character. These attributes, plus a dramatic instinct and some ability, earned for her the honor and glory of the American stage. But, Towse says, she was never a great actress, or a great artist. In tragedy (unlike the prediction of the Democrat), she was always mediocre—exhibiting little versatility in method or variety of resource. Pitou sees another reason for her ability to thrill the critics one night and bore them to distraction the next. She had an innate quality that enabled her to feel and express emotion, Pitou argues. But her acting was impulsive, and she lacked the subtleties of the actor's art, which if she possessed them, could have made it possible to be consistent and thrill audiences all the time.  

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31 Towse, op. cit., pp. 214-16.
32 Pitou, op. cit., p. 95.
With the 1875-1876 season nearing an end, Mrs. Chanfrau and the Varieties company began an extended period of production activity, with a round of varied dramas. From Monday, March 27, through Wednesday, March 29, Robertson's Ours was given, with the following well-trained cast that gave a brisk, well-balanced performance: Frank Mordaunt as Hugh, W. F. Burroughs as Capt. McAllister, C. H. Thompson as Col. Shendryn, Ada Monk as Mary Netley. Also aiding in smaller roles were Mrs. E. B. Vanderen, Anna Bleakley, George Morton, A. F. Chipman and Mr. Maurice. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 28, 1876.) On Thursday, March 30, Mrs. Chanfrau appeared as Mary Leigh in the drama, Hunted Down. The play had not been seen in New Orleans in many years since it was introduced by Kate Bateman at the old Varieties years before. Mrs. Chanfrau's role was one of the most sympathetic of her many characterizations, while as John Leigh, Frank Mordaunt added to his reputation. Also excelling were Mrs. C. H. Thompson as Lady Glenlania, Mrs. E. Vanderon as Mrs. Jones, Anna Bleakley as Clara and W. F. Burroughs as Rawdon. (Picayune, Friday, March 31, 1876.) This play remained the rest of the week. On Monday, April 3, Morton's comedy, Women of the Day was presented in the city for the first time, with Henrietta Chanfrau as Meta Killmeyer and Frank Mordaunt as
Capt. Frank Laidlaw. Mrs. Chanfrau sustained her reputation as being at ease in comedy as well as drama. Good support came from Anna Bleakley as Mrs. Hoffman, Mrs. E. B. Vanderen as the mother-in-law Mrs. Sampson, and Ada Monk as Mrs. Livingstone. This play was given through Wednesday evening, April 5. On Thursday, April 6, Tom Taylor's drama, Henry Dunbar opened, with Henrietta Chanfrau as Margaret Wentworth. Mrs. Chanfrau was said to capture the pathetic circumstances of the heroine's life as well as the lighter shades of her softer nature. Frank Mordaunt's Dunbar enhanced the actor's ever growing local reputation. (Picayune, Friday, April 7, 1876.) The play continued through both Saturday performances.

On Monday, April 10, Ada Monk and Frank Mordaunt took the lead roles in Boucicault's Modes of Wall Street and performed well. On Thursday, April 13, Mrs. Chanfrau stepped forward again to appear in the title role in Boucicault's Irish drama, Arrah-Na-Poque. The admirable rendering of the character of Arrah Meelish by the star had been recognized by the public years before, and time had only improved the delineation. Excellent support was given by Frank Mordaunt as Col. O'Grady, George Morton as Beamish McCowl, Ada Monk as Fanny and W. F. Burroughs as Shaun. The play remained
onstage with the exception of Saturday evening, April 15, when *Modes of Wall Street* was repeated. On Monday, April 17, Henrietta Chanfrau took a benefit, reappearing in *Arrah-Na-Pogue*. After the final curtain of the benefit, Mrs. Chanfrau was showered with rose leaves which descended from the curtain borders, as she stepped out for a curtain call, and then was presented with numerous baskets of flowers. In thanking the enthusiastic audience, the star made a short speech. In the emotional oration she thanked her adoring public on behalf of herself, her husband and her "dear little ones," and she acknowledged her deep gratitude to Tayleure, her associate manager, and to the members of the company and attaches of the theatre "... from all of whom I have received, under trying circumstances, the most cheering expressions of fidelity and respect." She ended with the words: "... I shall never be able to express the full measure of my feelings. In the words of Lady Gay Spanker: 'I wish that they were all here before me and had but one mouth, that I might kiss it!'" (*Picayune*, Tuesday, April 18, 1876.)

On Tuesday, April 18, *Monte Cristo*, a drama of six acts was produced with surprising mechanical effects, among which was the disappearance of the prison of the Chateau D'If beneath the waves. In one scene of the elaborate
production, a full German military band played a concert. The mammoth production featured Frank Mordaunt as Edmund Dantes, the Comte de Monte Cristo, T. F. Egbert as Fernand, W. F. Burroughs as Noirtier, J. B. Polk as Caderousse, George Morton as Baron Danglars, Ada Monk as Mercedes, Anna Bleakley as Haydee and Mrs. E. B. Vanderen as Carcoute. Harry Dressel, the gifted scenic artist now responsible for all sets and effects at the Varieties, was praised for his striking scenery, and on Saturday, April 23, a benefit was given in *Monte Cristo*. The play was held over for the final week of the season, closing on Saturday, April 29, 1876. During the final week, Ada Monk was given a benefit on Wednesday, and Burroughs had a benefit on Friday. Although the season ended officially on Saturday, April 29, benefits for Frank Mordaunt and J. B. Polk were given during the following week.

The *Picayune* printed a scathing indictment of New Orleans theatre in general, at the end of the 1875-1876 season. The gloomy account said that the just completed season was one of disaster "... not only to the managers' pockets, but to art as well." The account blamed mediocrity as the cause, and said that "hard times" were insufficient reason for the inferior plays produced that season in all
New Orleans theatres. It blamed also the caliber of some of the "stars" thrust upon the public with injudicious selection as to merit. (This complaint was almost word for word the indictment of Mary Anderson several weeks before.) Additionally, the account lamented the level of stock players of some of the local theatres. (Picayune, Sunday, May 7, 1876.)

With the season officially over, Mrs. Chanfrau and Tayleure left New Orleans. The season had provided many artistic satisfactions, but financially it was most disappointing. Mrs. Chanfrau returned to New York, and continued to act for another decade. In middle age, she retired to try her hand at journalism, and finally she became a Christian Science lecturer, dying in New Jersey at the age of seventy-one. Tayleure left New Orleans for the East and eventually went into the newspaper business with Henrietta Chanfrau.33 The highlights of the 1875-1876 season had been the reappearance of John McCullough in a second triumphant appearance, and the first appearance in the city of seventeen-year-old Mary Anderson, only four months after she made her stage debut. The young girl who was to become a top star

received mixed reviews. She was alternately panned and praised.

The week beginning Monday, May 1, was a unique one in which professional benefits overlapped with the beginning of the amateur theatrical season at the Varieties. J. B. Polk of the Varieties company took his benefit on Monday, presenting two comedies, *Everybody's Friend*, in which he acted the part of Major Wellington de Boots, and *Lend Me Five Shillings*, in which he appeared as Mr. Golightly. The members of the Varieties company volunteered their services by appearing in supporting roles. A large house applauded the comedian and showered him with floral bouquets. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, May 2, 1876.) At the end of the week, on Saturday, May 6, Frank Mordaunt took his benefit, and since most of the company had departed, Mordaunt was supported by leading amateurs of the city. Mordaunt's benefit was singular for two reasons: not only because the professional actor was supported by amateurs, but because he split his benefit into two performances in one day, with offerings of different plays at both matinee and evening performances on Saturday. At the matinee, the leading man of the Varieties company appeared in the lead role of the drama, *Still Waters Run Deep*, and in the evening, he took the lead role in Fred Marsden's *Clouds*. In the latter
play, Mrs. Mordaunt made her debut upon the stage, playing the feminine lead opposite her husband. *(Picayune,* Saturday, May 6, 1876.) In between the benefits of Polk and Mordaunt, the Shakespeare Club began the summer amateur season of 1876 at the Varieties, by returning for its appearances at the theatre. It will be remembered that the Shakespeare Club had been discontinued during the 1875 summer season. The club now replaced the Garrick Club. The leading amateur group, celebrating the start of its tenth anniversary series of summer performances, gave as their first offering, an historical drama, *The King of the Commons*. Leading characters were as follows: King James of Scotland by T. O'Neile, Sir Adam Weir by Ben Onorato, Madeline by Isabel Freeman, Widow Barton by Maggie Stroudback. In smaller roles were Adolph Schwaner, Joseph DeGrange, H. F. Given, K. J. Gnapp, John Cairns, C. M. DeCamp, F. H. Wilson, John Stumpf, F. A. Lee, E. A. Cowen and R. G. Eyrich. *(Picayune,* Wednesday, May 3, 1876.)

During the 1876 summer season, the New Histrionics disappeared from the Varieties scene, after making a notable beginning the previous year. On Monday, May 8, John A. Stevens took a benefit at the theatre, appearing as the lead character in *Dead Heart*, and as Enoch in two acts of *Enoch*
Arden. Emma Maddern was leading lady and well-known amateurs comprised the supporting cast. On Thursday, May 18, the Lee Memorial Association sponsored a benefit to raise funds for a mausoleum for Valentine's new statue of Robert E. Lee. A musical program was presented, a feature of which was a pageant of The Mistletoe Bough by Thomas Haines.

On Monday, May 29, the first complimentary entertainment of the Orleans Dramatic Association was given. The play selected was The King's Rivals, featuring anonymous male members of the club supported by Emma Maddern and Katie Glassford. On Friday, June 16, the second performance of the Shakespeare Club occurred with the presentation of the drama, Rose Michel. Pierre Michel, the lead role, was played ably by Isadore Davidson, with Kate Glassford as Rose and John Stumpf as Moulinet. The next scheduled activity at the Varieties was a month later, Monday, July 10, when the Orleans Dramatic Association presented the drama, Extremes, a play found to be dull by the Picayune. Harry Pickles excelled as Frank Hawthorne with Emma Maddern as Jennie Wildbriar, and W. H. Beanham as Robin Wildbriar. Others in the cast were W. S. Keplinger, J. M. Allen, Ed Angell, George Stern, E. H. Corkery, J. H. Hisgen, Esther Blumenthal, Kate Glassford, and Maggie Stroudback. (Picayune, Tuesday, July
The New Orleans Dramatic Club presented a benefit on Saturday, July 22, for the widow of Joseph Campbell, a fireman killed on the previous June 6. The comedies presented were *The Honeymoon* and *The Loan of a Lover*. On Monday, August 4, the Shakespeare Club's next entertainment at the Varieties took place, on which occasion, T. W. Robertson's drama, *Dreams*, and the farce, *The Conjugal Lesson* were given. Hit of the evening was the latter play in which Frank Wilson and Emma Maddern took the leading parts. (Picayune, Thursday, August 3, 1876.) On Monday, August 28, the Orleans Dramatic Association tendered Emma Maddern, leading amateur actress of that season, a benefit, performing *Fanchon, the Cricket*, with the honoree in the lead role. Other benefits for amateurs followed. On Monday, September 11, Harry Pickles was given a benefit, on the eve of that amateur actor's departure to enter the professional acting ranks. Pickles had become acquainted with Henrietta Chanfrau during the previous professional season at the Varieties, and had been engaged to play with Mr. and Mrs. Chanfrau in Boston, in the fall of 1876. Only a few days before he left his native city, Pickles was given a benefit by fellow amateur actors, with the play *London Assurance*. Pickles was seen as Dazzle, with Ben Onorato as Max Harkaway, Theodore James as
Sir Harcourt, Charles Buck as Charles Courtly, W. H. Beanham as Mark Meddle, Frank Wilson as Dolly Spanker, Emma Maddern as Lady Gay Spanker, Maggie Stroudback as Grace Harkaway and Mrs. Gray as Pert. (Picayune, Tuesday, September 12, 1876.)

Another benefit was held on Friday, September 29, this event being given by the Shakespeare Club in honor of Katie Glassford, who had taken many parts in the group's efforts that season. The play was East Lynne, with the honoree playing Lady Isabel and Madame Vine. In supporting roles were Maggie Stroudback, Emma Doyle, Mrs. Gray and members of the club including T. H. Wilson, T. O'Neile and C. M. DeCamp. (Picayune, Saturday, September 30, 1876.)

With this performance, the summer season of 1876 came to an end. In summarizing the first five summer seasons at the Varieties, during the years 1872-1876, several conclusions can be made. (1) The amateur theatrical groups that met during the summer performed, during these years, a vital activity in the community. (2) They filled a great creative need in the lives of those artistic persons who desired dramatic self-expression and who did not yet seek this outlet professionally. (3) They supplied the city with dramatic activity when the professional seasons were at an end. (4)
They served to bring out talented local amateurs who occasionally were called upon by the professional companies during the winter season to fill supporting roles in plays. (5) As organizations, they were high in the social hierarchy, the members having upper socio-economic status in the city. (6) They performed philanthropic as well as aesthetic activity—by often raising funds with benefits for worthy charities. (7) The memberships were for men only, although ladies were as active as the gentlemen in the dramatic performances. However, the ladies acted as guests of the gentlemen in the several dramatic organizations, most of the ladies being asked to perform in several of the groups' efforts. Thus, a lady alternated, for the most part, in performing for one and then another of the groups. (8) Some groups were created, functioned briefly and then were disbanded or reformed into new groups, but several groups continued as the leading and most stable of the dramatic clubs. These included the Shakespeare Club, the Orleans Dramatic Association, and the Variety Club. (9) The regular productions of the clubs were generally complimentary; however, benefits were often given, at which admission was charged. (10) The benefits were of two types: to honor individual worthy actors—much in the manner in which the professional benefits were conducted—and as fund-raising.
projects for worthy charities. At some benefits, several organizations pooled talent and resources. Occasionally, as stated, an amateur actor was recruited during the winter season, as were Isabel Freeman and Louise Hawthorne, to fill a part in a professional stock company; also, on occasion, an amateur actor was "discovered" by a manager, as was Harry Pickles, who then decided to join the ranks of the professionals. Both Lawrence Barrett and Mrs. Chanfrau had each decided during this five-year period to launch a New Orleans amateur upon a professional career.
CHAPTER III

THE SECOND PERIOD: FALL, 1876, THROUGH SPRING, 1879,
MANAGEMENT OF HALL UNTIL CHANGE OF
NAME OF THEATRE

The Varieties had a tardy fall opening for the 1876-1877 season; being the last of the major New Orleans theatres to open. The St. Charles and the Academy of Music both opened late in October, while the Varieties did not open for several more weeks, on Monday, November 13, 1876. Charles Pope was announced as manager of the Varieties, and Harry Dressel was announced as scenic artist. Charles Pope was born in Weimar, Germany, on February 17, 1832, but his parents moved to Rochester, New York, in the same year of the boy's birth. Apprenticed to a printer, young Pope preferred the stage, and in 1848 he joined Augustus A. Addams' company. Subsequently he was employed in New York theatres, and first appeared in New Orleans in 1854, at the St. Charles Theatre. A marriage to the actress, Mrs. Peter Cunningham (Virginia Howard), ended traumatically when it was discovered...
that Peter Cunningham, who was thought dead, was still alive. Pope's second wife, Margaret Macauley, was not in the acting profession. For a decade before Pope became manager of the Varieties, he distinguished himself as a manager of theatres in cities in the midwest, including Indianapolis, St. Louis and Kansas City. Moreover, he spent some time during these years as a member of stock companies in New Orleans, and was both widely known and well liked in the Crescent city. When offered the post of manager of the Varieties by the Variété Association, Pope accepted with some misgivings because of the lack of success of former managers at the new theatre. But when he finally accepted, he had two goals other than economic. He saw an opportunity to bring together some of the most distinguished actors with whom he had worked over the years, as members of the Varieties company, and he would produce and take the lead in his favorite play, Samson, in which he had considerable reputation already. He had first produced the drama in 1874 after seeing Salvini in the role.¹

The opening play was Byron's Our Boys, a comedy with brisk action and lively, crisp dialogue. The play served to introduce to a full house Pope's new Varieties company,

recruited by him during the summer. Leading man of the company was Russell Soggs, an actor of elastic method and sensibility, who shone in the central figure of Perkyn Middlewick. Rosa Rand, leading lady of the company, was introduced in the play as Mary Melrose, and made a favorable impression. Rosa Rand had been, formerly, leading lady of the Trimble Opera House, Albany, New York, and was a successful dramatic actress. Others of the new company making their initial appearance that season in Our Boys included Mr. Hague, Mr. Southard, Agnes Proctor, Miss Kunkle and Miss Lee. Other strong players who would satisfy in subsequent plays included the distinguished actor Joseph Wheelock, Mrs. Taylor, Mr. Bradley, Mr. Evans, Miss Wallace, Mr. Stedman, Mr. Cheever, Mr. Davidson, Linda Dietz, Mr. Marble, Mr. Rutledge and Miss Storrs. Manager Charles Pope would also stand in the spotlight frequently with the acting company during the season. The cast of Our Boys showed that Manager Pope had selected an experienced company of players who had been on the stage for a number of seasons. The Picayune noted: "... Not since eighteen years have we seen the strength of a company so well and harmoniously balanced as the Varieties Stock Company of 1876-77." (Picayune, Tuesday, November 1, 1876.) Joseph Wheelock, the most distinguished of the male actors
of the company, had supported Booth on several occasions and had played Romeo to Adelaide Neilson's Juliet in Boston in 1875. He had been also in the famous original cast of The Two Orphans with Kate Claxton. Our Boys continued through the Saturday performance.

On Monday, November 20, Rose Michel, a heavy melodrama, was enacted, receiving its first professional production in the city. The first act proved to be so dull that the Picayune critic admitted to falling asleep. By the second act, action quickened when Rosa Rand as Rose Michel entered the scene. Miss Rand in the role proved herself excellent in melodrama, being intense but wholly natural. Joseph Wheelock was seen for the first time, playing the lead role of Pierre, and giving a well-developed characterization of a very repulsive role. (Picayune, Tuesday, November 21, 1876.) The new opus played all week. Harry Dressel's sets received special comment.

The first star to make his appearance the season of 1876-1877 was E. H. Sothern. The actor had inherited a considerable comic flair from his father, who was an accomplished comedian. But, according to Towse, the former never

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2Ibid., p. 461.
exhibited anything resembling genius; he had no flashes of genuine dramatic inspiration. He could never penetrate to profound emotion, but was adroit in surface portrayals. On Monday, November 27, Sothern opened a brief engagement at the Varieties, appearing as Lord Dundreary in Tom Taylor's comedy, Our American Cousin. His portrayal was, according to the Picayune, a dramatic treat "... showing the effect of a trained and consummate art dealing with unmitigated nonsense." The artist"... elevated nonsense to the dignity of a dramatic quantity." (Picayune, Tuesday, November 28, 1876.) The Democrat critic complained of still holding his sides from the pain that continuous laughter had provoked over the "... nonsense so exquisitely rendered by the consummate artist." The latter critic swore that Sothern would "make a corpse smile." (Democrat, Tuesday, November 28, 1876.) The hilarious treat played all week. On Monday, December 4, 1876, Sothern opened his second and final week at the Varieties in Byron's A Hornet's Nest, acknowledged to be a play greatly inferior to Our Boys. Even in a poor vehicle Southern proved to be excellent and amusing as Sidney Spoonbill. The play was repeated through Wednesday matinee.

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During this final week, Sothern changed bills frequently. On Wednesday night, David Garrick was produced, with beautiful sets by Harry Dressel. Sothern enacted the lead role with cleverness and dignity, while Linda Dietz made a special impression with a finished characterization of Ada Ingot. Soggs as Ingot and Marble as Squire Chivey gave good support. On Thursday, December 7, Sothern appeared as Col. White in Robertson's comedy, Home. The star was said to enhance his status with proof of his versatility, in depicting the romantic role, in his love scene with Dora, played by Miss Storrs. (Picayune, Friday, December 8, 1876.) On Friday, December 8, Sothern took a benefit, repeating David Garrick, and appearing also in a farcical afterpiece, Married and Settled. On Saturday, for the matinee, The Hornet's Nest was the offering, and in the evening, Our American Cousin was repeated. On Sunday, December 10, Sothern closed his engagement with repeats of two of his most humorous farces, A Hornet's Nest and Married and Settled.

Directly following Sothern, on Monday, December 11, 1876, Mary Anderson returned to the Varieties for a two-week engagement, opening in the title role in Evadne. The Picayune commented briefly that the star returned after a year's absence as immature as when she departed. (Picayune,
Tuesday, December 12, 1876.) On Tuesday, Romeo and Juliet received additional adverse notice. The Picayune judged the portrayal to be listless, without symmetry and disregarding nature. (Picayune, Wednesday, December 13, 1876.) On Wednesday evening, December 13, Mary Anderson was slightly more convincing as Parthenia in Ingomar, but the Picayune abhorred her tendency to declamation and overacting. (Picayune, Thursday, December 14, 1876.) On Thursday, the young star appeared as Bianca in Fazio, and the Picayune held that where the girl was strong during the previous year, she was now entirely weak. Whereas her former portrayal had some semblance of form, now she had drifted into mere rant. (Picayune, Thursday, December 14, 1876.) On Friday, Miss Anderson took a benefit, repeating Evadne. Again she made a negative impression and the critic found that the young actress needed schooling, was not ready for the professional stage, lacked finesse in all stage business, and was inadequate in all her roles. (Picayune, Saturday, December 16, 1876.) The eighteen-year-old fledgling star appeared in Romeo and Juliet on Saturday at the matinee on December 16, and in Ingomar that evening. Reviewing Mary Anderson's week at the Varieties the Picayune lamented that the girl had not advanced beyond the amateur level and presented a severe indictment of her
acting style: "... She cannot discriminate between characters. ... Her characterization is a monotone ...",
roared the Picayune. (Picayune, Sunday, December 17, 1876.)
On Sunday, December 17, the stock company appeared in Byron's Our Boys, and on Monday, December 18, Mary Anderson opened her second week by appearing as Meg Merrilies in Guy Mannering. The Picayune again lashed out at the star, saying that during her first appearance, this was the one role in which she was delightful because of her aptitude for the mature character, but now there was a perceptible falling off from the former vigorous tone. (Picayune, Tuesday, December 19, 1876.) The play was to be repeated on Tuesday, but a sudden illness of the star cancelled the play, and Our Boys was substituted. On Wednesday evening, Mary Anderson appeared as Pauline in The Lady of Lyons. Finally, in this role, the star merited a commendation from the Picayune. But Wheelock as Claude Melnotte received the major praise, presenting the best Claude the critic had seen since the days of George Jordan. (Picayune, Thursday, December 21, 1876.) Thursday the star repeated her role of Bianca in Fazio, and on Friday, she took a benefit, appearing in two plays—as Meg Merrilies in Guy Mannering and Margery in The Rough Diamond. In the latter play, the actress disappointed again, being accused
of overacting and giving a haphazard interpretation. (Picayune, Friday, December 22, 1876.) At the matinee on Saturday, December 23, Miss Anderson appeared as Parthenia in Ingomar. For her final performance on Saturday evening, she reappeared in Guy Mannering and The Rough Diamond. At the young star's closing, the Picayune aired a final lament concerning Mary Anderson's art. The journal wondered at the audacity of the inexperienced young girl, with neither depth nor breadth to her acting style, daring to count herself as a star before maturity and experience ripened her enough to warrant anything near the claim of such status. (Picayune, Friday, December 22, 1876.)

On Sunday evening, December 24, 1876, conditions brightened for the holiday season. The vivacious singing star, Aimee, returned on that date with her opera bouffe company, and took over the Varieties for an extended engagement. The booking was a boon to manager Pope, for it freed that gentleman from managerial duties, so that he could rehearse his planned production of Samson with the Varieties company, later taking the troupe on an impressive tour before opening in New Orleans. Aimee and her company's schedule was as follows: Sunday, December 24, the special Christmas matinee; Monday, December 25, and Thursday, December 28,
Fille de Madame Angot; Monday night, December 25, Giroflé-Girofla; Tuesday, December 26, Wednesday matinee, December 27, and Saturday matinee, December 30, La Grande Duchesse; Wednesday night, December 27, La Jolie Perfumeuse, with Aimee as Rose Michon; Friday, December 29, and Sunday, December 31, for the first time in America, at a cost of $5,000, La Petite Mariee, with Aimee as Graziella; Saturday night, December 30, La Perichole. For her second week at the Varieties, beginning Monday, January 1, 1877, Aimee's schedule was as follows: Monday matinee, La Perichole; Monday night and Saturday night, January 6, La Jolie Perfumeuse; Tuesday, January 2, Les Dragons de Villars; Wednesday matinee, January 3, and Friday, January 5, La Petite Mariee; Wednesday night, La Timbale d'Argent; Thursday, January 4, Giroflé-Girofla; Saturday matinee, January 6, La Fille de Mme. Angot. Aimee's third week's program was as follows: Sunday, January 7, La Grande Duchesse; Monday, January 8, Les Chevaliers du Pince-Nez and Un Mari dans du Coton; Tuesday, January 9, Le Meurtrier de Theodore; Wednesday matinee, January 9, Les Chevaliers du Pince-Nez and at night, Le Homard and Un Mari dans du Coton; Thursday, January 11, Saturday noon, January 13, and Sunday, January 14, La Vie Parisienne; Friday, January 12, Les Dragons de Villars; and Saturday night, La Timbale d'Argent.
As Aimee completed her third week at the Varieties, the press released news of Pope and the Varieties company, now on tour in Samson. During the week beginning Monday, January 14, Pope and the company opened in Mobile in Samson, while during the previous week the group appeared in St. Louis, in which city the St. Louis Dispatch had given Pope and the company glowing reviews. (Picayune, Sunday, January 14, 1877.)

Aimee's fourth and final week at the Varieties was as follows: Monday, January 15, Tuesday, January 16, and Wednesday matinee, January 17, La Boulangere a des Ecus; Wednesday night, La Fille de Mme. Angot; Thursday, January 18, La Vie Parisienne; Friday, January 19, and Saturday matinee, January 20, Mme. L'Archiduc; Saturday night, La Perichole. Aimee and her troupe closed on Sunday, January 21, with a double offering, La Vie Parisienne and Les Chevalieres du Pince-Nez.

On Monday, January 22, John T. Raymond put in an appearance at the Varieties, as the next star of the season. By this date, Pope and the Varieties company had completed their engagement at Mobile, having received high commendations by the press for Samson, and were again at home base in New Orleans to support Raymond's engagement. The comedian opened in The Gilded Age in his familiar role of Col. Mulberry Sellers. The Picayune commended Raymond's
ability to "... make us laugh and forget for the moment the uncertainties and gravities of our political situation."
(Picayune, Tuesday, January 23, 1877.) Particularly humorous was the scene in which the Colonel sits down to his turnip dinner, and enlivens the repast with snatches of his quaint philosophy. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 23, 1877.) Good support was given the comedian by Rosa Rand as Laura Hawkins, Stedman as Clay Hawkins and Rutledge as Colonel Selby. The humorous interpretation of the serious-intending colonel who blunders and loses fortunes with impaired confidence in himself and his projects was so ardently received that the comedy played not only throughout the week, but was held over on Raymond's second week at the theatre, from Monday, January 29, through Wednesday, January 31, 1877. On Thursday, February 1, Raymond was seen in two plays--as Aminidab Sleek in The Serious Family and in the lead role of Toodles. Raymond was much more at home in Toodles than in the other more serious role, for the audience could not take seriously the portrayal of Sleek, and they broke into peals of laughter in the serious scenes. (Picayune, Friday, February 2, 1877.) The fault was Raymond's, he confused the roles of Sleek and Sellers. The actor was to play through Saturday night, but he terminated his engagement abruptly after Thursday evening.
On Friday, the stock company performed in W. S. Gilbert's *Pygmalion* and *Galatea* followed by the farce, *Sailing Under False Colors*. Rosa Rand performed as Galatea, and proved to be poetic, naive, and pathetic. Agnes Proctor was an animated Cynisca, Rutledge shone as Pygmalion and Mrs. Taylor was impressive as Daphne. (*Picayune*, Saturday, February 3, 1877.) The double bill was repeated for the Saturday matinee, and on Saturday night, February 3, the company was seen in Robertson's comedy, *Caste*. An excellent cast played to a ridiculously small house: "... You couldn't see the audience for the chairs." (*Picayune*, Sunday, February 4, 1877.) Nevertheless, performing nobly were Rosa Rand as Esther, Mrs. Taylor as the Marquise and Soggs as Eccles.

On Monday, February 5, Charles Pope and the Varieties company opened in the long-awaited production of *Samson*, which had been acclaimed by the press all over the country. Pope starred as Samson, with Rosa Rand as Delilah. Local raves by the press were added to the acclaim by the press elsewhere. The *Picayune* called Pope "... the most even actor we have seen." He proved an actor of peremptory thought and decided artistic flair. In physical bearing and presence he realized completely the proportions of the Hebrew giant, and presented a character at once vigorous and
symmetrical. Only fault found in the actor was a tendency to a sing-song tone which abated the effect of his reading. Miss Rand elaborated the role of Delilah with admirable discretion and force, depicting the struggle between love for Samson and duty imposed upon her, tender coaxing with which she beguiled her love and the remorse over her treachery. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 6; Wednesday, February 7; Thursday, February 8, 1877.) The scenic effects were spectacular. Particularly compelling was the collapse of the temple of Dagon. 4 There was no performance at the theatre on Thursday, so that patrons might witness the Momus parade. However, the Momus ball was held not at the Varieties but at the French Opera House. On Friday, February 9, Pope took the title role in King Lear. In this role he was disappointing; he ranted and his articulation was indistinct, although his emotion was convincing. (Picayune, Saturday, February 10, 1877.) Samson was repeated at the Saturday matinee, and on Saturday night, February 10, Richard III was produced with Pope in the title role. The actor made Richard a purposeful villain, and did not grasp the inner depth of the role: "... the more-than-a-villain aspect of his

4Kendall, op. cit., p. 462.

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nature—so brilliant in statecraft and Italian in policy."
The insincerity of the character was over-played. Miss Rand, on the other hand, was found to be poignant and brilliant as Queen Elizabeth. *(Picayune, Sunday, February 11, 1877.)* On Sunday, February 11, Pope appeared in The Gascon as Ariaben Puycadere, with Rose Rand as Mary Stuart. Pope played with freedom of spirit and intelligence, but his forte was not comedy; and he injected a seriousness not intended in the character. Miss Rand commanded the entire attention of the house as Mary Stuart and made the role a personal triumph. *(Picayune, Monday, February 12, 1877.)* This play was repeated on Monday, February 12, and at both performances on Wednesday and throughout the week. There was no performance on Tuesday, February 13, because of Mardi Gras. Instead, Comus held its lavish ball at the Varieties on that evening. Theme of the ball and its tableaux was "The Aryan Race." In reviewing Pope's initial week at the Varieties, it is seen that his only successful vehicle was *Samson*; in all else he disappointed.

On Monday, February 19, George F. Rowe, next star to appear at the Varieties, opened a brief engagement by appearing as Waifton Stray in his own play, *Brass*. It proved to be a delightful comedy, in which Stray, a liar and a
reprobate, is completely reformed along with two cronies—
Tom Masham (Bradley) and Mr. Wyvern (Evans)—by the heroine,
Sybil Hawker (Rose Rand). The incongruous effects wrought
made a series of very amusing scenes. (Picayune, Tuesday,
February 20, 1877.) The comedy remained onstage all week.

On Monday, February 26, Rowe began his second week at the
Varieties with the adaptation of Dickens's David Copperfield
called Little Emily. Rowe was seen in his celebrated role
of Micawber, a part in which he surpassed all other interpreters of the role in that era. Rosa Rand was seen in
the title role of Little Emily, with Agnes Proctor as Rose,
Miss Wallace as Mrs. Micawber, Stedman as David Copperfield,
Hague as Uriah Heep, and Davidson as Wickfield. The delightful presentation played through Thursday and on Saturday matinee. On Friday, for Rowe's benefit and the last performance of his engagement, Othello was given with Charles Pope as Othello and Rowe as Iago—a complete departure from his comic roles. The choice was both a surprise and a disappointment to the press. It was standard fare for a benefit for an actor to choose a role in which he excelled, one which he considered his best. As Iago, the comedian was, although consistent and smooth, not above the scope of "... stock actor with twenty-four hours to get himself up in the role,"
and he added nothing to his reputation as a star. Pope, as he had done with Samson, modeled his Othello upon Salvini's interpretation, but he failed to reach the breadth and feeling of the greater star. Rosa Rand played Desdemona with fervor. (Picayune, Saturday, March 3, 1877.) On Saturday night, March 3, the Varieties company performed in Reade's Masks and Faces. Mr. Hague shone as Triplet, playing the role with pathetic individuality. Miss Rand, as Peg Woffington, gave such a delightful performance that the Picayune judged the result to surpass any such portrayal since the role was played by Mrs. John Wood, years before. Miss Proctor was also a standout, with an admirable portrayal of Mabel Vance. (Picayune, Sunday, March 4, 1877.)

On Monday, March 5, Louise Pomeroy opened her inaugural appearance at the Varieties by appearing as Rosalind in As You Like It. The young star introduced herself to the New Orleans public for the first time in the role, and made an impressive first appearance. Tall and willowy, she fit the character physically; but she fit it dramatically, also. She depicted the part with archness, ease and spirit, and a finely wrought romantic air. Miss Pomeroy's best support came from Mr. Hague as Adam. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 6, 1877.)

The Shakespeare comedy was presented through Thursday, with
the exception of Wednesday matinee, when the company performed again in *Masks and Faces*. Miss Pomeroy took a benefit on Friday, March 9, appearing for the occasion as Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, with Evans as Romeo, Stedman as Mercutio and Mrs. Taylor as the Nurse. These supports played well and enhanced Miss Pomeroy's effectiveness. She portrayed Juliet as the slave of a strong, headstrong passion. *(Picayune, Saturday, March 11, 1877.)* For the Saturday matinee, the star was seen again as Rosalind, and in the evening, again as Juliet.

On Monday, March 12, 1877, it became publicly apparent that Charles Pope was not to renew his lease. Political and economic uncertainty had not abated, and the theatre continued to suffer financially. Attractions which under normal circumstances would have filled the house drew only a handful of spectators. Pope made great effort to put the Varieties on top financially, even touring as he did with the excellent Varieties company, that company which the *Picayune* had judged the best in New Orleans in eighteen years, and which the press acclaimed in all cities visited on its fall tour. Nevertheless, the season had been a great disappointment financially and made Pope virtually penniless. He had no
choice but to abandon the lease. On Monday, March 12, consequently, the New Orleans newspapers carried advertisements listing the Varieties "for rent" for the 1877-1878 season.

On the same date, Louise Pomeroy began her second and final week at the Varieties by appearing as Pauline in The Lady of Lyons, with Charles Pope co-starring as Claude. Miss Pomeroy had failed to draw audiences. Her reception had been cool and disappointing. For her benefit on Friday, the house was very small; and now on opening night of her final week, again, the audience was meagre and cool, and the press was uncomplimentary. The Picayune gave the star a scathing review, saying that as Pauline, Miss Pomeroy lacked emotion, passion and warmth; did not build to a climax but fell flat; and gave a crude and uncertain reading of her lines. On the other hand, Pope was found to be so impressive that the role was judged as his best characterization of a light role all season. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 13, 1877.)

On Tuesday, March 13, Louise Pomeroy and Charles Pope again joined hands to co-star in Ingomar. She appeared as Parthenia to his Ingomar. In this role, Miss Pomeroy excelled, giving her best performance of her engagement,

\[5\text{Ibid.}, \ pp. 461-62.\]
while Pope received nothing but praise for his dashing creation of Ingomar. (Picayune, Wednesday, March 14, 1877.) The play was repeated on Wednesday night, while at noon, Rosa Rand appeared in the title role in Camille. It was announced in the Picayune on Thursday, March 15, that Pope had decided to bring the season to an abrupt close, with no prior notice; and the final performance of the season was scheduled for Monday, March 19. (Picayune, Thursday, March 15, 1877.) On Friday, March 16, Miss Pomeroy took a second benefit, acting the role of Lady Macbeth to Charles Pope's Macbeth. Again, the actress received an icy review from the Picayune, which regarded the presentation as utterly surface, one-dimensional and disappointing. Pope fell down, also; his reading was judged to be incomplete and imperfect. (Picayune, Saturday, March 17, 1877.) For the closing day of her engagement on Saturday, March 17, Louise Pomeroy repeated The Lady of Lyons and in the evening Macbeth was given.

The closing night of the season, Monday, March 19, 1877, was dedicated as a benefit for Kittredge, treasurer of the Varieties. On the occasion, Rosa Rand repeated the title role in Camille, with Rutledge as Armand, Hague as Monsieur Ducal, Stedman as DeVureille and Mrs. Taylor as Prudence. Although the season was officially over, New Orleans citizens
demanded a benefit for Rosa Rand, the Varieties company's leading lady who had become the darling of New Orleans theatre goers. Another of the unique amateur-professional combinations, a popular kind of tribute of the day, was the result. The Rosa Rand benefit was planned for Monday, April 2, at the Varieties. From Tuesday, March 20, for two weeks, until Monday, April 2, the Varieties was dark, while forty of the leading professional and nonprofessional actors rehearsed for the benefit. The play chosen was Charles Shelley's *The Marble Heart*. Rosa Rand appeared as Marco, with W. H. Power of the professional company of the Academy of Music appearing as Phidias and as Raphael, and Ben Onorato, the talented amateur, as Diogenes and Volage. Miss Rand and Power proved to be electrifying co-stars, holding their talents in reserve until the climax in the third act. This act was played with admirable tone and spirit. Miss Rand depicted all the cold-bloodedness and egotism of Marco's nature. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, April 3, 1877.)

A week later, on Monday, April 9, the Varieties company rallied before their departure to appear in a final production of *Samson* given as a benefit and tribute to their now penniless manager, Charles Pope. Pope played his familiar leading role one last time at the theatre. A group of
sympathetic amateurs, the same group who had appeared in Rosa Rand's benefit, appeared in an afterpiece, the comedy, The Old Guard. Pope was so discouraged after his venture at the Varieties, that he turned his back on managing for several years in favor of acting. However, he eventually built and managed the Pope's Theatre, named after himself, in St. Louis. In this venture he built a fortune, and in 1888, he sold the theatre at a handsome profit.6

On Sunday, September 30, 1877, the Picayune published news of the name of the new lessee and manager of the Varieties who would take over for the 1877-1878 season. He was Thomas A. Hall, considered to be a dynamic and versatile man, widely known as an actor and dramatist as well as a manager. The regular dramatic season at the Varieties began on Monday, November 5, 1877. The event was marked by the first appearance in the city of Kate Claxton, in her famous characterization of the blind girl, Louise, in the drama The Two Orphans, which role she created in the original New York production. Kate Claxton was married to actor C. A. Stevenson who acted with her. The pair brought with them their own company, by

6Ibid., pp. 463-64.
special permission of A. M. Palmer of the Union Square Theater, New York.\textsuperscript{7}

The significant difference between the 1877-1878 season and prior seasons at the Varieties is that for the first time there was no permanent stock company at the theatre, and visiting companies accompanied the stars booked for brief engagements. The innovation would become a trend in the changing era.

Kate Claxton was the granddaughter of Spencer W. Cone, Sr., an actor of note who quit the stage in his prime to become a Baptist minister. Kate Claxton is most famous for her portrayal of Louise in \textit{The Two Orphans}, which remained her most celebrated role throughout her acting career. The version which she used was made by Hart Jackson from the original play by D'Ennery and Carmon.\textsuperscript{8} The cast of \textit{The Two Orphans} when it opened at the Varieties was as follows: Kate Claxton as Louise, the blind girl; C. A. Stevenson (Kate Claxton's husband) as Peter and the Chevalier, Lillian Cleves Clark as Henriette, Laura Phillips as the Countess, Mrs. Howard Rogers as La Frochard, T. A. Alexander as Jacques, Harry Phillips as Picard. The \textit{Picayune} held that Miss

\textsuperscript{7}Ibid., p. 553. \hfill \textsuperscript{8}Ibid., pp. 553-54.
Claxton's portrayal of the blind girl was so real that she made her auditors suffer at sight of the orphan's suffering and affliction. There were tears throughout the capacity opening audience as it watched the star grope in the darkness, shivering as if cold. Her every movement and tone of voice were said to be inspired, according to the *Picayune*. Her support was good; particularly from Stevenson who was an intelligent, graceful actor, and from Miss Clark and Mrs. Rogers who were very effective as Henriette and Mother Frochard. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, November 6, 1877.) The *Democrat* departed in opinion from the other paper's view concerning Miss Claxton as Louise. The latter critic held that although the actress was good, her over-acting kept her from being better; and commented in fact that Mrs. Rogers and Miss Clark were much more impressive. Mrs. Rogers was regarded as the most natural actress ever seen by the critic, and Miss Clark, the best actress ever seen by him. (*Democrat*, Wednesday, November 7, 1877.) The drama played all week to full houses. On Monday, November 12, Miss Claxton and her company presented another drama, *Constance*, in which the star had also appeared in the original New York cast in the title role. Recreating this role, she was supported by C. A. Stevenson as Cyril, her love interest, and
by J. T. Alexander as the Judge, Laura Phillips as Aunt Tabitha and R. C. White as the villainous Lawton. The play was a psychological and metaphysical mystery drama in which a murderer is induced to reveal his guilt while in a trance. Miss Claxton played conscientiously, but was accused of drifting at times back into the style of Louise, the blind girl. (Picayune, Tuesday, November 13, 1877.) The new drama was not a drawing card, and on Thursday, November 15, it was replaced by Frou-Frou, in which Miss Claxton played Gilberte for the first time anywhere. Although costumed handsomely, the star failed miserably in her portrayal. The Picayune stated that the play was put into rehearsal abruptly and was produced immaturely, with the result being that Miss Claxton was so nervous that she was incapable of doing justice to herself. (Picayune, Friday, November 16, 1877.) The play was repeated for the star's benefit on Friday, and for the Saturday performances which closed Kate Claxton's engagement.

On Sunday, November 18, Charles McEvoy's Hibernicon and comedy company returned to the Varieties for its second visit, featuring again the panoramic views of Ireland, with comedy and song. The group remained on the boards through Sunday, November 25.

On Wednesday, November 28, 1877, a limited season of
grand opera invaded the theatre when J. C. Freyer's Opera Company appeared, featuring the first appearance of Mme. Eugenie Papperheim, a greatly celebrated Viennese prima donna, and Charles Adams, renowned American tenor. Also featured were Adelaide Phillips and Signor Tagliapietra, distinguished Italian baritone, plus the illustrious orchestra leader, Max Maretzen. The gala event was made more auspicious, since it previewed for the first time in New Orleans the works of Richard Wagner. Prices for the big event ranged from $1.50 to 50 cents.\(^9\) (Picayune, Sunday, November 25, 1877.) The opening was delayed from Monday to Wednesday to allow ample opportunity for rehearsals and preparation. The impressive repertoire was scheduled as follows: Wednesday, November 28, *Il Trovatore*; Thursday, November 29, *The Flying Dutchman*; Friday, November 30, *The Huguenots*; Saturday matinee, December 1, *Massaniello*; (no performance on Saturday night), Sunday, December 2, *Der Freischütz*; Monday, December 3, *Lohengrin* by Wagner--first time in New Orleans; Tuesday, December 4, *Robert le Diable*; Wednesday, December 5, *Lohengrin*; Thursday, December 6, *Rigoletto*; Friday, December 7, *Il Trovatore*; Saturday matinee,

\(^9\)Kendall, *op. cit.*, p. 554.
December 8, Lohengrin; Sunday, December 9, Les Huguenots; and final week: Monday, December 10, Lucia di Lammermoor; Tuesday, December 11, Beethoven's Fidelio; Wednesday matinee, December 12, Wagner's Tannhauser; Thursday, December 13, scenes from Lucia di Lammermoor, Barber of Seville, Lohengrin and Der Freischutz; Friday, December 14, Lucretia Borgia; Saturday matinee, December 15, Les Huguenots and Sunday, December 16, Lohengrin.

For one week only, John T. Raymond returned to the Varieties beginning on Monday, December 17, 1877. He starred as Pembroke, the insurance agent, in Bartley Campbell's comedy, Risks. Accompanying the star in support was Whitney's Dramatic Company. His role was said to fit the comedian like a glove, and he had good support from A. H. Hastings as Job Alroyd and Emily Baker as Bella. The company, with the exception of George Morton, former member of the Varieties company, were all strangers to New Orleans. (Picayune, Tuesday, December 19, 1877.) The comedy played through Thursday, December 20. On Friday, December 21, Raymond changed to his favorite role, his inimitable portrayal of Col. Mulberry Sellers in The Gilded Age. The comedian was well supported by George Morton as Selby, A. H. Hastings as Hawkins, and Agnes Eliott as Emily. The play closed Raymond's engagement.
The Varieties remained closed on Monday, December 24, while the Christmas attraction rehearsed at the theatre. The holiday production, the first presentation in the city of W. S. Gilbert's drama, *Daniel Druce*, a current hit in London, opened on Tuesday matinee, December 25. The play starred manager Thomas Hall in his first appearance at the theatre, in the title role, and Mary Davenport as Dorothy Druce, in her first appearance in the city. The powerful drama took place in England in the sixteenth century in the stormy days of Charles II, when the Royalists were overthrown and Cromwell became dictator. Both leads made favorable impressions in their roles. M. B. Snyder as Sir Jasper was the only good support. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, December 25; Thursday, December 27, 1877.) Toys for all the children were distributed at the Christmas opening performance, and the play was displayed all week through Sunday, December 30. The house was dark again on Monday, December 31, in preparation for another mammoth production that opened on Tuesday, January 1, 1878. This was a drama in five acts with lavish sets and original music, an adaptation of *The Sea of Ice* called *The Wild Flower of Mexico*, in its first production in the city. Mary Davenport and M. B. Snyder had the lead roles, and the play sported spectacular mechanical effects. It played all week,
For the first time since the theatre opened, the Varieties was dark for a week in the height of the dramatic season, from Sunday, January 6, until Sunday, January 13, 1878. The disappointment for Manager Hall was due to actress Rose Eytinge, scheduled to appear that week, who telegraphed at the last moment, breaking her engagement. The cancellation came too late for Hall to find a substitute.

On Sunday, January 13, Louise Pomeroy, who had received such negative criticism in her prior engagement, returned courageously to the Varieties, supported by the John T. Ford Baltimore Dramatic Company. Miss Pomeroy and the company remained a week in a repertoire of Shakespearean plays, presenting Cymbeline, Twelfth Night, Romeo and Juliet, and As You Like It. Miss Pomeroy played on Sunday and Monday in Cymbeline as Imogen. It was seen immediately that the star had improved noticeably in her art, and gave a stirring, tender interpretation of Imogen. The excellent John T. Ford company, supporting impressively, was headed by Theodore Hamilton as Posthumus, Atkins Lawrence as Iachimo, and R. L. Downing as Guiderius. (Picayune, Monday, January 13, 1878.)
14, 1878.) On Tuesday, Twelfth Night was given, with Louise Pomeroy as Viola. Both she and the cast were excellent, with chief support from Atkins Lawrence, a handsome, dashing juvenile actor, as the Duke, George W. Denham as Sir Toby, Charles Waverly as Malvolio and Anna Story as Olivia. (Picayune, Wednesday, January 16, 1878.) For Wednesday matinee, the star performed as Juliet in Romeo and Juliet, and in the evening she appeared in As You Like It, as Rosalind. The latter presentation was called "... the most complete performance of the comedy that has been seen here for years."

Both Miss Pomeroy and the Ford company cast were excellent in every respect. As Rosalind, the star was filled with buoyancy and lightheartedness. Aiding greatly were Theodore Hamilton as Jacques, Atkins Lawrence as Orlando, Charles Waverly as the Duke and George Denham as Touchstone. The comedy was repeated Thursday and for the matinee on Saturday. Louise Pomeroy made a mistake in departing from her Shakespearean repertoire for her last two performances of her engagement on Friday and Saturday evenings by presenting an adaptation of Barriere's French play, Gamma. The play was judged to be weak, and an unsuitable vehicle for the fine talents of the cast. Best acting part in the opus, that of Michouet, was played well by Charles Waverly. (Picayune,
Saturday, January 19, 1878.) Even with the terminating let-
down, the Picayune judged the Ford company to be the best
visiting group to hit town in years. (Picayune, Sunday,
January 20, 1878.)

Beginning on Monday, January 21, the vivacious Marie
Aimee returned to the Varieties with her French Opera Bouffe
Company for a two-week sojourn. Aimee's schedule was as
follows: Monday, January 21, Girofle-Girofla; Tuesday,
January 22, La Jolie Parfumeuse; Wednesday matinee, January
23, La Fille de Mme. Angot; Wednesday night, Barbe Bleue;
Thursday, January 24, La Petite Mariee; Friday, January 25,
La Belle Helene; Saturday matinee, January 26, Barbe Bleue;
Saturday night, Les Cent Vierges; Sunday, January 27, La
Boulangere des Ecus; Monday, January 28, La Grande Duchesse;
Tuesday, January 29, La Fille de Mme. Angot; Wednesday mati-
nnee, January 30, Les Cent Vierges; Wednesday night, January
30, benefit Mme. Aimee, La Mariolaine; Thursday, January 31,
La Perichole; Friday, February 1, La Mariolaine; Saturday
noon, February 2, Girofle-Girofla; Saturday night, La Belle
Helene; Sunday, February 3, final performance, La Mariolaine.

On Monday, February 4, Lawrence Barrett made a long
awaited return to the Varieties in a two-week engagement,
bringing with him the company of Tom W. Davey. Davey was a
native of New Orleans who was a successful manager of many years standing. The company was a fine one, sporting such strong dramatic actors as W. H. Power, H. A. Langdon, John A. Lane, Edwin Price and the clever comedian John Marble. The star received the same type of reviews as he had in his previous appearances. The press applauded with superlatives for his varied repertoire, disliking only—as before—Barrett's portrayal as Richard III. Barrett's playing schedule during his first week was as follows: Monday, February 4, Richelieu; Tuesday, February 5, The Marble Heart; Wednesday matinee, February 6, Romeo and Juliet; Wednesday night, Hamlet; Thursday, February 7, The Man O'Airlie; Friday, February 8, Barrett Benefit, Merchant of Venice and David Garrick; Saturday matinee, February 9, The Marble Heart, Saturday night, Richard III. A full house greeted Barrett's return as Richelieu. Chief support from Barrett's company came from W. H. Power as DeMauprat, H. A. Langdon as Barados, J. F. Sutton as Joseph and Ellen Cummens as Julie. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 5, 1878.) In Marble Heart, Ellen Cummens, leading lady of the company, as Marco, was found to be utterly disappointing, with neither "the face, figure nor force" for leads. (Picayune, Wednesday, February 6, 1878.) Barrett, as Hamlet, on Wednesday, was acclaimed along with Booth as
one of the two greatest living Hamlets. (Picayune, Thursday, February 7, 1878.) Barrett received top support from W. H. Power as the Ghost, H. A. Langdon as Claudius, Edwin Prince as Laertes, John A. Lane as Horatio.

On Sunday, February 10, while Barrett took a night off from the Varieties, Marie Aimee and her troupe returned for one performance—a double offering of La Vie Parisienne and La Fille de Mme. Angot. Barrett's schedule for his second and final week at the Varieties was as follows: Monday, February 11, Julius Caesar, with Barrett as Cassius; Tuesday, February 12, The Duke's Motto, with Barrett as Lagardere; Wednesday noon, February 13, Man O'Airlie; Wednesday night, first time in the city, W. D. Howell's comedy, A Counterfeit Presentment, with Barrett as William Bartlett; Thursday, February 14, Rosedale with Barrett as Elliot Gray; Friday, February 15, Barrett benefit, the sombre drama, Iron Chest, with Barrett as Sir Edward Mortimer and Boucicault's comedy, Inconstant, with Barrett as Young Mirabel; Saturday noon, February 16, Rosedale; Saturday night, closing performance, Merchant of Venice with Barrett as Shylock and David Garrick. As Cassius in Julius Caesar, Barrett was hailed again as the greatest living Cassius. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 12, 1878.) He was given good support from John A. Lane as Mark
Antony, H. A. Langdon as Brutus, Edwin Price as Julius Caesar and W. H. Power as Octavius. In W. D. Howell's comedy, *A Counterfeit Presentment*, Barrett played for the first time in the city the role of William Bartlett, a painter, which was unlike any role he had done before. He played impressively an impulsive, gallant gentleman of refinement. In the play, Ellen Cummens received her first positive notice as Constance Wyatt, a love-sick invalid. Other good support came from J. A. Lane as Arthur Cummings, W. H. Power as Gen. Wyatt, Mrs. James Foster as Mrs. Wyatt. *(Picayune, Thursday, February 14, 1878.)* For his benefit, on Friday, Barrett did admirably in both the sombre role of Sir Edward Mortimer in *The Iron Chest* and in the light role of Young Mirabel in *The Inconstant*. The John W. Davey company, supporting Barrett, was given high commendation when the engagement ended. "... It is seldom that so many strong ... actors are combined in one company," the Picayune noted. *(Picayune, Sunday, February 17, 1878.)*

On Monday, February 18, 1878, Fanny Davenport returned to the Varieties, bringing with her members of Augustin Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre Company, in Daly's well-known drama, *Pique*, which had recently closed a long run in New York at Daly's theatre, with Miss Davenport starring in the original
cast. The strong drama concerned a marriage born out of pique and not love, and starred Miss Davenport in her celebrated role of Mabel Renfrew, with excellent support from Charles Fisher, William Davidge, Owen Fawcett, Frank Bennett, Herbert Barrymore, John Drew, George Parker, Georgie Drew, Eugenia Paul and Mrs. Tannehill. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 19, 1878.) Crowded audiences packed the Varieties all week to witness the new drama. The usual mid-week matinee was held on Thursday, February 21, instead of Wednesday that week because of a memorial ceremony. Pique played through Sunday, February 24. On Monday, February 25, Fanny Davenport played again in her celebrated role of Fanny Ten Eyck in Augustin Daly's society drama, Divorce. She was well supported by Owen Fawcett as Jilt and Davidge as DeWitt. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 26, 1878.) On Tuesday night, Miss Davenport changed to the comedy, London Assurance, in which she presented a dashing Lady Gay. On Wednesday, February 27, Divorce was seen at the matinee, with Pique that night. On Thursday, the evening performance was cancelled because of the Momus Mardi Gras parade; and instead, at noon that day, Miss Davenport appeared as Rosalind in Shakespeare's As You Like It to a full house. Effective support came from Charles Fisher as Jaques, William Davidge as Touchstone, and Eugenia
Paul as Audrey. (*Picayune*, Friday, March 1, 1878.) *The School for Scandal* was given as Fanny Davenport's benefit on Friday, March 1. Only the star's performance as Lady Teazle and Charles Fisher's finished portrayal of Sir Peter were applauded by the press, while the rest of the cast failed weakly. (*Picayune*, Saturday, March 2, 1878.) Miss Davenport appeared at the matinee on Saturday, March 2 in *The Lady of Lyons*; while on Saturday night, she was Viola in *Twelfth Night*. In the latter vehicle, the best performance was Charles Fisher's Malvolio. On Sunday, March 3, Miss Davenport and Augustin Daly's company closed their successful engagement with *Divorce*.

After disappointing Hall by cancelling earlier in the season, Rose Eytinge finally made her initial appearance at the Varieties on Monday, March 4, 1878, by recreating her original role in the drama, *Rose Michel* as done in New York. This was her first New Orleans appearance, but Miss Eytinge came with an established New York reputation. Supporting her were the New York actors J. B. Studley and Cyril Searle, and a company from DeBar's Opera House, St. Louis, including two well-known New Orleans actresses, Emma Maddern and Sadie Vivian, both of whom had appeared often at the theatre before during the summer amateur seasons. (*Picayune*, Monday, March
4, 1878.) Rose Eytinge's opening was auspicious. Like Fanny Davenport, she was recreating here for the first time a role she had made famous in New York for a whole season. Miss Eytinge was described by the Picayune as "... every inch an actress . . ., of good stature, with a handsome round face, very expressive, with piercing black eyes. . . ." The opening night house was a sellout, with all standing room sold hours before the play began. J. B. Studley was the star's chief support. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 5, 1878.) The Democrat joined in raves for Eytinge, describing the star's facial expressions as so eloquent that "... the text paled before its oscillations." She was hailed as being filled with fire, always correct and electrifying and possessed of "flashes of genius." (Democrat, Wednesday, March 6, 1878.)

The play was repeated all week with the exception of Tuesday, March 5, Mardi Gras, and Thursday, March 7, when Miss Eytinge was ordered to bed with a cold and laryngitis. The star caught cold when watching the Comus parade from the balcony of the Varieties, and by Thursday had lost her voice. (Picayune, Saturday, March 9, 1878.) On Sunday, March 10, Rose Michel gave way to Boucicault's adaptation of Led Astray, in which Miss Eytinge was seen as Armande Chandoce, a role created by her in New York. With this play, the Picayune
found evidence for its contention that the star system encouraged weak stock companies, a contention held by major theatre critics. While Rose Eytinge played the role with the same artistic skill that created a sensation in New York, the supporting company was found to be only tolerable. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 12, 1878.) On Thursday Led Astray was replaced by the melodrama, Miss Multon, in which Miss Eytinge appeared in the title role. Cyril Searle gave good support as DeLatour. On Friday, March 15, Miss Eytinge took a benefit with this play, also including three acts of Macbeth, appearing as Lady Macbeth, and making a splendid impression in the latter role. Miss Multon was repeated at the Saturday matinee, and on that evening Miss Eytinge was seen in Led Astray. Rose Eytinge remained at the Varieties for a third and final week, presenting an elaborate production of Antony and Cleopatra which opened on Monday, March 19, to a full house. Her Cleopatra was called "... a grand piece of passionate acting." She changed moods easily from a seeming angel to a very devil concerning relations with Antony. The supporting cast was embarrassingly bad. J. B. Studley fell flat as Antony, while Cyril Searle was weak and awkward as Caesar. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 19, 1878.) The drama played all week and closed Rose Eytinge's three-week
engagement on Saturday, March 23.

On Sunday, March 24, Mme. Elizabeth von Stamwitz appeared for only one night at the Varieties. The German actress played on that night, for the first time in English in the city, the title role of Deborah in an adaptation of Leah, the Forsaken called Deborah. Although she had a strong German accent, her portrayal was held to be excellent and she was called "a thorough actress." (Picayune, Monday, March 25, 1878.)

The above event marked the end of the dramatic season, with the exception of a one-week return engagement of Aimee and a week of musical concerts. The Varieties remained dark until Saturday night, March 30, when Agnes Herndon held the stage for an evening of dramatic readings. Then on Friday, April 5, the DeMurska Concert Company began a short engagement, starring Mme. Ilma de Murska, soprano. The musical entertainments were held subsequently on Saturday matinee, April 6, Tuesday, April 9, Wednesday matinee, April 10, Friday, April 12, and Saturday matinee, April 13.

Final event of the professional season was Marie Aimee's return for one week with her Opera Bouffe Company. She presented the following program: Monday, April 15, La Majorlaine; Tuesday, April 16, The Chimes of Normandy;
Wednesday matinee, April 17, *La Reine Indigo*; Wednesday night, *La Vie Parisienne* plus second act of *La Fille de Mme. Angot*; Thursday matinee, April 18, *La Petite Faust*. The season ended officially on April 18, 1878.

Manager Hall had begun the 1877-1878 season with a significant innovation at the theatre—having no Varieties stock company—and booking visiting stars who would bring their own companies. Hall booked popular stars that he knew would draw—like Fanny Davenport, Kate Claxton, and Rose Eytinge who created roles that they made famous in New York in the original casts, and he brought Rose Eytinge and Kate Claxton to New Orleans for their first local appearances. Hall brought back Lawrence Barrett, a matinee idol who always jammed the house. Moreover, Louise Pomeroy returned and surprised everyone by improving so much in her acting that she drew good houses. Other sure stars like John T. Raymond pleased and drew big houses. Hall had booked his stars wisely, and wound up with a profitable season. Thus, he renewed his lease for the 1878-1879 season, determined to have another prosperous and spectacular season.

The New Orleans theatres were all delayed in opening for the 1878-1879 season, since the prior summer and that
fall, as influenza epidemic raged in the city. As usual, the Varieties was the last of the major theatres to open, the St. Charles and the Academy of Music being opened in November. The Varieties did not open until Monday, December 23, 1878; but it was more than the epidemic itself that caused Thomas A. Hall such a tardy start. The Strakosch-Kellogg-Carey Grand Opera troupe which was to open the season early in December, cancelled because of fear of the epidemic. Consequently, Hall opened the theatre on Monday, December 23, Christmas week, with the Shook and Palmer Union Square Theatre Company, a top-rate group managed by A. M. Palmer and T. H. French. The company opened in Victorien Sardou's *Mother and Son*, a recent hit of Paris and New York, in its first New Orleans production. The company included George Clarke, who had been at the Varieties before in Lawrence Barrett's company, and was a handsome, dynamic man. Other familiar names who had appeared recently at the theatre and who were in the company were Linda Dietz and Lillian Cleves Clark. Other competent names in the big company were George F. DeVere, Fanny Morant, Ida Vernon, Nina Varian, Mrs. Marie Wilkins, Mrs. Seymour, Alice Sherwood, Clara Edmunds, C. H. Bradshaw, G. H. Henderson, W. Ebyng, W. Hebert, F. Godthwaite, and S. Richardson. The company was as fine a group
of actors as New Orleans could expect to see together. Four
of the cast of *Mother and Son*—Fanny Morant, Marie Wilkins,
Mrs. Seymour, and Linda Dietz—recreated their original roles
as played in New York. Both Miss Morant and Mrs. Wilkins
were two of the best character women on the American stage.
These two fine actresses played respectively a proud, noble
mother and a meddlesome old gossip. Linda Lietz was Marcelle,
a pathetic role, which she did effectively. The hero of the
play, Fabrice, was played with skill and effectiveness by
George Clarke. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, December 24, 1878.) The
strong drama was praised by the *Democrat* as "... a luxu-
riant oasis in the great desert of the American drama in New
Orleans," and judged as one of the finest stage presentations
of the day. (*Democrat*, Tuesday, December 24, 1878.) The
effective drama was played all week to full houses, with such
demand for seats that a performance was given on Sunday,
December 29, and it was held over for a second week on Monday,
December 30. The fine company and play closed the brief
engagement with a matinee on Saturday, January 4, 1879, after
which a reception was given the company by Manager Hall.
(*Picayune*, Saturday, January 4, 1879.)

On Sunday, January 5, 1879, the distinguished German
actress, Madame Fanny Janauschek, made her debut at the third
Varieties, introducing a new play coincidently called *Mother and Son*, but an entirely different play from the one just presented. Janauschek's play was instead an adaptation of Frederika Bremer's *The Neighbors*, dramatized by Janet Tuckley. Janauschek appeared as the Countess of Mansfelt, with E. F. Thorne as Bruno. The star brought M. W. Canning's strong company to support her. The play concerned a long conflict between a mother and son, when he is wrongly accused of stealing money from her. In the drama, as the mother, struggling between pride and maternal love, Mme. Janauschek had an opportunity to display some very fine acting, and she made the most of her chance. The *Picayune* ranked the actress with Ristori and Charlotte Cushman. *(Picayune, Monday, January 6, 1879.)* The *Times* found the actress transcendent as the Countess, with such power, intensity and magnetism, that she stilled the house as if by magic. This critic loudly applauded her great naturalness, and the complete avoidance of any over-acting. *(Times, Monday, January 6, 1879.)* Towse notes that Mme. Janauschek was already numbered among the greatest tragic actresses of Europe when she first came to the United States, bringing with her a fortune in jewels reputed to be tributes of princes and potentates to her genius. Towse judges the actress as an
artistic jewel to match her fine collection of jewelry. It was in heroic characters that her artistic powers found their greatest advantage. Towse notes that her versatility was remarkable, but her greatest roles were those of Lady Macbeth, Brunhilde, and Mary Stuart.⁴ On Wednesday night, Mme. Janauschek changed to the drama, Chesney Wold, an adaptation from Dickens's Bleak House, in which the star played two parts, that of Lady Dedlock and Hortense, the French maid, characters entirely dissimilar, and acclaimed wherever she had played them. The Picayune judged the roles as more strikingly contrasted than any other ever seen, from the stately English lady to the crafty voluble French maid. She gave an impressive, finished job of acting in both roles, with mixed reviews for the Canning company in supporting roles. E. F. Thorne did not please as Bucket, but Langeran was a standout as the calculating Tulkinghorn. (Picayune, Thursday, January 9, 1879.) The drama played again on Thursday and for the Saturday matinee, and on Friday, Janauschek appeared in her famous title role of Schiller's drama, Mary Stuart. In her royal robes, she was judged every inch a queen as Mary Stuart, and she had good support

¹⁰Towse, op. cit., pp. 208-12.
from E. F. Knowles as Leicester, E. F. Thorne as Mortimer, and the rest of the cast. (Picayune, Saturday, January 11, 1879.) On Saturday night, January 11, the star closed her brief engagement in the title role of Mosenthal’s Deborah, in an English version of the German. It was in this play that she first became famous on the German stage. (Picayune, Thursday, January 16, 1879.) The part was acclaimed as one of her strongest roles. Her curse scene was judged as a masterpiece of vigorous acting. She had good support from E. F. Thorne as Joseph and James Taylor as Nathan.

Manager Hall now suffered another broken engagement due to the flu epidemic, and the Varieties remained closed for the week beginning Monday, January 13. The Picayune noted that the terrible epidemic was interfering with theatre engagements all over the South. (Picayune, Sunday, January 12, 1879.) On Monday, January 20, 1879, the Hess Grand English Opera Company opened an impressive three-week engagement of grand opera, featuring the young American prima donna, Emma Abbott, supported by Adelaide Randall, Annis Montague, Mrs. Ellis Ryse, Zeda Seguin and Messrs. A. Tilla, Ellis Ryse, Harry Warren, W. M. Castle, Ryan and Hills. The schedule was as follows: Monday, January 20, Mignon; Tuesday, January 21, Wednesday matinee, January 22, Thursday, January

Monday evening, February 10, was a red-letter occasion at the Varieties. On that date, Stuart Robson returned to the theatre for the first time since the theatre's first season when he was comedian of the stock company. Now he returned as a star, with William H. Crane, another top comedian in the latter's first appearance at the Varieties. The two now starred together as a comedy team, bringing along their own comedy company. They opened in Joseph Bradford's comedy sensation, *Our Bachelors*, in which Robson and
Crane had starred in New York at the Park Theatre. At the Varieties, they recreated their original roles, Robson as the bald-headed Bangle and Crane as the jolly Jowler, and seen for the first time in the city. The fun of the play came from the two bachelors who swore to each other to be women haters, but who behind each other's backs tried to make love to and propose to any woman in sight. The audience never stopped laughing through the four acts of the play. Robson was welcomed back as the same effective exponent of eccentric comedy; but Crane was judged to be the better comedian, able to adapt himself to more parts, and was "... the most promising young comedian on the stage." (Picayune, Tuesday, February 11, 1879.) The company was a good one. Robson's daughter, Alicia, who was a school girl in New Orleans when her father played at the Varieties in its first season, was now a young woman and a promising actress in the company. The cast supporting Robson and Crane as Bangle and Jowler included J. K. Dillon as Bruce, A. J. Dunbar as Snugg, Kate Forsythe as Eve Clinton, Alicia Robson as Bella Blythe, Fanny Francis as Clara Courtney, Jeannie Harrold as Sweetport Katy and Eliza Bran as Grass-Widow Mouser. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 11, 1879.) The play remained through Sunday, February 16, 1879. On Monday, February 17, Robson and Crane
opened in their greatly humorous production of Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, a production which became the most celebrated play in their repertoire and one which they would bring back to the playhouse many times. Robson and Crane played the parts of the two Dromios, and their acting was regarded by the *Picayune* as "wonderful." No two comedians were more unlike naturally:

. . . Robson's peculiarities are so strong and marked, as to the pose and quick movement of the head, his lisping speech and falsetto voice, always pitched in a high key, with a short jerky way of speaking, so that he repeats himself and yet he is wonderfully funny. The burden of comic business which must result in a complete illusion and likeness of the Dromios, falls upon Mr. Crane. He does his work perfectly, playing the Dromio of Ephesus with true Shakespearean flavor and also playing Robson . . ., imitating his partner in fun to the life in a piece of double acting and art. Crane's performance . . . is something wonderful. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 18, 1879.)

The comedians were well supported by Kate Forsythe as Adriana and Alicia Robson as Luciana, and by Charles Webb as the father of the twins. Webb, a well-known English actor and himself once a famous Dromio, had come to America especially to direct the play for Robson and Crane in the best manner of the British stage. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 18, 1879.) The *Times* greeted the production as achieving a success and effectiveness almost unparalleled in the history
of Shakespearean revivals. The critic said: "Robson and Crane have managed to invest the two Dromios with a vitality and force which no other actors within our recollection have achieved." The *Times* agreed that Crane's imitation of Robson's voice and gestures was both remarkable and startling. (*Times, Tuesday, February 18, 1879.*) The great hit played to capacity audiences all week as had its predecessor the week before. For their final performance and benefit on Sunday, February 23, 1879, Robson and Crane offered a double bill, beginning with the farce, *Jones's Baby*, with Robson as Jones, and followed by *Comedy of Errors* with the comedians trading parts for the first time, with Robson as the Dromio of Ephesus, and Crane as the Dromio of Syracuse. The gala evening closed with the musical burletta, *Jenny Lind*, in which Crane performed some of the singing and dancing that first made him famous as a buffo comedian with the first Oates troupe. (*Picayune, Sunday, February 23, 1879.*)

On Monday, February 24, 1879, Kate Claxton returned to the Varieties with a strong company in a new play, *A Double Marriage*, written for her by Charles Reade, and adapted from his novel, *White Lies*. Kate Claxton played the role of Josephine. The actors in the company had all appeared in New Orleans before and were well known. Carrie
Wyatt was Rose, Josephine's sister; Edward Arnott was Raynal, Josephine's first husband; Charles A. Stevenson, Kate Claxton's husband, played Dujardin, the heroine's second husband and true love; and M. W. Leffingwell as the Sargeant. Others in the play were William Davidge, Maggie Harrold and H. P. Phillips. The drama played through Friday. On Saturday, March 1, Kate Claxton played her famous role of Louise in *The Two Orphans* at both performances and also on Sunday, March 2, her final performance at the theatre.

On Monday, March 3, 1879, Manager Hall produced for the first time in New Orleans, the *H.M.S. Pinafore* of W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan, which was an operatic sensation of the day. The operetta had been first produced only the year before in London where it was still running at the Opera Comique Theatre. Hall made the mistake, having no stock company at the Varieties, of investing much money in a lavish production with local amateur talent. Scheduled to run for several weeks, the production played for only five nights, closing abruptly on Saturday, March 8, 1879. The cast included William Sumner as Sir Joseph Porter, James Rosse as Captain Corcoran, John Legier as Dick Deadeye, F. W. Bremer as Boatswain. The ladies who appeared as Josephine and as Little Buttercup refused to have their names published and
remained anonymous. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 4, 1879.) This production marked the end of the dramatic season of 1878-1879.

The Picayune reported that the season, although a short one, was nonetheless remarkably successful. (Picayune, Saturday, March 8, 1879.) Hall had proved himself for a second season as manager of the Varieties as a capable man, and although beset by headaches and drawbacks, he came out ahead financially. Again he booked his stars wisely, and as he had done during the previous season, he chose actors to recreate in New Orleans for the first time successes in which they had starred in New York in the original casts. Such stars included Fanny Janauschek, Robson and Crane, and the actors of the Union Square Theatre company. Again, for the second year in a row, the Varieties had no stock company, and visiting stars brought their own companies or well-known companies with competent casts of hit plays were booked.

Hall's biggest drawback the season of 1878-1879 came from cancellations due to the raging flu epidemic. This was the last season in which the Varieties was to be known by that name. When the theatre reopened in the fall of 1879, it was to begin a new chapter as the Grand Opera House.
CHAPTER IV

THE THIRD PERIOD: FALL, 1879 THROUGH SPRING, 1883,
CONTINUED MANAGEMENT OF HALL THROUGH
CO-MANAGEMENT OF BROOKS AND NORTON

In the summer of 1879, the Variété Association decided
to change the name of the third Varieties Theatre to the
Grand Opera House. A trend had begun to devote more and more
entertainment to that second-class type of theatrical amuse­
ment called variety, which in this era included burlesque
and what we know today as vaudeville. It has already been
pointed out that both the Globe Theatre and the Gaiety
Theatre were devoted to variety entertainment. It was felt
that the word "Varieties" identified the playhouse with the
above theatres and with other new music halls at which
variety shows were then given. The term "vaudeville" had
not yet made its way into the theatre, thus the word "variety"
was used loosely to identify several types of inferior
dramatic and nondramatic entertainment as well as higher
class vaudeville-type activity. The change of name was made,
therefore, in an effort to differentiate the theatre from
the inferior and sometimes not too reputable amusement places which had become popular and numerous in New Orleans at this time.¹

The change of name of the Varieties to the Grand Opera House met with varied reactions from the press. The Picayune was noncommittal, as were the Bee and the Democrat. These journals merely mentioned in passing the change of name, the first reference to the change of name by the Picayune occurring on Sunday, September 14, when an advertisement appeared for the forthcoming summer production of the Orleans Dramatic Association, Ours, to be staged on Wednesday, September 24, 1879. The announcement stated only that the play was to be given at the Grand Opera House, formerly the Varieties Theatre. The Democrat, on Sunday, October 26, merely differentiated between the theatre and the French Opera House in the paper's first mention of the new name by speaking of the forthcoming opening of the fall season at the Grand Opera House, and then commenting upon the opera season at the "New Opera House," a new title coined for the French Opera House. The Democrat did not even bother to refer to the fact that

GRAND OPERA HOUSE—MAIN FLOOR.
Canal Street, near Dauphine.

VIII. SEATING CHART OF THEATRE
the former theatre had undergone a change of name. However, the *Times* reacted violently to the change. This paper did not realize that the term Opera House was a popular title of the day referring to a theatre of legitimate drama. There were already playhouses in many cities in the United States catering strictly to legitimate theatre with the title "Opera House." The term did not refer to a House of Opera, as might be the conception today. However, it is the latter connotation which the *Times* took, and in a scathing article on Sunday, October 19, 1879, the paper said that the Varieties had no right to change its name to "Opera House," --that it was not a house of opera and was not created for vocal purposes. Furthermore, the journal criticized:

... There is already an opera house in this city, one that is clearly entitled to the name ... on Bourbon Street, ... and so long as it exists, there is no excuse for the management of a rival establishment to appropriate the name which belongs to it only.

Nevertheless, the new name remained, and all opposition from the *Times* was soon forgotten. The 1879-1880 season was indeed an auspicious one. Thomas A. Hall, the first manager at the theatre to last for his third season, returned to New Orleans on Saturday, October 25, 1879, after a profitable summer sojourn in New York, where he succeeded
in securing noteworthy bookings for the theatre's forthcoming season. Again, Hall secured no permanent stock company for the theatre, and planned another season in which traveling companies of merit would play independently or would serve as support for visiting stars. Sunday became a new opening day instead of Monday at the theatre. The fall opening was on Sunday, November 2, 1879, at which time Leonard Grover and his comedy company appeared as the first attraction. Grover was a playwright-director-actor, and he acted simultaneously in all three capacities in this appearance. He was the author of the successful play, Our Boarding House, which had had a long run in New York with Robson and Crane in lead roles. It was this comedy which the playwright brought to New Orleans and in which he appeared in the city for the first time, assuming the part of Colonel Elevator. Amelia Waugh played her original lead role as played in New York with Robson and Crane, Harry Little was cast as Gillipod, W. H. Murdoch was Firretti, and the comedy also featured Chang Lee, a clever Chinese actor. The opening audience was a good one that received the comedy with much pleasure, laughter, and applause. (Picayune, Monday, November 3, 1879.) On Thursday, November 6, the Leonard Grover Company presented for the first time on any stage, Grover's newest comedy, My Son-in-Law, with the
following cast: Jean Bisbon..Leonard Grover, Cholmondelly Stuart..W. H. Murdoch, DeWitt Uppers..George Woodward, Blifilk,.F. Gerome, Mike..R. H. McNair, Jamison..G. J. Leicester, Mrs. Uppers..Amelia Waugh, Sarah Turnheart..Ethel Graybrook, Mrs. Bisbon..Jeannie McClellan, Daisy Uppers..Eula Talbott, Florence Crimp..Frankie Norton, Annia Maria..Ella Hunt, Biddy Nanine..Sadie Vivian. (The latter is recognized as the young New Orleans girl who had been a local amateur actress a few seasons before.) Both the new play and the company received a strong panning from the press. The play was a farce, with not much plot, but was found to be quite racy, immoral and dull; and the cast was found to be most disappointing. (Picayune, Friday, November 7, 1879.) This play closed the company's one-week engagement on Saturday, November 8, 1879.

The French Opera House now began to announce itself as "Theatre De L'Opera," to thwart confusion with the Grand Opera House which booked periodically opera combinations also. The former theatre had to combat competition from the theatre that not only took a similar name, then, but which from time to time presented operatic offerings. The next presentation was such a competitive offering. On Sunday, November 9, the Saville English Opera Company began a one-
week engagement at the Grand Opera House, presenting the first local production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Sorcerer*. Gilbert and Sullivan had become a sensation in London and America. *The Sorcerer* had just closed a 300-night run in London. Musical conductor of the company was F. W. Zanlig, and the stars were John J. Benitz, Lizzie Burton, Louis P. Pfan, Carrie L. Burton, Digby Bell, Flora E. Barry, J. M. Bean and Justice Engstrom. *The Sorcerer* played through the Wednesday matinee, and beginning on Wednesday night, for the balance of the week, *H.M.S. Pinafore* was the offering.

On Sunday, November 16, Collier's Union Square Company from the Union Square Theatre, New York, moved into the theatre. Under the auspices of A. M. Palmer, the company presented the first local production of Bronson Howard's comedy in six acts, *The Banker's Daughter*. The play starred Louis James as the jealous husband with Marie Wainwright as his wronged wife, the banker's daughter. Both were making their first appearance at the theatre and in the city, and both were later to become stars, to marry and to return to the Grand Opera House many times. James made a favorable impression with the *Picayune* critic who said that the actor was a top leading man "... as graceful as Lawrence Barrett and with a voice as musical as that of John McCullough."
Supporting was a singularly excellent cast: Charles Walcott and his wife, Mrs. E. W. Walcott, played the comedy parts of Mrs. Brown, a flirt, and Phipps, a tourist; Mrs. Farren was excellent as the aunt; and J. W. Collier, E. L. Tilton, Frank Roberts, Gustavus Levick, Howard Frosberg, Louisa Tharp, Clara Lecroix and Florence Lacroix filled the other roles. The play was presented for the entire week. (Picayune, Sunday, November 16; Monday, November 17; Tuesday, November 18, 1879.)

On Sunday, November 23, the Union Square Company opened its second week in the great Union Square Theatre success, A Celebrated Case, which was still playing its second year at the New York theatre, in the first local production of the play. Louis James portrayed well the unfortunate French soldier, condemned although guiltless, while Marie Wainwright played equally well the dual role of mother and daughter. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Walcott shone in the comedy character roles with finish and precision. The drama ran through Wednesday night; on Thursday, The Banker's Daughter was repeated; and on Friday, November 28, and for the balance of the week, Alexander Dumas' drama, The Danicheff was produced for the first time in New Orleans. The drama dealt with Russian life and love between a serf and a
nobleman. As the heroine, Marie Wainwright showed her emo-
tional ability at its best, while Louis James gave an admir-
able performance as Osip, the self-sacrificing serf whom she
marries. Mrs. Farren was excellent as the pompous Countess
Denicheff; while Mr. and Mrs. Charles Walcott excelled as a
French diplomat and the Princess. (Picayune, Saturday,
November 29, 1879.)

On Sunday, November 30, 1879, Mr. and Mrs. W. J.
Florence opened an engagement for the first time at the thea-
tre, after an absence from the city of twenty years. This
was an exceptional booking that Hall managed to secure.
Florence was one of the finest actors of his day. William
Winter says that few actors within the whole era stood upon
a level with Florence in versatility and charm: his gentle-
ness, simplicity, modesty, affectionate fidelity, ready
sympathy, and fine talents united with his spontaneous droll-
ness. According to Winter, the star's greatest gift was his
flexible manner of impersonation; he possessed an unerring
instinct of effective style. Added to these attributes,
Florence possessed profound feeling, good taste and perfect
self control.² The comedian and his actress wife played

their famous original roles in Woolf's *The Mighty Dollar* to large and enthusiastic houses throughout the week, with the exception of Wednesday matinee when the couple took the afternoon off. The *Picayune* critic noted drolly: "The Florences, who have enough mighty dollars to be independent, adopt the Lotta style of resting on Wednesday afternoon."

They did perform, however, at a crowded Saturday matinee. Florence played his famous role of Hon. Bardwell Slote, and Mrs. Florence appeared as Mrs. General Gilflory. They had excellent support from a fine company especially assembled in New York. (*Picayune*, Monday, December 1; Thursday, December 4, 1879.) The play was seen for the first time in New Orleans. Florence was considered to be hilarious both in make-up and grotesque eccentricity; and his wife was equally funny in a role calling for stupidity, bad French, and elegant over-dressing. The *Times* critic noted that the large audience laughed until their sides were ready to split. (*Times*, December 2, 1879.)

Max Maretzek and his English Opera Troupe were scheduled to open on Monday, December 8, for two weeks, but at the last minute Maretzek did not show up. The absence of available first-class attractions in the vicinity of New Orleans made it necessary for Hall to close the Grand Opera House.
for two weeks. The *Picayune* was incensed at Maretzek's callousness. Maretzek's agent had come with printing materials as scheduled, and considerable expense had been incurred in advertising and painting scenery for this attraction. Not until Saturday night, December 6, was it known that the unethical gentleman had disappeared from St. Louis on Thursday, leaving there his stranded opera troupe, who did not know where he was. The *Picayune* cited the bad news as an experience of the difficulties of current theatre management in New Orleans. (*Picayune*, Monday, December 8, 1879.)

Continuing his policy of offering first appearances in the city of stars and plays, Manager Hall presented on Sunday, December 21, Ada Cavendish, a distinguished English actress in her first New Orleans appearance. She appeared in a repertoire of characters closely identified with her name, leading off with Beatrice in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*. The British star had made the role famous at the Gaiety Theatre, London, in 1875. Her company was organized by T. B. McDonald. The *Picayune* applauded the star, calling her "... handsome, youthful and vivacious," and added: "She is to the life the witty and sprightly heroine." The critic considered it a delight to hear her
"... speaking the Queen's English with distinctness and perfect elocution." Moreover, she had forceful facial expressions and was judged a fine actress. Her best support was offered by S. W. Piercy and E. A. Eberle. (Picayune, December 22, 1879.) On Monday, December 22, Ada Cavendish played as Mercy Merrick in Charles Reade's The New Magdalen of which she was the original creator in London. Again, the bright star was electrifying, combining, the Picayune related, the qualities of Modjeska and Rose Eytinge "... being graceful and finished in her art like the former and strong and truthful to nature like the latter." The star brought tears to the eyes and showed true genius, the critic insisted. S. W. Piercy was a forceful Julian. (Picayune, December 23, 1879.) The last performance of this play was given at the Christmas matinee on Thursday, December 25, playing through that date. On Thursday night, Ada Cavendish played the title role in Tom Taylor's romantic drama, Lady Clancarty, as acted by her in the original London production. Again, the press found the English star "... a magnificent actress." Again, too, Piercy proved excellent support as Donough McCarty, her outlaw husband. (Picayune, Friday, December 26, 1879.) The drama was repeated through Saturday night, this being the last performance of the engagement of the superior actress.
On Monday, December 29, 1879, John T. Raymond returned to the theatre in Woolfert's Roost, a new comedy which had never been seen before in the city. The drama was the work of George F. Rowe and was founded on Washington Irving's The Legend of Sleepy Hollow. The play had had a successful run at Wallack's Theatre, New York. Raymond appeared as Ichabod Crane, the simple and comical Yankee schoolmaster. The actor made much of the role which was unlike any character he had done before, and ranked with the role of Sellers in producing laughter. Raymond's own comedy company supported him ably. The play ran through Thursday, with a special New Year matinee on Thursday, January 1, 1880, in addition to the regular Wednesday matinee. On Friday, January 2, and for the remainder of the week through Sunday, January 4, Raymond appeared in his familiar role of Col. Mulberry Sellers in The Gilded Age. In Raymond's company was the well-known actor, George Holland, and several children of well-known actors, including Affie Weaver, the daughter of actor H. A. Weaver; Laura Bascomb, daughter of two prominent actors, Mrs. Skerret and Harry L. Bascomb; and George C. Boniface, Jr., son of the well-known Boniface, Sr. (Picayune, Saturday, January 3, 1880.)

On Tuesday, January 6, 1880, Maurice Grau's French
Opera Company moved into the theatre for three weeks of opera. The company's stars included Miles, Paola-Marie, Leroux, and Angele, and M. Capoul. The performance schedule was as follows: First week, Tuesday, January 6, Wednesday, January 7, matinee, and Sunday January 11, La Fille de Mme. Angot; Wednesday night and Saturday matinee, January 10, Giroflé-Girofla; Thursday, January 8, for the first time, Le Petit Duc; Friday, January 9, La Grand Duchesse; Saturday night, La Belle Helene. Second week, Monday, January 12 and Thursday, January 15, Mignon; Tuesday, January 13, and Sunday, January 18, Les Cloches de Corneville (The Chimes of Normandy); Wednesday matinee, January 14, La Belle Helene; Wednesday night, Le Petit Duc; Friday, January 16, benefit of prima donna Paola-Marie, Barbe-Blue; Saturday matinee, January 17, La Grande Duchesse; Saturday night, Giroflé-Girofla. Third and last week, Monday, January 19, La Belle Helene; Tuesday, January 20, La Perichole; Wednesday matinee, January 21, Le Petit Duc; Wednesday night, Les Brigands; Thursday, January 22, Barbe Bleue; Friday, benefit for Mme. Angele, La Fille de Mme. Angot and one act of La Vie Parisienne; Saturday matinee, January 24, Mignon; Saturday night, farewell performance, Le Petit Faust.

On Sunday, January 25, Stuart Robson and William Crane
returned to the theatre for a two-week reign of comedy, opening in *Our Bachelors* as introduced to the theatre's patrons the previous year. Robson appeared again as Bangle, with Crane as Jowler. Their supporting comedy company was declared to be even better than in the previous year. Agnes Proctor was the handsome, capable leading lady and Alicia Robson, the star's daughter, had improved much in one season, and showed herself to be a clever actress. (*Picayune*, Monday, January 26, 1880.) The comedy was repeated until Thursday, when a new comedy, Clay M. Green and Slason Thompson's *Sharps and Flats* opened and then played the balance of the week. The play was a fast-moving, modern comedy, laid in Santa Monica and San Francisco, California; and the action concerned two cronies—Sharp, a visionary schemer, and Flatt, an ex-parson with a thirst for speculation. The cast was as follows: Cutler Sharp..Stuart Robson, Dullstone Flatt., William H. Crane, Captain Leslie Everton..Frazer Coulter, John Pemberton..A. S. Lipman, Ratle..John Marble, Rev. Percy Gosling..F. M. Burbeck, Harvey Single..William Morris, Marian Pemberton..Agnes Proctor, Lydia Lowndes..Alicia Robson, Mrs. Dullstone Flatt..Mary Myers, Nellie Flatt..Nellie Boyd. Crane created a noteworthy character in Flatt, according to the *Picayune*. His development of the radical changes in the
character was considered remarkable. Robson was his usual eccentric and hilarious self. The Picayune disliked Burbeck's handling of Rev. Gosling, feeling that it was in bad taste to make a clown of a clergyman "... throwing ridicule on a sacred calling." The play's sets received a special mention for beauty. (Picayune, Friday, January 30, 1880.)

In their second and closing week, beginning on Sunday, February 1, Robson and Crane produced Champagne and Oysters, a farce about an English rector and a homely old sexton. The play had been the rage at Abbey's Park Theatre, New York. Robson played Geoffrey Grahame, the rector, while Crane was Ichabod Herring, the sexton. The play caused convulsive laughter to the tag line of the last act. (Picayune, Monday, February 2, 1880.) On Wednesday night, the bill was changed to The Comedy of Errors, with the comedy pair appearing again in their famous roles of the Dromios and creating as solid a comedy effect as ever. Their support was excellent, particularly veteran Charles Webb as Argon, and Coulter and Lipman as the two Antiphole. (Picayune, Thursday, February 5, 1880.)

This comedy gem concluded the engagement of the comedy team. Because of Mardi Gras, that being the week of the carnival, there was no performance on Thursday when Momus had its parade and ball. Instead there was a special matinee on
Thursday, when *Our Bachelors* was repeated.

On Monday, February 9, the Emma Abbott Grand Opera Company moved into the theatre for two weeks. The obvious star was Emma Abbott, and featured were Marie Stone, Zelda Seguin, Pauline Maurel, Emily Gilbert, Tom Karl, E. A. Stoddard, W. MacDonald, Ellis Ryse, Wallace Temple and William Castle. The group had a grand sized chorus and a full orchestra. The playing schedule was as follows: first week, Monday, February 9, and Saturday, February 14, Balfe's *Bohemian Girl*; Tuesday, February 10, and Wednesday matinee, February 11, *Chimes of Normandy*; Wednesday night, *Paul and Virginia*; Thursday, February 12, *Faust*; Friday, February 13, and Saturday matinee, February 14, first time of Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*. Tuesday, February 10, was Mardi Gras night; the theatre remained open for the first time on this day that is annually the climax of the carnival season and was, then as now, a city holiday. On this evening, the theatre was filled to overflowing. Second week, Monday, February 16, *Il Trovatore*; Tuesday, February 17, *Martha*; Wednesday matinee, February 18, *Chimes of Normandy*; Wednesday night, *Daughter of the Regiment*; Thursday, February 19, *Bohemian Girl*; Friday, February 20, Miss Abbott's benefit, *Paul and Virginia*; Saturday matinee, February 21, *Romeo and*
Juliet; Saturday night, first time in America in English, Carmen. This closing performance was an auspicious occasion upon which Zelda Seguin, celebrated dramatic contralto of the era, sang the title role in Bizet's Carmen for the first time in English in the entire country. (Picayune, Saturday, February 21, 1880.)

Another unoccupied week occurred from February 22, through February 28, when Hall was hit by a further cancellation. Then on Sunday, February 29, 1880, a new young actor, Frederick Paulding, made his New Orleans debut at the Grand Opera House in the role of Hamlet. Paulding was the scion of a prominent family name. His father, Colonel Richard I. Dodge, was a well-known Civil War army officer, while his grandfather, Colonel Paulding, was a hero of the Revolutionary War, and his uncle, Commodore Paulding, was Commodore of the United States Navy—all men who had been conspicuous for gallantry and bravery. Paulding had adopted his mother's family name. The young actor was supported by Frank Lawler's dramatic company, which included Gussie DeForrest, Constance Hamblin, Carrie Jameison, Charles Loveday, Hamilton Harris, F. C. Hubener, Walter Hubbell, H. D. Gale, and Will Henderson. Paulding was described as slight of figure, with aesthetic, refined features, and with an expressive face and decided
tragic talent. His faults included off-readings in misplaced emphasis and over-acting. But his magnetic appeal offset the drawbacks and he received much applause on opening night from a large audience. Charles Loveday and Gussie DeForrest gave the best support. (Picayune, Monday, March 1, 1880.) On Tuesday, March 2, Paulding appeared as Bertuccio in The Fool's Revenge, the adaptation of Rigoletto in dramatic form by Tom Taylor. This was the first production of the play at the theatre. The very qualities of youth and charm that made Paulding attractive as Hamlet were lost in the repulsive, misshaped make-up of the court jester. Only Booth could do justice to this part according to the Picayune. (Picayune, Wednesday, March 3, 1880.) Hamlet was repeated for the Wednesday matinee and The Fool's Revenge was repeated at night. On Thursday, Frederick Paulding played Claude Melnotte in The Lady of Lyons. He was a hit in this role since he could appear as his dashing self. Gussie DeForrest was cast as Pauline. (Picayune, Friday, March 5, 1880.) On Friday, March 5, Hamlet was repeated. Two new plays were offered on Saturday, March 6, The Wife's Secret was the matinee fare, while The Merchant of Venice was given at night. In the former play, an historical drama, he appeared to good advantage as Sir Walter Aymott; and in the Shakespearean work,
the youth appeared as Shylock and made the biggest impression of his engagement. He was considered as forceful, thoughtful and vigorous in the role. (Picayune, Sunday, March 7, 1880.)

On Sunday, Paulding, with Frank Lawlor and the latter's dramatic company, participated in a benefit performance of Lady of Lyons for the relief of the starving poor of Ireland. This fete closed Paulding's engagement.

A brilliant event greeted patrons of the theatre the week of March 9, 1880. The lovely, fragile Adelaide Neilson, known as the greatest living actress of Shakespeare of her day, graced the stage of the Grand Opera House. The beautiful young British actress was making her first appearance in New Orleans, although she had visited the United States on three previous occasions—1872, 1875, and 1877. It was in the course of her fourth and last tour to this country that Hall secured the significant engagement at his theatre. This was to be, tragically, the young star's last visit to the country as well as her only visit to New Orleans, because in only a matter of months she was stricken suddenly while in Paris and died in minutes of a congenital heart condition on Monday, August 16, 1880. If Adelaide Neilson had not died so young, according to Kendall, she would have been one of
the greatest actresses of her time. But despite her untimely death, Adelaide Neilson was already judged as a great actress. William Winter calls her "... the best representative of Shakespeare's Juliet, Viola and Imogen who has appeared on the stage in our time." Her success was unequivocal. But Juliet was the most effective of her tragic portrayals. According to Winter, no Juliet of the entire last century was as fascinating and irresistible as she. "... Every element of her personality was rich and rare." Towse agrees wholeheartedly with this judgment. The latter critic recalls that as Juliet, Adelaide Neilson was ravishingly pretty, with an equal measure of dramatic genius. "... She could be arch, tender, pathetic, and fervently affectionate; and she could strike a thrilling note of emotional passion. All her gifts and accomplishments were exhibited in her Juliet." Pitou is in complete accordance. He recalls having seen the star as Juliet:

... Adelaide Neilson was the only actress I ever saw as Juliet who was true and potent in all

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3Kendall, _op. cit._, p. 557.

4Winter, _op. cit._, p. 544.  

5_Ibid._, p. 558.

her scenes. . . . She transmitted effect by her body, . . . her hands, her beautiful face and eyes, without the aid of words (when reacting to the speeches of others), a stroke of genius, expressed by the supreme art of acting.7

When the lovely star was to open at the Grand Opera House as Viola in Twelfth Night, on Monday, March 8, 1880, twelve hundred excited ticket holders were doomed to disappointment. An unforeseen rain storm flooded the streets of the city by curtain time, making the water on Canal Street knee deep. This condition did not hamper the undaunted star who walked a plank from her carriage to the stage door, and hundreds of gentlemen in top boots waded through the water. However, many ladies were lined up in carriages, unable to cross the street. Manager Hall postponed the performance due to the unfavorable circumstances, and on Tuesday, March 9, Adelaide Neilson opened instead in her celebrated role of Juliet in Romeo and Juliet. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 9, 1880.) The Picayune echoed other collective opinions: "... With her slight form, lovely eyes, exquisite voice and admirable method, she comes nearer to the ideal Juliet than any other actress of the current generation." (Picayune, Wednesday, March 10, 1880.) Her support was excellent. Edward Compton, 

as Romeo, was a strong actor who gave finish and warmth to the role, and F. W. Sanger was a spirited Mercutio. Other members of the company of excellent actors included W. E. Eytinge, Henry Weaver, Jr., E. H. Bradshaw, J. H. Miller, L. Leffingwell, G. Billings, Edwin Cleary, L. F. Rand, Katie Baker, Josephine C. Bailey, Lizzie Goode, Mrs. H. A. Weaver and Mrs. F. A. Tannehill. The initial play was repeated on Wednesday night; there was no Wednesday matinee. On Thursday, the delayed Twelfth Night was produced. Adelaide Neilson's interpretation of Viola was a new revelation of her accomplishments as an actress. She was said to be playful, sweet, sad, delicate, and reflective, with deft touches of by-play, gesture, attitude and facial expression that constituted a perfect performance of the role, and proved she was mistress of her art in comedy as well as tragedy. Her support was brilliant: Sir Toby..H. A. Weaver, Sir Andrew..C. H. Bradshaw, Maria..Lizzie Goode, Clown..M. L. Leffingwell, Malvolio ..Edward Compton, Olivia..Josephine Bailey. Twelfth Night was repeated at both Saturday performances, while the star shone anew as Juliet on Friday, March 12. The Times critic added himself to Neilson's long list of adoring fans on the latter occasion, with an aesthetically perceptive and meticulous evaluation of the star's greatness as Juliet.
... Very rarely does art essay what nature... has proclaimed as her prerogative, and in this successful achievement, Miss Neilson manifests the most consummate art. The Juliet of the first act and of the fifth are two entirely different persons. Passionate love and an ordeal of horrible suspense have metamorphosed [sic] a maiden into a matron. In the first scene, very rarely has there been exhibited more fascinating naivete, in the last never more stately dignity. ... This artist matures as the play progresses ... to real anguish in the broken hearted woman who sacrifices her life over the dead body of her husband. ...

The critic went on to say that the scene in which Juliet meets Romeo was "... simply electrical."

... Expression is more important than any possible word. Without a single utterance ..., she surrenders her heart ... and the surrender becomes obvious as if it were proclaimed from the house tops. If this is not consummate art, the writer fails to comprehend what real art is. ... In the potion scene, hysteria is worked into a frenzy, and the harsh metallic voice which the artiste assumes adds terror to her utterances. Very seldom is this scene reproduced, and never but once within the writer's recollection. ... Miss Neilson is the most artistic Juliet who has ever appeared in this city. ... (Times, Saturday, March 13, 1880.)

After less than a week in New Orleans the exquisite actress had the city at her feet. Many pages in the newspapers were devoted to her every movement, and a colorful interview with the star was printed by the Picayune. Adelaide Neilson was staying at the St. Charles Hotel, and it was there that she received the reporter. The poignant interview gives a key to the strain and fatigue to which the fragile star was...
submitted by constant over-taxing performances, ultimately contributing to the steady weakening of her defective heart. On the occasion of the Picayune interview, the star complained of feeling chilly after each performance, and drew a mantle about her shoulders when speaking to the interviewer, as if to throw off a chill. She said:

... Two performances of Shakespeare a day is hard work. [This was just after the second performance on Saturday, March 14, 1880.] Then you must recollect that I have been playing constantly this season; since October 27, I have given 130 performances, and have still engagements to fill in St. Louis, Cincinnati, Boston, New York, and San Francisco. ...

She spoke of Imogen and Juliet as being her favorite roles, commenting that she had played the latter 1,100 times, first assuming the role at fifteen years of age, at the Royalty Theatre in London. But she never tired of the part, she added. Her secret of successful portrayal, she said, was her appreciation of and identification with her characters.

"... There should be a point where art should assist nature, and control emotional tenderness within proper bounds. ..." She went on to describe the different kinds of love that dominate the various Shakespearean heroines, showing in her description a penetrating and brilliant insight into each character. Her scholarly analysis of each role she had played revealed a serious and profound knowledge

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of Shakespeare and of human nature. (Picayune, Sunday, March 14, 1880.) On Monday, March 15, 1880, Adelaide Neilson began the second and final week of her engagement, appearing for the first time as Rosalind in *As You Like It*, and bringing to the role delightful charm, warmth and grace. In male attire she was judged to be still enchantingly feminine, yet boyish enough to deceive Orlando. She had fine support from Compton as Orlando, Weaver as Jacques and Bradshaw as Touchstone.

(Picayune, Tuesday, March 16, 1880.) *Twelfth Night* was repeated on Tuesday, and *As You Like It* played Wednesday at both performances, and also on Friday. *The Hunchback* was staged on Thursday, March 18, 1880, for the first and only time, with Adelaide Neilson as Julie. Every seat in the theatre and all standing room was sold out for this singular event. The beautiful star's Julie was no less than perfect, as were all her other impersonations, according to the Picayune. Her Julie was regarded as refined, artistic, genuine, and lovely. She depicted the transitions from the simple country girl to the lady of fashion, from the obedient child to the strong-willed woman with rare touches of art. She was supported excellently by H. A. Weaver as Master Walter, Compton as Sir Thomas and Sanger as Modus. Her engagement closed on Saturday, March 21, when she appeared as Pauline.
in The Lady of Lyons. (Picayune, Friday, March 19, 1880.)

The engagement of the brilliantly talented star was considered nothing less than remarkable by the press and public alike. Acclaiming her engagement an artistic triumph, the public crowded her performances to utmost capacity. The public had the opportunity to see Adelaide Neilson in five roles as Juliet, Rosalind, Viola, Julia, and Pauline. In each of these, she was the most artistic actress ever seen by the Times critic who marveled at her beauty and talent, on the eve of her departure:

"... In idealizing these characterizations, Miss Neilson has become the poetess of her sex. ... She has achieved a success in art, and conferred a glory upon her own sex, for which the cultivated auditor cannot be too deeply grateful. (Times, Sunday, March 21, 1880.)"

The Picayune commented that no other star had succeeded in drawing capacity audiences at all performances during Lent in the entire city as had Adelaide Neilson. The Picayune declared:

"... Those who went to see a famous beauty in those two weeks, remained to admire a great actress. She is a woman doubly with womanly graces, personal charms, and possessing a great genius for portraying character, which makes her mistress of her art. (Picayune, Sunday, March 21, 1880.)"

The Picayune called the lovely star "... the most attractive woman on the dramatic stage," and concluded the glowing
article written at the time of her departure with the plea: "... Her constant popularity has been a great triumph here to Miss Neilson, and it is hoped that she will return to New Orleans for another season. ..." (Picayune, Sunday, March 21, 1880.) The plea was not to be realized. Only a few months later, only eighteen days after sailing from New York, she was dead—in the blossom of her youth at thirty-two years, at the height of her beauty and in the ripeness of her fame. The world was deeply shocked and all the artistic world mourned. William Winter says: "... Never was a more brilliant theatrical career arrested in its meridian by a stroke of fate." Her death befell suddenly, Winter relates, at a chalet where the sudden illness compelled her to halt on the course of a drive in the Bois de Boulogne in Paris, on August 15, 1880. Her fatiguing fourth American tour had been too much for her fragile heart.8 The tragedy was felt very deeply in New Orleans where the lovely star had gained so recent an artistic triumph. The local newspapers carried laments and eulogies for a week. The Picayune published a biography of her life on Friday, August 20, 1880, as one of the many features concerning the late star. Adelaide Neilson had made her debut at fifteen years in the Theatre Royal,

8Winter, op. cit., pp. 548-56.
Margate, England, in the role of Julia in *The Hunchback*, which became one of her most famous portrayals. It was after her triumphant visit to the United States in 1872 when she appeared at the Booth Theatre as Juliet, that upon her return to England, she was acclaimed as the leading living actress of Shakespearean roles. It is both a coincidence and significant to this study, that her initial performance in the United States was at Philadelphia in *Measure for Measure* at the theatre where Thomas A. Hall, of the Grand Opera House, was then the manager! The beautiful actress had subsequently played in all the chief cities of the United States and Canada, and had starred with such eminent actors as Henry Irving, Charles Matthews, and Samuel Phelps, and shared the friendship and esteem of such prominent names as Macready and Lord Eileenborough. She had a magnificent collection of diamonds and other precious jewels. She also had a collection of many admirers, and the *Picayune* related an anecdote concerning three rings, a story in which Adelaide Neilson gave as many as three gentlemen identical rings, causing each to think that he had the only especially designed ring. The *Picayune* told of her temperament and her rehearsal habits, including her rehearsing of parts. She never acted a part, she was quoted as saying, until she had studied the
role two or three years, whereas the parts of Imogen and Isobella she studied for six or seven years. (Picayune, Sunday, March 14; Friday, August 20; Monday, August 16, 1880.)

After Adelaide Neilson's singular engagement, the Grand Opera House was closed for a week, due to a cancellation. Then on Easter Monday, March 29, 1880, D'Oyly Carte's Opera Company commenced a two-week engagement in Gilbert and Sullivan's The Pirates of Penzance, performed for the first time in New Orleans. The company received favorable reviews --they were considered excellent by the press who also judged the settings to be very handsome. This production marked the end of the professional dramatic season of 1879-1880, before the beginning of the summer amateur season that began auspiciously with a four-performance comic Frog Opera, on Wednesday, April 28, 1880, with a Pollywog Chorus and leading amateurs of the city.

This had been a season notable principally for two significant events--the change of name of the theatre and the unforgettable engagement of Adelaide Neilson, at once the most physically beautiful actress of her time and the greatest Shakespearean actress of her time, only months before her prematurely tragic death robbed the world of her
beauty and her rare talent. It was a good season, despite several cancellations; the greatest business of the season coming with Adelaide Neilson's engagement when the theatre played to sold-out houses despite the Lenten season.

Thomas Hall remained for another season as sole lessee and manager of the Grand Opera House. The 1880-1881 season opened on Monday, October 25, 1880, with an engagement of the Emma Abbott Grand Opera Company, performing in English for eight performances; and featuring prima donna Emma Abbott and a brilliant company including such operatic names as Julia Rosenwald, Theresa Marcy, Alonzo Stoddard, Arthur Tams, Severo Strim, Pauline Maurel, William Castle, Frank Augustine, Lithgow James, Ellis Archer and the renowned tenor, Signor Grignoli, and with Signor Tomasi as musical director. The opera schedule was as follows: Monday, October 25, *Maritana*; Tuesday, October 26, *Paul and Virginia*; Wednesday matinee, October 27, *Carmen*; Wednesday night, *Lucia*; Thursday, October 28, *Il Trovatore*; Friday, October 29, *Romeo and Juliet*; Saturday matinee, October 30, *Faust*; Saturday night, *Bohemian Girl*. The *Picayune* of Thursday, October 28, noted the arrival of Sarah Bernhardt in New York on October 27, 1880, on the steamer *L'Amerique*, for the first celebrated tour of American cities. It was a special achievement of Manager
Hall that he secured a booking at the Grand Opera House later that season of the famous French star on her very first visit to this country.

On Sunday, October 31, 1880, the New York Criterion Company opened an engagement at the theatre, appearing in the farce, *Freaks*, in its first New Orleans production. Beginning with this production, the admission to the balcony dress circle was reduced to 50 cents. The Criterion Company consisted of Edward Lamb, W. J. Gilbert, W. S. Harkins, J. B. Curran, A. H. Canby, John Ogden, Julian Reed, and Mary Davenport, Leonore Harkins, Maty Stuart and Virginia Thomas. *Freaks* rated a large audience for its opening, and the play received a hearty review from the *Picayune*. The piece was described as intensely humorous, full of witty dialogue and comical situations and in the hands of capable comedy actors. From the rise of the first curtain to the end of the play, the audience laughed and applauded continually. The cast was as follows: Dr. Appolounius Ketchem, a Freak for the ladies.. Edward Lamb, Ebenezer Crank, a Freak against all women..W. J. Gilbert, Fred Mastic, a Freak for Florence..A. H. Canby, Charles Lovell, a Freak for Grace..W. S. Harkins, George Goldbug, a Freak for business..J. B. Curran, Hunter, a Freak for collecting unpaid notes..Julian Reed, Billy Black, a Freak
for copy. Edward Gray, Wineton, a Freak for the cup. John Ogden, Florence Goldbug, a Freak for the emancipation of women. Mary Davenport, Theodolinda Goldbug, a Freak for writing tragedies. Mary Stuart, Grace Goldbug, a Freak for matrimony. Leonore Harkins, Jane, the maid, a Freak for running. Virginia Thomas. _Freaks_ made a hit and occupied the theatre the entire week. (_Picayune_, Monday, November 1, 1880.) It is remembered that Mary Davenport starred at the theatre several seasons before, when Hall was first manager of the Grand Opera House.

Sunday, November 7, 1880 was a prominent evening at the theatre. On that date, the noted English actor Cyril Searle—in his first appearance at the Grand Opera House—and Rose Eytinge—in a heralded return—opened a co-starring week's engagement in a dramatic adaptation by Charles Reade called _Drink_ of Emil Zola's extremely popular realistic dramatic prose work, _L'Assomoir_. The event was noteworthy not only because it brought two important stars together in a single engagement, but because it was the first production of the famous work in the city; and because in it Searle re-created his original role of Copeau as played by him in England. It showed Rose Eytinge, furthermore in a new role, in the lead part of Gervaise. Because of the extraordinary
length of the drama, being seven acts, the curtain was at 7:30 P.M. This realistic play depicted the sufferings of Copeau amid the lower classes of Paris. Searle's Copeau was described as a really great piece of character acting. His naturalism as a drunkard was startling, and his delirium scene was noted as unforgettable. Rose Eytinge enacted deftly the role of the simple laundress, the feminine leading role. Nellie Jones gave good support as Virginie. Drink was performed all during the week with the exception of Saturday matinee when Rose Eytinge was seen in Led Astray. (Picayune, Sunday, November 7; Monday, November 8; Tuesday, November 9, 1880.)

Beginning on Sunday, November 14, 1880, Adele Belgarde made her first appearance in the city, opening at the Grand Opera House in a week's repertoire of Shakespeare, in which she donned male attire to play the male roles of Romeo and Hamlet among her portrayals. She was supported by H. J. Sargent's company, described as a good one. The young actress, a native of Yazoo City, Mississippi, was the niece of a prominent New Orleans rabbi, Rev. J. K. Gutheim. She was only eighteen years old, and was described as very pretty and bearing a marked resemblance to the late beauty, Adelaide Neilson. For her opening performance on Sunday, and on
Monday and Wednesday matinee, the ambitious young girl appeared in five Shakespearean characters: as Imogen in the fourth act of *Cymbeline*; as Isabella in the prison scene of *Measure for Measure*; as Romeo in the balcony scene; as Rosalind in the fourth act of *As You Like It*; and as Hamlet in the closet scene. She was described as impressive, showing fine histrionic talent, with a lovely face and figure, and a beautiful voice which still needed some control.

(*Picayune*, Monday, November 15; Tuesday, November 16, 1880.)

On Tuesday, November 16, and Wednesday, November 17, the actress appeared as Romeo with Hannah Bailey as Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*. As Romeo, Adele Belgarde was very handsome, but not an ardent lover; yet, she gave an intelligent reading. Hannah Bailey gave a fine performance as Juliet. (*Picayune*, Wednesday, November 17, 1880.) On Thursday, November 18, Miss Belgarde appeared as Julia in *The Hunchback* and was so much more impressive in this role than as Romeo, that the *Picayune* commented:

"... If she is wise in a business way she will leave the Hamlets and Romeos to actors of the stronger sex and cultivate the graces belonging to the heroines of the drama. They are numerous enough to call forth the highest skill and talents of actresses. The Charlotte Cushman and Kate Denins were rare masculine women, and even they had difficulty with male characters." (*Picayune*, Friday, November 19, 1880.)
The drama was repeated on Friday and Saturday matinee, with best support coming from J. A. Nugent as Master Walter, W. H. Fitzgerald as Sir Thomas, and Hannah Bailey as Helen. 

*Ingomar* was produced on Saturday night, November 20, the last performance of Adele Belgarde's engagement. The booking was very unprofitable—the young lady did not draw large audiences.

But the drawing power picked up momentum with the next engagement beginning Sunday, November 21. Alice Oates, previously a singer, made her first acting appearance in a non-singing part, as the star of the smash hit, Boucicault's *Forbidden Fruit*. This laugh-provoking comedy played to "standing room" houses, and Alice Oates was a hit as Zulu, Queen of the Arena. The rest of the cast was made up from the company which served the previous week as Adele Belgarde's support, including Hannah Bailey as Mrs. Dove, James Cooper as Sgt. Buster, May Nugent as Mrs. Buster, W. H. Fitzgerald as Cato Dove, R. B. Bouchier as Capt. Deringer, John Dailey as Podd, and Charles Osgood as Conductor. Hannah Bailey, who received the highest mentions in support of Adele Belgarde the previous week, was a standout as Mrs. Dove. The play was repeated all week. *(Picayune, Monday, November 22, 1880.)*

On Wednesday, November 24, 1880, the name of the Globe
Theatre was changed to the Varieties, this name just having been abandoned by the Grand Opera House the year before. Col. J. H. Wood and Charles O. White were the managers behind the change of name. It was mentioned that the Globe had been shunned and abused by the virtuous folk for the last few years previous to this time, and it was hoped that the change of name to the more genteel association with the former name of such an elite house as that of the Grand Opera House, plus a new format, would bring more financial success to the theatre now leased by Wood and White. These managers now planned to present burlesque on the order of Tony Paster's then popular theatre in New York. (Picayune, Sunday, November 28, 1880.)

The Grand Opera House had another cancellation, and Manager Hall was forced to keep the theatre unoccupied for two weeks, from Sunday, November 28, until Sunday, December 19. The only activity scheduled during that period was a concert and lottery drawing of the Louisiana State Lottery, on Tuesday, December 14, at 11 A.M. The event was managed by General P. G. T. Beauregard and General J. A. Early. Thus, the occasion was an elite one, and tickets went at the steep price of $10.00. The first prize was the astonishing sum of $100,000; and the entire orchestra circle was
reserved for ladies. (Picayune, Tuesday, December 7, 1880.)

On Monday, December 13, 1880, the La Variété stockholders met in their club room at 7 P.M., in order to elect their thirteen directors for the next year. Those chosen were Will Steven, G. A. Breaux, Thomas C. Heardon, John Phelps, J. A. Morris, James G. Clark, Julius Aroni, J. L. Harris, Victor Meyer, A. H. May, F. T. Howard, A. P. Mason, and J. D. Rouse. (Picayune, Monday, December 13; Tuesday, December 14, 1880.)

For the first time, on Sunday, December 19, 1880, a full page advertisement announced the next offering of the theatre, that of J. W. Collier's famous Union Square Theatre Company, that opened that evening in Bronson Howard's Banker's Daughter. The admission prices were reduced to: top price for orchestra and dress circle, $1; with balcony seats at only 50 cents and 25 cents. Members of the company included F. C. Bangs, Harold Forsberg, A. H. Stuart, Walter Collier, Signor Majoroni, Ed Tilton, David Huston, Thomas McBride, Charles Walcott, Joseph A. Wilks, Mrs. Charles Walcott, Edna Bankson, Lizzie Hudson, Fanchon Campbell, Mary Bankson, and Anna Boyle. Production personnel included J. W. Collier, Manager; C. T. Atwood, Business Manager; and B. H. Butler, Treasurer. The opening production had been presented at the
theatre during the previous season, but now the company was found to be smoother and improved. Standouts were Charles Walcott as George Washington Phelps, Mrs. Walcott as Mrs. Brown, Wilkes as Mr. Brown, Signor Majoroni as the Count, Bangs as John Sterbelow, Anna Boyle as Lillian, Stuart as Routleege, and Collier as Montvillais. The play was repeated all week through Saturday, December 25, 1880.

On Sunday, December 27, a famous group of actors in Goschean Hopper's Dramatic Company opened at the theatre in the first production in the city of the drama, One Hundred Wives, a satire on the evils of Mormonism and the then current practice of multiple marriages. The well-known cast included such names as Georgie Drew Barrymore, mother of John, Lionel and Ethel Barrymore; DeWolf Hopper, later matinee idol in his first appearance at the Grand Opera House; and Ada Gilman. The play was a decided hit and played to standing room. The cast included DeWolf Hopper as Cornelius McGinley, William Harris as Ed Bradford, Alezan der Fitzgerald as Elder Bezum, Lawrence Eddinger as Nick Culver, George Sprague as Jake Sykes, John Ince as Hung Li, John Ogden as Spriggins, Charles Rolfe as Dickson, Ada Gilman as Mrs. McGinley, Georgie Barrymore as Elsie Bradford, Mrs. J. Wheeler as Mrs. Andrews, Vivian Ogden as Little Bessie. In
this era when Mormonism allowed polygamy, the social problem inherent in this play was a big drawing card. The Picayune noted: "The theme will absorb human interest until the Mormon status is fixed by the Government." (Picayune, Tuesday, December 28, 1880.) This holiday offering was played all week through New Year's Day, Saturday, January 1, 1881, and proved such a sensation that it was held over through Monday, January 10.

Another regrettable cancellation forced the theatre to remain closed until Sunday, January 16, when Nat C. Goodwin made his debut at the theatre in the comedy, Hobbies. Goodwin was supported by his own comedy company in its first airing in the city, and billed as Goodwin's Frolicues. The play, seen for the first time in New Orleans, was a laugh-provoking hit and attracted large audiences. Goodwin was to become a big comedy star, and was to appear many times in future history making days at the Grand Opera House. It was Goodwin who was to leave the stage of the Grand Opera House in a later era, to assist at the laying of the cornerstone of the Theatrical Syndicate's rival local houses. The cast of Hobbies was as follows: Nat C. Goodwin as Prof. Whiffles, Alice Burville as Minnie Clover, Jennie Weathersby as Euphemia Bang, Daisy Ramsden as Daisy Bang, Charles Bowser as
Major Bang, Frank Lamb as Arthur Doveleigh. Goodwin was described as an inimitable comedian with a style all his own. Daisy Ramsden, Frank Lamb and Charles Bowser were Goodwin's chief supports. *(Picayune, Monday, January 17, 1881.)* The play was repeated all week.

Another cancellation forced the theatre to remain closed from Sunday, January 23, to February 6, 1881. On that date, an auspicious event transpired—the first engagement in the city and at the Grand Opera House of Sarah Bernhardt. The French star appeared in eight performances in seven plays, as follows: Sunday, February 6, *Frou-Frou* with Bernhardt as Gilberte and her sister Jeanne as the Baronesse; Monday, February 7, *Phèdre*; Tuesday, February 8, *Camille*; Wednesday, February 9, *Hernani*; Thursday, February 10, *Le Passant* and *The Sphinx*, with Bernhardt in two characters; Friday, February 11, cancelled performance; Saturday matinee, February 12, *Camille*; Saturday night, *Frou-Frou*; and Sunday, February 13, last performance, *Adrienne Lecouvreur*. Sarah Bernhardt appeared under the management of Henry E. Abbey. The scale of prices for her engagement was exceedingly high for that era: season tickets, $27 and $18; private boxes with six seats each, $270, $216, and $162; single seats, $3, $2, $1. Private boxes, six seats, for a single performance, $30, $24,
and $18. It is interesting that Sarah Bernhardt's name has become world-famous as one of the foremost actresses of all time, since, according to many of her contemporaries, she was not a great actress, and most critics who saw her perform, while acknowledging her talent were extremely critical of her shortcomings. Many actresses were considered by her contemporaries to be greater than she. William Winter accuses Bernhardt of "... affectation, egregious vanity and the pervasive insincerity of an inveterate self-exploiter."

That critic considered Bernhardt to be among the most disagreeable humans that he ever encountered. Her most admirable quality Winter found to be resolution, tenacity of purpose and fortitude. She presented no more than old variations of character under new names, Winter accuses, but she was able to present only one new phase of character, that of Rechastadt in L'Aiglon. Her repertoire could not bear comparison, Winter insists, with those of John Gilbert, Henry Irving or William Warren; nor was she as agile as Jefferson or Gilbert. Winter says that Bernhardt's natural field was a narrow one of morbid eccentricity, the best of her roles being undesirable characters. She could only elicit dramatic effect from

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9Winter, op. cit., p. 476.
situations of horror, terror, vehement passion and mental anguish; women in whom vanity, cruelty, selfishness and animal propensity were supreme. Winter declares that she could never depict a woman who truly loves, as Imogen, Juliet or Rosalind. She did not possess the mind to understand or the heart to sympathize with goodness. She was, therefore, Winter concludes, a conspicuous example of eccentric character and dramatic ability; but one who does not deserve immortality since she was shallow, selfish, and an exhibitionist incapable of submission or loving—only of being loved and taking. Bernhardt's repertoire at the Grand Opera House was congruent with Winter's conclusion.

The French star was thirty-seven years old during this first tour in America. She made eight American tours as follows: first tour, October 26, 1880-April 30, 1881; second tour, 1886; third tour, February 6, 1891-May 1, 1890; fourth tour, September 28, 1891-April, 1892; fifth tour, January 20, 1896-May 22, 1896; sixth tour, November 26, 1900-April 29, 1901, with Coquelin; seventh tour, November, 1905-June 13, 1906 (in which she played the South in a tent to thwart the Theatrical Syndicate); eighth tour,

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10 Ibid., pp. 488-90.
October 31, 1910-June 21, 1911. Although Bernhardt performed entirely in French, she sold out houses and was a great financial profit to her manager. Pitou says that no other foreign artist appearing in his native language made a profit in the United States. Bernhardt was the single exception. Although other famous performers attempted this feat—including Tomasso Salvini, Coquelin, Rejane, Jane Hading, Aine and Mounet-Sully—their American tours either lost money or merely broke even.12

The Times gave a minute and colorful description of Bernhardt’s first day in New Orleans. The actress and her entourage arrived on Sunday morning, February 6, 1881, amid rain-laden weather. She was described as a natural blonde with fair hair and clear complexion, and prominent features including a strong nose and soft generous mouth. Her eyes were blue and were deep and penetrating. She was slight of build, petite but well developed. Her outstanding feature was her personal magnetism. Her commanding voice was melodious and her carriage erect. She was at this point a diligent student of English, and had learned the language so well

11Ibid., pp. 476-86.
12Pitou, op. cit., p. 35.
already that during an hour's interview with the Times reporter, the services of Jarrett, her interpreter, were required only once or twice. Jeanne Bernhardt, Sarah's sister, was described as bearing a strong resemblance to the former, but was prettier, very spirited and quite gay. Bernhardt arrived on The City of Worcester, a private railway train converted into an elegant home on wheels for the actress. The train was the property of Marble of Worcester, Massachusetts, and contained a combination dining, sleeping, and parlor car, which was engaged by Manager Abbey for Bernhardt's entire Southern tour. Its occupants were limited to Mles. Sarah and Jeanne Bernhardt, a maid for each sister, and Abbey and Jarrett. In Mlle. Bernhardt's suite was a genuine walnut bed, a large dressing room, and a music room with a fine piano. An elaborate pantry and kitchen were on the train, manned by a Negro cook, a waiter, and a valet who wore a gilt-banded cap. The company traveled in a pullman sleeper. The group consisted of twenty-eight persons, including James H. Haynie, correspondent of the Paris Gaulois, and a private secretary to Manager Henry E. Abbey. As was the custom in the era, the star traveled with her own personal costume wardrobe, which included four to six complete changes for each play in her repertoire. Included in the luxurious wardrobe
were no less than 300 gloves and 175 pairs of shoes. (Times, Monday, February 7, 1881.)

The Picayune reported Bernhardt's opening in Meilhac and Halvey's Frou-Frou as Gilberte as a great success. Note-worthy were her graceful movements, her expressive face, and extreme naturalness. The role was sustained admirably, and the death scene was painfully real. The supporting company was reported to be only satisfactory. (Picayune, Monday, February 7, 1881.) Although the night was a gloomy one, with rain falling in torrents, the Grand Opera House was crowded with the elite of the city. The Times was more lavish in praise of the actress than the Picayune, calling Bernhardt's Gilberte "perfection," and deeming the star a consummate actress, with a well preserved and faultless conception of the role. Her attention to details was regarded to be her greatest charm to the latter critic who concluded that Bernhardt's Frou-Frou was a "... grand picture of dramatic art." (Times, Monday, February 7, 1881.) As Phedre in Racine's greatest drama, the Picayune regarded Bernhardt as utterly disappointing, with the remark that "... she is not strong enough for a tragedy of this nature." However, her agonizing death scene was regarded to be perfect art. M. Gally as Hippolytus was noted to be a
dreadful actor who played consistently badly. Only Mme. Mea played well as OEnone. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 8, 1881.) On Tuesday, in La Dame aux Camelias (Camille), the Picayune considered Bernhardt's performance as excellent, particularly the scene of the interview with Armand's father, the parting with the lover, the ballroom scene and the death scene. However, the critic felt strongly that Bernhardt was miscast as Camille: "... Mlle. Bernhardt is not beautiful enough to cause such a love or to give a reason why she is a queen in her peculiar world." The Picayune maintained that the actress was only outstanding in death scenes. (Picayune, Wednesday, February 9, 1881.) Again, the Times differed, and regarded this performance as Bernhardt's "... greatest creation." This critic regarded "the chef d'oeuvre" of her art was reached in the scene with M. Duval, pere. The transitions of the star's countenance was particularly striking to the Times reporter:

... The frightened expression ... when Armand's father disclosed himself was quickly followed by indignation by his cruel words, dignity at the reference to her mode of living, humility at his doubts of her love for Armand, joy at his confession that he believes it, terror at the thought of parting from Armand, pleading to be allowed to remain at his side, then calmness, resignation ..., sorrow ..., and finally determination to sacrifice herself for Armand's sake. ... (Times, Wednesday, February 9, 1881.)
Considering Bernhardt's role of Donna Sol in Victor Hugo's romantic drama, *Hernani*, on Wednesday, February 10, the *Picayune* noted tersely that she proved herself a consummate artist in her death scene, as a grand climax long to be remembered. (*Picayune*, Thursday, February 10, 1881.) For the first time, the *Times*—still differing with the *Picayune*—found this performance of Bernhardt completely wanting, and said of it, "It fell flat." This critic found the role of Donna Sol as one affording insufficient scope for Bernhardt's acting power, and liked only the scene with the King. But the *Times* review concluded that "... throughout the performance her acting was quite commonplace..." (*Times*, Thursday, February 10, 1881.) On Thursday, February 11, Bernhardt played two roles: first came Copee's *Le Passant*, a love poem in one act with but two characters--Zanetto, a young troubadour, played by Bernhardt, and Sylvia, a widow seeking love, played by Mme. Colombier. The main play of the evening was Octave Feuillet's *Le Sphinx* in which Bernhardt played Blanche de Chelles, a woman whose social conduct is such an enigma of contradictions that she is called "the Sphinx." Again, Bernhardt chose a role with a terrible death scene. In this tragedy, she takes poison, and gloried in showing all the repulsive results--"... glazed eyes, rigid face, blanched cheeks and convulsive movements."
On Friday, February 11, Bernhardt was to appear as Mrs. Clarkson in Dumas' L'Etrangere, but with no prior announcement, the performance was cancelled moments before it was to begin. A placard in the entrance informed patrons that Bernhardt was ill. On Saturday at noon, Bernhardt appeared again as Camille with full evening prices, and yet all standing room was sold out, a fact that proved her success in New Orleans. At night she appeared again as Gilberte in Frou-Frou, and the house was again full. Her last performance was on Sunday, February 13. At this time she appeared in the title role in Scribe and Legouvé's drama, Adrienne Lecouvreur, to a crowded house. Her conception was carried out powerfully, and again her death scene was awful in its seeming reality. (Picayune, Monday, February 14, 1881.)

Monday, February 14, 1881, marked the return to the theatre of that popular first manager of the Varieties, Lawrence Barrett, who opened a two-week engagement in his celebrated role of Hamlet, backed by the R. E. Stevens Company. On Tuesday, February 15, he appeared in Julius Caesar as Cassius, that role in which he was regarded as having no living equal. (Picayune, Wednesday, February 16, 1881.) Louis James and Marie Wainwright, now married, headed his
supporting company. James appeared as Brutus, with Frederick Bock as Marc Antony. On Wednesday, February 16, at the matinee, Barrett and Marie Wainwright took the leading roles in *The Lady of Lyons*; and that evening Barrett appeared as Elliot Grey in *Rosedale*, a play extremely popular with New Orleans audiences. He was well supported by Louis James as Mathew Leigh and Marie Wainwright as Rosa. On Thursday, February 17, Barrett appeared as Richelieu, another of his familiar roles. He was well supported again by Louis James as DeMauprat and Marie Wainwright as Julie. The two were making a favorable impression on critics and audiences alike. On Friday, February 18, Barrett appeared in the double bill of Shylock in *Merchant of Venice* and the title role in *David Garrick*. Fine support was provided by Louis James, Marie Wainwright, Kate Meek, Ben G. Rogers and Charles Plunkett. The role of Raphael in *The Marble Heart* was Barrett's offering at the Saturday matinee, and *Julius Caesar* was repeated Saturday night. To begin his second week, on Monday, February 21, Barrett appeared for the first time in New Orleans in *Yorick's Love*. The drama was an adaptation from the Spanish by W. H. Howell. The play within a play was set in the time of Shakespeare and concerned Yorick, a comedian of the Globe Theatre, and his tragic marriage to Mistress Alice, leading
lady of that theatre. Supporting Barrett as Yorick were Louis James as Edmund and Marie Wainwright as Alice. Barrett was at his best in the new role. He invested the character with naturalness and with needed flexibility, from appropriate lightness to tragic intensity. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 22, 1881.) On Tuesday, Barrett repeated Richelieu, on Wednesday at noon he appeared in Rosedale, and that evening, he repeated Yorick's Love. On Thursday, there was no performance since Mardi Gras season was once again in full swing, and that evening was the occasion of the Momus parade. On Friday, February 25, Richelieu was repeated. On Saturday, February 26, the last day of his engagement, Barrett appeared at the matinee in Yorick's Love, and on Saturday night, he repeated the double bill of Merchant of Venice and David Garrick. Barrett's engagement called forth crowded audiences for his entire two weeks, proving that his popularity had not been diminished. Yorick's Love was reputed to be the stand-out event of the engagement. (Picayune, Sunday, February 27, 1881.)

On Sunday, February 27, Kate Claxton began an engagement, reappearing in The Two Orphans, supported by her own company headed by Florence Elmore and Mrs. Charles Stevenson. Kate Claxton recreated as she had before at the theatre her
original role of Louise. On Monday, Kate Claxton appeared for the first time in the city in the romantic drama, *The Snow Flower*, in which she played Pauvrette with skill and feeling. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, March 1, 1881.) On Tuesday, Mardi Gras Day, the theatre remained open, and *Two Orphans* was repeated. This same offering was repeated on Wednesday and Thursday. On Friday, Kate Claxton appeared in *Frou-Frou* as Gilberte. It was noted that Kate Claxton's conception of the role was very different from Bernhardt's. Miss Claxton stripped Gilberte of all wickedness, causing the character to be loving and honest. (*Picayune*, Saturday, March 5, 1881.) For the last day of her engagement, on Saturday, March 5, Kate Claxton appeared in *The Snow Flower* at noon and in *The Two Orphans* at night.

The unfortunate Hall had another cancellation for the next two weeks beginning on March 6, 1881, when the Soldene Troupe, booked that two weeks, failed to appear without even bothering to cancel. Then, the noteworthy return of Tommaso Salvini occurred. Salvini's return to the theatre was different from his prior engagement, for instead of playing completely in Italian, Salvini spoke his native language, while he was supported this time not by his own Italian company, but by the Stetson Globe Company, who played in English.
This fine company was from the Globe Theatre in Boston, and it contained such established actors as Mrs. E. L. Davenport, W. H. Crisp, Jr.—a handsome New Orleans boy who was the son of W. H. Crisp, once manager of the Old Varieties, H. A. Weaver, F. W. Owen, Marie Prescott—a New Orleans girl who had gotten her start in local amateur theatre, A. D. Bradley and Ella Wilton. All press releases signified Salvini as the world's greatest living actor. His two weeks' appearance was the last event of the 1880-1881 professional season, and it was a crowning finale to a star-studded, noteworthy season. Salvini played only four times a week, and his repertoire for his first week beginning Monday, March 21, was as follows: Othello, Monday; Ingomar, Wednesday evening; The Gladiator, Thursday; Othello, Saturday, March 26. Prices were steep, but were one dollar less than Bernhardt's top price. Single tickets were two dollars and one dollar fifty cents, tickets for the week were six dollars and three dollars. During the two-week engagement, on the nights on which Salvini did not appear, and for the matinees on Wednesday and Saturday, the Globe company played in The Guv'nor, a comedy that was the hit of the season at Wallack's Theatre, New York. (Picayune, Sunday, March 13, 1881.) Salvini's glittering rave notices far surpassed those he received during his prior engagement at the theatre several seasons.
Prejudice against the Negro was shown in the subjectivity of the Othello review in the Picayune. The critic applauded Salvini's Othello make-up as representing a yellow Moor, "... which relieves ... Desdemona from the repulsive Negro loving infatuation placed upon her by the methods of other actors. ..." (Picayune, Tuesday, March 22, 1881.) The same review said that the great actor realized all of the complex emotions of the Moor with a vividness and reality beyond the capacity of any other actor. The fact that Salvini spoke Italian while the company spoke in English was regarded as extremely pleasing, and most helpful to the majority of the audience who did not understand Italian. The company took its cues readily, were well schooled in "business" of the scenes, and played with remarkable smoothness. H. A. Weaver was Iago, Henry Crisp was Cassio, Marie Prescott was Emelia and Ellie Wilton was Desdemona. (Picayune, Tuesday, March 22, 1881.) The Times noted that since his last New Orleans appearance, the great actor had grown in scope, adding new beauty to his magnificent and poignant interpretation. In the bedchamber scene with Desdemona, he was regarded as having reached heights that were sublime, sending "... a quivering chill of horror through the audience." (Times, Tuesday, March 22, 1881.)
The Guv'nor which was performed for the first time in the city on Tuesday, March 22, 1881, by the Globe Company, was a hit comedy by Lankaster and Merrivale. It was first produced in London a year before, still playing there, and was currently a New York hit. The lead comedy characters, Freddy—a great stammerer, and Old Macclesfield—a very deaf man, were played skillfully by Henry Crisp and W. F. Owen, respectively. There were surprises and wit at every turn that kept the audience howling. The two lead show-stealers were ably supported by Mrs. E. L. Davenport as Mrs. Macclesfield. (Picayune, Wednesday, March 23, 1881.)

In Ingomar, Salvini's conception was poetic, and he had top support from Marie Prescott as Parthenia. The arena scene of The Gladiator was considered magnificent. The arena was a grand scene showing tier upon tier filled with Roman citizens; below were caged lions, moving and life-like. When recognizing his child in the arena, Salvini worked the entire house to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. "... Strong men wept over the effects of his powerful acting." (Picayune, Friday, March 25, 1881.) Beginning his second week, on Monday, March 28, Salvini repeated Othello. On Wednesday, March 30, the star's scheduled performance as Hamlet was cancelled because of a severe pain in his side, a
result of an old injury received when playing Samson. The Guv'nor was substituted. On Thursday, March 31, Salvini appeared in his famous role of Conrad in La Morte Civile, creating another grand impression. On Saturday at noon, April 2, 1881, Salvini made his farewell appearance in Othello, while the Boston Globe Company repeated The Guv'nor as the last performance of the 1880-1881 season, on Saturday evening.

The Picayune of Sunday, April 16, 1881, announced that Thomas A. Hall had left the city with no intention of renewing his contract as manager of the Grand Opera House. The Picayune aired its view that Hall was now in Philadelphia where "... his fine taste and great talents as a stage manager ... would be more thoroughly appreciated." The journal remarked that Hall was well known in and had been remarkably successful in Baltimore and in Philadelphia; and added--quoting an article in the Baltimorean: "... There is not a more competent man on this or any other continent." It was also announced that Hall was assuming the management of the South Broad Street Theatre, Philadelphia. (Picayune, Sunday, April 16, 1881.)

Hall had been one of the new theatre's most ardent and enthusiastic managers. He had lasted longer than any
other manager in the first decade of the Grand Opera House, and brought celebrated attractions to the theatre, such as the singular engagements of world-famous figures like Salvini, Bernhardt and Adelaide Neilson. He brought many American stars to the Grand Opera House who had never been in New Orleans before, and his noteworthy feat was to book stars to recreate their famous original New York roles in plays that had never been seen before in the city, plus booking well-known companies in their first local appearances. Hall had terminated the pattern of having a resident stock company at the Grand Opera House, and created a new pattern, whereby stars brought along their own companies or booked an available company to support them. It was under Hall's managerial reign that the name of the theatre was changed. Despite Hall's noble efforts to make the Grand Opera House one of the greatest theatres in the country, and despite the parade of stars booked into the theatre from 1877-1881, while Hall was manager, he was beset with agonizing cancellations that ate into his profits and diminished his financial returns. Hall was the first manager to be plagued by dark nights at the theatre because of excessive cancellations. Before, cancellations had been covered by the substitution of the stock company of the theatre. In his final season of 1880-1881 at the Grand Opera House, the two-week dark condition resulting
from the failure of the Emily Soldene Company to fulfill its engagement, and the several one-week gaps due to other cancellations, negated the excellent profits made from the sell-out engagements of Bernhardt, Barrett and Salvini. Consequently, the season was regrettably unprofitable; as it grew to a close, Hall realized that he could no longer endure the traumatic condition of uncertainty over engagements and the question of whether or not a given booking would actually appear. In Philadelphia, in close proximity to New York, Hall would not have to worry about this headache. There can be no doubt concerning Hall's significant contributions to the Grand Opera House, and it is understood how the *Picayune* could lament Hall's departure to such a degree.

The 1881-1882 season was to mark a new kind of managerial direction for the Grand Opera House. The new lessees were Brooks, Connor and Norton, a firm that was a booking agency, and which would avail itself, during the two years that it controlled the Grand Opera House, of its relationship with a number of Southern theatres to route some of the dramatic organizations which did business with them.¹³ This tendency did not serve to reduce the probability of cancellations, however. When cancellations occurred, there was

¹³Kendall, *op. cit.*, p. 553.
usually insufficient notice to route a substitution to the theatre on time. The senior partner of the firm was Joseph Brooks, a well-known New York booking agent. He spent little time in New Orleans, and was represented in the city by J. H. Havlin, who was sent down for this purpose from Brooks' theatre in Detroit. Brooks was induced to take over the Grand Opera House by the fact that since he controlled theatres in the Midwest and in the South, as far down as Memphis, it would be advantageous to have a house in New Orleans as an outlet for the stars and companies doing business with him. John W. Norton was next in importance to Brooks. He had made many prior appearances in New Orleans at the St. Charles Theatre before entering into partnership with Brooks. William Connor was the least important and least active member of the booking firm. In fact, at the end of the 1881-1882 season, he withdrew from the firm. Brooks, Connor, and Norton represented a large amount of capital, and their first act in regard to the Grand Opera House was to renovate the theatre during the summer of 1881, spending lavish sums in interior decoration of the entire theatre. New carpets were put on all the stairways and floors, and new paint on the

\[14\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 560.\]
chairs and all woodwork. The walls in the lobbies and the auditorium were covered with rich paper, with gold predominating, and the boxes and balcony fronts were ornamented with decorative pictures. John Norton personally supervised the beautifying process, and an unveiling was given the press in a special press party on Saturday, October 15, 1881. The Picayune's verdict of the face-lifting was: "... It is certainly the finest (theatre) to be found anywhere in the South." Among other improvements were aisles allowing access to any seat in the balcony circle from the lobby doors without climbing up difficult steps at the lobby front. On the orchestra floor, a passage way was made behind the last row of seats. Also, rich curtains were hung at all the windows and doors. (Picayune, Sunday, October 16, 1881.)

The new managership ushered in a trend of musical extravaganzas. Again, no stock company was in residence in the theatre. The season of 1881-1882 opened on Sunday, October 23, 1881, with the return after a long absence of Charlotte Thompson, co-starring with Joseph Wheelock. The pair opened in the first production in the city of Tillotson's comedy drama, The Planter's Wife, with Miss Thompson appearing in the title role of Mrs. Graham and Wheelock as Albert Graham, the planter. The Democrat called the supporting company one of the best that had been in the
city for years. (Democrat, Monday, October 24, 1881.) The Picayune applauded the acting of both stars, and said that time had only served to make Charlotte Thompson a better actress and more charming woman than she was years before. (Picayune, Monday, October 24, 1881.) The play was repeated every evening that week. For the Wednesday matinee on October 26, however, East Lynne was given, and for the Saturday matinee on October 29, Jane Eyre was offered.

On Sunday, October 30, 1881, Willie Edouin and his company which he called his Sparks, moved into the Grand Opera House for two weeks. The group presented throughout the first week a musical comedy fantasy called Dreams, or Fun in a Photograph Gallery. The play was a fantasy based on a dream, and was filled with music, variety, and with bits of acting. Every seat in the house was filled for the opening night on Sunday, and the company was judged as an excellent one. (Picayune, Sunday, October 30, 1881.) Heading Edouin's very fine company were Alice Atherton and Marian Elmore; Alice Atherton was Edouin's leading lady. (Picayune, Monday, November 7, 1881.) On Sunday, November 6, the Willie Edouin Company presented Joseph E. Bradford's musical extravaganza, Ripples, for the first time in the city. The play concerned a group of American and English travelers.
shipwrecked on the way to Australia. The comedy reflected unlikely romances and lively musical numbers that kept the plot sparkling. Edouin took the part of a Cincinnati pork packer while Miss Atherton was the buxom Britisher who wins his heart. (Picayune, Monday, November 7, 1881.) The play was repeated through Thursday. From Friday through Sunday, Dreams was repeated, with benefits on Friday for Alice Atherton and on Sunday, November 13, the final performance, for Willie Edouin.

The new extravaganza, The World, was to move into the theatre on Monday, November 14, but the scenery arrived too late for an opening that night, and the initial performance was switched to Tuesday, November 15. J. H. Barnes, a fine English actor who supported Adelaide Neilson on her first American tour, headed the cast of the Brooks and Dickson company who presented the drama. The Brooks of Brooks and Dickson was Joseph Brooks, the senior partner of the firm now managing the Grand Opera House. Other members of the company included Russell Bassett, William Fleming, R. G. Wilson, W. H. Collings, Laura Bascomb, Helen Sedwick and Mrs. Barnes. The sensational play featured elaborate sets that included a raft scene complete with waves, the lunatic asylum, a passenger elevator, and an inferno machine. For
the opening, to greet the company of the new lessees of the theatre in the first performance in the city of the play, the Grand Opera House was decorated with rare plants, shrubbery, and exotic flowers, while ropes of evergreen and flowers spanned the stairways, and wreaths of roses entwined the large mirror at the head of the stairs. The house was packed from top to bottom, all standing room was sold, and many disappointed patrons were turned away. The plot was both sensational and interesting, filled with comedy and sentiment, with heroes and villains and with beautiful girls. (Picayune, Monday, November 14; Tuesday, November 15; Wednesday, November 16, 1881.) The novel extravaganza proved to be such a drawing card that it played to full houses for two straight weeks, through Saturday, November 26, 1881.

On Sunday, November 27, 1881, the Comley-Barton Company of New York, reputed to be the largest, finest, and most complete comic opera company of the era, was brought to the Grand Opera House at great expense to appear in the comic British Operetta, Olivette by Audran. The company presented the original London version of the opera, by special arrangement with R. D'Oyley Carte. This fact is an interesting reminder of the lack of copywright laws of the day. It was stated in press releases that Comley and Barton had the
special permission from the author to produce Olivette in the United States, giving it complete, as the author intended, "... without a cut or transposition of scale to fit indifferent performers, who take advantage of a want of copyright laws and play it." (Picayune, Sunday, November 27, 1881.)

There were sixty in the company. The performers were all excellent, and were elegantly costumed. Star performers included Catherine Lewis as Olivette and John Howson as De-Merrimac. Also featured were Frederick Leslie, J. C. Armand, F. H. Freer and Minnie Walsh. The lavish production played all week, through Saturday, December 3, 1881.

The week beginning Monday, December 5, the Grand Opera House was closed when Fred Warde failed to appear. Then, Maurice Grau's French Opera Company returned to the theatre on Monday, December 12 for two weeks, following a tour of Cuba, Mexico and South America. The production schedule was as follows: first week, Monday, December 12, La Mascotte; Tuesday, December 13, La Fille du Tambour Major; Wednesday, December 14, matinee, La Fille de Mme. Angot; Wednesday night, Si J'Etais Roi; Thursday, December 15, Les Mousquetaires au Couvent; Friday, December 16, Carmen; Saturday matinee, December 17, La Fille du Tambour Major; Saturday night, Le Pre aux Clercs. Second week, Sunday, December 18, La
Mascotte; Monday, December 19, Les Noces d'Olivette—first time in city, in the original French; Tuesday, December 20, Les Cloches de Corneville; Wednesday matinee, December 21, Les Mousquetaires au Couvent; Wednesday night, Mme. Favart; Thursday, December 22, Les Mousquetaires au Couvent; Friday, December 23, first time in New Orleans, Piccolino; Saturday matinee, December 24, Les Noces d'Olivette; Saturday night, Christmas eve, Paul and Virginie.

A new star came to the Grand Opera House for Christmas week, beginning Sunday, December 25, 1881. She was the American tragedienne, Genevieve Ward, in her familiar role of Stephanie in Merrivale and Grove's society drama, Forget-Me-Not, as played by her for 500 performances in the principal cities of Great Britain. Genevieve Ward appeared for one week, bringing her own dramatic company, and exhibiting costly costumes designed by Worth of Paris. The supporting cast included Frank Clements, Nelson Decker, John Irwin, William Farren, Jr., Percy Campbell, Agnes Barnett and Bella Cathbert. The play was found to be faulty and disappointing, and endurable only because it was performed by a fine actress in the leading role. Genevieve Ward was found to be a thorough and powerful actress, but her voice was found to be disagreeable. Clements, an excellent English actor, took
the top male role, with Farren giving the best character support. The play was repeated all week through Saturday, December 31. On Friday, December 30, however, in addition to Forget-Me-Not, at its conclusion, a one-act comedy, La Pluie et La Beau Temps, by Louis Gordon, was presented in French. (Picayune, Sunday, December 25; Tuesday, December 27, 1881.)

Beginning on Monday, January 2, 1882, H. B. Mann's English Comic Opera Company began their first appearance at the theatre, presenting for the first time in the city, Von Suppe's opera, Boccaccio, through both performances on Wednesday. The engagement began with a bargain New Year's matinee at noon on Monday, with seats at 50 cents and 25 cents. Flora Barry starred as Boccaccio. On Thursday, January 5, Gilbert and Sullivan's Patience became the new offering, playing through Saturday, January 7. It is noted that during this week, Lawrence Barrett played at another theatre, for the first time since the Grand Opera House opened its doors in 1871, when he was its first manager. That week he appeared at the Academy of Music. For the second and final week of the H. B. Mann Company's engagement, beginning on Sunday, January 8, 1882, Von Suppe's opera Donna Juanita was the offering. Flora Barry appeared in the double role
of a French cadet and as Donna Juanita. This opera played again on Monday, on Tuesday, and for the Wednesday matinee on January 11. On Wednesday night, Maschotte was produced; on Thursday, January 12, Patience was repeated; and on Friday, January 13, and Saturday matinee, January 14, The Musketeers was presented for the first time in English in the city. The Saturday matinee marked the closing of the Mann Opera Company.

Sunday, January 15, 1882, was a special occasion at the Grand Opera House, for on that date the inimitable American star Lotta appeared for the first time at the theatre. In a one-week engagement, the bright little actress presented a new play by Fred Marsden, called Bob. She brought along her own company, which included W. H. Wallis, Mrs. G. C. Boniface, Clement Bainbridge, H. B. Bradley, C. H. Bradshaw, Florence Noble, P. A. Anderson, Fred Percy and Lulu Jordan. Lotta was a perpetual ingenue type. Pitou classifies the pert star as "... unique, chic and magnetic." He says that she did best eccentric comedy and character work, and marks her best roles as Little Nell and the Marchioness in Dickens' Old Curiosity Shop.\(^\text{15}\) Although the little star

\(^{15}\text{Pitou, op. cit., pp. 14-15.}\)
had appeared in the city before, both at the Academy and the St. Charles, she had not been seen locally in some time. Her popularity had in no way diminished, however, and her New Orleans fans followed her promptly to the Grand Opera House, filling the theatre from top to bottom with the largest audience of the season. Both Lotta and her play were a great success. Playing the title role of Bob, the star appeared as a tomboy girl who was the terror of a boarding school. Yet, Bob was a heroine who thwarted the scheme of her villainous father to squander money not belonging to him. Lotta was charming and vivacious, and she romped through the part, according to the Picayune. (Picayune, Monday, January 16, 1882.) The Times-Democrat (by this time the Times and Democrat had merged) applauded the little star also, saying: "... The captivating little lady retains all her grace and charm of manner which has made her such a favorite." This paper commented that her opening standing room audience went wild over her. (Times-Democrat, Monday, January 16, 1882.) Her support was strong and sustained Lotta ably. The play closed on Saturday, January 21, 1882.

The Vokes Family appeared at the theatre next, for the first time, opening on Sunday, January 22, for an engagement of eight nights. The British family of comedians appeared in a double bill of comedy, Belles of the Kitchen,
an extravaganza, and **Cousin Joe**, a farce. Supporting the Vokes Family was their own comedy company. In the cast of the first play were Jessie Vokes, Victoria Vokes, Fred Vokes, Fawdon Vokes and Bessie Vokes Samson; and in the latter comedy were Victoria, Jessie and Fred Vokes and N. D. Jones, E. H. Warren Wright, and L. Hayward. This was the first visit of the British family to New Orleans. Fred and Victoria Vokes were the stars of **Cousin Joe**, while **The Belles of the Kitchen** brought out the whole family in comedy, songs, and dances. The five Vokes: Victoria, Jessie, Bessie, Fred, and Fawdon, kept the audience in an uproar of laughter. The troupe was under the direction of Brooks and Dickson—again proving a connection between company manager and theatre lessee. The double bill stayed on the stage through Friday. On Saturday, for the matinee, **Ruth's Romance** and **The Belles of the Kitchen** were offered, while on Saturday, January 28, and Sunday, January 29, the closing performances, **Cousin Joe** and **Fun in a Fog**, an extravaganza, were played. (**Picayune**, Monday, January 23, 1882.) The Vokes Family were praised as pioneers in musical comedy entertainment and ahead of all imitators in being irresistibly funny. Fred Vokes was called "... a positive genius," and Victoria Vokes "... a soubrette of the Mrs. John Wood kind, now nearly extinct from
the stage." The Picayune commented that the family deserved the fortune they were making and that a large theatre was then being built for them in Boston. (Picayune, Sunday, January 29, 1882.)

The most important event of the 1881-1882 season occurred on Monday, January 30. On this date, the stage of the Grand Opera House was graced for the first time by "America's greatest living tragedian," Edwin Booth. (Picayune, Sunday, January 29, 1882.) The famous actor played one week and began his engagement in Richelieu in the title role. It had been twelve years since his last appearance in New Orleans, and the event was heralded as a historic event in annals of New Orleans theatre. Booth was supported by a company that included several experienced actors like Barton Hill, Robert Pateman and Mrs. Belle (Robert) Pateman. However, from the first performance, the company made a poor impression upon the press. When Booth presented Richelieu on Monday, January 31, the Picayune commented that the great actor's portrayals of Richelieu, Hamlet, Iago and Bertuccio were among the great character representations of the age. Consequently, it was expected that he would be superior as Richelieu. The years had only served to mellow and perfect Booth since he had last appeared in New Orleans. His
portrayal was classified as marvelously good acting, in which he brought out the wit, humor, ambition, flattering craft, and power of the Cardinal. In complete opposition to Booth's great impression was the negative impression made by the cast. The Picayune noted: "... The support given Mr. Booth ... was unworthy of the great star." Weakness was found in all supporting players except Belle Pateman who played Julie finely and impressively. Barton Hill, W. A. Whitecar and D. C. Anderson were all found wanting. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 30, 1882.) J. Rankin Towse gives interesting reasons for Booth's poor judgment in selecting supporting companies. The critic states that in the latter twenty years of Booth's career, his supporting companies, with the exception of two or three veterans, were notoriously incompetent. The reason was that he was no manager or director, but solely an actor. Only when associated with Lawrence Barrett and Modjeska were Booth's companies generally good. Towse states: "... This situation was due to Barrett alone, who was a fine manager and director, a scholar, an idealist and perfectionist and an indefatigable worker."16 The Times-Democrat described the unique interpretation of

16Towse, op. cit., p. 107.
Richelieu that made the role so great:

... His Richelieu is not the crafty cardinal, not the scheming, shrewd politician. It is that of an old man beset by enemies, striving to free himself from their toils, and save France and Julie. ... Booth has no catch expressions, ... the lines are given ... in a manner which while conveying the full import of the statements ... do not attract attention.

The review concluded that Booth's Richelieu was a finished, scholarly characterization that reached the heart as well as the mind of the auditor. (Times-Democrat, January 31, 1882.)

On Tuesday, January 31, Booth was seen in the title role of Othello. His interpretation was cited as not bellowing, but was a graceful Moor—slender, supple, poetic, noble in speech, and bearing, yet fierce and terrible when aroused to jealousy and revenge. Belle Pateman was excellent as Desdemona, and Barton Hill as Iago and W. A. Whitecar as Cassio were considered good. (Picayune, Wednesday, February 1, 1882.) On Wednesday, February 1, Booth appeared as Hamlet to a completely filled house. Booth had made history previously in New York when he appeared in the celebrated role for 100 performances, and since was considered as the greatest Hamlet on the English-speaking stage. Booth's superior portrayal was considered to be beyond description by the press, since his impersonation had already been "... the subject of sonnets, poems, essays, lectures, sermons, magazine articles and
debates. . . ." Moreover, as Hamlet, Booth had been
"... drawn, photographed, engraved, painted, crayoned and
busted." But the company again failed the great star.
"... Mr. Booth's towering excellence in so great a part
... only makes the inferior company about him seem more
weak than it is." (Picayune, Thursday, February 2, 1882.)
On Thursday, Macbeth was presented, and again the theatre
was filled to capacity. Supporting Booth in the title role
were Bella Pateman as Lady Macbeth and Barton Hill as Mac-
duff. Booth pictured Macbeth in his craven, cowardly nature,
moved by the ambition of his wife. As a lesson of the con-
science lashing a murderer, as a picture of horror at a
guilty man's own deeds, suffering the mental tortures of the
damned, Booth's portrayal was regarded as a magnificent per-
formance. Mrs. Pateman as Lady Macbeth was regarded as
"... a fine actress and the salvation of the Booth troupe." (Picayune, Friday, February 3, 1882.) Booth's offering
changed again on Friday, February 3, when the star played
Bertuccio in Tom Taylor's drama, The Fool's Revenge. Again,
all standing room was sold out, and again Booth achieved a
histrionic triumph. As a portrayal of a misshapen, soured
man, loving a daughter tenderly, seeking a terrible revenge
for wrongs, and finding a fool's revenge, it was reputed to
stand among the greatest dramatic creations of the age.

(Picayune, Saturday, February 4, 1882.) On Saturday, February 4, Booth appeared as Iago in Othello at the only matinee of his week's engagement. Iago was considered one of his greatest and most electrifying roles. Booth's engagement closed on Saturday night, with a repeat of Richelieu. At the end of Booth's appearance, the Picayune declared:

Booth's engagement has been one of the great events in the history of the Grand Opera House, and can only be compared to the engagements played by Neilson and Bernhardt at the same theatre. The theatre was crowded at each performance.

(Picayune, February 5, 1882.)

For one night, on Sunday, February 5, 1882, Louis Aldrich and Charles I. Parsloe, the original lead characters of the then very popular comedy, My Partner, appeared at the Grand Opera House. They recreated their original roles and drew a large house.

Robson and Crane were the next important stars to appear at the theatre. The comedians returned for a two-week engagement, beginning on Monday, February 6, 1882, reappearing in Our Bachelors. The comedy company backing the stars included John Marble, Alicia Robson, A. S. Lipman, Charles Webb, Harry Meredith, Grace Thorn, T. N. Roberts, Adele Walters, F. E. Ambrose, Mary Myers and Nettie Hall. The comedy pair made a hit again in their roles of Bangle and
Jowler. The play continued through both Wednesday performances. On Thursday, February 9, *Sharps and Flats*, a hilarious farce satirizing the San Francisco Stock Exchange was produced. The play was repeated for the rest of the week, through Sunday, February 12. Beginning their second week, Robson and Crane appeared for the first time in New Orleans in Dion Boucicault's *Forbidden Fruit* in the roles of Dove and Buster. This proved to be a racy play which Boucicault had adapted from the French. It was compared to the risqué *Pink Domino*, and described as "... such a piece as an American young girl would not like to take her mother to! But for baldheaded men, it presents the wildest sort of fun..." (Picayune, Monday, February 13, 1882.) The comedy team made the same local hit in the play that they had made in New York. The production was played all week.

Kate Claxton was the next star to return to the theatre. Following Robson and Crane, she opened a one-week engagement on Sunday, February 19, appearing in her famous role of Louise in *The Two Orphans*. Marie Wilkins played her original role of Frochard. Other standouts in the cast were Charles A. Stevenson and Henrietta Vaders. On Monday, Tuesday and on Wednesday matinee, Kate Claxton appeared as Gilberte in *Frou-Frou*. On Wednesday night, February 22, the actress was seen...
in Charles Reade's play, *The Double Marriage*, but on Thursday and for the remainder of that week, through Saturday, February 25, *The Two Orphans* was repeated.

The renowned magician Herrmann the Great began his first of many appearances at the Grand Opera House beginning on Sunday, February 26, 1882, for one week. The magician was considered to be the most outstanding exponent of magic on the American or European stage. He traveled with his own European company, including Japanese Prince Atawa Katsnochin, Howell and Darwin, the three Lovellas, and Zoe--automatic sketch artist. The engagement brought big business to the theatre all week.

On Sunday, March 5, Rice's Opera Comique Company moved into the theatre and also did big business. The company's production schedule for the week was as follows: Sunday, March 5, *Babes in the Wood*; Monday, March 6, Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience*; Tuesday, March 7, *Mascotte*; Wednesday matinee, March 8, *Cinderella at School*; Wednesday night, *Patience*; Thursday, March 9, *Billie Taylor*; Friday, March 10, *H.M.S. Pinafore*; Saturday matinee, March 11, *Patience*; Saturday night, *Babes in the Wood*; Sunday, March 12, *Mascotte*.

The Rice Company was the first to act *Patience* in this country, at the Booth Theatre, New York. (*Picayune*, Monday, March 6, 1882.)
Continuing the full season, John McCullough returned to the theatre amid a royal welcome. The actor who was so popular in New Orleans opened a week's engagement on Monday, March 13, in his popular lead role in *Virginius*, with an impressive cast including Edmund Collier as Appius Claudius and Kate Forsythe as Virginia in top supporting roles, and Augusta Foster, Henry Chanfrau, H. C. Barton, John Lane, Mittens Willett, Charles Kidder, George Griffith, H. A. Langdon, J. H. Shewell, Frank Lane, Frank Little and H. S. Harris. The star received the same brand of rave notices as he had in his previous appearances. On Tuesday, March 14, McCullough appeared in *Othello* in the title role with John Lane as Iago. Lane had replaced McCullough's top supporting man, Frederick Warde, who had handled the role in McCullough's last engagement in the theatre. But Lane was considered as inadequate and a disappointing substitute for Warde. As Othello, McCullough received great praise, while Kate Forsythe was considered only satisfactory as Desdemona. (*Picayune*, Wednesday, March 15, 1882.) There was no scheduled Wednesday matinee for McCullough's engagement. On Wednesday night, the star appeared as Spartacus in *The Gladiator*, and was called "the only Spartacus." Edmond Collier was excellent as Pharsarius. (*Picayune*, Thursday, March 16, 1882.)
On Thursday, March 16, McCullough appeared as Gloster in *Richard III*, while on Friday, *Virginius* was repeated. On Saturday, March 18, McCullough closed his engagement at noon in *Ingomar*, while *The Gladiator* was repeated that night. McCullough's closing also marked the closing of the 1881-1882 season.

The firm of Connor, Brooks and Norton had had an impressive first season at the Grand Opera House. Besides booking popular stars who would draw business, the new managers brought to the theatre the greatest English-speaking star of the era, Edwin Booth, in his first appearance at the Grand Opera House, and his first engagement in the city in over a decade. Joseph Brooks, senior partner of the firm of lessees, was also responsible for managing two of the supporting companies that appeared at the theatre that season. The following record, summarized by the *Picayune* on Sunday, March 19, 1882, gives a condensation of the activity of the 1881-1882 season: The season opened on Sunday, October 16, 1881, and closed on Saturday, March 18, 1882. The house was closed during the week of December 4, 1881, owing to the failure of Fred Warde to appear. The length of the season was twenty-one weeks. The number of performances given was: night performances, 141; matinees, 36; total, 177. The dramatic
combinations that played totaled 9; opera and other combinations, 8; total, 17. Plays, opera and other entertainments produced were as follows: comic operas, 17; dramas, 12; tragedies, 7; comedies, 6; extravaganzas, 4; operas, 2; musical comedy, 1; burlesques, 1; total, 50. These performances were named, characterized, played by and given the number of times each, as follows: Bob—drama, Lotta, 8; Babes in the Wood—burlesque, Rice Co., 1; Billie Taylor—comic opera, Rice Co., 1; Boccaccio—comic opera, Mann Co., 5; Belles of the Kitchen—extravaganza, Vokes, 7; Carmen—opera, Grau Co., 1; Cousin Joe—comedy, Vokes, 8; Cinderella at School—musical comedy, Rice Co., 1; Dreams—extravaganza, Edouin's Sparks Co., 13; Donna Juanita—comic opera, Mann Co., 4; Double Marriage—drama, Kate Claxton, 1; East Lynne—drama, Charlotte Thompson, 1; Forget-Me-Not—drama, Genevieve Ward, 8; Frou-Frou—drama, Kate Claxton, 2; Fun in a Fog—extravaganza, Vokes, 2; Fool's Revenge—tragedy, Booth, 1; Forbidden Fruit—comedy, Robson and Crane, 7; Gladiator—tragedy, McCullough, 2; Hamlet—tragedy, Booth, 1; H.M.S. Pinafore—comic opera, Rice Co., 1; Ingomar—drama, McCullough, 1; Jane Eyre—drama, Charlotte Thompson, 1; La Fille de Tambour Major—comic opera, 2; La Fille de Mme. Angot—comic opera, 1; Les Mousquetaires au Couvent—comic opera, 3; Le Pre aux
Clercs—comic opera, 1; Les Cloches de Corneville—comic opera, 1; La Pluie et le Beau Temps—comedy in French, Miss Ward, 1; Mascotte—comic opera, Grau, 2, Mann, 1, Rice, 2; Musketeers—comic opera, Mann, 2; Mme. Favart—comic opera, 1; Macbeth—tragedy, Booth, 1; My Pardner—drama, Aldrich & Parsloe, 1; Olivette—comic opera, Grau, 2, Comley-Barton, 8; Othello—tragedy, Booth, 2, McCullough, 1; Our Bachelors—comedy, Robson & Crane, 4; Planter's Wife—drama, Charlotte Thompson, 7; Paul et Virginie—opera, Grau, 1; Picolina—comic opera, Grau, 1; Patience—comic opera, Mann Co., 4, Rice Co., 4; Ripples—extravaganza, Edouin's Sparks, 6; Ruth's Romance—comedy, Vokes, 2; Richelieu—drama, Booth, 2; Richard III—tragedy, McCullough, 1; Si J'Etais Roi—comic opera, 1; Sharps and Flats—comedy, Robson & Crane, 5; Two Orphans—drama, Claxton, 5; Virginius—tragedy, McCullough, 5; The World—drama, 16.

When the 1882-1883 season got underway, the firm of lessees of Brooks, Connor and Norton had been reduced to Brooks and Norton. Some time over the summer, William Connor had resigned from the firm. The season began on Sunday, October 29, 1882, with the policy being maintained of having no resident stock company. John Conniff was announced as business manager of the theatre. The opening attraction
served as a bad omen for Brooks and Norton—for business was bad the opening week, and immediately after, for the second week, there was already a cancellation. The season would end in financial disappointment for Brooks and Norton, and they would bow out as managers of the theatre. Their exit from the Grand Opera House scene, however, would mark the entrance of a dynamic new manager, the theatre magnate David Bidwell, who would make theatrical history at the playhouse for a period, and then would figure significantly, although covertly, in the decline of the theatre in its later days. It was Bidwell's money that financed the Theatrical Syndicate, the overt enemy of the Grand Opera House in its denouement.

The 1882-1883 season got underway on Sunday, October 29, 1882, when the Brown and Lennox Dramatic Company moved into the theatre for one disastrous week. The troupe was headed by Josephine Laurens, a figure who was well known locally; others in the company included George W. Thompson, Walter Lennox, Jr., Leslie Edmunds, King Hedley, Harry Sinclair, George Willard, Edward Rue, S. H. Johnson, N. O. Reynolds, Nellie Carleton, and Lizzie Carleton. For the entire week the group presented Bartley Campbell's comedy, Mr. Partner. The performance proved to be a delightful one,
and the company was classified by the Picayune as a first-rate organization. (Picayune, Monday, October 30, 1882.) Leading roles were taken by Walter Lennox, Jr. as Wing Lee and George W. Thompson as Joe Saunders. The Times-Democrat agreed that the company was good, and praised particularly the acting job of George Thompson. (Times-Democrat, Monday, October 30, 1882.) Nevertheless, the company did not draw audiences, and business was bad all week. (Picayune, Sunday, November 5, 1882.) The attraction closed on Saturday, November 4. Then, so early in the season, Brooks and Norton were already faced with a cancellation. From Sunday, November 5, for two weeks, until Sunday, November 19, the theatre was dark.

In a desperate effort to make up for the deficit of these first three disastrous weeks, and in an effort to fill the theatre for future billings, Norton and Brooks decided to slash admission prices. For the next attraction, beginning on Sunday, November 19, the top price for reserved seats at the Grand Opera House was announced at 75 cents. (Picayune, Thursday, November 16, 1882.) Marion Elmore was the star that week, and she was supported by the Hayden and Davis Company, which came directly from Haverley's Theatre, New York. Chispa was the offering, and played for the first
time at the theatre. The Picayune spoke of the drama as "fascinating, amusing and exciting." Marion Elmore's vivacity and abandon were displayed to advantage, and the company gave good support. (Picayune, Monday, November 20, 1882.) The offering was performed all week.

C. D. Hess' Grand Opera Company took over on Sunday, November 26. This was the largest English opera organization of the day. There was a chorus of fifty voices under the direction of W. E. Taylor. Featured soloists were Abbie Carrington, Rose Leighton, Henry Peakes, Mark Smith, George Appleby, James Peakes, Josie Renner, Kate Tams, Kate Griffith, Kate Baner, James H. Jones, and Lizzie St. Quinten.

The two-weeks' schedule was as follows: first week, Sunday night and Wednesday matinee, Chimes of Normandy; Monday, November 27, Maritana; Tuesday, November 28, Mascotte; Wednesday night, November 29, Martha; Thursday, November 30, Olivette; Friday, December 1, Bohemian Girl; Saturday, December 2, Fra Diavolo. Second week, Sunday, December 3, and Thursday, December 7, Mascotte; Monday, December 4, Fra Diavolo; Tuesday, December 5, and Saturday matinee, Olivette; Wednesday matinee, Bohemian Girl; Wednesday night, December 6, Chimes of Normandy; Friday, December 8, Martha; Saturday night, December 9, Maritana.
Rice's New Surprise Party Company spent the next week at the Grand Opera House, beginning on Sunday, December 10. The troupe appeared in an operatic melange called *Pop*. Variety artists in the company were Albert Murdock, Kate Castleton, John Mackay, Charles Dungan, Ida Smith, George Fortesque, F. Reynolds, N. S. Burnham, May Stembler, W. T. Doyle, Edward Taylor, James Mills, Irene Perry, and Lizzie Grubb. The group danced, sang and performed in comedy sketches, and were a hit. Beautiful Kate Castleton in her first New Orleans appearance became the sensation of the hour. This was the first appearance, too, of the outstanding female impersonator and comedian, George Fortesque, who would appear subsequently many times at the Grand Opera House. (*Picayune*, Monday, December 11, 1882.)

On Sunday, December 17, the great German artiste, Mme. Fanny Janauschek reappeared at the theatre for one week in a varied repertoire. On Sunday and Monday, she took the title role in Glacomo's *Marie Antoinette*, a role she made famous on the German stage. As the tragic Queen of France, the star revealed the powerful acting style of a bygone school. She was every inch a queen, replete with dignity and grandeur. The *Picayune* found particularly commendable the fact that Janauschek appeared only in wholesome, edifying dramas and
that no scandal had ever been identified with her name. Her company was a strong one, with George Chaplin as the King and A. H. Stuart as Lafayette giving exceptional support. Henrietta Irving, Harry Hawk, Emie Wilmot and Anna Locke also performed well. (Picayune, Monday, December 18, 1882.) On Tuesday and Thursday, the German star appeared in Dickens' Bleak House, doing the double roles of Lady Deadlock and the French maid Hortense, parts in which she had first excited the theatre patrons several years before. On Wednesday night and Saturday matinee, she reappeared in Frederika Bremer's Die Naechbar, the English adaptation of which was called Mother and Son, and which she had also already performed admirably before at the Grand Opera House. On Friday, December 14, and Saturday, December 15, Janauschek closed her engagement by appearing in another celebrated role seen before at the theatre, that of the lead role in Schiller's Mary Stuart. Again she performed with grand, sweeping style and deep feeling.

Possibly the most mediocre Christmas holiday presentation at the Grand Opera House in its entire history was the 1882 offering. Beginning Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24, Nick D. Roberts' Humpty Dumpty Troupe opened a two-week engagement. The booking was a make-shift last minute affair.
to fill in time for a cancellation. It was a variety, vaudeville-type bill that included pantomime and some fair specialties such as dialect representations of Frank Bush, Mlle. Zazel's aerial feats, juggling of Mlle. Adelina, Louisa Bosbell's wire act, and Leon Chilatto's musical fantasies. Sketches performed included a "Jack and Jill" pantomime and a short farce called Ikey Salomon's Clothing Store, featuring Frank Bush. The Nick Roberts' Specialty Company played through Saturday, January 6, 1883. There were special holiday matinees in addition to the regular matinees, on Monday, December 25, a traditional toy matinee, and on Monday, January 1, 1883.

On Sunday, January 7, 1883, a unique event took place at the Grand Opera House, with the one evening booking of the world famous phenomenonist Anna Eva Fay of London, England. Called an "... indescribable ... brilliant spiritualist" by the Picayune, Anna Eva Fay was a sensational news item of her day. Described as "a great physical medium," Miss Fay was assisted in performing a seance by Professor C. C. Braddon and by another well-known medium, Professor D. H. Hearnes. The Picayune noted that Miss Fay was "... the only living medium who has the endorsement of the Royal Scientific Society of England." She conducted a
materialization seance in bright lights, reputed to be
effectively as given by her in England before the Royal Scien-
tific Society, before such British nobility and notables as
Lord Raleigh, Sir William Crooks, Professor Wallace and
Professor Sergeant Cox. A very large audience attended the
singular event to watch "... spirit forms, hands and faces,
... beautiful flowers from the spirit land and other amaz-
ing phenomena." Volunteers who assisted were said to be
completely baffled and could not explain how the feats were
performed. (Picayune, Sunday, January 7; Monday, January 8,
1883.) Since Joseph Jefferson was booked at the Grand Opera
House beginning on Monday, January 8, the mediums, much in
demand in the city, moved over to the St. Charles Theatre.

Jefferson's appearance was a significant theatrical
event, and was marked as "the dramatic event of the season"
The star not only returned after an absence of many years,
but he brought as his co-star, the brilliant comedienne, Mrs.
John Drew, in her first appearance in New Orleans in thirty
years. It will be remembered that Jefferson quit the Cres-
cent city for many years after receiving bad reviews in his
famous role of Rip Van Winkle. Mrs. Drew was the widow of
the celebrated comedian John Drew, and was the prominent
proprietor of the Arch Street Theatre in Philadelphia. Her
appearance with Jefferson was called a histrionic achievement for the city, and a triumph for the stars. Crowds packed the theatre to overflowing. The stars appeared in The Rivals on opening night, Joseph Jefferson as Bob Acres and Mrs. Drew as Mrs. Malaprop. A fine company supported the stars: Frederick Robinson, an actor who had appeared as lead man of the Varieties stock company a decade before, was Sir Anthony Absolute. Jefferson made a work of art of his role; and Mrs. Drew could not have been more perfect. Others in the supporting company, all who proved to be substantial players, included B. T. Ringgold, Rose Wood, Charles Waverly, Lillian Lee, Samuel Hempis and H. F. Taylor. The comedy was repeated through Wednesday night. On Thursday, January 11, Jefferson dared to revert to his controversial role of Rip Van Winkle, which had stirred such negative reviews when last presented in the city. The Picayune was kind at long last to Jefferson in this role, saying: "...As a piece of acting, it is perfect..." This play concluded the brief engagement of the two famous stars, on Saturday, January 13, 1883. In an interview with Mrs. John Drew, the Picayune drew an arresting contrast between the actress in her familiar role of Mrs. Malaprop and the celebrated lady as she appeared off-stage:
This most excellent of actresses as Mrs. Malaprop swirls across the stage in her rich brocades and satins, smirking and smiling under her outrageous quantities of rouge and powder and patches, tossing that wonderfully arranged head of hers, with its pyramid of white hair and its waving forest of fine plumes.

So wonderful was the art of make-up, the reporter stated, that a haggard, ill-concealed look of age was produced by slightly swollen pinkish lines underneath her eyes "as if the arrant old coquette had not been able to cover up these hideous crawling finger-marks of time." In reality, however, Mrs. Drew showed none of the lines of aging:

Her placid, intelligent face, full of gentleness and goodness, is well nigh smooth of wrinkles, although it is thirty years since she played in New Orleans, at the old St. Charles Theatre, way back yonder in '56.

The dainty actress was described as being quiet and reserved, under medium height, but with a magnetic presence that commanded respect. Her dark brown hair was banded in swirls, and she was handsomely attired in a brown dress. She reflected the repose of good breeding. Her comment concerning changes in the city in the thirty intervening years since she had been in the city was interesting:

I do not think the city much changed. I recognize many old landmarks, particularly in French Town. Since then, the old St. Charles Theatre, in which I opened, and the old Varieties Theatre on Gravier Street, have been burned....
The reporter received a deserved abrupt dismissal from the lady after an unnecessary, unprovoked and tactless remark concerning Joseph Jefferson. The reporter made a remark about Jefferson looking as though he had been asleep for twenty years, to which Mrs. Drew replied:

... How can you think so! He is not an old man, he is only fifty-three years of age, and I do not think he looks even that. He is a wonderful man to travel with. The brightest conversationalist I ever met. The gentlest and most thoughtful of men. He is the life of our party!

And with this remark, Mrs. Drew dismissed the thoughtless reporter. (Picayune, Wednesday, January 10, 1883.) Mrs. Drew was not only looked upon as "... the most wonderfully versatile actress on the American stage," but was one of the wealthiest and one of the few important women managers in the era--as the proprietress of the famous Arch Street Theatre. (Picayune, January 10, 1883.) The unique and seemingly ageless star was born in England and made her debut at the Liverpool Theatre. Her maiden name was Louisa Lane, and her first appearance in America was at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, in 1827, when she played the Duke of York with the celebrated Junius Brutus Booth as Richard III. The actress was married several times, but took the professional name of her last husband, John Drew, a comedian who was
famous in Irish character parts. She had two famous children on the stage: her son was the light comedian of Daly's New York Theatre Company, and her daughter was Georgia Drew Barrymore, mother of the later famous Barrymores--John, Ethel, and Lionel. (Picayune, Wednesday, January 10, 1883.)

Charlotte Thompson, another long-time favorite with the New Orleans public, returned to the theatre on Sunday, January 14, 1883, appearing for one week in her familiar role of Jane Eyre in the drama of that name. The play was a new version of the Charlotte Bronte novel, the somber features of the original being relieved by the infusion of comedy. New thrilling effects were introduced, as the realistic burning of Lord Rochester's room, and his subsequent rescue. Charlotte Thompson was afforded full scope for her dramatic powers in the lead role. The supporting company was under the management of William W. Kelly. (Picayune, Monday, January 15, 1883.)

The next engagement of the season was the return of two more stars who had not been in New Orleans for some time, Frank Chanfrau and his actress wife, Henrietta, in her first return to the theatre since she managed it. The pair opened an engagement of one week on Sunday, January 21, and brought along their own company. Included in the Chanfraus' troupe
were Regina Doce, F. D. Allen, S. H. Vernay, J. H. Alliger, Perkins Fisher, Harry Barefoot, W. R. Owen, Percy Rede, John Parker, W. R. Alexander, J. H. Wilson, Daisey Deane, S. Montgomery and S. L. Gilpin. On Sunday, Chanfrau appeared as Kit, the Arkansas Traveler, a comedy role in which he was famous and in which he had appeared at the theatre when his wife was its manager. The Times-Democrat commented that the comedian kept the audience in a constant round of applause and laughter. (Times-Democrat, Monday, January 22, 1883.) The Picayune praised Regina Doce as "... a surprisingly strong and pleasing young actress," and who assumed the double role of May Redding and Alice Redding. (Picayune, Monday, January 22, 1883.) On Monday, Chanfrau reappeared in his comedy character part of Sam, in Waldon's comedy of that name, and was greeted as "... one of the few great character comedians on the American stage." (Picayune, Tuesday, January 23, 1883.) On Tuesday, January 23, 1883, Henrietta Chanfrau made her first appearance of the engagement by appearing as Lady Gay Spanker to Frank Chanfrau's Sir Harcourt Courtly in Boucicault's comedy, London Assurance. The offering received a panning by the Picayune which called it "... a very bad performance, excepting Mrs. Chanfrau's impersonation which is a fine one. . . ." But Chanfrau was
said to lack finish. Besides Mrs. Chanfrau, the Picayune liked only Regina Doce who was a graceful Grace. (Picayune, Wednesday, January 24, 1883.) At the Wednesday matinee, Mrs. Chanfrau was seen in A Mystery of Paris, while Sam was repeated in the evening. On Thursday, January 25, Henrietta Chanfrau appeared in a new version of East Lynne, adapted by Clifton W. Tayleure. It was a gala event, since Tayleure appeared with Mrs. Chanfrau in the melodrama. It is remembered that Tayleure was Mrs. Chanfrau's co-manager of the Varieties when the pair served jointly. At that time, the well-known manager-playwright served in a backstage capacity only. But now he graced the stage in the important role of Archibald Carlyle to the satisfaction of all present. Mrs. Chanfrau charmed everyone in the audience, and was described by the Picayune as both a wholly professional actress and a great beauty. (Picayune, Friday, January 26, 1883.) On Friday, January 26, London Assurance was repeated, while on Saturday, January 27, the final day of the Chanfraus' engagement, East Lynne was offered at the matinee, and Kit was repeated in the evening. In reviewing the press notices of that week's offerings, it is noted that Frank Chanfrau received mostly indifferent reviews or downright panning, while his actress wife Henrietta received nothing but praise.
A Picayune interview with the Chanfraus and Tayleure led to some significant comments concerning essentials of good acting, a critic's responsibilities, and a poignant description of the physical appearance and personalities of these celebrities. The reviewer spoke of the,

... pretty faced, sweet-eyed woman who stood ankle-deep in rose leaves on the stage of the Grand Opera House seven years before, while vociferous applause attested to the admiration of the populace that season for the powerful actress and beautiful woman who had been manager of the house during 1875-1876.

The reporter described the Chanfraus and Tayleure as delightful people of culture and refinement whose criticisms of their art were most valuable. Henrietta Chanfrau was described as being wonderfully pretty. Now approaching forty, she was even lovelier than she was at thirty-two. She was described as plump, her complexion was like a girl's, her eyes a fascinating combination of brown and blue, and her personality was compared to "sweet perfume." Mrs. Chanfrau spoke of Lawrence Barrett, in this interview, as the most brilliant man on the American stage. In comparing Barrett and Edwin Booth, she said:

... He (Barrett) is a fine scholar and a thoroughly intellectual man. Now it is the popular idea that Edwin Booth is a scholar, but this is not so. He has not half the culture and learning of Barrett....
Chanfrau complained bitterly of the panning by newspaper critics—having direct reference to his bad reviews of that week. Chanfrau's impersonation of Sir Harcourt Courtly in London Assurance had been judged by the Picayune on January 24, 1883, to lack the finish of Lester Wallack. Concerning this review, Chanfrau now commented:

. . . There is one fault that you newspaper folks are falling into, and it is a serious one. Your critic goes to see an actor of a new school, or no school at all, and he blusters out: 'He is no actor, he can't act,' compares him to so and so, and proceeds to talk of the fame and talents of actors who lived forty years ago. . . .

In defense against such criticism, Chanfrau said:

. . . Now this is unfair. The young actor of today has no school, no teacher, no precedent. Why compare him to men who died before he was born? He must depend solely on his own intelligence. What chance has a man to study who must travel about the country merely as a part of the mechanical frame that incloses a specialty artist like Emmett. Gad! The dramatic profession is breaking up, now that the day of good stock companies is ended, and in ten years from now, unless things change, it is my opinion that there will not be enough good actors in the country to fill this room, and you will wait for the resurrection day to get a decent cast for the 'School for Scandal.' (Picayune, Sunday, January 28, 1883.)

Tayleure augmented the field of theatrical complaints by lamenting the task of intelligent actors to play to ignorant audiences. He spoke of a conversation of Edwin Forrest with a theatre patron who criticized Forrest's Othello. The actor
had said in reply to the criticism that he had studied Shakespeare for twenty-five years, getting at Othello's heart and his motive. But when he was judged, it was not by scholars and students, but by ignorant "cabbage heads" like the one addressing him. This significant Picayune interview is made the more effective by the fact that for the first time since critiques of the third Varieties began in 1871, a reporter was referred to as a woman. In terminating the review of the interview, the writer said: "... When the reporter came away, she carried with her recollections of a lovely, refined, cultivated woman, her accomplished husband, and their business manager." (Picayune, Sunday, January 28, 1883.) At the close of the Chanfraus' engagement, the Picayune noted that their supporting company was very weak, and that the Chanfraus' business had been bad. (Picayune, Sunday, January 28, 1883.)

A new star crossed the stage of the Grand Opera House on Sunday, January 28. She was a French girl, Mlle. Rhea, who was said to be beautiful and who had high dramatic status in France. She opened her engagement by appearing on that date in the title role of Scribe's Adrienne Lecouvreur, and played in English. She charmed both the press and the packed opening audience. Rhea reminded the Picayune of Modjeska in
her acting style. Co-starring was William Harris as Maurice DeSaxe, with an impressive portrayal. C. A. McManus as Meheton was a second stand-out. Others in the Rhea company were Leo Cooper, Owen Ferree, J. R. Amory, Edwin Davies, Charles Rogers, Harry Trayer, and Marie Fletcher, Estella Stineway, Elsie Pride, Margy Bonner, Grace Hall, and Eugenie Lindeman. Rhea's accent added to her appeal, and she was costumed beautifully. The shapely French star wore on-stage many diamonds and a decoration given to her by the Czar of Russia. Her dresses included costly velvets, satins, and brocades, all studded with jewels. The only marring aspect of the performance was Rhea's odd decision to give a recitation in French between acts. So introduced, the Picayune complained, it destroyed the effect and illusion of the play. The paper compared the discordant note with that of an actor playing Hamlet who might dare to recite "Shamus O'Brien" directly after the Ghost scene. (Picayune, Monday, January 29, 1883.) The play was repeated on Monday. On Tuesday and at the Saturday matinee, Camille was performed. Rhea scored a triumph as Camille. The star's beauty and costly costumes and jewels had become the talk of the city, and a spectacular audience of the best society crowded to see Camille. Particularly dazzling was the stunning actress's jeweled gown in the
ball scene. Her Camille was noted as a fervent, faithful portrayal of Dumas' heroine. Equally strong and compelling was William Harris as Armand. The actor was described as being natural, strong, and very graceful. (Picayune, Wednesday, January 31, 1883.) On Wednesday at noon, Rhea played the role of Hester in An Unequal Match for the first airing of the play in the city. In this role, she was miscast, since her French accent marred her performance. Camille and Adrienne were enhanced by her French accent in verisimilitude. But Hester was the daughter of a Yorkshire blacksmith, and her manner of speaking, peculiar to the British locality, was important to the play. Here, Rhea's accent was inharmonious. Too, she marred the performance again by the recitation of incongruous French selections between acts. (Picayune, Thursday, February 1, 1883.) On Thursday, Rhea played Beatrice in Much Ado About Nothing. Despite her broken English, she was charming in this role. But William Harris stole the evening as a handsome, forceful Benedick. The rest of the cast disappointed completely. Once more, the Picayune complained that Rhea insisted upon giving an unbefitting French dialogue between acts. The dialogue was named Jurors de Cadillac, and for it Rhea recruited the assistance of William Harris. This discordant note made the performance
unnecessarily long. *(Picayune, Friday, February 2, 1883.)*

On Friday, February 2, *Adrienne* was repeated, while at the Saturday matinee, *Camille* was offered again. Rhea's week closed on Saturday night, February 3, with the repetition of *An Unequal Match*. Reviewing the week, Rhea was supported, as were the Chanfraus, by a very weak company. The exception to her weak support was the appearance of her co-star, William Harris, who was described by the *Picayune* as "... one of the most accomplished and best legitimate actors on the stage." Although the *Picayune* regretted the discordant note of injecting superfluous recitations in the middle of serious plays, the paper applauded Harris for his superior portrayal of Cadellac in French with Rhea, done with excellent emphasis and discretion, although he had never spoken French before in his life. The *Picayune* praised Harris, furthermore, as being "... handsome, graceful and earnest ...; and a sincere and worthy new star." *(Picayune, Friday, February 2, 1883.)*

The Mardi Gras carnival week loomed next upon the horizon, and for that holiday week, the jovial comedian John T. Raymond returned to the theatre for the first time in three years. The familiar-faced star brought a new repertoire, and began his week on Sunday, February 4, by appearing as Major Bob Belter in Jessop and Gill's new comedy-melodrama, *In
Paradise, presented for the first time in the city. His supporting cast included G. F. DeVare as Stephen Dallas, O. H. Farr as Old Joe, Harry Pierson as Dewitt Duxom, John Marble as Bart Binke, Stella Boniface as Melia, Lizzie Creese as Priscilla Fagg, Ruth Cowles as Annie Lovell, Nellie DeVere as Matilda. As the Major, the hero of the play, Raymond unmasked Rawdon, the villain amid cheers. The play gave Raymond an excellent opportunity to be funny in the manner of his Colonel Sellers, and he milked the part to its utmost. As a thankful change from the last several companies to appear at the theatre, Raymond's troupe was a good one. Stella Boniface, the star's leading lady, was described as a charming young actress from Wallack's Theatre, New York, who was refreshingly natural. The play was produced through Thursday, February 8, with the exception of Tuesday, February 6, Mardi Gras Day. In place of the cancelled Tuesday performance, when the theatre remained dark, an extra matinee was substituted on Monday, February 5. On Friday, February 9, Raymond changed his bill, despite the fact that In Paradise was still playing to full houses, and offered another new play, Fresh, the American. The Picayune screamed that it was unfair to pull a play when it was playing to capacity houses. (Picayune, Friday, February 9, 1883.) Yet, the new
comedy did capacity business also and proved as much a hit as the first offering. As Fresh, Raymond was thoroughly delightful, and in this role he closed his sensational week. On Saturday, February 10, 1883, the Picayune commented, "... Raymond has had a glorious week!" and on Sunday, at the close of the run, that paper said: "... His brief engagement was splendidly profitable." (Picayune, Sunday, February 11, 1883.)

Rose Eytinge was the next familiar face to return that season to the Grand Opera House. She moved into the theatre on Sunday, February 11, 1883, for a one-week engagement, appearing in two new dramas during the week. Miss Eytinge opened in the popular Paris and Union Square Theatre success, Felicia. The drama was an adaptation by A. R. Cazaraum of the Union Square Theatre, of August Delpit's play by that name. Delpit was a New Orleans native who was at that time a successful dramatist in Paris. Rose Eytinge played Mme. Dumont in the essentially French, risqué drama. The Picayune critic called the story not the type that a young lady would take her mother to see. Mme. Dumont was an ex-actress and ex-"demi monde" who had a son but no husband, and whose son believed the mother to be an aunt. Miss Eytinge played strongly the lead role. She was easily adept in this role,
having played the part for more than 100 nights at the Union Square Theatre in New York, where she created the role in the United States. The son, Captain John, was played well by Atkins Lawrence, while his rival in love was played impressively by George Morton as Cassacnac. The role was considered Morton's best effort in any local appearance. (Picayune, Monday, February 12, 1883.) The drama was repeated through Wednesday's performances. On Thursday, February 15, Rose Eytinge appeared in the then latest success of Dumas, fil, The Princess of Paris, done for the first time in New Orleans. The French play had been adapted for the American stage by Cyril Searle, the London actor and author. In this play, Miss Eytinge appeared as Lionette De Courlin, a wife wrongly accused of infidelity. The role was said to give the actress the opportunity to reveal some remarkable acting, while showing off elegant Worth of Paris costumes. This drama concluded Rose Eytinge's brief engagement on Saturday, February 17, 1883. All week, the theatre was packed with patrons eager to see the two strong and risqué dramas performed by the star for the first time in the city. (Picayune, Friday, February 16, 1883.)

An interesting event was slated next in the Grand Opera House, when Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's
Cabin took over for a noteworthy two-week engagement, for the first time at the theatre. A celebrated company brought the play to the city, and opened on Sunday, February 18. This was the Jay Rial troupe, into which Rial's famous European and American companies were consolidated into one troupe. The renowned play had already had a remarkable stage history, playing for over a quarter of a century for more than 50,000 performances in the United States alone. The veteran actor George Kunkel, who played the role of Uncle Tom, had himself already played the part more than 2,600 times, commencing before the Civil War. At the time, there were also at least fifty other companies of the drama traveling. Topsy was played by Sallie Partington, a Southern soubrette who was one of the well-known Partington Sisters, a singing group who were favorites in Southern cities before the Civil War. The bulk of the company had appeared for two years in this play at Her Majesty's Theatre, London, England. The house was literally packed for the opening, not a seat was vacant. A great degree of Southern prejudice was revealed by the Picayune critic who gave an unobjectve, emotional review of play. This critic encouraged the public not to see the play, censuring those who jammed the theatre by saying:

... If they do not like it, they have the great
moral right to save their dollars. If they do want to see the play, they have the great moral right of giving up good money for it, stupid as it is! . . . (Picayune, Sunday, February 19, 1883.)

The drama was criticized as "... a strange mixture of melodrama, camp-meeting piety, preaching, gumbo business, Yankee-ism, and rotten sentiment! . . ." The critic said that he would not seriously oppose the performance of the drama, since "... it is not worth making objections to. . . ." The upset critic had to admit, nevertheless, that "... in its way, it is well acted . . .;" and he particularly enjoyed Sallie Partington's Topsy. (Picayune, Sunday, February 19, 1883.) The Times-Democrat did not even give the play as favorable a review as the Picayune. To this critic, the performance was "barely fair," and the critic complained that the action dragged heavily. The only feature of which he approved was the Magnolia Slave Band. This critic, like the Picayune writer, was incensed, moreover, at the large audience:

... In each act the Gods cheered at every declaration of the emancipation of the slave. Indeed, all through the play, the applause and laughter were frequent, and so far as the allusions to slavery were concerned, no Boston audience could have shown more enthusiasm on the subject. . . . (Times-Democrat, Monday, February 19, 1883.)

It is interesting to realize that an audience in the heart
of the deep South could react only two decades after the Civil War in such a manner. It is also interesting to note how much both critics disagreed with the liberal attitude of the theatre patrons. The initial enthusiasm of the public was not to be abated. All during the two-week engagement, the theatre was filled from top to bottom with enthusiastic audiences who applauded and cheered throughout the play. The Picayune critic noted sarcastically: "... The play is received with such remarkable demonstrations of favor, it is thought that the public may clamor for the Siberian blood hounds..." An extra matinee was scheduled for Washington's birthday, on Thursday, February 22, 1883. The second and last week of Uncle Tom's Cabin was also the last week of the season. For this final offering, despite sold-out performances, the management cut the admission prices to only 25 cents and 50 cents for all seats. The Picayune's only comment at the end of the season was "... The sable and pious drama closes its season on Saturday night, March 3. That closes the season at that house." (Picayune, Sunday, February 25, 1883.)

This 1882-1883 season, the last season under the management of Brooks and Norton was a very profitable one, according to the Picayune, which noted that every good
attraction at the theatre did well. However, "... two or three that should have starved before reaching here have suffered..." (Picayune, Sunday, March 4, 1883.) This newspaper offers an excellent summary of the season. The season opened on October 29, 1882, with My Partner. This was a touring company composed by Lennox and Brown. Business was fair for one week. After this rather poor beginning, the theatre was closed for two weeks while the managers tore their hair over a cancellation. On November 19, Marion Elmore came in Chispa. The star was weak, and the play and company were very poor. However, business was fair. On November 26, the Hess Acme Opera Company opened and stayed two weeks to fair business. On December 10, the Rice Surprise Party opened in Pop to fair business. Mme. Janauschek returned on December 17, to good business. Then on December 24, Nick Roberts came "... with the smallest and worst variety show ever seen in New Orleans out of beer saloons. In the best weeks for amusements, and in that beautiful theatre, Roberts was made to stay two weeks. Business was worse than bad." (Picayune, Sunday, March 4, 1883.) Joseph Jefferson reappeared with Mrs. John Drew on January 8, 1883. This was a significant event, as Jefferson had not been in the city for several years, while the important actress had not appeared
in New Orleans for thirty years. The pair had a good company and did a superior business. The "standing room only" sign was displayed nightly. January 14 saw the return of Charlotte Thompson who played one week to only fair business. The Chanfraus were the next familiar stars to reappear, on January 21. Despite the fact that the lady had been manager at the Varieties only seven years before, and had many friends in the city, business was only fair. Mrs. Chanfrau received a lion's share of good reviews, while her husband received mainly negative criticism. On January 28, Mlle. Rhea appeared at the theatre for the first time. The French star played to full houses. The next week, on February 4, John T. Raymond returned and did an amazingly good business. Rose Eytinge returned on February 11, and played one week to good business. On February 18, the Jay Rial Company began a two-week engagement in the controversial *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Business was good despite furious local reviews. (*Picayune*, Sunday, March 4, 1883.)

At the conclusion of the 1882-1883 season, the *Picayune* announced that Brooks and Norton had given up the lease of the Grand Opera House. David Bidwell was announced as the new lessee and sole manager for the following season,
managing also the St. Charles Theatre and the Academy of Music at the same time. Bidwell would remain unique in being the only manager of the Grand Opera House to manage the two main rival theatres in the city at the same time. An extract from the New York Mirror was published by the Picayune explaining John Brooks' reason for surrendering the lease of the theatre: Brooks' point of view and comments are significant to a full perspective of the theatre's history. Brooks had just returned to New York after a trip to New Orleans and the Grand Opera House. He said that the theatre had been a constant source of worry, and as neither he nor Norton could give it their personal attention, they had agreed to terminate the lease. Moreover, the venture had not been profitable. Brooks complained:

... I don't think New Orleans is good enough to support three English theatres ..., although business there this season has been much better than three or four years past, and the prospects are bright for the future... But, the South is different from the balance of the country. The jumps are long, the towns not so large, and the railroad rates are heavy, but at the same time, good attractions well managed make money there. The country is overrun with cheap attractions, and the people are getting tired of them, and are beginning to let them alone to starve to death, as they should, while the larger and better attractions are receiving more encouragement and doing better business with every succeeding year. ... For next season the prospects are brighter than ever. All through the South ... the crops
of all kinds are very large, and good prices are being realized from them; hence money will be plenty, and those people will enjoy themselves when they have the money and can afford it.
(Picayune, Sunday, March 4, 1833.)

Brooks announced that his firm would no longer manage theatres, with the exception of his Memphis theatre which was wholly profitable. Finally, Brooks gave his personal comment concerning David Bidwell and the latter's plans for the forthcoming season:

... Bidwell, who is now King of Amusements in New Orleans, thinks he can make the Grand Opera House pay and give satisfaction to its patrons. He has had an experience of thirty years as a manager in this city, and knows something of the wants of the people. He will run the Grand Opera House on strictly business principles. The theatre has been neglected and abused. Mr. Bidwell has a lease with five years to run, and will improve on the place by putting new scenery and machinery on the stage, carpets in front, and electric lights in the entrance. A season of twenty weeks, with the best attractions, is proposed. John T. Raymond, Miss Rose Eytinge, Mme. Modjeska, Robson and Crane, Augustin Daly's Company and Mlle. Rhea are already under engagement to come there next season. It is one of the finest theatres in the United States, and will be the Madison Square Theatre of the South if the public patronizes and desires it to be so.
(Picayune, Sunday, March 4, 1883.)

Summary of the Period of Seasons 1879-1883

The 1879-1880 season opened with Manager Thomas A. Hall again as manager. An active season, it brought to the Grand Opera House important stars and combinations like
Collier's Union Square Combination, Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Florence in their first local appearance in many years, the first New Orleans appearance of the British actress Ada Cavendish, John T. Raymond, Maurice Grau's French Opera Troupe, Stuart Robson and William H. Crane, the Emma Abbott Grand Opera Company, Frederick Paulding and Leonard Grover. But the most important event that year at the theatre was the crowning engagement of the beautiful and brilliantly talented Adelaide Neilson in her only engagement at the theatre, a highlight of the entire history of the theatre. The 1880-1881 season found Thomas A. Hall back for a fourth season as manager in an unforgettable season of brilliant names. The Emma Abbott Grand Opera Company opened the season. Following were the New York Criterion Company, Rose Eytinge, Adele Belgarde, J. W. Collier's Union Square Company, Nat Goodwin's Frolickes, Kate Claxton, Lawrence Barrett, Salvini, and as the most noteworthy booking of that year--Sarah Bernhardt in her first appearance in New Orleans in a controversial engagement with varied reactions from the press. Despite the brilliant season, there were disappointing last minute cancellations on two occasions, and Manager Hall decided to quit the theatre. Brooks, Connor and Norton appeared as the new joint lessees for the 1881-1882 season.
Attractions that season included Charlotte Thompson and Joseph Wheelock, the Willie E. Edouin's Sparks Company, Brooks and Dickson's Company, Comley-Barton Company, Grau's French Opera Company, Genevieve Ward, H. B. Mann's Comic Opera Company, Lotta—in her first appearance at the Grand Opera House, Fred Vokes and Company, Robson and Crane, Kate Claxton, Herrmann the Magician, Rice's Opera Comique Company, John McCullough, and—as the greatest highlight of that season—the celebrated Edwin Booth in his first appearance at the theatre. The last season of this period, 1882-1883, saw Brooks and Norton as joint partners, as managers and lessees, with Connor having withdrawn. The varied and active season provided the Lennox-Brown Combination, Marion Elmore, Dan Rice Company, Hess Opera Company, Mme. Janauschek, Nick Roberts Company, Joseph Jefferson and Mrs. John Drew, Charlotte Thompson, John T. Raymond, Jay Rial Company, Rose Eytinge, Frank and Henrietta Chanfrau and Rhea. During this period, some of these bookings were of significant stars and drew full houses; others were unimportant, disappointing bookings. During this entire period, there was no stock company at the Varieties. This period ended with the ascendency of David Bidwell into the managerial seat at the Grand Opera House, and a new historic era of activity.
In reviewing briefly the second period of the third Varieties, from the time when its name was changed in 1879 to the Grand Opera House, to the period when David Bidwell became manager, some significant general conclusions can be made. Thomas A. Hall was the most dynamic and the most enduring manager of this period. He retained the managership of the theatre until it was taken over by the firm of Brooks, Connor and Norton after the 1880-1881 season. Hall set some policies that were retained by his successors as manager. First, he did away with the resident stock company at the Grand Opera House. This move created a problem both for Hall and for Brooks, Connor and Norton: when a star or an attraction cancelled during the period when the theatre had a resident company, the management was able to conceal the fact, by presenting the resident company as the offering of the night or week in question. Thus it was never necessary for the theatre to remain dark when the resident company could substitute with an offering at a moment's notice. The company would have a back-log of presentations available for this purpose, that having been performed by them before, were part of their repertoire and only needed "brushing up." When Hall abolished the theatre's resident company, however, immediate problems presented themselves. The most important
concern was the fact that when an attraction cancelled at the last minute, or otherwise neglected to appear without any prior notice, Hall and then Brooks, Connor and Norton were left with no company who could substitute, but with only a very dark and unoccupied house. Consequently, financial problems occurred which never occurred when the theatre had its own company—although other types of financial problems manifested prior to this time. It was now always glaringly apparent when the theatre had a cancellation.

Second, stars booked into the theatre under the new system had to recruit their own companies, or had to find an available company at liberty in the North, that would travel with them. Sometimes these companies were good and worthy support for the star, but more often such a company was very bad outright, or had one or two powerful members while the bulk of the troupe was very weak. When a star had a problem like the latter condition, he or she suffered considerably both artistically and at the box office. Stars like Edwin Booth, Frank and Henrietta Chanfrau and John McCullough are examples of stars who suffered this double catastrophe when backed by weak support. On the whole, in comparison, the resident stock company at the third Varieties Theatre had been vastly superior in artistic worth and versatility to
the average company that traveled with a star. Since the resident company was to last a whole season, a given manager could hand-pick his company in New York early in the summer in advance of the fall season. But since there were many more stars than there were theatres, it stands to reason that many more companies were required to back each star that traveled the country during a given season. The traveling company could hardly, then, have as many hand-picked or excellent players as the resident company of a season. Moreover, as Frank Chanfrau pointed out in the Picayune in his interview in the 1882-1883 season, with the unfortunate removal of the resident stock company, the young American actor now had no proving ground in which to train and gain experience. Instead of being called upon to play many kinds of parts and to back many stars, under the new system the actor became atrophied under a deluge of type-casting. It was a period, then, of general decay and decline for the actor in a company, and stars now coming up lacked the versatility and experience they would have gained if they could have developed through the ranks of good resident stock companies. It must be remembered that Hall only followed the norm of the times in abandoning the resident company at the theatre.
In the third period of the Grand Opera House, opening night was switched from Monday to Sunday night. Consequently, the night that in the first period of the theatre in the decade of the 1870's was traditionally dark—a day of traditional religious rest, now became, as opening night, the biggest and most important night in the week. Extravaganzas made their appearance in this era, and new plays became more traditionally "French" in the style of risqué and racy plots. New social problems were discussed in drama, like the multiple marriages of Mormonism, Russian class distinctions, the problems of drinking—as found in Emil Zola's *Drink*—and unwed mothers who were given sympathetic treatment and made the heroines of plays. New mechanical devices made scenic effects more spectacular, like that of an elevator that moved upward and downward onstage, and the fire scene in *Jane Eyre*. Feminine stars' wardrobes began to appear to be more costly and spectacular in this period, with stars like beauties Adelaide Neilson and Rhea wearing genuine precious jewels onstage, and some stars advertising that their gowns were imported from Worth of Paris. In this era, exciting stars made their debuts at the Grand Opera House, some appearing for the first time in the city: Adelaide Neilson, Salvini, Rhea, Ada Cavindish, Sarah Bernhardt, and Cyril
Searle; and others appearing for the first time at the theatre after long absences from the city of New Orleans: Edwin Booth, Mrs. John Drew and Lotta. The most tragic event to affect the Grand Opera House in this period was the sudden, lamentable death of beauteous Adelaide Neilson, only weeks after she had experienced one of the most triumphant engagements in the theatrical history of the city and had taken New Orleans by storm. The whole city and its newspapers mourned the death of the lovely star, with headline stories of her life appearing for weeks. Although Brooks and Norton spent a fortune renovating the Grand Opera House when they took over in 1881, they gave up their lease in 1883. Their financial problems were similar to Hall's, the biggest cause being from cancellations, with no resident company to cover dark nights. When cancellations occurred, the inability to move in a substitution from New York so far South at a moment's notice, was a concern of which Brooks and Norton tired in just two seasons.
CHAPTER V

THE FOURTH PERIOD: FALL, 1883, THROUGH SPRING, 1888,
ERA OF DAVID BIDWELL

At the time that David Bidwell became lessee and manager of the Grand Opera House, he was already a theatrical magnate of much power. Bidwell was a self-made man, who was born in Stuyvesant, New York, on the Hudson River. His father, Alex, had been a steamboat master, and David spent eight years as a youth as steward on riverboats in summers, while in winters he found employment as a ticket seller in New York theatres. Before coming to New Orleans in 1846, Bidwell operated a restaurant and equipped and managed the New York hotel, the Empire House. After withdrawing from a ship chandlery business in New Orleans in 1852, Bidwell operated the Phoenix saloon, and eventually drifted into the theatre business. The Academy of Music was the first theatre with which Bidwell became associated, and remained the theatre closest to his heart. It was at the Academy that Bidwell began giving matinees, and to him has been given the distinction of being the first manager in the country to...
institute the matinee. Bidwell made the Academy of Music into a first-rate institution, and himself became a celebrated name. Ten years after becoming proprietor of the Academy, the theatre magnate took over the St. Charles Theatre in 1878. The Grand Opera House was the third first-class theatre, therefore, which Bidwell controlled at one time, and was the last of his New Orleans acquisitions. His operations became so extensive and so successful that he was frequently referred to in the theatrical profession as the Napoleon of Managers. Bidwell had a reputation of being firm and aggressive, but according to Kendall, he was always kindly and a gentleman.¹

As it was Bidwell's custom to open the Academy of Music first, in the season of 1883-1884, the Academy began its fall season on Sunday, September 9, while the St. Charles was opened on Sunday, October 21. The Grand Opera House was the last of Bidwell's three theatres to open, and did not begin the season until Sunday, November 4, 1883. Prior to this opening, Bidwell announced that he was changing the day of the midweek matinee of the Grand Opera House from

Grand Opera House,  

PROGRAMME  

ROBSON & CRANE, 
Cases of Errors, 

Aided by a Competent Dramatic Company. 

Under the Direction of Mr. JOSEPH BROOKS, in their Production of Shakespeare's 

Cases of Errors. 

IN PROLOGUE AND THREE ACTS. 

CAST OF CHARACTERS: 

ERASMO OF SYRACUSE: 
Mr. STUART ROBSON  

HERACLES: [Two Brothers.] 
Mr. W. H. CRANE.  

Syracuse, an aged Merchant of Syracuse: 
Mr. C. H. Blyde.  

Antipholus of Ephesus, twin Brother to Antipholus of Syracuse but unknown to him, and son to Egeon and Emilia: 
Mr. Wm. Harris.  

Antipholus of Syracuse, twin brother to Antipholus of Ephesus, but unknown to him, and son to Egeon and Emilia: 
Mr. E. H. Blyde.  

Egeon, a Goldsmith: 
Mr. D. W. Van Beuren.  

Balbuzard, a merchant: 
Mr. Edward McConnell.  

Egeon, a Schoolmaster and Conjuror: 
Mr. Louis L. Carpenter.  

Mr. George Warley.  

Adriana, Wife to Antipholus of Ephesus: 
Mr. Wm. Brown.  

Floria, her Sister: 
Mr. Mrs. Wm. Brown.  

Miss Alice Brown.  

Petruchio, the Reigning Count of Ephesus: 
Mr. Louis Wadsworth.  

Emilia, Wife to Egeon, an Elder of Ephesus: 
Mr. Mrs. Wm. Brown.  

Mrs. Brown.  

Egeria, an Elder of Ephesus: 
Mr. Mrs. Wm. Brown.  

A tine, a Cook: 
Mr. Mrs. Wm. Brown.  

Mrs. Brown.  

Cassander, a Jew: 
Mr. Mrs. Wm. Brown.  

Scotia, a Merchant: 
Mr. Mrs. Wm. Brown.  

The action takes place from sunrise to sunset in Ephesus, and the period is supposed to be circa A. D. 111. 

PROLOGUE. 

The Cenacle of Ephesus. Act I. 


ACT SECOND.—Tableau I.—A Jeweler's Shop. Tableau 2.—Adriana's Chamber. Tableau 3.—Port and Dock of Ephesus in which is introduced a Dance of Merchants. Hymn to Venus, Goddess of the Ephesians. Reception of the Elder States by the King and Princesses of her Temple. Hymn to Venus by Homer. Chorus of Vestals and Vestals of the Temple. Indian Flutes, Egyptian Harps. 

ACT THIRD.—Tableau.—The Melancholy Vale, in which is seen the Rock Church of the Early Christians, and the Colossal Statue of Diana of the Ephesians. 

IX. EARLY THEATRE PROGRAM.
GRAND OPERA HOUSE!

WEDNESDAY THE 14TH OF MAY 1889

PROGRAMME.

In the Famous Society comedy in Four Acts, by David Belasco and Henry C. DeMille, Authors of "Lord Chumley," etc., and entitled

THE WIFE.

Cast of Characters.

John Rutherford, of the United States Senate...Mr. Boyd Putnam
Matthew Culver, in politics.........................Mr. Henry Herman
Robert Grey, attorney at law........................Mr. S. Miller Kent
Miss Truman, of the Produce Exchange...........Mr. Henry Talbot
Major Homer Q. Putnam, G. A. R., whose "fast heart never won fair lady"...............................Mr. Thomas H. Burns
Jack Dexter, Columbus, '89..........................Mr. Stanley Rigmold
Mr. Randolph, Rutherford's private secretary...Mr. A. W. Gregory
Mlle Ferrant, from New Orleans....................Miss Frances Grant
Mrs. S. Bellamy Ives, in charities................Miss Ethel Greybrooke
Miss Kitty Ives, coming out.......................Miss Etta Hawkins
Mrs. Amory, Junior member of Truman & Co....Miss Eliza Logan
Agnes, Helen's maid....................................Miss Olive Dunton

Helen Truman, an only daughter...............Mrs. Berlan-Gibbs

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES.

ACT I. Mrs. Ives' Villa, Newport. July. The amateur theatrical.
ACT II. Reception Room at Senator Dexter's, Washington, February. Mrs. Dexter's Ball. The quarrell. "The husband.

Midnight view of the Capitol.

(The curtain will remain down for two minutes only.)


INTERMISSION.

During the intermission the orchestra under the direction of Mr. Wm. Seefur will perform the following selections:

"Concert" Overture (No. 2)......................Kalliwoda
Selection "The Brigands".........................Offenbach and Kerker
Waltz "Am Neckar Strand"...........................Millcker
Spring Morning (July II).............................Lamoure

EARLY THEATRE PROGRAM

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Grand Opera House,

PROGRAMME.

Mr. Lawrence

BARRETT,

Supported by

An Excellent Company,

Under the Direction of MR. ARTHUR H. CHASE.

Wednesday Night and Saturday Matinees,

Hym. George H. Bok's Tragedy, in Six Acts and Tableaux,

FRANCESCA DA RIMINI.

A Realization of Dante's celebrated story.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

LANCIOTTO, The troubadour. Mr. LAWRENCE. Barret.
Grunt Pasco, his brother. Mr. F. C. Mosley.
Matella, Lord of Rimini, head of the Guzzis. Mr. C. M. Huy.
Guido, Lord of Bernezz, head of the U. Pasco. Mr. D. O. Rogers.
Boppa Pope, Matella's Jester. Mr. Newton Gottschalk.
Cardinal Malaparte. Mr. Ches. Fasset.
Bene, a Trabandu. Mr. Cyril Montague.
Lucentio. Mr. J. G. Harvey.
Veronina. Mr. F. E. Abbot.
Vendito. Mr. A. C. Pacino.
Torelli. Mr. J. L. Finlay.
Lodovico, a Page. Mr. E. M. Moran.
Moro, a Page. Mr. New York Fort.
Captain in Guzzis' Camp. Mr. A. C. Pacino.
Officer of Guzzis' Guard. Mr. Henry Perry.
Francesca, Guido's daughter. Miss Anna K. Selig.
Ritti, her maid. Miss Kate McManus.
Priests, Attendants, Lords, Officers, Pages, Messenger, Soldiers and Citizens.

EARLY THEATRE PROGRAM
Grand Opera House,

PROGRAMME
Thursday 24th Hour 1866

BIDWELL'S
STAR DRAMATIC COMPANY,
Sunday, November 21,
First production in this city of an Emotional Drama in Five Acts, from
D'Anney's celebrated novel, "Le Martyre," Translated and dramatized
by Mrs. Etta Henderson, entitled

THE MARTYR MOTHER!

CAST OF CHARACTERS.
COUNT MAURICE DE BERTHIER.........................OSMOND TEARLE
PAUL TESTA........................................HARTON HILL
ADMIRAL DE VIENNE..................................CHAS. WHEATLEY
Monsieur BRIAN.......................................LUKE MARTIN
GERALD MOREL........................................HART CONWAY
LOUIS, an East Indian Servant.........................EDGAR Selden
BLANCHE, Countess de Berthier.......................MINNIE CONWAY
GEORGETTE, Duchess de Cavell, afterwards Countess de Berthier,
.......................................................................MAY BROOKS
SUZETTE DE BERTHIER.................................EMMA MADDERN
MADAME DE VENNE....................................ISABELLA WALDAM

ACT 1.—Hotel in the Mountains near Cannes,
ACT 2.—Drawing Room in House of Count de Berthier,
ACT 3.—Saloon in House of Count de Berthier,
ACT 4.—Boudoir in House of Admiral de Vienne,
ACT 5.—Same as Act 1.

EARLY THEATRE PROGRAM

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Grand Opera House

PROGRAMME

Saturday, 16th July 1867

Mr. Edwin Booth,

supported by his excellent company under the direction of

Mr. Arthur H. Chase.

OTHELLO

1660

Mr. Edwin Booth

Iago

Mr. Chas Barron

Othello

Mr. Carl Aluredt

Brabantio

Mr. John Malone

Casio

Mr. Owen Fawcett

Rodrigo

Mr. L. J. Henderson

Duke of Venice

Mr. John T. Sullivan

Montano

Mr. H. C. Barton

Gratiano

Mr. T. L. Coleman

Lodovico

Mr. Edwin Royle

Paulo

Mr. J. Russell

Julio

Mr. J. Morse

Herald

Mr. Volney Streamer

Messenger

Mr. Walter Thomas

Desdemona

Miss Emma Vaders

Emilia

Mrs. Augusta Foster

EARLY THEATRE PROGRAM
Mr. A. M. Palmer's Company

WILL PRESENT

The Great Success of Two Seasons at the Madison Square Theatre, New York, written by

SIR CHAS. YOUNG,

JIM THE PENMAN.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

JAMES RALSTON...........Mr. GEORGE EDGER
LOUIS PERCIVAL...........Mr. WRIGHT HUNTINGTON
BARON HARTFIELD...........Mr. HARRY EYTINGE
CAPT. REDWOOD...........Mr. LOUIS BAKER
LORD DRELINCOURT...........Mr. JOHN ARCHER
JACK RALSTON...........Mr. J. H. BROWNE
Mr. CHAPSTONE, Q. C......Mr. JOHN T. McKRWER
Mr. PETTYWISE...........Mr. JOHN MATHES
Mr. NETHERBY, M. P........Mr. PERCY WINTERS
GEORGE, a servant...........Mr. A. G. HILSDORE
NINA, Mrs. Ralston...........Miss MAY BROOKYN
AGNES, her daughter.......Miss MARY SANDERS
LADY DUNSCOMBE...........Miss FANNIE JACKSON
MRS. CHAPSTONE...........Miss ADELE CLARKE

SYNOPSIS

THE TIME OF THE PLAY IS THE PRESENT.

ACTS 1 and 2.—Mrs. Ralston's apartment in the town house of the Ralston's in Regent's park. Conservatory at back.

ACT 3.—The library at Arbligh court, Ralston's country house.

ACT 4.—Small reception room at Arbligh court, breakfast-room at back.

EARLY THEATRE PROGRAM
Wednesday to Thursday. This move was instituted to reduce matinee competition among his three theatres, and to allow an extra matinee day. Thus, a patron would be able to catch a Wednesday matinee at one of Bidwell's other two theatres and be free to attend also the Thursday matinee at the Grand Opera House. Bidwell announced prior to the opening of his newest house that he had given the theatre a meticulous face lifting over the summer, with a thorough painting and redecorating of the entire establishment. In addition, the scenery, properties, furniture and stage accessories were all new. The grand stairway, vestibules and auditorium were embellished with new, costly velvet carpets, while the draperies, hangings and curtains were all entirely new, and was reputed to compete in decorative elegance with any theatre in the world. The most significant innovation in the theatre was the installation of electric lights throughout the theatre and vestibule, and decorating the front of the building. (Picayune, Tuesday, October 30, 1883.) New rich, plush blue and russet velvet curtains adorned the boxes which also contained new plush chairs. The expensive velvet carpets were imported from Brussels--nearly 1,000 yards of the costly fabric having been laid. After the press inspected the impressive effects of the renovation on Saturday night,
November 3, 1883, the consensus of opinion was that the Grand Opera House was one of the most gorgeous theatres in the country. (Picayune, Sunday, November 4, 1883.)

John T. Raymond was selected as the star to open the season on Sunday, November 4, 1883, and he reappeared in the familiar comedy, In Paradise, which had been produced the season before. An elite audience flocked to the opening to appraise the effects of the theatre's sumptuous redecoration. Tony Bagnetto, a well-known local artist and the new scenic artist of the theatre, was cited as being responsible for creating the new elaborate fresco work and artistic scenery. An impressive corps of production employees were announced as the new administrative personnel of the theatre for the coming season. These included J. H. Conran, business manager and treasurer; Gus Ringe, assistant business manager; R. J. Browne, stage manager; William Hyland, chief carpenter; L. Thomas, gas engineer; William Roane, dress circle doorkeeper; A. Mauberet, gallery door; Frank Cook, balcony door; E. Gibbons, office; and ushers A. Roig, Jr., James Walsh, William Caulfield, A. Rudore, and R. Hutchins. Jessup and Gillis' In Paradise, which continued through the Thursday matinee, had the following cast: Bob Better, the Virginia lawyer.. John T. Raymond, Francis Rawdon.. G. F. Dever.,
Stephen Dallas..W. T. Doyle, Old Joe..William Cullington, DeWitt Duxum..Harry Pierson, Bart Binks..John Marble, Melia ..Sadie Bigelow, Priscilla Fagg..Lizzie Creese, Annie..Ruth Cowles, Matilda..Nannie Egberts. The performance was considered to be excellent. (Picayune, Monday, November 5, 1883.) The audience enjoyed also the "Lustspeil" overture performed before the play began by the large theatre orchestra under the direction of Professor H. Schindler. (Times-Democrat, Monday, November 5, 1883.) On Thursday, November 8, Raymond opened for the first time in New Orleans in The Rocket, a new comedy purchased from England by the star. The play was humorous, and Raymond was a hit in his role of Chevalier Walkinshaw, a dead beat, gentleman swindler and coward. This play closed Raymond's engagement on Saturday night, November 10. (Picayune, Friday, November 9, 1883.)

Two new young stars, Emily Rigl and Harry Lacy, were featured in a production of The Planter's Wife for one week beginning on Sunday, November 11. The cast was as follows: Emily Rigl..Edith Gray, Kate Hawthorne..Dora Graham, Ida Glenn..Angie Gordon, Alice Ernstein..Aunt Susan, Frank Burbank..Arthur Blake, Ralph Delmore..Harry Livingston, E. A. Locke..Simeon Simco, D. J. Sherwood..Uncle Joe, George Shelly..John Walters, Harry Lacy..Colonel Albert
Graham. The company was judged as excellent, and made the strong play arresting entertainment. Emily Rigl surprised and delighted the opening audience, making a hit. She was judged to be graceful and pleasant with an expressively mobile face. Lacy was applauded also as a brilliant young actor. (Picayune, Monday, November 12, 1883.)

J. H. Haverly's New York Company was the next attraction, ushering in a surge of melodrama. The celebrated group opened a week's engagement on Sunday, November 18, appearing in the successful London melodrama, The Silver King as played by them for 150 nights in New York. The sensational hit which was now in its second year at the Princess Theatre in London had never been seen before in New Orleans, and attracted a capacity opening audience. The moral of the melodrama was to show young men the evil of horse race gambling. F. C. Bangs played the role of Wilfred Denver, hero of the story, with Helen Blythe as Mrs. Denver and F. M. Rose as "the Spider." (Picayune, Monday, November 19, 1883.)

Another strong melodrama, The Power of Money, presented by Harry F. Weed's Company, was the next attraction at the theatre. The play was to open on Sunday, November 25, but the company arrived too late to open on time. An accident had occurred on the Louisville and Nashville railroad
that served to delay the troupe's arrival by eight hours, and they did not reach the city until 5 P.M. on Sunday. A new policy in dealing with a cancellation was practiced for the first time; since Bidwell was operating three leading houses simultaneously the holders of tickets for opening night were given the choice of getting their money back, using the ticket to attend either the St. Charles or the Academy that evening, or exchanging the ticket for another night. (Picayune, Monday, November 26, 1883.) When The Power of Money did open on Monday, November 26, for a week's run, a large house greeted the strong company. The mammoth cave scene was regarded as remarkably beautiful, and the play made a favorable impression. Comprising the cast were Frank Kilday, Walter Kelley, James Hagan, Charles Drew, Thomas Morris, Belle Dickson, Charles Vincent, David Blair, Lillian Joyce, Bessie Sanson, Mrs. Charles Poole and Hattie Pike. The play was performed through Saturday, December 1. (Picayune, Tuesday, November 27, 1883.)

Clara Morris returned to the Grand Opera House on Sunday, December 2, for two weeks, after an absence of ten years. Since Miss Morris chose to open her engagement on Monday, on Sunday, her company appeared without her in The Marble Heart. It was the Frank Goodwin Company that backed
the star, and in the opening play the cast included Gus Levick, Lillie Eldridge, George Farren, Clem Bainbridge, Fred Lotto, Hugh Fuller, G. Frederichs, J. C. Elliott, Mollie Revel, Edith Bryant, Ada Wallace and Mrs. Farren. Heading the cast were Gustuvas Levick as Raphael, Clement Bainbridge as Volage, Lillie Eldridge as Marco, Mrs. Farren as Mme. Duchatlet and Ada Wallace as Marie. These lead players were regarded as fine actors. (Picayune, Monday, December 3, 1883.) On Monday, December 3, Clara Morris appeared—as the dramatic event of the season—in her celebrated role of Mercy Merrick in The New Magdalen. Ticket prices for this star's appearance were boosted to that of full New York prices. In the ten intervening years since Clara Morris had appeared at the Grand Opera House, her fame had increased and she was now undisputedly "... America's greatest emotional actress." (Picayune, December 4, 1883.) Throughout her career, Clara Morris' acting remained uneven and full of eccentricity and oddity, according to Harrison Grey Fiske, but despite her peculiar enunciation and unconventional methods, she proved herself unquestionably as an actress of singular histrionic genius.² Cast of The New Magdalen was as follows: Gustavus

Levick as Julian Gray, Clement Bainbridge as Horace Holmcraft, H. F. Fuller as Surgeon Surville, George Farren as Captain Arnault, Fred Lotto as James, F. Hughes as Special Officer, G. Frederick as German Sergeant, C. Jones as French Sentinel, J. C. Elliott as Max, Lillie Eldridge as Grace, Mrs. Farren as Lady Janet Roy, Clara Morris as Mercy Merrick. Miss Morris overwhelmed the Picayune critic, who said:
"... Clara Morris has no method, no school, she seems to act right from her heart. There is no ... suppressed emotion, tears come right to her eyes. ..." (Picayune, Tuesday, December 4, 1883.) The Times-Democrat said of Miss Morris' acting: "... It is real life ... a part of the auditor's own emotions ... the consummation of art ... and a great dramatic event in the histrionic history of New Orleans." (Times-Democrat, Tuesday, December 4, 1883.) The opening audience was said to be one of the most elegant ever seen at the theatre, and they greeted the star with vociferous applause. (Times-Democrat, Tuesday, December 4, 1883.) The support was judged as excellent. On Wednesday night, December 5, Clara Morris appeared as Cora in Adolphe Belot's drama, Article 47, a part which she had created in this country and had played for over 200 nights at Daly's Theatre in New York. Her performance amazed with its varied emotional heights--she
registered love, jealousy, bitterness, revenge and finally madness. The mad scene in the last act was startling, according to the Picayune: "... She sways back and forth, shrieks, glides like a serpent, laughs..." The critic concluded: "... No living actress can excel Clara Morris in this act..." Gustavus Levick supported with strength as George, with Clement Bainbridge strong as Victor. (Picayune, Thursday, December 6, 1883.) A significant review of Clara Morris as Camille was contributed by the Picayune. The tragedy was offered on Friday, December 7. The critic compared Morris and Bernhardt in the role and found Bernhardt sadly wanting. The review stated:

... Clara Morris in the title role is a revelation... and different from all others in the part... from the strong presentation of amazon Mathilda Heron years ago... to Sarah Bernhardt. ... Bernhardt is the opposite of Heron. She looked consumptive and seemed like a corpse at the beginning of the play. No Armand could love a Camille like Bernhardt. There is no provocation.

But this critic said that Morris was marvelous, that she was the ideal Camille of Dumas, and that her acting was grand. (Picayune, Saturday, December 8, 1883.) In excellent support were Gus Levick as Armand, Clement Bainbridge as the Count, J. G. Saville as Gaston, J. Southerland as Duval. On the Saturday matinee, The New Magdalen was repeated; while on
Saturday night and Sunday, December 8, and 9, the company without Miss Morris appeared in *The Ticket-of-Leave Man*. The actress remained for a second week of successes. All of her performances commanded full houses including the matinees that sold at New York night prices. Commencing her second week on Monday, December 10, Clara Morris appeared that night and on Tuesday night and Saturday noon in *Article 47*, on Wednesday and Thursday nights in *Camille*, and on Friday in *The New Magdalen*. The supporting company performed *The Ticket-of-Leave Man* again on Sunday night, December 15, and for the Thursday matinee, they performed in *The Marble Heart*, with Gustavus Levick starring in both plays.

The Frank L. Goodwin Company that supported Clara Morris, remained for a third week at the theatre to appear in the melodrama, *Moths*, an adaptation of Ouida's popular novel of that name. The play was performed for the first time at the Grand Opera House, and was found to be full of Ouida's sparkling dialogue. Gustavus Levick acted the lead role of Lord Jura, the hero, with force and discretion, while Clement Bainbridge was effective as Raphael de Correze. Lilly Eldridge was found to be completely wanting and miscast in the lead role of the heroine, Vere Herbert; but Helene Adele gave a splendid performance of Vere's vulgar mother,
and George Farren satisfied as Prince Zouroff, the villain. (Picayune, Monday, December 17, 1883.) The play ran a week.

The Emma Abbott Opera Company came next, on Sunday, December 23, for Christmas week. The group was by now the most popular opera company in the country. Leading singers were Emma Abbott, Julie Rosewald, Zelda Seguin, Signor Tagliapietra, Marie Windle, Walter Allen, Valentine Fabrini, William Roderick and William Castle. J. H. Rosewald was company director and musical conductor. During the week's engagement, Julia Rosewald, William Castle and Zelda Seguin proved to be the patrons' favorites; while the Picayune regarded the acting of Rosewald and Seguin to be "magnificent." (Picayune, Sunday, December 30, 1883.) The week's schedule was as follows: Sunday, December 23, Il Trovatore; Monday, December 24, Si J'Etais Roi; Tuesday, Christmas matinee, December 25, The Bohemian Girl; Tuesday night, Lucia der Lammermoor; Wednesday, December 26, first time in English in New Orleans, Verdi's Rigoletto; Thursday, December 27, Mignon; Friday, December 28, Donizetti's Linda di Chamouni; Saturday matinee, December 29, Bellini's La Sonnambula; Saturday night, Mme. Angot's Daughter.

On Sunday, December 30, 1883, Minnie Maddern, the future Mrs. Fiske, appeared for one night at the theatre.
The young actress was presented in the lead role of Madge in *The Puritan Maid*, a drama presented for the first time at the theatre. Miss Maddern was supported by her own company. Ironically, the budding actress who was later to star with glowing reviews at the Grand Opera House, did not even receive a review for this effort.

The exciting event beginning on Monday, December 31, 1883, was the first appearance at the Grand Opera House of the celebrated star, Mme. Helena Modjeska. A native of the Polish stage, she had made her American debut only six years before in 1877. She had only just learned English that year, in order to be able to act in the United States. The ambitious star had been the leading actress of Poland in the 1860's, where she was star of the Imperial Theatre in Warsaw, and where she was known as Helena Benda—her real name. She was the wife of Charles Bozenta, a Pole of noble birth with whom she fled of necessity from Poland when his titled family name caused him to be a political exile during political upheaval. Her rise on the American stage in six years had been rapid, and her command of the English language was now much improved. *Scribner's Monthly* described the star as a well-rounded genius whose greatest quality was her goodness. In her hands, the *Scribner's* account insisted, roles of depraved
heroines were lifted and purified by her enactment. Modjeska was slender but well proportioned, and she possessed a well trained, intense, and harmonious voice. (Picayune, Sunday, December 30, 1883, copied from Scribner's Monthly, March, 1879.) William Winter held that no artist on the international stage was more delicate or subtle than was Modjeska. Her art was poetic, marked by perfect self-control and grace. The actress possessed great personal charm and sensuous beauty. Camille and Adrienne were her greatest roles and defined her genius. Towse found that Modjeska excelled Bernhardt's ability, by mastering roles entirely beyond the sphere of Bernhardt's comprehension or talents. Modjeska opened her engagement on Monday by appearing in the title role of Mary Stuart in Schiller's play of that name. The star was supported by Maurice Barrymore as Sir Edward Mortimer, with Frank Clements as Leicester, James Cooper as Burleigh, Edwin Cleary as Kent, C. A. McManus as Paulet, Mary Shaw as Elizabeth, I. Robertson as Shrewsbury, T. L. Coleman as Melvin, Joseph Waters as Burgoyne. Forbes Dawson, Charles


Kelly, Mrs. P. A. Pennoyer and Belle Inman completed the cast in smaller roles. The Times-Democrat noted that the star rose to fiery heights of passion with accurate ascent and queenly dignity. Her conception showed a careful study of the historic character of the Queen. Whether displaying grief, pride, despair or anger, she exhibited great naturalness and was electrifying. (Times-Democrat, Tuesday, January 1, 1884.) The Picayune agreed in its review that Modjeska looked and acted the part perfectly. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 1, 1884.) Both journals applauded the outstanding acting job of Mary Shaw as Elizabeth. On Tuesday at noon, a special New Year matinee featured Modjeska as Viola in Twelfth Night, and on Tuesday night, the star appeared as Adrienne in Adrienne Lecouvreur. She was judged as superior in this role--completely natural, yet thrilling the audience. William Owen gave fine support as Michonnet. (Picayune, Wednesday, January 2, 1884.) For Wednesday night's performance, Modjeska played the role of Gilberte in Frou-Frou. This role was as life-like and graceful as were her prior conceptions. She was supported by Maurice Barrymore as Henri, and Mary Shaw as the Baronness. This play was repeated on Thursday night, while Adrienne Lecouvreur was offered again on Friday. Mary Stuart was repeated for the Saturday matinee,
and on Saturday night, *Twelfth Night* was the offering. Maurice Barrymore and Georgie Drew Barrymore were convincing in chief support. Tony Bagnetto's sets in the latter play were noteworthy, and the supporting cast was as follows: Maurice Barrymore as Orsino, Frank Clements as Malvolio, W. F. Owen as Sir Toby, Ian Robertson as Sir Andrew, Forbes Dawson as Sebastian, James Cooper as Clown, C. A. McManus as Antonio, Georgie Drew Barrymore as Olivia, Mary Shaw as Maria, with Belle Inman, Clara Ellison, Joseph Waters, Edwin Cleary and T. L. Coleman in smaller roles. Beginning her second week on Monday, January 7, Modjeska played her famous role of Camille before a discouragingly small audience. Yet, the star was at her best, and her costumes were exquisite. Maurice Barrymore was reputed to do a terrible job of over-acting as Armand, making the role into a whining, immature, unnatural part. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, January 8, 1884.) On Tuesday, January 8, and at the Thursday matinee, *Camille* was repeated, while on Wednesday, *Frou-Frou* was offered. On Thursday night, January 10, *As You Like It* was performed, with Modjeska playing Rosalind. As support were Maurice Barrymore as Orlando, Frank Clements as Jacques, W. F. Owen as Touchstone, C. A. McManus as Adam, Georgie Drew Barrymore as Celia, Clara Ellison as Audrey. Modjeska was delightful
as Rosalind. (Picayune, Friday, January 11, 1884.) On Friday, January 11, Cymbeline displayed Modjeska as Imogen, in which role she was again superior and looked beautiful. Maurice Barrymore played Leonaius and Frank Clements was Tachimo. (Picayune, Saturday, January 12, 1884.) For the Saturday matinee, January 12, Modjeska played Juliet, and for her closing performance on Saturday night, she repeated Twelfth Night. At her closing performance, the Confederate Soldiers Home presented the star with a testimonial and a floral offering, as a symbol of political freedom. (Picayune, Saturday, January 12, 1884.) Because there was an increase in prices, unlike the similar hike in ticket cost with Clara Morris, Modjeska's engagement suffered greatly and her audiences were very small. (Picayune, Sunday, January 13, 1884.)

On Sunday, January 13, Rose Eytinge returned, and brought again the fine English actor, Cyril Searle as co-star. For the opening, the star appeared in an adaptation of Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist as played by them together for 1,500 performances at the Royal Olympic Theatre, London, and in which they were proclaimed by the London press for the most realistic acting ever witnessed. (Picayune, Sunday, January 13, 1884.) Rose Eytinge played Nancy Sykes with Searle as Bill Sykes. Miss Eytinge's powerful delineation
was regarded as brilliant and Searle showed sterling merit. Two amateur New Orleans actors in minor roles were meritori­ous. These were Bessie Bernard Smallwood and Bernard Shields. (Picayune, Monday, January 14, 1884.) On Monday, January 14, and for the balance of the week, Shakespeare's A Winter's Tale was produced with a ballet and mise-en-scene of supernumeraries numbering 100 persons. Rose Eytinge played Queen Hermione, and was imposing in tragic power. Searle was Leontes and Gloria Knowlton was Perdila. Others in the cast included Bernard C. Shields as Prince Florizel, Bessie Bernard Smallwood as Shepherdess, Sidney Drew as the Clown, Minnie Shannon as Mamilius, F. Armstrong as Camillo, Lewis Baker as King of Bohemia, Daniel Hart as Autolueus, H. E. Lewis as Paulina. Beginning her second week, on Sun­day, January 20, Rose Eytinge played the title role in Rose Michel and gave a finished powerful portrayal. Searle played the role of Pierre in impressive style. The drama was re­peated through Tuesday, January 22. On Wednesday, January 23, Miss Eytinge appeared as Armande in the drama Led Astray, a part which she had created and which she repeated again on Thursday noon for her one thousandth appearance in the part. Supporting the star were Cyril Searle as Rudolph Chandoce, Lewis Baker as George DeLesparre, Sidney Drew as Rector
Placide, Bernard C. Shields as Baron Gosline, J. D. Rocler as La Fontaine, H. Kingsley as Robert, J. Rogers as Huntsman, Georgie Knowlton as Mathilde, H. N. Lewis as Countess Chan-doce, Nellie Shannon as Sophie, Bessie Bernard Smallwood as Suzanne. (Picayune, Thursday, January 24, 1884.) On Thursday, January 24, Rose Eytinge appeared in the title role in Felicia, a French drama by the former New Orleans playwright, Albert Delpit, played before at the theatre. Supporting were Helen Lewis as Elnore Mornay and Bernard Shields as John, in chief roles. This play was repeated on Friday and Saturday's matinee. On Saturday night, January 26, the closing night of the Eytinge-Searle engagement, Oliver Twist was repeated. The Picayune reported that Rose Eytinge's business, as Modjeska's, had not been good. (Picayune, Sunday, January 27, 1884.)

On Sunday, January 27, 1884, the William Henry Rice Pleasure Party, a variety troupe, made their debut in a musical and variety show at the Grand Opera House. The show was called Our Goblins. William Henry Rice was described as a clever female impersonator in burlesque. Appearing in the company were Agnes Hallock, Alice Gleason, Frank Budworth, J. H. Stewart, C. W. Allison, Will Jones, Harry Maulick and J. Johnson. Like its two immediate predecessors, this
attraction had a bad week. It closed on Saturday, February 2.

Fanny Davenport returned to the theatre on Sunday, February 3, 1884, after an absence of years. She opened in Sardou's *Fedora*, which role she created in the English version of the French play on the New York stage and which she had only just closed. She brought with her the original New York cast, including the handsome young leading man, Robert Mantell, in his first of many appearances at the theatre. Miss Davenport had been coached by Sardou himself in the lead role. The cast, exactly as it was in New York, was as follows: Princess Fedora..Fanny Davenport, Loris Ipanoff..Robert Mantell, Jean de Sirex..Eugene McDowell, Pierre Baroff..James Miller, Rouvel..A. Del Campe, Vernet..J. M. Willis, Dr. Loreck..O'Kane Hillis, Gretch..Eugene Jepson, Nicholas Lasinski..Sheldon Kinnecom, Tchileff..Frank Willard, Dunitri..Lucy Pixley, Desire..Edward Warren, Cyrille..W. J. Hurley, Ivan..L. S. Anderson, Dr. Miller..E. Pembroke, Zuric..O. M. Dunn, Ditche..H. Williams, Doctor Assistant..Detter, Basile..Germon, Countess..Ada Monk, Mme. De Tournis..Marie Sheldon, Baroness Ockar..Annette Marska, Marks..Annie White. Fanny Davenport was regarded as a great actress and her company was exactly suited to the play's requirements. Mantell
was regarded by the *Picayune* as a strikingly handsome young man who acted as if unconscious of his audience. Popular Ada Monk was welcomed back as an old favorite of a stock company at the theatre seasons before. (*Picayune*, Monday, February 4, 1884.) Mantell would grow into a star who would receive top billing many times at the theatre. Towse says that Mantell frequently created effects far beyond the reach of any living American actor, but these were often the result of physical prowess rather than imaginative perception, and his roles, even at the height of his fame, were of uneven merit.⁵ *Fedora* played all week to crowded audiences, breaking the jinx of the past month's poor business.

J. H. Haverly's Company returned to the theatre to present as they had earlier, the spectacular melodrama, *The Silver King*, which played to full houses all week. F. C. Bangs and Helen Blythe filled the principal roles, and the whole company was excellent. This company remained from Sunday, February 10, through Saturday, February 16.

Then, another talented group of players followed, when on Sunday, February 17, Augustin Daly's well-known company came to the theatre and opened that night in Daly's

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⁵Towse, *op. cit.*, pp. 407-408.
sparkling comedy, 7-20-8. The play was adapted from the German of Schwathan, and was presented for the first time at the theatre and in the city. The company was well rehearsed, and gave a good performance. The play was found to be full of fun that sparkled at every turn. In the cast were Harry Rainforth as Bargiss, Agnes Perring as Mrs. Bargiss, Lizzie Jeramy as Flos, R. F. Russell as Courtney Carliss, and in small parts, W. H. Harris, E. T. Webber, Florence Barrett, D. G. Longworth, E. P. Wilks, Hattie Russell and Henry Miller. The play was seen all week. The Augustin Daly Company remained another week, and on Sunday, February 24, were seen for the first time in New Orleans in Daly's military comedy, The Passing Regiment. The play had a large cast and featured the dancing of the Highland Schottische. This was the week of the Mardi Gras carnival, and although the play ran the week, no performance was scheduled on Mardi Gras night, Tuesday, February 25. In this cast were Hattie Russell, Agnes Perring, Lizzie Jeramy, Minnie Dean, Florence Barrett, E. Gilbert, E. T. Webber, E. P. Wilks, Harry Rainforth, Fulton Russell, Henry Miller, G. D. Longworth, H. P. Atmer, E. D. Moore, and A. W. Spear. The offering closed on Saturday, March 1. This company closed its engagement on Sunday, March 2, at which time Pinero's drama, The Squire,
was presented. This play had run for 300 nights in London. Lizzie Jeramy was a stand-out as Kate Verity. This performance closed the 1883-1884 season at the Grand Opera House.

The 1883-1884 season had lasted for seventeen weeks. David Bidwell had planned for a season of twenty weeks but three of the attractions failed to keep their engagements. These included the Fan on the Bristol Company, The Hoop of Gold Company, and the Majiltons. Nevertheless, there were several significant engagements, including Modjeska's first appearance at the theatre; and Clara Morris and Fanny Davenport shared the honors of being the biggest attractions of the season, both doing capacity business for the entire engagements. *(Picayune, Sunday, March 2, 1884.)*

The Academy of Music remained Bidwell's favorite theatre always, and despite the fact that the theatrical magnate controlled all three major theatres in New Orleans for five years--from 1883 to 1888--the Academy continued to be opened first in the fall. Thus it was in 1884: the Academy opened early in September, the St. Charles was opened on October 12, while the Grand Opera House did not open until November 2, 1884.

Several new theatres opened that fall, minor in importance for the most part, but nonetheless, houses that would
serve as competition for the major theatres: Faranta's Theatre, at the corner of Bourbon and Orleans streets, which would provide competition with legitimate dramatic fare; the Grundwald's Opera House, which would cater to opera and opera bouffe; and the Eugene Robinson Dime Museum and Theatre, at 126 Canal Street, which had variety entertainment in addition to freak shows. The Grundwald Opera House opened its doors initially on the same night that the Grand Opera House opened that year, on Sunday, November 2, and established itself as a high-type house by presenting the Ideal Opera Company in Lecocq's The Little Duke with thirty artists and ten ballet dancers, at prices comparable to the Grand Opera House—50 cents, 75 cents and $1 for evenings and 50 cents for matinees. Faranta's Theatre opened its doors for the first time on the very next night, on Monday, November 3, 1884, and proved to be competition and a major headache for the established houses by offering the spectacular Mazeppa starring Zoe Gayton and featuring a big company and a beautiful Arabian steed called Gypsy, all for 10 cents. The Robinson's Museum and Theatre also opened that month, offering astounding entertainment for the rock-bottom price of 10 cents. For that small sum, in the new theatre of the museum, a patron could see twenty-five actors... in new refined
stage performances, with a different play scheduled one after another going on all day—from 10 AM to 10 PM. . . ."
Also, for that small admission fee, one was privileged to see in the main section of the museum, a number of fascinating freaks like "... a human mermaid who lives at will under water or out of it, Maggie Minnott—smallest woman in the world, a Great Congress of Albinos, and musical attractions as the all girl orchestra and the Rick Family—musical wonders. . . ." (Picayune, Sunday, November 2, 1884.)

Consequently, when the Grand Opera House opened on Sunday, November 2, 1884, the theatre had never opened to more competition—with all the established theatres already open, and three new houses of entertainment on the scene for the first time. However, the Grand Opera House, was, despite competition, firmly regarded as "... the most beautiful theatre in the South." (Picayune, November 2, 1884.)

Frederick Warde, an English actor, was the first attraction of the season, and made his New Orleans debut, appearing at the theatre as Gloster in Richard III. Supporting Warde, described as a brilliant actor, were Henry Aveling as Earl of Richmond, Robert C. Hudson as Buckingham, John Dailey as Stanley, H. C. Barton as Catsby, L. A. Williams as Norfolk, Mittens Willett as Lady Anne, Kate Meek as Queen Elizabeth,
Ida Thorpe as Duchess of York, Edwin Larence as Prince of Wales, Belle Lyons as Duke of York, G. F. Nash as Tressel, E. Horton as Ratcliff, W. A. Lavelle as Lieutenant, T. B. Jones as Officer, Charles Andrews as Blount, Walter Osmund as Oxford. The opening audience was mammoth, and applause was prolonged. Mittens Willett, leading lady of the company and Avering gave the greatest support. The new orchestra of the theatre was noted to be the finest in many seasons, and Knoll, on cornet, was given special mention for his outstanding solos. (Picayune, Monday, November 3, 1884.) On Monday, November 3, Warde appeared in the title role of Virginius. Other leading players included Mittens Willett as Virginia, Henry Aveling as Icilius, Robert Hudson as Appius Claudius, H. C. Barton as Caius Claudius, Milton Rainford as Siccius Dentatus, John Daily as Numitorius. Warde received a glowing review with the comment that his portrayal showed infinite study, patience, effort, power and remarkable smoothness. (Picayune, Tuesday, November 4, 1884.) On Tuesday, November 4, Richelieu was produced with Warde in the title role, Mittens Willett as Julie and Henry Aveling as De Mauprat. This play, and Othello on Wednesday night, confirmed further the merits of star and company. In Othello, Warde played Iago and made this his outstanding performance of his
repertoire. He had fine support from Henry Aveling as
Othello and Mittens Willett as Desdemona. (Picayune, Thursday, November 6, 1884.) On Thursday noon, Warde changed his
bill again, presenting Ingomar and playing the title role
with Mittens Willett as Parthenia. On Thursday night, John
Howard Payne's Brutus and Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew
were both offered. Warde appeared as Brutus in the first
play, with Aveling as Titus. This was the first production
of the play in many years, and the presentation was applauded
as being superior in every way, and with the acting of the
star and the entire company being admirable. In the latter
play, Mittens Willett played Katherine to Warde's Petruchio.
Again, the star excelled. It is to be noted that Warde
starred in three different full-length plays on Thursday,
and was noteworthy in each part. (Picayune, Friday, November
7, 1884.) On Friday, November 7, Virginius was repeated.
Warde closed his eventful and exceptional engagement on
Saturday night, November 8, by appearing as Damon in John
Banim's Damon and Pythias. Henry Aveling played Pythias,
with Mittens Willett as Calanthe; and the performance was a
good one.

Another star new to the Grand Opera House opened an
engagement on Sunday, November 9, 1884. She was Annie
Berlein, a conscientious actress with an attractive wardrobe. She opened in a new play, George Hoey's melodrama, Under the Upas, played for the first time in the city. Miss Berlein appeared as Volia, a feminine villain who poisons, murders and lies. Her support was weak, with the exception of E. J. Mack as the Marquis de Thuro. The balance of the troupe were described as "... amateurs who may have quitted a school of acting after one lecture." (Picayune, Monday, November 10, 1884.) The play ran through the Thursday matinee. On Thursday night and Saturday matinee, East Lynne was played with Annie Berlein as Lady Isabel and Mme. Vine. On Friday night, King Lear was the offering, with Miss Berlein as Cordelia. On Saturday night, November 15, and Sunday, November 16, Annie Berlein played Nancy Sykes in Oliver Twist. All week the star's support was feeble and poor, and business was bad. (Picayune, Sunday, November 16, 1884.)

Maurice Grau's French Opera Company returned on Monday, November 17, 1884, and presented a star new to the theatre and to New Orleans, Mme. Theo, a Parisian opera bouffé star. Theo lived up to her famous reputation and attracted large audiences for two weeks. The playing schedule was as follows: Monday, Mme. L'Archiduc; Tuesday, November 18 and Thursday matinee, November 20, La Jolie Parfumeuse; Wednesday

The highlight of the 1884-1885 season took place with the next auspicious engagement. On Sunday, November 30, and for the following important week, the celebrated tragedian, Thomas W. Keene came to the Grand Opera House. Keene was supported by a powerful company under the management of W. R. Hayden. The famous actor's repertoire was as follows:

Sunday and Saturday evening (opening and closing performances), *Richard III*; Monday, *Richelieu*; Tuesday, *Othello*; Wednesday, *Hamlet*; Thursday matinee, *Lady of Lyons*; Thursday night, *Fool's Revenge*; Friday, *Macbeth*; Saturday matinee, *Romeo and Juliet*. Despite the impressive booking, there was no advance in prices. In the company were some fine actors, including Constance Hamblen, W. P. Sheldon, Lettie Allen, Mrs. S. A. Baker, Carl Ahrendt, P. C. Hager, Eugene Moore, Mollie Marder,
Frank Henning, Harry Taylor, C. R. Hanford, Alex Corbett, Julius Scott, Dwight Gaylord and Arthur Howard. In Richard III, Keene appeared as Gloster, in the Colly Cibber version of the play. The star rated superlative reviews, including the Picayune's comments on his wholly intelligent portrayal, his mastery of detail and his remarkably distinct and beautiful diction. (Picayune, Monday, December 1, 1884.) The Daily States (which had only recently made its entrance upon the local newspaper scene) said: "... With the solitary exception of Booth, Mr. Keene is without question at the very head of the best of tragedians in America." This review noted with pleasure the actor's magnificent stage presence and strong voice, and said of his characterization:

... A more picturesque, a more forceful and a less brutal Richard of Gloster has not been seen upon the American stage. That he was playing upon chords of which he had entire and experienced control was proved over and over again by the enthusiasm--almost amounting to uproar--of his audience. (Daily States, Monday, December 1, 1884.)

Particularly outstanding cast members were Eugene Moore as Buckingham, Alex Corbett as Stanley, Julius Scott as Catesby, Dwight Gaylord as Tirrell. Richelieu as presented on Monday, December 1, revealed Keene as Richelieu, with the following in top support: Lettie Allen as Julie, C. P. Hager as De Mauprat, Arthur Howard as Louis XIII, Mollie Marder as Marion.
Keene's Cardinal was an original conception, depicting the man of history, strong, with a sense of humor. His beautiful diction again delighted his auditors. (Picayune, Tuesday, December 2, 1884.) Keene played the title role in Othello on Tuesday, December 3. As a piece of superior acting, the Picayune related that Keene's portrayal would have been electrifying even if he had not uttered a word, and his beautiful acting inspired and animated the entire cast. (Picayune, Wednesday, December 3, 1884.) Chief support came from Eugene Moore as Iago, P. C. Hager as Cassio, Lettie Allen as Desdemona, Constance Hamblin as Emilia, Carl Ahrent as Barbantio, W. P. Sheldon as Rodergio, Charles Hanford as Duke of Venice, Julius Scott as Montano, Alex Corbett as Gratiano. Keene as Hamlet, on Wednesday, December 3, was judged to be so excellent that, according to the Picayune, "... his work was like a picture set in the rays of the setting sun, all aflame with gold. . . ." (Picayune, Thursday, December 4, 1884.) Keene had good support from Lettie Allen as Ophelia, and Constance Hamblen as the Queen. On Thursday noon, December 4, The Lady of Lyons played to a capacity house, and on that evening, The Fool's Revenge featured Keene as Bertuccio, and brought forth new plaudits from the Picayune:
... The role has not been so sufficiently filled here for years. His remarkable adaptability... made it a depiction of concentrated passion so intense that it was more a demoniacal torturing of humanity than the physical deformity in which it purports to have its seat... (Picayune, Friday, December 5, 1884.)

Constance Hamblin was cast as Francesca, P. C. Hager as Del Aquilla and Lettie Allen as Fiordelisa. On Friday, December 6, Thomas W. Keene appeared as Macbeth, and it seemed incredible to the press that a production intended for one night only could have such meticulous detail—with historical costumes, special scenery, careful staging and numerous supernumeraries. In the role of Macbeth, the great actor affirmed to the local public that he was the greatest Macbeth then on any stage. Constance Hamblen supported as Lady Macbeth. (Picayune, Saturday, December 6, 1884.) For the final day of Keene’s singular engagement, he performed as Romeo in Romeo and Juliet at noon, and in the evening, he closed by repeating the title role in Richard III.

The classics gave way to melodrama on Sunday, December 7, when Charles Chappelle, another newcomer to the theatre, began an engagement of one week in Harry Meredith’s western melodrama, Ranch 10. Chappelle took the dual role of twin brothers, Al and Tom, both heroes of the story. A full house greeted the first performance of the play in its
New Orleans debut. Chappelle's enactment of the two brothers who were of very distinct and different character types, was regarded as being most creditable. The support was, on the other hand, only fair, with the exception of Annie Douglas as the old maid. Other principals included Annie Haines as Silver Bird, George Berrel as Joe Keebok, the villain, Margaret Benison as Annie, the heroine, and Sid Smith as the Judge. (Picayune, Monday, December 8, 1884.)

Bidwell now displayed a significant tendency, initiated for the first time the week of Sunday, December 14, 1884 at the Grand Opera House, of bringing back to one of his theatres at a later date an engagement that proved a money maker earlier in the season at another of his houses. On the above date, Morton and Bell's comedy company brought the comedy, Our Strategists to the theatre, after having made a hit at the Academy of Music in the play earlier that season. The cast included H. R. Bell as Jack Rutledge, Lewis Parker as Sgt. Gumbleton, Harry Thayer as Capsicum Pepper, E. C. Howard as Terrence O'Flam, Gerald Warner as Rev. John Mildman, Katie Gilbert as Nellie Howard, May Bardwell as Mrs. Howard, Helen Gould as Araminta. The comedy drew crowds just as heavily all week as it had done previously at the Academy of Music. (Picayune, Monday, December 15; Friday,
A spectacular event of the season, surpassed only by Keene's appearance, was the engagement for the first time at the theatre of James O'Neill in his famous role of the Count of Monte Cristo and Edmund Dantes, in Dumas' *Monte Cristo*. This was the first of many engagements of O'Neill in his celebrated play. O'Neill played the version used by Charles Fechter. The scenery was elaborate and complete in realistic detail, and included such admirable sets as the Port of Marseilles, the Chateau d'If and the Hotel de Monceuf. O'Neill starred under the personal management of John Stetson, and was supported by a good company. Top support came from Ralph Delmore as Nortier, H. B. Bradley as Villefort, J. W. Shannon as Caderousse. The *Picayune* said of O'Neill as Dantes: "There is no better actor on the stage for the part." (*Picayune*, Sunday, December 21; Monday, December 22, 1884.) The play was a major hit, playing all Christmas week to full houses, and was held over by popular demand for a second week, playing through Saturday night, January 3, 1885. Clara Morris returned to be the next star at the theatre. She was supported by the Frank L. Goodwin Dramatic Company, with Frederick Bryton as her leading man. The company opened without Clara Morris on Sunday, January 4, 1885,
playing in *The Galley Slave*, with Bryton as star. He was described as being handsome, and a competent actor. Then, on Monday, January 5, Clara Morris opened her engagement by appearing as Miss Multon with Frederick Bryton as Maurice De Latour. The play was a French version of *East Lynne* in which Clara Morris was said to hold the audience spellbound, and scored a great triumph on opening night. Bryton pleased immensely again; others in the cast included Mrs. M. A. Farren as Arabella Osborne, Clara Ogden as Paul De Latour, Virginia Ogden as Jane De Latour, Charles Steadman as Mons. Belin, Robert Fisher as Dr. Osborne, John C. Elliott as Gravesend, Emily Steward as Mathilda De Latour, Adah Crisp as Kitty, Edith Bird as Louise. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, January 6, 1885.) On Tuesday, Clara Morris appeared as Cora in *Article 47*, and created the same magnificent impression in this role as she had previously, and electrified the audience. Bryton appeared as George Duhamel. The rest of the cast included Charles Steadman as Potain, Robert Fisher as Dr. Coombes, J. A. Edwards as De Breeve, Joseph Holland as Victor, George Bird as Lauristot, George Fredericks as De Lille, Mrs. M. A. Farren as Mme. Gerard, and Emily Seward as Marcelle. (*Picayune*, Wednesday, January 7, 1885.) On Wednesday and Friday, Miss Multon was repeated, and on
Thursday night and Saturday matinee, *Article 47* was shown. On Thursday's matinee, Frederick Bryton appeared again in *Galley Slave*. The Saturday matinee on January 10, was Clara Morris' last appearance. On Saturday night, Frederick Bryton and the Frank L. Goodwin Company appeared in two plays, Wallack's comedy, *Snowball*, and in *Robert Macaire*.

For one week beginning on Sunday, January 11, 1885, another actress new to the theatre began an engagement. She was Mattie Vickers, who appeared for the first time in Charles Gayler's comic-drama, *Jacquine* or *Paste and Diamonds*, given for the first time in the city. The play did not have much of a plot but served to show off the talents of Miss Vickers as Jacquine. She acted, danced and sang. Charles S. Rogers, a comedian, co-starred as Dick Vinton. Also in the company were Mary Davenport (a familiar face at the theatre), Aida Gardner, E. F. Gardner, J. W. McConnell, R. C. Stewart, George Weller, William Mason and C. K. James. Also for the first time at the theatre, a dog performed in the cast and received cast billing: Fido Fido was played by Jumbo. The play ran through Saturday, January 17.

Now, another second successful booking that season was brought from the Academy of Music to the Grand Opera House, this time coming directly, instead of being recalled.
after an interval of time. On Sunday, January 18, Milton Nobles was moved from the Academy where he had been appearing the previous week, to star at the Grand Opera House for a week. Nobles co-starred with his actress wife, Dolly Nobles, a vocalist and comedienne. In the Nobles company were W. B. Fuller, Frank Lane, George W. Barnum, Max Fehrmann, Florence Vinton, Frank Aiken, Charles Warren, E. L. Mortimer, Willie Wright, Tillie Barnum, and Louis Browning. On Sunday, Monday and Thursday matinee, Nobles presented The Phoenix, one of several plays of which he was author. It was in this role that Nobles had first proved himself a worthy character comedian. The whole play was described as providing rollicking fun. (Picayune, Monday, January 19, 1885.) On Tuesday and Wednesday nights, Interviews, another of Nobles' plays was presented; and on Thursday night and through Saturday night's performance on January 24, Love and Law was presented. The latter which had been a hit the previous week at the Academy, was also authored by Nobles.

Marie Aimeé was to open on Sunday, January 25, but owing to a delay on the railroad, with her train breaking down between Orange and Beaumont, Texas, the star and her troupe did not arrive on time, and the opening was delayed until Monday. Instead, on Sunday, a substitution was found,
and Roland Reed and his Cheek Company played for the one night. Ticket holders for Aimeé were allowed either to see the latter play, to exchange for another Aimeé performance, or to see an offering at another of Bidwell's houses. (Picayune, Monday, January 26, 1885.) Aimeé's opening on Monday, January 26, was a unique one for the star as it marked her first appearance in the city in a nonsinging category, and as a legitimate actress. She appeared in Mam'zelle, a farce comedy especially written for her by Jessop and Gill. Aimeé played the title role of Mam'zelle, a French milliner. The play is significant in that it marked the first type of drama at the theatre in which actors were planted in the audience to participate on cue in the play. This Helzapoppin-type comedy first occurred in action in the second act, and at first the theatre patrons were unaware that the audience "business" were plants. The Cafe Chautant scene was accompanied by disturbances all over the audience; certain parties in boxes behaved very strangely, and a young man in the parquette was removed under protest. When it finally occurred to the audience that these disturbances were caused by members of the company, the applause was great. Aimeé was an immediate hit. She acted her part well, with a charming French accent, and the role allowed her to sing in French.
and to dance in her old inimitable way. The play ran through Saturday, January 31. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 27, 1885.)

The theatres in New Orleans played "musical chairs," with shifting rotating bookings on the week beginning Sunday, February 1, 1885. At this time, an attraction shifted from the Grand Opera House to the St. Charles when Aimeé left the former theatre to appear at the latter. Also the Mapleson Opera Company that had been at the St. Charles was shifted over to the French Opera House. The English melodrama, The Silver King, which had appeared twice during the previous season at the Grand Opera House with F. C. Bangs as Wilfred Denver, returned again on Sunday, February 1, and ran through Saturday, February 7. Bangs was impressive again in the lead role; and his leading lady was Charlotte Behrens as Mrs. Denver. Others in the large cast were Samuel Verney, Harry Colton, T. J. Quinn, James Vinecennnt, Frank Dayton, C. J. Burbidge, Lawrence Hanley, H. Dawson, W. P. Kitts, Joseph Howard, M. J. Carlisle, G. D. Farnham, F. Lyton, L. Y. Pance, Thomas Davis, Charles Parker, George Burk, John Levinson, Milton Keyes, Robert Clarke, Abbie Pierce, Nellie Farren, May Campbell and Effie Shannon. (Picayune, Monday, February 2, 1885.)

Continuing this eventful season, an exciting new young
star, a famous company, and a striking new melodrama all ascended at once upon the Grand Opera House on Sunday, February 8. The company was Shook and Collier's excellent Union Square Theatre Company, straight from New York. The new star was Alexander Salvini, the handsome young son of the celebrated international tragedian, Tomasso Salvini, and the new play was Robert Buchanan's melodrama, Storm Beaten, as produced by the company in New York, and seen now for the first time in the city. The play featured spectacular scenic effects created by Lysander Thompson, including aurora borealis effects in the exciting ice scene of the first act. The drama was adapted by Buchanan from his novel, Man of God. Set one hundred fifty years before, the scenes represented the coast of northeast England, on board ship, and an island of desolation. The extraordinary effects included the ship on fire, the ship caught among iceburgs and aurora borealis effects. The principal role of Christian was taken by Alexander Salvini, who was described as young and handsome, with excellent stage presence, energetic acting ability and remarkably good English pronunciation. The new star was cheered on opening night by a capacity audience that filled all standing room, and he received numerous curtain calls. It is ironic to note that his triumphant reception far
surpassed his famous father's reception during the latter's initial visit to the city at the same theatre. Chief supporting roles were handled by W. A. Sands as Richard, Nettie Guion as Kate, Lizzie McCall as Priscella Sexton, J. C. Padgett as Sexton, W. J. Constantine as Squire Orchardson, Mrs. W. A. Sands as Dame Christianson. (Picayune, Monday, February 9, 1885.) The melodrama played to capacity houses for two weeks, being held over for a second week, and playing through Saturday night, February 23. The second week of the run was concurrent with Mardi Gras, but no performances were cancelled and the house sold out every night despite the competition with carnival parades. On Monday and Tuesday, however, the curtain was held until 9 P.M., after the street parades had passed.

The brilliant Shook and Collier Union Square Company was held over for many more weeks at the request of Bidwell. No more popular company ever played at the Grand Opera House. At every performance many people were turned away while all standing room was sold out. It was lucky for Bidwell that the company did not have prior commitments and could remain. On Sunday, February 22, and for that week, George R. Sims' melodrama, The Lights of London was produced with the same scenery painted by Richard Marston that was used by the
company in the New York run of the play at the Union Square Theatre. The realistic melodrama dealt with the suffering of the lower class in London in that era. Alexander Salvini played the leading role of Harold Armitage. Other principals were John Mathews as Squire Armitage, Nettie Guion as Bess—Harold's wife, Lizzie McCall as Hettie Preene, and J. D. Padgett as Seth Preen. Others in the cast included Maude Dixon, W. A. Sands, F. Clifton, Joseph Backus, Fred Clare, W. Richards, E. Standcliffe, O. Ostrander, Ed Temple, George Clare, Albert Goodwin, John Marble, George Slade, Olive Berkley, George Jones, Arthur Raymond, Fred Banstead, Mrs. W. A. Sands, A. Howe, Lizzie Winner and Lillian Ainsleigh.

The play drew capacity audiences all week, playing through Saturday, February 28, 1885. The exceptionally popular company began its fourth week on Sunday, March 1, by adding several stars to its already superior troupe: Kate Claxton and her husband, C. A. Stephenson were brought to head the cast of the Union Square Company's production of The Two Orphans, the play in which Kate Claxton had starred in New York and had represented many times already at the Grand Opera House. The drama opened on Sunday, and played all week through Saturday, March 7, to full houses. Its cast included Kate Claxton as Louise, C. A. Stevenson as Jacques, Alexander
Salvini as Chevalier, J. C. Padgett as Pierre, Nettie Guion as Henrietta, Mrs. W. A. Sands as Mother Frochard, Isabel Freeman as Countess de Linieres, John Marble as Picaud, Lizzie McCall as Marianne, Louisa Dickson as Sister Genevieve, Mary Drake as Julie, Maud Dickson as Florette, Lillian Ainsleigh as Sister Therese, W. J. Constantine as Count de Linieres, John Matthews as Doctor, Edward Temple as La Fleur, George Padgett as Captain, George Clarke as Martin, Fred Clare as Police Clerk, L. V. Thompson as D'Estree, E. Stancliff as Antoine. The Union Square Company broke all previous records in the length of stay for a visiting company, remaining for a fifth week, still at sold out houses. Kate Claxton remained as star, and mammoth crowds packed the theatre all week to witness The Sea of Ice. The drama sported magnificent scenic effects as well as the excellent acting of the company. Such scenes as the deck of a ship tossed on an ice-bound Arctic Ocean, a storm and the ice breaking, caused gasps and much applause. The cast was as follows: Kate Claxton as Louise, Olive Berkley as Marie, Charles A. Stevenson as Carlos, John Marble as Barbaras, John Mathews as Jean, W. J. Constantine as Raoul, George Clare as Pierre, Fred Burrill as Block, E. Walker as Survie, Mrs. W. A. Sands as Countess, Nettie Guion as Diane, C. A.
Stevenson as Marquis Del Monte, Ed Temple as Horace, W. A. Sands as George De Laval, G. W. Padgett as Spanish Secretary. The play closed on Saturday, March 14. Constantly packed houses and popular demand commanded more of this company. Their sixth week at the theatre began on Sunday, March 15, with the offering of George Hoey's melodrama, A Child of the State. Alexander Salvini and Kate Claxton starred in the play, which was laid in Holland in the seventeenth century. Sold out houses prevailed the entire week, and the company received new press honors with its fine acting, with Alexander Salvini earning top plaudits for outstanding playing. The Picayune predicted that in ten years, the brilliant son of the illustrious Salvini would rival any actor in the first rank of the theatre. (Picayune, Monday, March 16, 1885.) Unfortunately, this prediction was altered by fate, with the sudden death of the young star before many more years were to pass. The cast of A Child of the State was as follows:

Alexander Salvini as Count Maurice, Charles A. Stevenson as Gros Rene, Kate Claxton as Gertrude, Nettie Guion as Marie, Lizzie McCall as Caroline, W. A. Sands as Christian, W. J. Constantine as Frederick, Frank Richmond as Walberg, Ed Temple as Bidoche, G. W. Padgett as Fritz, E. Stancliff as Lantry, Fred Clare as Hans, George Clare as Carl, Louisa
Dickson as Louise.

The triumphant Union Square Company remained at the Grand Opera House by popular acclaim for two additional record-breaking weeks. Their seventh week began on Sunday, March 22, when the melodrama, *A Celebrated Case*, was presented, starring Alexander Salvini. Large houses viewed the play all week, through Saturday, March 28. The cast was as follows: Alexander Salvini as Jean Renaud, Nettie Guion as Adrienne, Lizzie McCall as Valentine, W. J. Constantine as Duke d'Aubeterre, W. A. Sands as Count de Mornay, G. W. Padgett as Viscount de Langey, J. C. Padgett as Dennis O'Rouke, George Clare as Sergeant, John Marble as Joseph, Louise Dickson as Duchess, Mrs. W. A. Sands as Chanionesse, Lizzie Winner as Julie. For the eighth and final week of their astounding engagement, by audience insistence, *Storm Beaten* was brought back for six performances, beginning on Sunday, March 29, and playing through Thursday, April 2. *Lights of London* was repeated as the final offering of the company, beginning on Friday, April 3, for four performances, the closing being on Sunday, April 5, 1885.

The long season was not yet over. The termination of the season was described as the greatest the city had ever known up to that time. (*Picayune*, Sunday, March 29, 1885.)
Bidwell was given credit for the success of the long season, with new bookings still listed for all three of Bidwell's theatres. The Picayune called Bidwell "... a Napoleon among managers," and said that no city in the country, except New York and Boston would have such an active April with theatrical entertainment. Lawrence Barrett was announced as the next star at the Grand Opera House. (Picayune, Sunday, March 29, 1885.) After the high point established by the Union Square Company, Lawrence Barrett's engagement proved no let down, but seemed to equal and amplify the enthusiasm of mammoth houses. Barrett had been absent from the Grand Opera House for several years. In his absence, his reputation had grown steadily, and when he opened at the theatre on Monday, April 6, 1885, in Yorick's Love, never had he received such tribute from the press and the patrons of the theatre. The tragic play was Howells' adaptation of Estebanez' French play. Barrett was greeted on opening night by one of the largest and most elite audiences ever gathered at the theatre. The commendation of the Picayune rated Barrett now as America's greatest tragic actor, while at the same time censuring Edwin Booth:

... This powerful actor came to New Orleans twenty years ago a young untried actor, to be leading man at the old Varieties Theatre. His
success was great. He went from here to be a star. His career since belongs to the history of the American stage. Every cultured honest American is proud of Lawrence Barrett. His aims have been the highest and noblest. He had done everything in his power to elevate the stage. . . . Barrett is now America's greatest tragic actor . . . excepting only Mr. Booth, who seems content to stay in Northern cities, and rest his reputation on the performance of the half dozen characters which he has been acting for the past thirty years. . . . Barrett has encouraged dramatic authorship in the forms by purchasing, producing and acting original plays. (Picayune, Tuesday, April 7, 1885.)

The Picayune was to reverse completely its negative stand regarding Booth only two and three years later, when Booth came as sole star in 1887, and then when Booth and Barrett played together at the Grand Opera House in 1888. At that time, the newspaper would have nothing but raves for Booth.

A completely sold out "standing room only" house on opening night witnessed a superior company support the star. Marie Wainwright and husband Louis James headed the support with Marie Wainwright proving to be the best and most capable leading lady Barrett was ever to have. The cast was as follows: Lawrence Barrett as Master Yorick, Louis James as Heywood, S. E. Springer as Master Walton, F. C. Mosley as Master Edmund, Charles M. Collins as Master Woodford, Ben Rogers as Gregory, Charles Hawthorne as Thomas, Marie Wainwright as Alice and Beatrice, F. C. Mosley as Mantredo, S. E.
Springer as Landolpho. The *Times-Democrat* reported that there was such a demand to see Barrett on opening night that Assistant Manager Conniff was forced to turn away many hundreds of people from both the orchestra and balconies. (*Times Democrat*, Tuesday, April 7, 1885.) The press saw the gigantic opening house to be a great tribute to the beloved first manager of that theatre. (*Times-Democrat*, Tuesday, April 7, 1885.) On Tuesday, *Hamlet* was offered and the response was the same, with many disappointed fans being turned away from the theatre's completely full auditorium. Barrett's acting proved more powerful and finished than ever, and his large houses were completely responsive. As Hamlet, Barrett was supported by Louis James as the Ghost, Marie Wainwright as Ophelia, Minnie Monk as Queen, Ben G. Rogers as Polonius, F. C. Mosley as Laertes, Charles Hawthorne as Horatio. On Wednesday, Barrett performed in *Richelieu* to another capacity house, and warranted a review that rated the star as surpassing Booth:

... It is well known that Mr. Booth, who can act Richelieu better than any man living when he chooses, has of late grown careless, and uneven, saving himself for points, while Mr. Barrett acts all the way through, with quite as much neatness and finish. It goes then that Mr. Barrett gives the best performance. (*Picayune*, Thursday, April 9, 1885.)
On Thursday, April 9, Barrett appeared in the lead roles in two plays, The Merchant of Venice and David Garrick. On Friday, the star acted in two new plays: A Blot on the 'Scutcheon and The King's Pleasure. Again, as had been the case all week, hundreds were turned away. This fact is significant in that, although it was so late in the spring, the professional season was still in full swing at all the city's houses of entertainment. Consequently, Barrett was not without competition: the St. Charles had Wallack's Company, the Academy had the Madison Square Company--both top companies, Pygmalion and Galatea was at the French Opera House, Faranta's Theatre had the John R. Allen Company, while variety companies were at Grunewalds' Opera House and Robinson's Museum. Yet, the city's populace flocked to see Barrett. The star's new double bill on Friday was particularly auspicious since both plays were new to the city. A Blot on the 'Scutcheon was a tragedy in three acts by Robert Browning with a plot so somber and grim that the Picayune avowed: "... The tomb scene of Romeo and Juliet is comedy compared to this play." Barrett played Thorold, Earl of Tresham, with Marie Wainwright as Mildred, Thorold's sister, and F. C. Mosley as Earl of Mertoun, Mildred's lover. The King's Pleasure proved to be a happier play. The comedy was
an adaptation-translation of Theodore de Banville's French comedy, *Gringoire*, a play which had been acted first in 1866 by Coquelin at the Théâtre Français. Barrett took the lead role of Gringoire, a strolling poet. Marie Wainwright played Loyse, the Burgher's daughter and the love interest, with Ben Rogers as the Burgher and Louis James as Louis XI. Barrett was said to be excellent in the new part, being persuasive and eloquent. (*Picayune*, Saturday, April 11, 1885.) On Saturday, April 11, *Yorick's Love* was offered at noon and *Julius Caesar* was played at night, with Barrett in his celebrated role of Cassius. Again, hundreds of people were turned away from the theatre. (*Picayune*, Sunday, April 12, 1885.) Barrett refused to play on Sundays, being a religious man, and the next night was dark.

So remarkably successful was Barrett's first week of his two-week engagement that the *Picayune* stated: "... He ends the regular season at the Grand Opera House with a crown of glory." (*Picayune*, Sunday, April 12, 1885.) The star's second week proved to be as illustrious as the first. Barrett opened his second stellar week on Monday, April 13, by producing George H. Boker's tragedy, *Francesca da Rimini*, one of the most popular dramas of the era. From Barrett on to every member of the cast, the acting was rated as being
exceptional by the Picayune. (Picayune, Tuesday, April 14, 1885.) The play was staged handsomely and the costumes were elegant. The cast was as follows: Lanciotto, the Hunchback.

.Lawrence Barrett, Count Paolo, his brother..F. C. Mosley, Malatesta, Lord of Rimini..C. M. Collins, Guido..Ben G. Rogers, Beppo Pepe, the Jester..Louis James, Cardinal Malespini

..Charles Jameson, Rene..Percy Winter, Lucentio..Garrie Davidson, Gremio..J. L. Finney, Vincento..W. F. Gerald, Torelli..

Henry Tapper, Lodovico..Eugene Morgan, Marco..Herman Forbes, Captain..Louis Lyon, Officer..J. H. Ward, Francesca, Guido's daughter..Marie Wainwright, Ritta..Rosa France. The drama was repeated to full houses through noon on Thursday. On Thursday night, April 16, Julius Caesar was revived, and on Friday, April 17, Barrett starred in Much Ado About Nothing, with Barrett as Benedick, Marie Wainwright as Beatrice, Ben Rogers as Dogberry, and Rosa France as Hero. On Saturday, April 18, the last of Barrett's engagement, and also the final day of the season, Romeo and Juliet was acted at noon with Barrett and Marie Wainwright, and Saturday night, Hamlet was repeated. At the close of Lawrence Barrett's engagement, the Picayune noted that this had been the greatest engagement of the star in the city. Significantly, never before had hundreds of patrons been turned away from every
performance throughout Barrett's engagement. The Picayune declared: "... This ends the season at the Grand Opera House in a blaze of glory. ... It has been the best season known in the history of that theatre!" (Picayune, Sunday, April 19, 1885.)

In summarizing the 1884-1885 season, it is to be noted that despite the competition from several new theatres and variety houses, never before had the Grand Opera House had such a glorious season. David Bidwell proved to be a financial wizard in striking just right in his policies, in booking engagements that would fill the theatre, and in providing the longest and most lucrative season since the theatre's opening. With three leading theatres in one city, Bidwell used his theatres as compliments to rather than as competition to each other. First, he changed the matinee day at the Grand Opera House from Wednesday to Thursday, thus lessening matinee competition among this theatre and his other houses. Second, he covered cancellations smoothly by offering ticket-holders to a cancelled performance at the theatre the choice of two other theatres' entertainments. Third, if an attraction proved to be a hit at one of his theatres, Bidwell wisely brought the bill later on to another of his houses.
Fourth, if a hit was drawing audiences heavily, but another booking was engaged to follow the first bill by a specific date, it was sometimes possible to extend the run of the hit attraction by moving it to another of the three theatres. Consequently, during the 1884-1885 season, Bidwell moved hit shows from the Academy to the Grand Opera House and from the Grand Opera House to the Academy. This season marked increased interest in and popularity of melodramas, and many examples of this type of drama were offered that season.

Frederick Warde, an English actor new to the city, began the impressive season at the theatre on Sunday, November 2, 1884, making a favorable impression and playing to good houses. Annie Berlein, the weakest booking of the season, followed on Sunday, November 9. In her first visit to the city, the young star was supported by such a weak company, that her sincere efforts were almost negated, and business was poor. Mme. Theo, a Parisian opera celebrity, starred for the first time with the Maurice Grau Opera Company, when it opened a two-week engagement on Monday, November 17, of opera bouffé. The most auspicious engagement of the season was that of the celebrated tragedian, Thomas W. Keene, presented in his first booking at the theatre. Keene appeared in a classic repertoire, brought the excellent W. R. Hayden Company, and was
highly successful. He opened his one-week engagement on Sunday, November 30, 1884. First of a long list of melodramas to hit the theatre that season was Harry Meredith's Ranch 10. Charles Chappelle, in his first appearance at the theatre, starred for a week as twin brothers in this opus, opening on Sunday, December 7, and doing a good business. Morton and Bell's successful company, having played at the Academy of Music earlier that season, opened at the theatre on Sunday, December 14, and played in Our Strategists for a week, doing big business. James O'Neill opened a significant first engagement on Sunday, December 21, in his famous role as the Count and Edmund Dantes in The Count of Monte Cristo. He played two weeks to mammoth houses. Another celebrated star followed, Clara Morris, who began an engagement on Sunday, January 4, 1885, stayed for a week in varied repertoire, and introduced handsome Frederick Bryton as her leading man. Business was big. Mattie Vickers headed the cast of Gayler's comedy, Jacquine, for a week beginning Sunday, January 11. She did well, although her support was only fair. Milton Nobles was transferred from the Academy of Music on Sunday, January 18, and played in several comedies for a week to good audiences. Roland Reed held the stage for one night on Sunday, January 25. On Monday, January 26,
Marie Aimeé opened an engagement for a week, playing for the first time as an actress and not primarily as a singer. She did well, and was moved to the St. Charles to make way for the melodrama, *The Silver King*, presented beginning on Sunday, February 1, by the J. H. Haverly Company. F. C. Bangs headed the cast, and the play did good business for a week. The Union Square Theatre Company, managed by Shook and Collier, moved into the theatre on Sunday, February 8, to break all previous records for a visiting company. The group was held over for eight weeks and played to capacity audiences throughout that time. Alexander Salvini was the main star of the company, with Kate Claxton and C. A. Stevenson sharing top honors for several weeks. Mostly melodrama was played. The group closed on Saturday, April 4, and the theatre was dark for one week prior to a sensational two-week engagement of Lawrence Barrett, supported by Marie Wainwright and Louis James. Playing his familiar repertoire with a few new additions, Barrett packed in the patrons for each performance to such an extent that hundreds were turned away every night for the entire two weeks. This situation shattered all previous Barrett records in the city, and proved to be an unforgettable closing bill for Bidwell's 1884-1885 season.
The 1885-1886 season opened on Sunday, November 3, 1885. Edward E. Kidder's melodrama, *Niagara the Adventuress*, was the first production of the season, and Rose Eytinge was the initial star. She was supported by an excellent company under the personal direction of playwright Edward K. Kidder. The exciting new offering played for one week with the following cast: Rose Eytinge as Guiditta, Ada Gilman as Eily, Augusta Redmond as Mildred Poole, Laura LaClaire as Mrs. Wedge, Mattie Ferbushon as Constance, Stella Trenton as Ricca, A. J. Dunbar as Officer, Will Sands as Luigi, Charles T. Nichols as Pietri, Henry Dalton as Saxon Poole, Charles Stanley as Noah. This was not a one-part play, and every member of the cast was able to display his ability. (*Picayune*, Monday, November 9, 1885.)

The world-famous Milan Grand Opera Company from Milan, Italy, moved into the theatre on Sunday, November 15, for two weeks. Stars of the troupe were Emma Romeldi, Ernesto Baldanza, A. Marchesi, Carrie Morse and G. Rologua. At popular prices ranging from 25 cents to $1.00, the following offerings were scheduled: Sunday, November 15, *Il Trovatore*; Monday, November 16, *Lucia*; Tuesday, November 17, *La Traviata*; Wednesday, November 18, *Martha*; Thursday, November 19, *La Sonnambula*; Friday, November 20, *Norma*; Saturday matinee,
November 21, Lucia; Saturday night, Faust. Second week:
Sunday, November 22, La Traviata; Monday, November 23, La Sonnambula; Tuesday, November 24, Norma; Wednesday, November 25, Rigoletto; Thursday, November 26, Faust; Friday, November 27, Lucrezia Borgia; Saturday matinee, November 28, La Traviata; Saturday night, Lucia.

Lena Langdon made her debut on Sunday, November 29, 1885, at the theatre, when she appeared for the first time locally in Young Mrs. Winthrop, starring as Constance Winthrop, a part she had acted over 300 times. The performance was only fair, with a supporting cast of players mostly new to the stage. In the cast were Leighton Baker as Douglas Winthrop, playing opposite Lena Langdon as Constance, and Agnes Graham, Etta Hawkins, Emily Maynard, H. C. DeMille, Lortimer Stoddard, J. L. Wilson and H. B. Mason. The play remained for a week.

James M. Hardie and Sara Von Leer headed the fine New York company that moved into the theatre on Sunday, December 6, for one week. The troupe played in the drama, A Brave Woman, in the original parts as performed in New York. The leading actors were excellent, and were well supported by the strong cast. The play was found to be arresting and was loudly applauded. In the cast were James Hardie as Ivie,
Sara Von Leer as Lillian, Ada Foster as Artie, Helen Mowatt as Polly Randall, Florence Foster as Dame Belle, Emma Latham as Maud, Lincoln Walenhale as Archie, Daniel Ralston as Sir Arthur, Hal Lovell as Ward Cree, George Fawcett as Sandie Gram, Charles Titus as Georgie Bell. The fine play and company did not receive patronage equal to the merits of either. (Picayune, Sunday, December 13, 1885.)

William H. Gillette was the next star to make his debut at the theatre, appearing for a week beginning Sunday, December 13, in his own adaptation of the farcical comedy Private Secretary, which Gillette had translated from the German. At this time, Gillette was already a famous playwright and actor. Private Secretary had already been a hit in London and New York for the past two years. The play was presented with this cast: William H. Gillette as Rev. Robert Spaulding, M. A. Kennedy as Mr. Cattermole, Frank Tannehill, Jr. as Douglas, H. A. Moray as Marsland, Herbert Ayling as Harry, T. A. Wise as Gibson, Thomas Curran as John, A. D. Gill as Knox, Maud Haslam as Edith, Maud Giroux as Eva, Mrs. Selden Irwin as Miss Ashford, Alice Sherwood as Mrs. Stead, Mrs. H. Charles as Mrs. Spaulding. Gillette's performance rated a panning from the Picayune, which regarded his portrayal of the minister as grossly exaggerated and
unnatural, the consequence of which was to make the part of
the Reverend as idiot. *(Picayune, Monday, December 14, 1885.)*
M. A. Kennedy was regarded as the best actor in the cast, with
fine acting style.

James O'Neill returned in *Monte Cristo* on Sunday,
December 20, for the Christmas week and drew mammoth audi­
ences. With replacements in the cast since its previous
showing, the play was now performed better than it had ever
been in the city. The superior cast was as follows: James
O'Neill as Edmund Dantes and Count de Monte Cristo, J. W.
Shannon as Noirtier, W. H. Wallis as Caderouse, S. Miller
Kent as Albert, H. B. Bradley as Villefort, John Mellon as
Douglas, Howard Gould as Fernande, J. H. Shewell as Morel,
Arthur LeClercq as Dantes, W. Jones as Abe Faria, F. B.
Boudinot as Brigadier, B. Shannon as Police Agent, Harry
McClusky as Germain, E. Pelnam as Prison Governor, G. Meulier
as Jailer, B. B. Frank as Sentinel, W. Wilson as Servant,
Elizabeth Robins as Mercedes, Annie Boudinot as Carconte,
Fannie Henry as Mlle. Danglars, Marie Floyd as Fisherman.

The Baltimore Academy Opera Company began a three-week
engagement on Sunday, December 27, 1885, making its debut at
the theatre. Featured performers of the company were Eva
Ballan, Louise Searle, Jeannie Winston, Rose Leighton, George
Appleby, Walter Allen, Arthur Bell, Vincent Hogan and Joseph Fay. Adam Utzel, Jr., was conductor of the large orchestra. The playing schedule was as follows: Sunday, December 27, through Saturday matinee, January 2, 1886, The Queen's Lace Handkerchief; Thursday matinee, December 31, Princess of Trebezonde; Thursday night and Saturday night, January 2, Fra Diavolo; New Year's matinee, Friday, January 1, Cinderella at School; Friday night, La Perichole. The company achieved an artistic triumph. For its second week, the opera company presented, beginning on Sunday, January 3, 1886, for the first time in New Orleans, a new opera, Jack Sheppard. The opera was founded on Ainsworth's novel of the same name, with libretto by Al Fulton and music by Adam Itzel, leader of the orchestra. The opera ran through Tuesday, January 5.

The rest of the week's schedule was as follows: Wednesday night and Thursday matinee, January 7, Princess of Trebizonde; Friday, January 8, Saturday matinee and night, January 9, Prince Methusalem. For the third week, on Sunday, January 10, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday matinee, Von Suppe's Donna Juanita; Monday, Thursday and Saturday nights, Boccaccio; and Wednesday night and Saturday matinee, January 16, Prince Methusalem.

In January, 1886, another new theatre opened, the
Avenue Theatre, located on St. Charles Avenue and Calliope Street. Like Faranta's Theatre, it was a low price house, with admission to see Scott Marble's comedy, Silver Spurs, the initial offering, set at only 10 cents and 20 cents. (Picayune, Sunday, January 10, 1886.)

The biggest audience of the season turned out for the opening night of the next attraction, Charles H. Hoyt's musical comedy, A Rag Baby, on Sunday, January 17. This production of the popular play marked its first local presentation. Marion Elmore and John T. Craven headed the company that was managed by Eugene Tompkins. The action took place in a drug store, and the store patrons were all peculiar comedy caricatures. Most of the cast took multiple parts. Cast members included Marion Elmore as Venus Grout, John T. Craven as Old Sport, Tony Williams as a tramp, Harry Young as a pharmacist, Michael Sheedy as new father; all the foregoing taking major parts, and in minor roles: Rosa France, Marie Reynolds, Helen Brainard, James Dyer, W. F. Mack, Henry Pew and Ella Mayer. Marion Elmore played with vim and spirit, and was received warmly. The novel play remained all week. (Picayune, Monday, January 18, 1886.)

The melodrama, The Silver King, returned for a week's engagement on Sunday, January 24, with Frank C. Bangs again
starring as Wilfred Denver. Bangs was supported by a strong, able company from New York, under the direction of Joseph H. Mack. The cast included Grace Thorn as Nellie Denver, Sam Verney as Daniel, Horace Vinton as Captain Skinner, Dunston Farnham as Cripps, Charles Marriott as Frank, D. J. Sherwood as Parkyn, Harry Dayton as James Vincent, Gail Forest as Olive, Emie West as Tabitha, Winnie Shannon as Cissy, Effie Shannon as Susy, Mrs. P. A. Earle as Mrs. Gammage, Little Lily as Ned.

The next event was a major one at the theatre. On Sunday, January 31, 1886, Bidwell brought to the theatre the excellent Star Dramatic Company, a company that was to play a week at that time and was to return late in March. The Star Company was really a stock company organized in New Orleans to play at the St. Charles Theatre. It was a superior company with featured New York players like Marie Wainwright, Barton Hill and Henry Hawk. Marie Wainright had last appeared at the theatre during the previous season with Lawrence Barrett, during his triumphant return. Wheelock and Hill had appeared also many times at the Grand Opera House, and Charles Wheatleigh, a veteran actor, had been a star comedian decades before and was now a valued character man. The company played in Henry Guy Carleton's comedy-drama,
Victor Durand to a large audience with the following cast:
Joseph Wheelock as Henri Favart, Charles Welles as the Baron, Charles Wheatleigh as John Vaughn, J. W. Hague as Dr. Randolph, George Backus as Tub, Barton Hill as Paul, Henry Hawk as Antonio, Percy Brooke as Jacques, Louis Filber as Whittle, Marie Wainwright as Ruth, Emma Maddern as Violet, Louis Muldener as Mrs. Dudley. The performance was described by the Picayune as one of the best ever seen in the city. Marie Wainwright was hailed as a gem of an actress, and Wheatleigh, Wheelock and Welles also drew strong approval. (Picayune, Monday, February 1, 1886.) At noon on Monday, the company offered The Two Orphans, while Victor Durand was repeated through Wednesday night. On Thursday noon and night and on Friday, Man and Wife was performed. The excellent group did not play on Saturday, but ended their week on Friday, February 5. Concerning Marie Wainwright and Joseph Wheelock who took the principal roles in this play, the Picayune said there had never appeared a finer pair of actors than these two. (Picayune, Friday, February 5, 1886.) Every seat was sold all week for this fine company. After completing their week, the Star Company left for a tour of several cities, returning to the theatre on March 28.

Marie Aimée returned on Sunday, February 7, for two
weeks. The French star appeared under the direction and management of Maurice Grau, in Victorien Sardou's comedy, The Divorce Bill. As Cyprienne, a married lady who seeks a divorce after reading treatises on divorce laws, Marie Aimeé was regarded as captivating, and her French accent added to her charm. The balance of the cast, all who were good in their roles included Russell Bassett as Des Prunelles, Lester Victor as Adhemar, A. DelCampe as Clavinac, F. Anderson as Bafortdin, Newton Chisnell as Joseph, Leo Cooper as Police Chief, Martin as Bastian, H. Deaves as Janitor, Laura Wallace as Mlle. DeBrionne, Charline Weldman as Josephine, Lou Burleigh as Mlle. De Valfontaine, Florence Spader as Mme. De Lasignan. The attendance all week was only fair. For her second week, Aimeé repeated her first English success, Mam'zelle, as performed before at the theatre. The cast, all judged as good, was as follows: Marie Aimeé as Toinette and Fleur de Lis, Russell Bassett as T. T. Tupper, A. Del Campe as Lionel Leslie, Leo Cooper as Bob Pritchard, Newton Chis­sell as Col. Poster, Lester Victor as Francois, Martin as Toppleby, H. Deaves as O'Club, J. A. Anderson as Thisway, Laura Wallace as Louisa Tupper, Charline Weldman as Mary. This play was rated as more delightful than that of the previous week. (Picayune, Sunday, February 14; Monday, February 15, 1886.)
Another Parisian artiste followed Aimeé. She was Anna Judie, a famous French vaudeville and comic opera star, also brought to the theatre by Maurice Grau. Mlle. Judie made her local debut at the Grand Opera House on Sunday, February 21, 1886. appearing in Meilhac and Herne's musical comedy, Mlle. Nitouche. This play was written especially for the French star, and had first been produced at the Paris Varieties in 1883 with Judie in the title role. She was supported by Maurice Grau's French Opera Company, and appeared for one week. For this engagement, prices rose slightly, tickets selling at $2, $1.50 and 50 cents. Judie's company consisted of Mme. Delorme, Mlles. Raymonde, DeWitt, Caro, Mirybel, De Lest, Ellen, Perrin, Andreé and J. Blanc, and Messrs. Cooper, Ginet, Mezieres, Germain, Gregoire, Dupuis, Salvator, Vinchon, Estiot and Minard. The program for the balance of the week was as follows: Monday, February 22, La Grande Duchesse; Tuesday, February 23, La Femme à Papa; Wednesday, February 24, La Belle Helene; Thursday matinee, February 25, La Mascotte; Thursday evening, Lili; Friday, February 26, Divorcons; Saturday matinee, February 27, La Perichole; Saturday night, Ninoche.

Mlle. Rhea was the third charming French actress in a row to grace the stage of the Grand Opera House. She came
for two weeks, opening on Sunday, February 28, by appearing in Augustin Daly's adaptation of William Wycherley's comedy, *The Country Wife*. The cast was as follows: Peggy Thrift, Mlle. Rhea, Squire Moody, R. W. Wilson, Ned Harcourt, Percy Sage, Dick Belville, Boyd Putnam, Sparkish, Edward Warren, Old Will, Charles T. Vincent, Robin, Edwin Davis, Althea, Julia Wheeler, Lucy, Anna Mc Kay. Rhea's support was only fair, but the star's acting was rated as near perfect. (Picayune, Monday, March 1, 1886.) The comedy ran through Tuesday. On Wednesday through Friday, *Pygmalion and Galatea* was offered, and on Saturday for both performances, *A Dangerous Game* was played. Rhea's support improved considerably in W. S. Gilbert's mythological comedy, *Pygmalion and Galatea*, with excellent acting from George F. Learock, Ella Wren and Robert G. Wilson; all experienced and well-known players. The cast was as follows: Pygmalion, George F. Learock, Galatea, Rhea, Leucippe, Edward Warren, Chrysos, Robert Wilson, Agesinios, Percy Sage, Mimos, Boyd Putnam, Cynisca, Adelaide Fitzellen, Daphne, Ellen Wren, Myrine, Julia Wheeler. Rhea's performance as Galatea, seen for the first time in the city in the role, was described as charming, and her French accent made the part delightful. (Picayune, Wednesday, March 4, 1886.) For her second week, beginning on Sunday, March 7,
Rhea appeared in Tom Taylor's comedy, *An Unusual Match*, given with the following cast: Hester..Rhea, Bienkinsop..Charles Vincent, Harry Arneliffe..George Learock, Honeywood..Boyd Putnam, Captain Chillingham..Percy Sage, Botchesby..Ed Warren, Toffs..A. C. Hillsdorf, Grazesbrook..Robert Wilson, Herr Dumpkoff..Edwin Davies, Mrs. Montressor..Adelaide Fitzellen, Lady Honeywood..Julia Wheeler, Miss Leach..Annie Mackar, Betsy..Ellen Wren. This play remained through Tuesday. On Wednesday, Rhea performed in the title role in *Adrienne Le-couvreur*; on Thursday night *Frou-Frou* was performed, with *An Unequal Match* at the matinee. On Friday, Rhea performed in *Camille*; and on Saturday, *The Power of Love* was given at both performances. As Camille, Rhea gave her best performance of her entire engagement, fitting well the part of the young and beautiful French woman. She was admirably supported by George Learock as Armand, Robert Wilson as M. Duval and Charles T. Vincent as Gaston. George Learock received the highest praise in the entire cast as Armand. Learock had performed the role many times with Charlotte Thompson, and was excellent. (*Picayune*, Saturday, March 13, 1886.) Sardou's comedy, *The Power of Love* was acted by Rhea for the first time in the city, on Saturday, March 13, the final day of her engagement. The plot concerned Frederic, a young

Bidwell had planned to book the Star Company again into the Grand Opera House on Sunday, March 14, but he moved the group instead to the St. Charles Theatre for two weeks, leaving the Grand Opera House dark for this period. Some lack of forethought in planning ahead accounted for this blunder. After the two-week dark period, the Star Dramatic Company moved to the theatre on Sunday, March 28, opening in Dumas' drama, The Corsican Brothers. The superior company received a glowing tribute from the Picayune which said, "... No greater cast has ever been given the great Fechter production in this country." The cast was as follows:

Joseph Wheelock. Fabien and Louis, Barton Hill. Renaud,
Charles Welles..Baron de Montgiron, Charles Wheatleigh..
Orlando, Harry Hawk..Colanna, J. H. Hague..Maynard, George
Backus..de Martelli, Percy Brooke..Antonio, Louis Filber..
Griffo, Arthur Mercer..Beauchamp, Boissec..Frank Bowers,
Tomasso..James Joyce, Surgeon..Samuel Mould, Emilie..Marie
Wainwright, Mme. del Franchi..Minnie Monk, Celestine..Louise
Muldener, Estelle..Emma Maddern, Coralie..Helen Ogelvie,
Marie..Kate Matthews, Josephine..Annie Williams. Charles
Wheelock was judged as superior as the twin brothers, and
Marie Wainwright was enchanting as the leading lady. (Pica­
yune, Monday, March 29, 1886.)

Lawrence Barrett returned to the theatre on Sunday,
April 4, for one week, closing the season as he had done the
previous year. Unfortunately, Barrett was not to achieve
the triumphant success of the previous year when his support­
ing company was wholly superior and when his leading lady was
the talented Marie Wainwright. Ironically, Marie Wainwright
now closed at the theatre just the night before Barrett
opened. Eugenia Blair proved to be the more talented of
Barrett's two new leading ladies. A charming girl, she was
the daughter of Ellen Wren, the fine veteran character
actress who had appeared at the theatre earlier that season
in support of Rhea. Barrett was his usual competent,
stellar self, being at his best in his acting, but his general support lacked the strength that his company had had the previous year. He made the mistake of reserving Eugenia Blair as leading lady of only several plays in his repertoire. Had Eugenia Blair appeared in each play as feminine lead, as Marie Wainwright had done the year before, the result would have been noteworthy. However, Barrett used Minna Gale as leading lady in much of his repertoire. This move proved a catastrophe. Miss Gale was new to the Barrett company, and was considered completely lacking in talent, and in no way could she compare with Miss Blair. *(Picayune, Tuesday, April 6; Thursday, April 8, 1886.)*

Barrett opened with Bulwer's *Richelieu*, on Sunday, April 4. The *Picayune* again regarded Barrett as the best Richelieu living, next to Booth. The cast was as follows: Richelieu..Lawrence Barrett, Louis..Ian Robertson, Gaston..J. L. Finney, Count del Barades..S. E. Springer, Adrian de Mauprat..F. C. Mosley, De Beringhen..T. L. Coleman, Joseph..Ben Rogers, Huguet..Charles Collins, Francois..J. M. Sturgeon, Julie..Minna Gale, Marion..Kate Molony. Minna Gale and Kate Molony disappointed completely, and were considered as unworthy support for the celebrated star. *(Picayune, Tuesday, April 6, 1886.)* On Tuesday, April 6, *Hernani* was performed with
Barrett in the title role for the first time in the city.
The supporting cast was as follows: Don Carlos..F. C. Mosley, Gomez..Newton Gotthold, Don Marhias..Frank Harvey, Don Henriquez..S. E. Springer, Don Ricardo..T. L. Coleman, First Conspirator..J. M. Sturgeon, Second Conspirator..Edwin Phelps, Third Conspirator..John Dodd, Fourth Conspirator..G. Davidson, Duke of Gotha..J. L. Finney, Duke of Alcala..Henry Tapper, Duke of Parma..Charles Forrest, Duke of Bavaria..George Adams, Duke of Lara..T. F. Irving, King of Bohemia..R. W. Thorne, Isadore..Cyril Montague, Donna Zantha..Minna Gale, Josepha..Kate Molony. The Picayune applauded Barrett as being great as Hernani. He was gallant as the outcast bandit, and showed the chivalry of an earlier day. Newton Gotthold, a fine actor, gave excellent support, and was considered an important new addition to Barrett's company. The rest of the cast was considered as weak. On Thursday, Francesca da Rimini was offered with the following cast: Lanciotto..Lawrence Barrett, Count Paolo..F. C. Mosley, Malatesta..C. M. Collins, Guido..Ben Rogers, Beppo Pepe..Newton Gotthold, Maleapia..Charles Forrest, Rene..Cyril Montague, Laucetto..Frank Harvey, Gromio..George Adams, Vincentio..John Doud, Torrelli..J. L. Finney, Lodovico..Eugene Morgan, Marco..Herman Forbes, Captain..Thomas Coleman, Officer..
According to the Picayune, Barrett played the role as no one else could. Minna Gale as Francesca was so poor that the critic would not even attempt a comparison with Barrett's former leading lady, Marie Wainwright, who had played the role previously. Gotthold as the jester was wholly excellent. (Picayune, Thursday, April 8, 1886.) Eugenia Blair was finally introduced in Hamlet, playing Ophelia to Barrett's Hamlet; and was found to be a welcome relief from Minna Gale's slaughtering of lead roles. (Picayune, Friday, April 9, 1886.) On Friday, Yorick's Love and David Garrick were played with Barrett assuming the lead roles in both plays. For the final day of the season, on Saturday, April 10, Barrett repeated Francesca da Rimini at noon, and appeared in Julius Caesar as Cassius at night. In the cast were: Lawrence Barrett as Cassius, Newton Gotthold as Brutus, F. C. Mosley as Marc Antony, Ian Robertson as Julius Caesar, Charles Collins as Decius, Ben Rogers as Casca, T. L. Coleman as Octavius Caesar, S. E. Springer as Trebonius, T. F. Irving as Cinna, John Doud as Soothsayer, Kate Molony as Lucius, Eugenia Blair as Portia, Minna Gale as Calphurnia, and Oliver Doud and G. Davidson as Citizens. Both the Picayune and the Times-Democrat applauded Barrett's greatest role.
The latter publication mentioned that the star had wrought all the minute details of the part with a pre-Raphaelite finish that displayed consummate art. (Times-Democrat, Sunday, April 11, 1886.) The Picayune besought the star to come back soon, but with a company worthy of him. (Picayune, Sunday, April 11, 1886.) Despite the let-down from all company members with the exception of two—Newton Gotthold and Eugenia Blair—Barrett did a booming business all week.

Bidwell closed the Grand Opera House and the St. Charles simultaneously. The Star Company which had moved to the Academy when it left the Grand Opera House, was to remain at that theatre for another week. The Star Dramatic Company is a significant group for analysis as a stock company in a time when stock companies were no longer functioning. Bidwell organized the group as an experiment to remain in New Orleans for the entire season and to function at his three theatres. Dramatic journals sneered at the venture, according to the Picayune, and managers around the country doubted its ability to succeed. Bidwell realized that it would be difficult to find competent actors who would memorize and play many parts in this era of role specialization. But he took the risk and came out a winner artistically and financially. The success of the Star Company decided an important
point in dramatic presentation of that era: it showed that first-class performances could still be given during the entire season, and that there were still enthusiastic and able players who were not afraid to learn many parts and who could still be versatile. The Picayune noted that "... of the present 300 companies, not more than a dozen are perfect and made up of good actors." (Picayune, Saturday, April 18, 1886.) Bidwell had been fortunate in many ways: first he came up with his idea of forming his own company at a time when Lawrence Barrett and the Jameses (Marie Wainwright and Louis James) had had a disagreement and the couple had left Barrett's company, an occurrence that allowed Bidwell to secure "... the best leading lady in the country." (Picayune, Saturday, April 18, 1886.) Second, R. E. Stevens came to Bidwell's aid, with the former's great experience in organizing first-class companies. Third, as with Marie Wainwright, by a fortunate chance, Bidwell engaged Joseph Wheelock just at an opportune time when he was free. During the 1885-1886 season, the Star Company played at the three Bidwell theatres for a record of sixteen weeks with four more weeks on the road. Marie Wainwright, Joseph Wheelock and Charles Wheatleigh, the three lead players, appeared in every play, with fifteen different plays being produced. The Picayune
judged that ". . . there is no better company in the country with more elegance or finer acting. . . ." (Picayune, Saturday, April 18, 1886.) The players worked harder than any company in twenty years, but were a happy, harmonious group. The company had become a great local hit and New Orleans was very proud of the group. (Picayune, Saturday, April 18, 1886.) It is no wonder that Bidwell determined to keep the company for another season.

To summarize the season, the 1885-1886 season began on Sunday, November 8, with Rose Eytinge as the first star of the season. Large audiences flocked to see Eytinge in the melodrama, Niagara. The Milan Grand Opera Company made its debut at the theatre on Sunday, November 15, and remained for three impressive weeks. Lena Langdon came on Sunday, November 29, and did only fair business with a poor company. Business did not pick up with the next engagement, that of James M. Hardie and Sara Von Leer and a good New York company in A Brave Woman. The fine group deserved better houses to equal the merits of the play and company. W. H. Gillette acted in his own play, Private Secretary, beginning on Sunday, December 13. He overacted, and his cast was not up to par. James O'Neill returned in Monte Cristo on Sunday, December 20,
and played Christmas week to big business. The Baltimore Academy Opera Company made its debut on Sunday, December 27, and remained for three weeks to good business. The largest audience of the season rushed to see Marion Elmore and John T. Craven in Hoyt's *A Rag Baby*, shown for the first time in the city on Sunday, January 17, 1886. Frank C. Bangs returned in *The Silver King* on Sunday, January 24, bringing a fine company and doing big business. Bidwell's brilliant new Star Dramatic Company made its debut at the Grand Opera House on Sunday, January 31, 1886. Moving over from the St. Charles, the group played for a week to very big business. Marie Aimeé returned on Sunday, February 7, and was the first of three French stars in a row to appear at the theatre. She did only fair business for two weeks. Anna Judie was the second French glamour girl to appear. She made her debut in New Orleans at the theatre on February 21, staying for a week in a varied repertoire of opera bouffe at increased prices. Both Aimeé and Judie were managed by Maurice Grau, and Grau's French Opera Company supported Judie during her appearance. Rhea, another French charmer, followed her two Parisian predecessors, on Sunday, February 28, and stayed for two weeks in varied repertoire to very slim business. This financial reversal was a shock to the star who had done well in her
previous appearance at the theatre. A change in plans in
sending the Star Company to the St. Charles on Sunday, March
14, instead of to the Grand Opera House, resulted in the
closing of the latter house for two weeks. The theatre re-
opened, however, on Sunday, March 28, to receive the tardy
Star troupe. They played The Corsican Brothers to huge
business. Lawrence Barrett closed the season, as he had done
the previous season, beginning his one-week engagement on
Sunday, April 4. Because of a disagreement with the Jameses,
Barrett lost Marie Wainwright and Louis James to the Star
Company, and his new company could in no way equal his supe-
rior company of the previous year. The only two outstanding
performers of the new troupe were Newton Gotthold and Eugenia
Blair. Unwisely, Barrett used Minna Gale as leading lady
more often than Eugenia Blair. Miss Gale was as poor an
actress as one could find on any stage, and it seems incred­
ible that Barrett, with his artistic perception, would choose
such a poor player for lead roles. When Eugenia Blair played
as leading lady, however, the company's artistic merit im­
proved considerably. Despite company difficulties, Barrett
played as successfully as ever, made a great impression in
old and in several new roles, and attracted packed houses.
The season closed on Sunday, April 11, 1886.
Again, Bidwell opened the Grand Opera House after his other theatres in the fall of 1886 for the start of the 1886-1887 season. The Academy opened early on October 17, and the Grand Opera House did not open until Sunday, November 7, 1886. Faranta's and the Avenue theatres had openings early in September; consequently the "...most beautiful parlor opera house in the south, the Grand Opera House..." was the last New Orleans theatre to open. (*Picayune*, Monday, November 1, 1886.) The comedian-playwright, Milton Nobles became the first star of the season. Nobles was supported by his wife, Dollie Nobles, comedienne and vocalist. The comedy, *Love and Law*, which had already been presented by the Nobles in a previous season, was repeated. The cast was as follows: Rita..Dolly Nobles, Felix..Milton Nobles, Helen Montague..Fanny Barry Sprague, Mrs. Tarnox..Florence Vinton, Kitty O'Rouke..May Bardwell, Old Rose..Mary Davenport, Sir Randall Burns..L. R. Willand, Jasper Craddock..George R. Sprague, Septimus Sawyer..Willie B. Wright, Jimmie Nipper.. John Ready, Giavanni..Louis F. Howard, Ferdinand..Max Fehrmann, Crane..Joseph E. Martin, the Dude..Wilbur Force, Grocer..B. A. Long, Butcher..Will Thayer, Joseph..F. I. Ketchum. The Nobles, who were popular, attracted good houses. The bill changed on Thursday night, November 11, when Nobles
presented his satirical comedy, *Interviews*, in which he played a Bohemian reporter in a political campaign. Nobles' greatest success, *The Phoenix*, was presented on Friday, November 12, and Saturday, November 13, at both performances.

The Star Dramatic Company which had been reorganized to perform again all the season of 1886-1887 at Bidwell's three theatres put in an early appearance at the theatre this season. Unfortunately, the company lost its biggest stars after its initial season, with Marie Wainwright and Louis James resigning to branch out on their own as co-stars. Charles Wheatleigh was the only big name to return. Osmond Tearle was the new leading man, taking the place of Joseph Wheelock. Minnie Conway was the new leading lady, replacing Marie Wainwright. Tearle and Conway were man and wife. Tearle was a handsome, experienced leading man from Wallack's New York Theatre who had played in England and had an international reputation. Minnie Conway was from an old acting family. Her parents were the F. B. Conways and her sister was the well-known actress, Mrs. D. P. Bowers. Moreover, she had appeared all over the country before and after her marriage to Tearle. Most exciting new name in the new company was that of Junius Brutus Booth, II. Booth was the nephew of the famous Edwin Booth, and was named for his
renowned grandfather. May Brooklyn was the new ingenue. She was a tall, beautiful English girl, with London and New York experience. Emma Maddern, the popular New Orleans actress and soubrette was an addition to the group, as a second lead. Isabelle Waldron and Pauline Duffield, two veteran actresses with wide experience, were engaged as character women; while Alice Duffield, young daughter of Pauline Duffield, was engaged to play children's parts. Barton Hill returned for a second year with the Star Company. Hill, who had been a prominent actor for thirty years, served as stage manager. Charles Wheatleigh, who returned as a star of the company, had first become a star when a member of Charles Kean's Company in London. Luke Martin and Edgar Selden were engaged as comedians, while Hart Conway doubled as juvenile and comedian. Hart Conway was a young Englishman who had appeared in London and the United States with such stars as Laura Keene and Dion Boucicault. Walter Dennis was a handsome juvenile, and Lewis Mitchell played second leads. This experienced new Star Company opened on Sunday, November 14, 1886, proving to be the most important theatrical event of the season. They appeared in Sardou's brilliant new comedy, A Scrap of Paper, acted for the first time in New Orleans. The important comedy was performed admirably, and the new
Star group made a most favorable impression. Prosper and Suzanne were played well by Osmond Tearle and Minnie Conway. Tearle was described as being graceful and handsome, with a rich, mellow voice and excellent acting ability. Minnie Conway showed herself as an adept performer of high comedy. Barton Hill was excellent as the Baron. Hart Conway was a standout in the fop role of Anatole, playing with care and finish. May Brooklyn, Isabelle Waldron, Junius Booth and Charles Wheatleigh also made favorable initial impressions. Wheatleigh was welcomed back with great applause. (Picayune, Monday, November 15, 1886.) The play attracted attention all week. The Star Company began their second week on Sunday, November 21, by playing in the French melodrama, The Martyr Mother. Ettie Henderson's adaptation of D'Ennery's novel, Le Martyre. It was played with the following cast: Count Maurice de Berthier..Osmond Tearle, Admiral de Vienna..Charles Wheatleigh, Paul Testa..Barton Hill, Brian..Luke Martin, Gerald Morel..Hart Conway, Louis..Edgar Selden, Blanche, Countess de Berthier..Minnie Conway, Georgette..May Brooklyn, Lucette..Emma Maddern, Mme. de Vienne..Isabelle Waldron. Again, nothing but praise could be found for the fine company. Tearle showed himself to be as strong in emotional drama as he was in light comedy. The Picayune declared: "... He is
the best leading man in America." May Brooklyn was described as a treasure for the company, and Hart Conway as an artist; praise was given, also, to Charles Wheatleigh, Emma Maddern and Barton Hill. *(Picayune, Monday, November 22, 1886.)*

Beginning on Sunday, November 28, the comedy, *The Guv'nor* was given during the Star's third week with the following cast: Freddy Butterscotch...Osmond Tearle, Mr. Butterscotch...Charles Wheatleigh, Macclesfield, Sr...Luke Martin, Macclesfield, Jr...Hart Conway, Mac Teddy...Barton Hill, Jellicoe...Edgar Selden, Gregory...Junius B. Booth, Cantile...Lewis Mitchell, Genell...S. Rogers, No. 3407...R. Graham, Ullage...H. C. Brincker, Aurelia...Minnie Conway, Carrie...May Brooklyn, Kate...Emma Maddern, Mrs. Macclesfield...Isabelle Waldron, Barbara...Pauline Duffield, Susan...Lizzie Wood. Tearle, Wheatleigh, Hill, Martin and Conway were praised highly for playing delightfully. *(Picayune, Monday, November 29, 1886.)*

Completing their third week on Saturday, December 4, the Star Company moved over to the St. Charles Theatre.

A novelty attraction made a New Orleans debut at the theatre on Sunday, December 5, when Marshall's Japanese Tourists began a week's engagement. The entire troupe was Japanese. They were vaudeville artists who appeared in authentic Japanese costumes, and performed such feats as
juggling, rope acts, acrobatics, equilibrist tricks, balancing and contortionist acts. There were children in the company, as young as four years of age. (*Picayune*, Sunday, December 5, 1886.)

Kate Forsyth made her local debut as a star at the theatre on Sunday, December 12. Although new as a star, the girl had been seen at the Grand Opera House in support of Robson and Crane, John T. Raymond and John McCullough. Frank Losee was leading man for Miss Forsyth. Clinton Stuart's new society drama, *Faithful Hearts*, was the offering, presented with the following cast: Andre Lafèverè..Frank Losee, Jean Radel..Henry Holland, David Charnet..J. H. Fitzpatrick, Mondan..Burr McIntosh, Gerome..Charles W. Allison, Noel..Joseph Conyore, Servant..George Steward, Lucille..Lillie Vane, Paulette..Ethel Greybrook, Ernestine..E. L. Fernandez, Mme. Dubie..Virginia Thorne, Madeline..Kate Forsyth. Miss Forsyth made a favorable impression as Madeline, doing well the emotional part, by playing smoothly and showing excellent voice techniques. She had strong and able support. The bill changed on Friday, December 17, when Kate Forsyth appeared in the title role of a new drama by Knox, *Marcelle*. The *Picayune* applauded the acting of star and cast, but did not like the sad ending of the play, in which Marcelle's husband
shoots an innocent man he thinks is his wife's lover. (Picayune, Saturday, December 18, 1886.) The strong play closed Kate Forsyth's brief engagement on Saturday, December 18, 1886.

Louise Rial was Bidwell's holiday choice for the Grand Opera House. Miss Rial came for Christmas week, opening on Sunday, December 19, 1886, in Will S. Marion's new melodrama, Fortune's Fool, as presented for the first time in the city, with playwright Will S. Marion appearing as co-star. In the cast were: Coralie Loriot, Louise Rial, Jack Thornton, Will S. Marion, Richard Marlande Clarke, Robert Frank J. Rich, Claude Smith Salisbury, John Harry Linden, Bertie C. P. Morton, Lillian Nellie Pierce, Lois Lillian Stilman. Louise Rial was charming as Coralie, being handsome and graceful. Will S. Marion showed himself lacking in talent, and was not star material, according to the Picayune, that judged Marion's performance to be only fair. Marlande Clarke was powerful as the villain and Frank Rich was an amusing comedian. The rest of the company was merely passable. On Christmas Day, Saturday, December 25, at the matinee, a broncho pony was given as a door prize. (Picayune, Monday, December 20, 1886.) From the Grand Opera House, Louise Rial moved to the Academy of Music.
The Litt and Lee Company moved into the theatre on Sunday, December 26, to present G. R. Simms' drama, *The Lights of London*. On opening night, the theatre was packed to capacity. The company was described as good but not a star troupe. A hit of the evening was a little New Orleans girl, Loretta Keene, who took the part of Tim, a waif, at short notice, and did a fine acting job. The large cast was as follows: Squire Armytage..G. H. Rexford, Harold Armytage..Archibald Foster, Clifford Armytage..H. C. Bruce, Joseph Javis..Samuel Hample, Shakespeare..Maud Harris, Bess Marks..Helen Weathersby, Hetty Prene..Carrie Lee, Mrs. Javis..Elizabeth Andrews, Tim..Loretta Keene, Janet..Augusta Florence, and in small parts: Joseph Mitchell, R. J. Moye, Charles Pettia, George Shaw, E. B. Tilton, G. W. Padgett, W. H. Lewis, Fox Sidney, Percy Lawson, H. W. Montgomery, George Siader, George Wilbur, H. S. Barnum and Lizzie Hyatt. The play ran through Saturday, January 1, 1887.

For the first time that season, the theatre remained dark for a week in the height of the season—from Sunday, January 2, through Saturday, January 8, 1887, with no explanation for the condition. Then Bartley Campbell's most celebrated drama, *The White Slave* came to the theatre for the first time. Opening on Sunday, January 9, 1887, the
drama played for a week to capacity audiences. Campbell was well known in the city where he had lived many years as a struggling journalist, and friends and acquaintances rushed to see the sensational play, based on the misfortunes of a supposed octoroon, whose deliverance comes with the discovery of her white birth. The play was produced with stunning scenic and mechanical effects, including a thrilling steamboat scene with a fire and explosion, and subsequent wreck, after which the heroine and her lover float down the Mississippi River on fragments of the wreck and are cast upon an island. In the cast were: Lisa, The White Slave.. May Newman, Nance, a Quadroon..Marie Hifforende, Dauphine, an Octoroon..Bessie Rowland, Mrs. Lee..Mrs. Frank Foster, Letty Lee..Clara Downs, Martha..Marie Bates, Clay Britton..Frank Roberts, William Lacy..William Beach, Judge Harden..Joseph Weldon, Job, a Negro preacher..Charles T. White, Stitch.. Frank Drew, Clem..Charles Weber, Jack Hazelton..Harry Vetterlein, Bancroft..Thomas McCartney, Captain Stryker..Richard Callahan, Natchez..James Beckwith, Jamison..William Brown, Count Abstain..Charles Bryant, Little Jim..Master Willie. The company was judged to be excellent, from the largest to the smallest parts. (Picayune, Monday, January 10, 1887.)

Several seasons before, the Picayune had published an account
of an interview with playwright Bartley Campbell which concerned both the author's thoughts concerning the merit of

The White Slave, at the time that he was preparing that play for a Pittsburg run, but which gave also the playwright's

formula for writing plays:

... When I get an idea of a new play, I jot it down... perhaps on the back of an old envelope. This first idea is generally the pivotal one, the one that gives tone and color to the whole play. Around this thought, I group subsequent ideas both of character and incident, and when I have accumulated a mass of such material, I marshal them into acts. The next process is to write the story of the play with copious notes of what sort of people are to figure in it. This done, I spend two months or more familiarizing myself with the characters until at length they appear to me like a group of old acquaintances. If it is a story of Russia like "Siberia," I read a book of travels setting forth the everyday customs and habits of the people, and study carefully the geography of the country, and try to get en rapport with the spirit of the people. ... The geography of a country is more important in a play than you would think. If Sardou would have studied the map of the United States, he would not have run a steamboat from Boston to Chicago, as he did in "L'Oncle Sam." The last thing to be thought of is of the first importance. A polished phrase engages the attention of the intellectual, an incident of intense dramatic interest reaches all. There is a good deal of eloquence in silence on the stage, and a bit of gesture or pantomime often sets the theatre in a roar or calls forth the tear of sympathy. ... This is the "business" of the play, and a great deal of this is arranged at rehearsals. I hold that the author should direct the first rehearsals, since he understands his characters better than anyone else could possibly do. ... My poetic play "Clio" as a piece of dramatic literature,
is the best thing I have done, but "The White Slave" has made more money in a single season than all the poetic drama that have ever been written in America, including Howard Payne's "Brutus." No agency has done more to foster the love of art than the theatre, but no manager can afford to be governed entirely by the highest art canons, no more than a publisher of a paper can by those of the best literature. The newspaper, as the theatre, is what the public makes it. (Picayune, Saturday, February 10, 1883.)

This noteworthy article shows a definite parallel between the problem of commercialism versus art as it exists in the theatre today, with commercialism, then as now, predominating.

For the second time in just two weeks, the theatre remained closed again for another week, from Sunday, January 16, through Saturday, January 22. Then on Sunday, January 23, the Carleton Opera Company presented *Manon*, featuring W. T. Carleton, with a company of sixty players and elaborate scenery by Henry C. Hoyt of the New York Casino. Large crowds turned out all week. For its second week, the company presented for the first time in the city, the comique opera success, *Erminie*, described as the New York Casino Theatre's greatest success. Music was by Ed Jakabowski and libretto by Harry Paulton. The title role of *Erminie* was played by Ray Samuels, with W. T. Carleton as Ravennes. Others in the cast were Clara Wisdom, Alice Vincent, Fannie Rice, Jessie Quigley, Robert Broderick, J. S. Greenfelder, Jay Taylor,

Robson and Crane returned on Sunday, February 6, for one week with their humorous roles as the two Dromios in Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, which had not been seen at the theatre in some time. The production was now much more elaborate than it had ever been before—scenery, costumes, effects and staging were presented with intricate care. Recognizing a significant trend to realism in the theatre, the *Picayune* declared: "... The growth of realism in art and literature today has given us this magnificent mounting with its splendid ballet and classic costuming." (*Picayune*, Monday, February 7, 1887.) The play was "... laid in Greece after that country had become a Roman province" and the costumes and architecture were Greek but reflected Roman influence. Among the breathtaking scenes was a beautiful background landscape of the Vale of Tempe, the valley of temples and tombs. The choreography included a classic dance of the Bacchantes. The *Times-Democrat* declared that there was never before in the city a production so lavish or one of such historical accuracy. Hundreds of patrons were turned away on opening night, and this capacity condition existed all week, creating the finest business of the season.
up to that time. The cast was as follows: Dromio of Syracuse..Stuart Robson, Dromio of Ephesus..William H. Crane, Solinus..C. H. Riegel, Aeneas..Harry Langdon, Antipholus of Ephesus..William Harris, Antipholus of Syracuse..C. Handyside, Angelo..D. W. Van Doren, Balthazar..Edward McWade, Dr. Pinch..Louis Carpenter, Officer..George Clark, Adriana..Selena Fetter, Luciana..Alice Brown, Phryne..May Waldron, Aemilis..Mrs. George Dickson. (Picayune, Monday, February 7, 1887; Sunday, February 13, 1887; Times-Democrat, Monday, February 7, 1887.)

Another historic event in theatrical annals immediately followed Robson and Crane, when Edwin Booth came to the Grand Opera House on Monday, February 14, 1887, for one week, after a long absence from the city and from the theatre. He produced all of the successes of his celebrated repertoire, and as was the case during the Robson and Crane week, he attracted capacity houses for every performance with many disappointed patrons turned away. Long lines had formed in a rush for seats as soon as his coming was announced days before his engagement. This capacity business existed despite the fact that admission was boosted to $2, $1.50, $1 and 50 cents. The playing schedule was Monday, Richelieu; Tuesday, Hamlet; Wednesday, Fool's Revenge; Thursday, King Lear;
Friday, *Merchant of Venice* and *Taming of the Shrew*; Saturday matinee (only matinee), *Hamlet*; Saturday night, *Othello*.

Both the *Picayune* and *Times-Democrat* welcomed Booth as "America's greatest actor," and "the greatest Hamlet in the world." The latter journal called Booth "history's greatest of all dramatic interpretators." ( *Picayune*, Tuesday, February 15; *Times-Democrat*, Tuesday, February 15, 1887.) Booth came with a much stronger company than he had during his previous visit to the theatre, and the increased quality of the support was said to allow even more brilliant and more electrifying histrionics from the illustrious star. In Bulwer's *Richelieu*, one of Booth's greatest plays, the cast was as follows: Richelieu..Edwin Booth, King Louis XIII..T. L. Coleman, Count of Baradas..Charles Hanford, Adrian..John Malone, De Beringhen..Owen Fawcett, Joseph..Carl Abrendt, Francois..Walter Thomas, Huguet..Edwin Royle, Clermont..E. K. Harte, First Secretary..Charles Abbe, Second Secretary..Charles Bower, Third Secretary..Volner Streamer, Captain of Guard..John Doud, Page..Ida Rock, Julie de Mortimer..Emma Vadere, Marion de Lorme..Kate Molony. In the curse of Rome scene, defending his word, his church and himself, Booth was reputed to electrify the mammoth audience, and the *Picayune* declared: "... His work is monumental ..." and
"... He cannot be duplicated. ..." (Picayune, Tuesday, February 15, 1887.) All the wealth and aristocracy of the city piled into the theatre on opening night. The galleries were filled with a brilliant audience that had not been able to secure orchestra seats, and all standing room was filled by elegant patrons: "... It was as grand a house and as high a compliment as New Orleans could pay the actor." The mammoth house reacted as one collective man to Booth. He was welcomed by a roar of applause and "bravos" that surpassed any welcome ever before. His majestic voice, his naturalness and penetrating simplicity, his lofty mien and impressive gestures were said to make a tremor run throughout the capacity house, and breathless patrons reflected upon their faces sheer awe. (Times-Democrat, Tuesday, February 15, 1887.)

"The greatest Hamlet in the world ..." surpassed himself in his greatness with a performance even more exquisite in the shading, sentiment and delicate consistency than usual or could be believed possible. The stellar cast was as follows: Hamlet..Edwin Booth, Ghost..Charles Barron, Claudius..John Malone, Polonius..Carl Ahrendt, Laertes..John T. Sullivan, Horatio..Charles Handford, Rosencrantz..H. C. Barton, Guilderstern..Edwin Royle, Osric..Charles Abbe,
Marcelius...John Doud, Bernard...F. K. Harte, Francisco...J.
Brown, First Actor...T. L. Coleman, Second Actor...Walter
Thomas, First Grave Digger...Owen Fawcett, Second Grave Digger
...L. J. Henderson, Priest...Volney Streamer, Gertrude...Augusta
Foster, Ophelia...Emma Vaders, Player Queen...Kate Molony.
Charles Barron, as the Ghost, proved to be Booth's top sup-
port, his superior acting being called a revelation by the
Picayune and the Times-Democrat; and most of the cast was
very good. Emma Vaders was, however, so poor as Ophelia, she
was felt to be unworthy to play leads opposite the renowned
actor. (Picayune, Wednesday, February 16, 1887.) In his in-
terpretation, Booth forsook all old models, playing deeply
from within, and each scene brought new surprises of added
beauty that were breathtaking and magnificent. (Times-Demo-
crat, Wednesday, February 16, 1887.) Tom Taylor's The Fool's
Revenge created another electrifying impression. The Picay-
une noted that there was no other play in which Booth was
able to display to greater extent his tragic genius:

...'Richelieu' presents him in majesty and state-
liness; 'Hamlet' as learned, metaphysical, whimsical;
as Othello, with all-pervading chords of jealousy, as
Iago, the cold, polished intriguer, but in no other
portrayal than as Bertuccio does he so play upon the
most potent, profound and terrible chords of the human
heart. ... (Picayune, Thursday, February 17, 1887.)

The actor, with consummate art, was said to make the poor fool
grand, terrible and heartbreakingly pathetic. The audience followed Booth with silenced awe. The cast was as follows: Bertuccio..Edwin Booth, Manfredi..John Malone, Guido..Carl Abrendt, Torelli..Owen Fawcett, Ordelaffi..T. L. Coleman, Ascolti..Edwin Boyle, Dell 'Aquila..John T. Sullivan, Ascanio..Charles Abbe, Francesca..Augusta Foster, Fiordelisa ..Emma Vaders, Brigetta..Mrs. A. S. Baker, Gianevra..Kate Molony. (Picayune, February 17, 1887.) King Lear was reputed to be another magnificent performance. The Picayune noted: "... It took Forrest twenty-five years to study to do with Lear what Booth did as soon as he made it a study. Forrest had to become old to feel Lear; Booth accomplished it with his fine art in his youth." Charles Barron gave leading support as Edgar, producing strong restrained effect in the most polished way. In the cast were: Edwin Booth.. King Lear, Charles Barron..Edgar, Emma Vaders..Cordelia, Ida Rock..Regan, Augusta Foster..Goneril, Charles Abbe.. Oswald, T. L. Coleman..King of France, John T. Sullivan.. Cornwall, Charles Hanford..Albany, L. J. Henderson..Gloster, Carl Ahrendt..Kent, John Malone..Edmunc, Owen Fawcett..the Fool. Again on Friday, Booth was magnificent in two roles, as Shylock in The Merchant of Venice and as Petruchio in The Taming of the Shrew. In the latter role, he gave a new
side of his genius, becoming a superior light comedian, looking very young and handsome and being full of antics. *(Picayune, Saturday, February 19, 1887.)* On the last day of his engagement, Booth commanded, as he had all week, lovers of good drama in much masses that their assembling amounted to an ovation. *Hamlet* at noon and *Othello* at night played to capacity houses. The cast of the latter tragedy was as follows: Iago..Edwin Booth, Othello..Charles Barron, Brabantio..Carl Abrendt, Cassio..John Malone, Roderigo..Owen Fawcett, Duke of Venice..L. J. Henderson, Gratiano..H. C. Barton, Montano..John T. Sullivan, Lodovico..T. L. Coleman, Paulo..Edwin Boyle, Desdemona..Emma Vaders, Emilia..Augusta Foster. The beauty of Booth's Iago lay in its utter naturalness. He did not play the role as an obvious villain, but made Iago pleasant and subtle. Charles Barron gave an excellent performance as Othello, and was a complete balance to Booth. *(Picayune, Sunday, February 20, 1887.)*

A third engagement in a row to summon capacity houses for the entire booking was that of Marie Wainwright and Louis James who came for two weeks, beginning on Sunday, February 20, 1887. Marie Wainwright had made many fans during her stellar performances as leading lady for Lawrence Barrett and
of the Star Dramatic Company. Now she came to the city for the first time as a star in her own right, bringing as co-star her husband, Louis James. Marie Wainwright had now come into national prominence, having been picked by the world's avowed greatest actors, Salvini and Edwin Booth, to co-star with these renowned celebrities in their historic production of *Hamlet*. As Ophelia, Marie Wainwright had been picked from a score of the country's leading actresses, and appeared in the famous production in New York and on a tour of Northern cities. (*Picayune*, Friday, February 25, 1887.) At this point in her career, Miss Wainwright was already avowed to be the best leading lady in the country. In their co-starring engagement, Marie Wainwright far out-acted her husband, performing with outstanding merit in every performance, while James was good in some roles, and only fair in others. The pair began their engagement by appearing in *Virginius* on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, and at the Thursday matinee; *Ingomar* was performed on Wednesday, and at the matinee on Thursday; *Hamlet* was given on Thursday night; *Romeo and Juliet* on Friday; and *Julius Caesar* closed the first week on Saturday night. A full house greeted the opening of *Virginius*. Marie Wainwright was radiant in loveliness as Virginia. White draperies fell in softly rounding folds
about her in graceful lines, while her brown hair, in antique coiffure, set off in classic beauty her finely molded head. According to the Times-Democrat, she had never looked so beautiful, but her acting was said to match her beauty, and she enslaved her audience. (Times-Democrat, Monday, February 21, 1887.) James made a favorable impression as Virginius, with a well rounded portrayal that was artistic and intelligent. Moreover, his facial expressions were moving, and he was handsome with powerful physique and noble bearing. His voice was sonorous and clear, and he was natural and free from rant. (Times-Democrat, Monday, February 12, 1887.) Both the Times-Democrat and the Picayune agreed that the triumph of the opening was a double triumph for both stars. A good company supported the pair. The cast was as follows: Virginius..Louis James, Appius Claudius..F. O. Huebner, Casius..Ed Hoyt, Dentatus..E. L. Tilton, Icilius..F. C. Mosley, Numitorius..George Fawcett, Lucius..Percy Brooke, Titus ..Willis Granger, Marcus..Charles Mackay, First Soldier..F. W. Cline, Servia..Kate Meek, Slave..Aurelia Sarner, Virginia..Marie Wainwright. Ingomar brought forth more packed houses. Marie Wainwright was winning and tender as Parthenia, and James was heroic and played with skill in the lead role. His presence was commanding, but one irritating flaw was noted--
he fingered his beard too much. (Picayune, Thursday, February 24, 1887.) This cast included: Ingomar..Louis James, Rimarch..F. C. Huebner, Myron..E. Tilton, Polydon..Percy Brooke, Eiphenor..Charles Mackay, Lykon..E. Y. Backus, Alaster..George Fawcett, Trinoblantes..Willie Granger, Novio.. Ed Yodt, Ambiva..O. B. Packard, Herald..F. W. Cline, Actea.. Kate Meek, Theano..Kittie Wilson, Parthenia..Marie Wainwright. Hamlet followed, and James created a good impression in the lead role. The Picayune made an interesting ranking of actors playing Hamlet in that era, in the following order of excellence and merit: Edwin Booth, E. L. Davenport, Edwin Forrest, Charles Fechter, Tomaso Salvini, Lawrence Barrett, Barry Sullivan, Edwin Adams, Thomas Keene, John McCullough. James was rated to fall somewhere after McCullough, with the acknowledgment that while he was no Booth, he gave a good performance. But, of Marie Wainwright, the Picayune said that she was the best Ophelia on the stage of the day. She was reputed to bring to the part modesty and affectionate tenderness, and her mad scene with her flower strewing and her singing, was considered as one of the most pathetic scenes on the stage of the era. In top support as the Queen was Kate Meek, a fine actress, who had graced the stage of the Grand Opera House many times before as a member of an
earlier company when the theatre had its own stock company seasons before. (Picayune, Friday, February 25, 1887.) Others in the cast were: F. C. Mosley..Laertes, George Fawcett..The Ghost, F. C. Huebner..Claudius, E. L. Tildon..Polonius, Willis Granger..Horatio, Charles Mackay..Roscenrantz, B. L.Paine..Guildenstern, Kitty Wilson..Orsic, Percy Brooke and E. Y. Backus..the Grave Diggers. In Romeo and Juliet, James was panned. The Picayune felt that James was much more the type to do Mercutio, while F. C. Mosley who was a fine juvenile lover-type should have been Romeo. If only these two parts had been reversed, according to the Picayune, it would have been a stunning production; but James was just not a young lover physically, and the portrayal was unconvincing. As Juliet, Marie Wainwright was so superior, according to the Picayune, that she was the stage's most perfect Juliet since beautiful Adelaide Neilson died prematurely. It was Wainwright's play from start to finish. (Picayune, Saturday, February 26, 1887.) The cast was as follows:

Romeo..Louis James, Mercutio..F. C. Mosley, Tybalt..F. C. Heubner, Frair Lawrence..E. L. Tilton, Capulet..George Fawcett, Paris..Charles Mackay, Benvolio..Willie Granger, Peter..Percy Brooke, Balthazar..Edward Hoyt, Apothecary..F. W. Cline, Page..O. B. Packard, Lady Capulet..Pauline Duffield,
Nurse...Kate Meek, Juliet...Marie Wainwright. James made up for his limitations of Romeo by projecting an "electrical effect" as Brutus in *Julius Caesar* on Saturday night. He was strikingly like John McCullough in the role. Marie Wainwright was missed, by not being in the play. But, instead, top honors went to F. C. Mosley who played Antony with such strength and feeling that he won several curtain calls. Other principals in the cast included: Julius Caesar...George Fawcett, Lucius...Kittie Wilson, Portia...Kate Meek, and Calphurnia...Pauline Duffield. (*Picayune*, Sunday, February 27, 1887.)

For their second week, Marie Wainwright and Louis James presented *Othello* on Sunday, February 27. James was impressive in the title role, while Miss Wainwright achieved another triumph as Desdemona, and F. C. Mosley was regarded as splendid as Iago—with an intelligent and artistic performance. Others in the cast were: Emilia...Kate Meek, Cassio...Willis Granger, Montano...Ed Hoyt, Duke of Venice...George Fawcett, Brabantio...E. L. Tilton, Roderigo...Percy Brooke, Paulo...Charles Mackay, Ludovico...Frank Monroe, Gratiano...T. F. Jones. (*Picayune*, Monday, February 28, 1887.) *Virginius* was repeated on Monday, February 28; and on Tuesday, March 1, *Much Ado About Nothing* was presented. The
Shakespeare comedy was delightfully effective; and Benedick proved to be one of James' best roles. In it he was courtly, graceful and polished. Marie Wainwright, as Beatrice, found another role in which to be perfect, with a beautiful and thorough performance. Her dresses were impressively authentic, and each member of the cast was dressed appropriately in the style of Shakespeare's day. Supporting in this play were: Kittie Wilson..Hero, F. C. Mosley..Claudio, E. L. Tilton..Dogberry, Aurelia Sarner..Margaret, Annie Mitchell..Ursula, G. Marston..Sexton, T. F. Jones..Seasoal, F. W. Cline..Oatcake, Charles Mackay..Verges, P. D. Quinn..Balthazar, Percy Brooke..Borachio, O. B. Packard..Conrad, Edward Hoyt..Friar, E. Y. Backus..Antonio, George Fawcett..Leonato, Willis Granger..Don Juan, F. C. Huebner..Don Pedro. *Hamlet* was repeated on Wednesday, and *Othello* was the bill on Thursday night. On Friday, the double bill of abridged versions of *Merchant of Venice* and *Taming of the Shrew* was presented. James was considered by the *Picayune* to be too heavy and intense as Shylock, while Miss Wainwright was thought to be a lovely and lively Portia. In *Taming of the Shrew*, both were most successful as Katherine and Pertruchio. (*Picayune*, Saturday, March 5, 1887.) *Romeo and Juliet* was repeated at the Saturday matinee on March 5, while *Ingomar* was repeated.
that night as the last performance of the James-Wainwright engagement. During this engagement, the Picayune critic made an interesting note concerning theatre fashions. He congratulated ladies of the audience for doffing their hats for the first time, copying a style set that season in New York. He commented that the mass removal certainly simplified former viewing problems. (Picayune, Wednesday, March 2, 1887.)

The theatre was closed for a week beginning on Sunday, March 6. On Sunday, March 13, the Star Dramatic Company returned, moving over from the St. Charles, and opening in D'Ennery and Corman's drama, A Celebrated Case. Several cast members rated special mention for excellence: Pauline Duffield..Duchess d'Aubeterre, Little Alice Duffield..Adrienne, Isabelle Waldron..Chanoinesse of DeHyere, Barton Hill..Lazarre, Minnie Conway..Adrienne--grown up, and Madeline, Osmond Tearle..Jean Renaud, Luke Martin..O'Rouke, May Brooklyn..Valentine de Mornay. The drama played all week. (Picayune, Monday, March 14, 1887.) Beginning on Sunday, March 20, for their second week, the group presented Bulwer's popular comedy, Money, with the following cast: Alfred Evelyn..Osmond Tearle, Sir John..Charles Wheatleigh, Sir Frederick..Hart Conway, Lord Glassmore..W. A. Whitecar,
Captain Smooth...Barton Hill, Graves...Luke Martin, Stout...
Edgar Selden, Sir John's man...Junius B. Booth, Evelyn's man...
H. C. Brinker, Sharp...Louis Mitchell, Clara Douglas...Minnie Conway, Georgina...May Brooklyn, Lady Franklyn...Isabelle Waldron. Tearle was exceptionally good as Evelyn, while almost everyone else in the cast rated special mentions for excellence. (Picayune, Monday, March 21, 1887.) For their third and last week, which was also the last week of the season, the Star Dramatic Company presented a double bill all week. Opening on Sunday, March 27, 1887, Buckstone's comedy, Married Life, was given followed by the afterpiece, Boucicault's comedy, To Parents and Guardians. In the cast of the first play were the following: Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Younghusband...Osmond Tearle and Minnie Conway, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Coddle...Charles Wheatleigh and Isabelle Waldron, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Dove...Luke Martin and Emma Maddern, Mr. and Mrs. Lionel Lynx...Hart Conway and May Brooklyn, Mr. and Mrs. George Dismal...Edgar Selden and Pauline Duffield. This was a hilarious play, showing five married couples of different temperaments, all quarreling and making up. Charles Wheatleigh received foremost commendation of the collective performances, but each member of the cast was equal to his task and gave a good performance, keeping up the merriment from beginning to end. Following
the main play, the comedietta, *To Parents and Guardians*, sported a large cast. Emma Maddern played the principal role of Bob in a winsome manner. Luke Martin and Pauline Duffield were excellent as Waddilove and Mary Swish; and Barton Hill was a standout as the aged Frenchman, Tourbillion. Others in this cast were Lizzie Wood, Julius B. Booth, Isabelle Waldron, Edgar Selden, Louis Mitchell and H. C. Brinker. The play and the season closed simultaneously on Saturday evening, April 2, 1887. Bidwell closed the St. Charles on the same night, while the Academy of Music remained open. This last fact is significant in as much as in association with the next attraction at the latter theatre is the first mention in the New Orleans newspapers of Marc Klaw and A. E. Erlanger, the leaders of the later Theatrical Syndicate, the ruthless syndicate which would be important to the history of the Grand Opera House. It was the Theatrical Syndicate which would serve to "choke the life's blood" from the Grand Opera House in its late days; when Henry Greenwall, the manager who would soon succeed Bidwell, would not cooperate with Klaw and Erlanger. At the time of the closing of the 1886-1887 season, the *Picayune* noted on Sunday, April 2, 1887, that Klaw and Erlanger had arrived in New Orleans for the appearance there of Effie Ellsler at Bidwell's Academy of Music.
Klaw and Erlanger were managing Effie Ellsler and her company at that time. The trip was to serve as an initial introduction between Bidwell and Klaw and Erlanger. The friendship would grow in scope to the point where it would be Bidwell's money that would back the Theatrical Syndicate.

The 1886-1887 season had been another successful one for Bidwell. The Star Dramatic Company had continued to remain a financially successful venture. It was an expensive but a talented company, since it was the best group that Bidwell could put together for a season considering the offers that experienced actors had to become stars, the temptations that lazy actors had to travel with one part and avoid studying new parts, and with the difficulty of finding good actors at all; since the stock system had broken up the training opportunities for performers to play successfully new parts every week. The Star Company had satisfied on all accounts. Bidwell had been extremely fortunate, as he had the previous year, in securing the members of the company. Osmond Tearle had proved to be among the best leading men of the day. He was young, handsome, intelligent, well dressed, and so versatile that he was equally successful in English drama with an English accent, Irish parts, comedy or tragedy, and as the
hero of romantic drama or melodrama. Charles Wheatleigh was a thorough artist in every part he did during the two seasons with the company. He was the most experienced member of the company, and was regarded as an indispensable treasure to the group, according to the Picayune. (Picayune, Sunday, April 3, 1887.) Of equal value was the veteran actor-director Barton Hill who had not only acted beautifully for both seasons, but had cast the plays and directed them excellently. Luke Martin had proved himself to be both extremely popular and a versatile actor who had played a variety of parts and was equally successful in each. Will Whitecar had replaced Walter Dennis as juvenile during the season, and had done a fine acting job, as had comedian Hart Conway. Minnie Conway, coming in the wake of Marie Wainwright, had had a trying responsibility, and although being no Wainwright, acted with strength and feeling, worked hard and had made a successful impression as a good leading lady. May Brooklyn and Emma Maddern proved themselves to be wonderfully talented and versatile actresses and shared honors with the leading lady. Misses Waldron, Duffield and little Alice Duffield each had done fine work. Robert E. Stevens deserved highest praise according to the Picayune for his valuable part in the success of the company. For its two years of existence,
he had been both the company's personal manager and its capable business manager. The polished and experienced gentleman had been the manager of top stars like Lawrence Barrett, Dion Boucicault and Fanny Davenport. (Picayune, April 3, 1887.)

Retracing the 1886-1887 season at the Grand Opera House, Milton and Dolly Nobles began the year's festivities on Sunday, November 7, 1886 in a comedy repertoire, and did fairly well. The Star Dramatic Company followed on Sunday, November 14, and stayed for three weeks, playing to big business. Marshall's Japanese Tourists came on December 5, for a week, attracting curiosity seekers. Kate Forsyth headed the company that played Faithful Hearts and Marcelle for one week beginning on December 12, playing to fair business. Louise Rial brought a poor company on Sunday, December 19, for one week, playing Fortune's Fool to fair business. A mammoth business resulted from the booking of R. G. Sims' Lights of London, beginning on Sunday, December 26. From January 2, to January 9, in the height of the season, Bidwell allowed the Grand Opera House to remain closed. The White Slave then opened, and drew tremendous business for one week. Again, on Sunday, January 16, for the second time in a month, the theatre remained closed for a second week with no explanation. The Carleton Opera Company brought large crowds
beginning on Sunday, January 23, for two weeks. Then on Sunday, February 6, Robson and Crane returned triumphantly for a week, after a long absence, and attracted capacity houses, playing in their celebrated Comedy of Errors, done on a larger, more authentic and more expensive scale than ever before. Edwin Booth was the most important engagement of the season. The renowned star returned on Monday, February 14, 1887, also after years of absence from the city, and attracted such excitement that crowds gathered in long lines outside the theatre to buy tickets, and he played to capacity houses for one week. Louis James and Marie Wainwright appeared as co-stars together for the first time in that capacity beginning on Sunday, February 20, for two weeks. The couple attracted large houses. Then, for a third week during the season, the theatre stayed closed for another week without explanation beginning on Sunday, March 6. Finally, the Star Dramatic Company returned to the theatre on Sunday, March 13, and wound up the season, playing for three weeks to excellent houses through Saturday, April 2, 1887.

Bidwell’s fifth and final season at the Grand Opera House was the 1887-1888 season. This season began on Sunday, November 13, with the booking of Jeffreys Lewis, who opened her two-week engagement by appearing in La Belle Russe. The
drama was given with the following cast: Geraldine Calthrope
..Jeffreys Lewis, Captain Brand..Harry Mainhall, Sir Philip..
C. H. Mestayer, Monroe..Logan Paul, Robert..J. C. Greig, Lady
Calthorpe..Georgie Haine, Agnes..Helene Brooks, Little Beatrice..Master Frankie Wilton. The star was described as
being beautiful and "... wickedly alluring," although having
grown stout. (Picayune, Monday, November 14, 1887.) The
support was good, and the drama played the week. Jeffreys
Lewis opened her second week by playing the role of Stephanie
in Herman Merrivale's drama, Forget-Me-Not, a part which she
had created in the United States when playing with James
O'Neill in San Francisco. The drama ran at the Grand Opera
House through Wednesday, November 23, with the following cast:
Stephanie de Mohrivart..Jeffreys Lewis, Sir Horace Welby..
Harry Mainhall, Prince Wallcott..Logan Paul, Baratto..Charles
Mestayer, Joseph..J. C. Greg, Alice Verney..Elenor Barry,
Mrs. Foley..Georgia Haine, Rose..Helene Brooks. Stephanie
was a role in which the star could enjoy her specialty of
being beautiful, vicious and wicked. Her successful por-
trayal added to her earlier triumphs. She was said to
possess a magnetic abandon that was so natural that it verged
on the thrillingly daring, according to the Picayune. (Picayune,
Monday, November 21, 1887.) On Thursday, at the matinee
and on Saturday night, Jeffreys Lewis presented Clothilde, a play adapted from the French, and presented for the first time in the city. In the title role she was considered strong and daringly sensual. On Thursday night, November 24, the star acted the part of Zaire, the French ballet dancer in A Desperate Game, cast as follows: Zaire Loriot..Jeffreys Lewis, Lillian..Elenor Barry, Louis..George Hayne, Jack Thornton..Harry Mainhall, Mr. Milmarth..Charles H. Mestayer, Richard Daracott..John Greig, Robert Rattles..Logan Paul, Claude Lascadot..James Griffith, Bertie Thornton..G. H. James. The play had been performed before under the name of Fortune's Fool. Again, Miss Lewis had the role of a vicious, unscrupulous woman, which she played beautifully. (Picayune, Friday, November 25, 1887.) The play was repeated on Friday, and at the matinee on Saturday, November 26, 1887.

George C. Miln, a former clergyman turned actor, made his New Orleans debut on Sunday, November 27, at the Grand Opera House. He appeared for a week with a constantly changing repertoire, proved himself to be a sincere and intelligent actor, but suffered by adopting too large a repertoire for his limited scope. He opened in Richard III in the title role and gave a scholarly performance. He was handsome, his voice was full and sonorous, and he presented a striking and

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dynamic appearance, but he was guilty of ranting in the role. In the cast were Adele Payn as Lady Anne, William N. Griffith as Richmond, Stanislaus Strange as King Henry, Floyd Minot as Buckingham, Harry Pruner as Norfolk, Annie Minot as Duchess of York, Willard Newell as Cattlesby, Hubert Wilson as Ratcliff, Amy Stone as Queen Elizabeth. Fool's Revenge was the offering on Monday, November 28. In this play, Miln and the company were poor. The star over-acted and confused the roles of the father—man and the mask of the jester. Only two actors in this cast did well. Annie Lief as Francesca and William N. Griffith as Dell Aquila were both excellent. Picayune, Tuesday, November 29, 1887.) On Tuesday, November 29, Miln played Hamlet and was so good that the Picayune mused: "... He showed neither the ranting of Richard nor the over-acting of Bertuccio." His Hamlet was said to be natural, thoughtful and consistent, and he proved himself as a first-rate tragedian in this role. William N. Griffith was Miln's top support as Laertes. The rest of the cast was weak. Hamlet was repeated only at the Saturday matinee. On Wednesday, Othello was offered, and in the title role Miln lost the footing made as Hamlet. He was merely acceptable. It was regretted that William Griffith, announced to play Iago, did not appear. Stanislaus Strange, substituted for
Griffith, was an utter failure as Iago. No reason was given for the failure of the strongest member of the cast not to appear. (Picayune, Thursday, December 1, 1887.) The Merchant of Venice was offered at the Thursday matinee, and Richelieu was played on Thursday night. In this role, Miln was successful, and acted with force. However, the cast got worse as the week went on. With the single exception of William N. Griffith, who was brilliant as De Mauprat, the cast was found to be unequal to the requirements of drama. (Picayune, Friday, December 2, 1887.) Damon and Pythias was offered on Friday, December 2, with Miln as Damon and Griffith as Pythias. Both men played well, while the rest of the cast were disappointing. On Saturday night, December 3, Miln closed his engagement with a performance of Macbeth.

On Sunday night, December 4, for one night, the W. W. Tillotson Company transferred from the St. Charles Theatre and presented the drama, Evangeline, to a good audience. Then, on Monday, December 5, 1887, Helena Modjeska returned for one week in a varied repertoire. Her busy schedule of performances included: Monday, Adrienne Lecouvreur; Tuesday, As You Like It; Wednesday, Mary Stuart; Thursday matinee, Dona Diana; Thursday night, Twelfth Night; Friday, Much Ado About Nothing; Saturday matinee, Camille; Saturday night,
Romeo and Juliet. Modjeska's opening attracted an impressive and fashionable audience, and her interpretation of the French actress of the Théâtre Francais was judged to be exquisite. The costumes of star and company were classed as breathtakingly beautiful. The cast included Maurice De Saxe...William Morris, Prince de Bouillion...Charles Vandenhoff, Abbee...Vincent Sternroyd, Michenet...William F. Owen, Poisson...Robert Taber, Tuinault...Tully Marshall, Servant...Charles Kelley, Call Boy...John Tata, Princess de Bouillion...Mary Shaw, Duchess d'Aumont...Grace Flikins, Marquise...Sarah Blanche Gray, Adrienne Lecouvreur...Modjeska, Mlle. Jouvenot...Claire Ellison, Mlle. Dangville...Kate Lesson, Maid...Julia Rosalie. (Picayune, Tuesday, December 6, 1887.) On Tuesday, Modjeska played Rosalind in As You Like It and was properly graceful, tender and delightful. As in the previous vehicle, Mary Shaw shone in top support as Celia, and was called one of America's most talented actresses. Rating other special mentions were Charles Vandenhoff as Jacques, William F. Owen as Touchstone and William Morris as Orlando. (Picayune, Wednesday, December 7, 1887.) On Wednesday, Modjeska enacted Mary Stuart in Frederick Schiller's drama of that name. Recreating one of her favorite parts, she acted in her usual artistically superior manner. Mary Shaw shared honors as
Elizabeth. Others in the cast were William Morris. Leicester, Thomas Coleman. Shrewsbury, James Cooper. Burleigh, Tully Marshall. Kent, S. E. Springer. Paulet, Tabor Taber. Mortimer, Frank Rich. Merville, Charles B. Kelly. Burgoyne, Mrs. W. A. Pennoyer. Hannah, Sarah Blanche Gray. Margaret. On Thursday night, Viola was Modjeska's choice in Twelfth Night, with Mary Shaw doing beautifully as Olivia. Other standouts were: William Morris. Orsino, Vincent Sternroyd. Sebastian, Charles Vanderhoff. Malvolio, William Owen. Sir Toby, Claire Ellison. Marie, Grace Filkins. Valentine. On Friday night, Juliet was Modjeska's choice role. The Picayune noted that although no Juliet could be found to duplicate the ideal performance of Adelaide Neilson, Modjeska was a fine and tender Juliet. The critic noted also that Modjeska was a grandmother, was proud of the fact and bragged about it—yet she was exceedingly convincing as the childlike Juliet. (Picayune, Saturday, December 10, 1887.) In good support were William Morris as Romeo, Mrs. M. A. Pennoyer as Nurse, Charles Vanderhoff as Mercutio, William Owen as Peter. At noon on Saturday, December 10, Camille was offered, while that night, Modjeska played Beatrice in Much Ado About Nothing. In each effort throughout the week, the star was said to give a brilliant performance. Modjeska was interviewed.
in an arresting article that appeared in the Picayune of Wednesday, December 7, 1887. The reporter traveled to the star's home-on-wheels for the interview. Reminiscent of Bernhardt, Modjeska traveled in a private railway car nicknamed "Mascotte." The sumptuous car traveled on the Louisville and Nashville line, and consisted of a smoking room, bedroom, drawing room, bathroom and kitchen—the latter room being presided over by a Negro cook and a head waiter. Amber drapes screened the car windows. Modjeska's genial husband, Count Bozenta, traveled with her and was by her side constantly. He chatted all the time his wife was interviewed, but added flavor to the conversation with his good humor. Both proved to be highly intelligent and well read. Modjeska lamented the fact that the stage was currently peopled with incompetent actors, amateurs who succeeded on the basis of notoriety or mere beauty, while really schooled actors were left starving. "... Genius, talent and training can never be replaced by today's competition with vulgarity," she said. She lamented also the fact that there was no real American school of acting, and she held the only great typical American actress to be Clara Morris. Concerning her repertoire, she told the reporter that she always opened in Adrienne Lecouvreur to bring her good luck.
On Sunday, December 11, Clio, a mammoth extravaganza by Bartley Campbell, opened at the theatre. There were fifty in the cast and two ballet troupes. The house was packed to the doors for the opening. The play was set in Italy, and among the lavish scenes was a carnival in Venice. This play marked the beginning of a new era of extravaganzas that featured dozens of girls in pink tights who were called amazon choruses, plus ballet sequences and lavish effects and costumes. Emphasis was on effect and spectacle and not on plot nor acting ability. This company was the original Boston and New York cast, and the lavish scenery was the original scenery from Niblo's Garden as used in its 150-night run in New York. The costumes were of the seventeenth century, and were authentic and costly. The cast included the following: Fabian...John Marshall, Clio...Mlle, Mabel, Dido...Angie Griffiths, Countess Ellis...Pauline Gaty, Duchess de Montmarie...Mattie Wood, Count de Grovannie...W. J. Coonsy, Paulo...W. H. Turner, Pietro...Alfred Beverly, Marquis Matto...William Stewart, King of France...E. H. Stoddard, Prince Zillah...Ed Page, Doge of Venice...T. A. Lambert, Sancho...P. Farren, Alsazage...Charles Collins. Mlle. Rosina Astegiani's solo dancing captured the audience, and the mechanical effects
astounded, especially the earthquake. (Picayune, Monday, December 12, 1887.) This spectacular drama played all week.

On Sunday, December 18, for Christmas week, Robert Downing came to the theatre and stayed a week, playing the title role in Spartacus. Downing and his impressive company were under the management of Joseph H. Mack. They appeared in a spectacular production with beautiful historical costumes and scenery. The cast included: Spartacus..Robert Downing, Phasarius..William Harris, Crassus..Harry Meredith, Bracchius..Samuel Dubois, Lentulus..Charles Nevine, Enomaus..Samuel Browne, Jovioques..Walter Osmond, Florus..Lincoln Wagenhale, Crixus..Lewis Keane, Gellius..Harry Willand, Centurion..G. D. Farnum, Scrobus..E. W. Hilliard, Aftificer ..P. A. Clinton, Sonona..Mattie Earle, Julia..Stella Rees, Child Spartacus..Master Dennie, Fighting Gaul..Louis Hendricks. Downing gave a sincere portrayal of the Gladiator, and William Harris and Harry Meredith shared honors with the star with outstanding performances. (Picayune, Monday, December 19, 1887.)

F. C. Bangs returned on Sunday, December 25, in a new role, that of Lanciotto, the hunchback, in George H. Boker's Francesca da Rimini, and remained for the holiday week in the role. Without imitating Lawrence Barrett who made the
role famous, Bangs gave a fine conception of the character. A good company supported the star, including John M. Sturgen as Count Paolo, W. St.Clair as Pepe, Helen Leigh as Francesca, G. S. Gray as Malatesta, J. D. Williams as Guido, E. Dunbar as the Cardinal, Thomas Harvey as Rene, Fred Scott as Lucentio, James Deaton as Gremio, A. F. Ridder as Vincentio, C. E. Spencer as Torelli, Alis Endres as Ritta. Helen Leigh was considered as graceful and forceful in the title role, and the production proved to follow the new mode of the day, with rich, beautiful and authentic costumes and scenery, a chorus of trained voices and new music. The lavish production also sported a large corps of auxiliaries. F. G. Stone was the manager of the powerful company. (Picayune, Monday, December 26, 1887.)

Another familiar face was greeted at the theatre on Sunday, January 1, 1888, when Charlotte Thompson opened a week's engagement. It had been several years since the veteran favorite had appeared at the theatre, and a large enthusiastic opening audience greeted the popular star. She appeared in a new play, **Drifting Clouds**, a dramatic adaptation of Hugh Conway's novel, **Dark Days**. This was melodrama in its strongest sense, sporting a repulsive villain, Sir Charles Melville, whose hobby is ruining young ladies,
including the leading lady, Phillis Denobr, who then loses her mind but regains her sanity in the end. Charlotte Thompson, as Phyllis, was a charming heroine despite the sombre circumstances. Dore Davidson as Denobr, the valet and brother of Phyllis, was excellent as the hero who foils the villain. The rest of the cast was not up to the standard of the playing of the fine actress. These included Lorraine Rogers, Charlotte Thompson's husband and the first business manager of the third Varieties, and also H. E. Chase, Florence Vincent, Kate Mallon, Sylvia Miller, Ramie Austin and Messers. Sackett and Hubert. (Picayune, Sunday, January 1, 1888.) The bill changed for one night only on Sunday, January 8, when Charlotte Thompson appeared in East Lynne.

An important engagement took place at the theatre beginning on Monday, January 9, 1888, when the eminent actress, Margaret Mather, appeared for the first time at the Grand Opera House. She came for a week, starring in an exceptional production of Romeo and Juliet, and supported by a fine company managed by J. M. Hill. It was Hill who was the discoverer and patron of Margaret Mather. The production was described by the Picayune as the grandest, most expensive production of the tragedy ever seen in the city. The scenery was elaborate and beautiful beyond expectations,
having been painted by William Voegtlein, George Heineman and William Shaefer of New York, with intricate authentic detail. The lavish costumes numbered more than 120, to supply the mammoth cast, and were all as authentic and elaborate as the scenery. Only fifteen years before her New Orleans debut, in 1872, Margaret Mather was a starving little waif who sold newspapers on street corners in Detroit. Only less than two years before, in 1886, she played as Juliet at the Detroit Opera House in her home town and caused a sensation. In the interim, the ambitious waif who wanted to be an actress went to New York to live with a relative and study drama. J. M. Hill discovered the girl when she was seventeen and made her a star. She first appeared as Juliet in 1882 in Chicago. (Picayune, Sunday, January 8, 1888.) Margaret Mather's debut in New Orleans received mixed reviews despite the exquisite production surrounding her. The Times-Democrat found the star charming and possessing a captivating freshness, but her diction disappointed; she over-enunciated, attempting to give each word perfect enunciation. Too, her "r" sounds were over-stressed; she exaggerated action as well as speech, and the quality of her voice was often harsh and discordant. The Times-Democrat declared that despite the beauty of her face and figure, Margaret Mather was not ready
for stardom, and warned: "... There is no short nor rose-strewn pathway that leads to real eminence in the drama."
(Times-Democrat, Tuesday, January 10, 1888.) The Picayune disagreed, however, and found Margaret Mather's reading to be delightful. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 10, 1888.)

Frederick Paulding, who had appeared at the theatre years before, co-starred as Romeo, and proved himself to be a fine actor. Others in the Union Square Company supporting Mather included Milnes Levick as Mercutio, Mrs. Sol Smith as the Nurse, O'Kane Hillis as Friar Lawrence, Eugene Jepson as Capulet, William Ranons as Tybalt, George Dalton as Benvolio, Howell Hansel as Paris, Fred Peters as Peter, William Morton as Apothecary, R. F. Runyon as Sampson, C. F. Loon as Gregory, George Leman as Abraham, E. Hanna as Balthasar, Jean Harold as Lady Capulet, and pages: Misses Radden, Morton, Smith, Thomas, Sweeney, Preston, LeBrun, Maddern, Welter, Hughes, and Walters. Margaret Mather's last performance on Saturday, January 14, was a sellout with all standing room sold and over 300 people turned away, marking the biggest business of the season. (Picayune, Saturday, January 14, 1888.) On Saturday, January 14, for her final performance, Mather acted as Lady Macbeth in Macbeth; and although Marie Wainwright and Louis James played the same tragedy on the same
date at the Academy, both theatres drew capacity audiences.

Charlotte Thompson returned for another week on Sunday, January 15, to play the title role in Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, with William Yerance as Lord Rochester. The rest of the cast was as follows: Dore Davidson as Achille, H. E. Chase as Colonel Dent, H. Sackett as Jacob Buttercup, Mr. Ecncary as religionist, Kate Mallon as Mrs. Reed, Ramie Austin as Lady Ingraham, Florence Vincent as Mrs. Fairfax, Sylvia Miller as Adele. Always popular in New Orleans, the star attracted many devoted fans.

Professor Kellar, renowned mystic, began an engagement on Sunday, January 22, 1888. He came without advance notice and had never been seen in the city before. At his opening an average-sized house of the curious and those interested in supernatural manifestations came to witness unbelievable demonstrations of spirit materializations. These included flowers that floated through the air and formed wreaths with spirit faces inside, luminous shapes that appeared and walked about before they floated through the air and then disappeared. The amazing performance ended with the levitation of Kellar, so that he was elevated into the air, sitting on apparently nothing but air. Kellar was assisted by Nana Sahib, an Oriental mystic, and by pretty Eva Hewett, Kellar's wife, who
relieved the eerie tension by playing cornet solos. To say that Kellar caught on is an understatement. Solely on the merit of his supernatural skill, business increased nightly until crowds were being turned away. Originally engaged for a week, Kellar proved to be such a sensation, that by popular demand he was held over for a second week, through Saturday, February 4. (Picayune, Sunday, January 22; Sunday, January 29, 1888.)

The greatest theatrical event of the season, not only at the Grand Opera House, but in the entire city, was the fortunate booking of Edwin Booth and Lawrence Barrett, now appearing together as co-stars. Described by the Picayune as the strongest dramatic attraction in America, the stars were playing to sold-out houses wherever they appeared on their celebrated tour. Booth was "... the greatest English-speaking tragedian in the world," according to the Picayune, while Barrett stood "... next in line to Booth..." No one was more sincere or had climbed higher than the latter, that newspaper avowed. (Picayune, Sunday, February 5, 1888.)

The two famous stars came for a week, beginning on Monday, February 6, and played a varied, ever changing repertoire. Seats for the engagement were sold at $3, $2.50 and $1, with boxes at six seats for $25. A significant reference to the
high price scale shows the low regard with which Bernhardt was held by the *Picayune*:

... A few years ago, the American public had to pay $3 a seat to see the thin French person called Bernhardt, whom they could not understand. Booth and Barrett are both Americans, and that is something to be proud of. ... (*Picayune*, Sunday, February 5, 1888.)

The repertoire was as follows: Monday, *Othello*; Tuesday and Saturday matinee, *Hamlet*; Wednesday, *King Lear*; Thursday matinee and Saturday night, *Julius Caesar*; Friday, *Merchant of Venice*. *Othello* was given with the following cast: Iago ..Edwin Booth, Othello..Lawrence Barrett, Brabantio..Ben G. Rogers, Cassio..E. J. Buckley, Rodgerio..Kendall Weston, Duke of Venice..Charles Collins, Montano..Charles Hanford, Gratiano..Frederick Vroom, Lodovico..Lawrence Hanley, Paulo ..Edwin Boyle, Marco..Beaumont Smith, Julio..J. L. Finney, Herald..Charles Koehler, Messenger..Walter Thomas, Desdemona..Minna Gale, Emelia..Gertrude Kellogg. This cast was a strong one and gave a great performance. Booth's exquisite enactment of Iago has already been described on several occasions, and Barrett's Othello was impressive. The *Times-Democrat* said that the fruits of the performance proved the two unquestionably superior to all living tragedians on the American stage, and that it was a happy thought that led them to combine their talents for the present season as their phenomenal
success in every part of the country had shown. It was said that such a combination had not been seen in English-speaking countries since 1881 when the same tragedy of Othello was given at the Lyceum Theatre in London by Booth and Henry Irving. Outdoing the Picayune that gave mild praise to Barrett, the Times-Democrat said that Barrett was a magnificent Othello. (Times-Democrat, Tuesday, February 7; Picayune, Tuesday, February 7, 1888.)

On Tuesday, February 7, the stars presented Hamlet, with Booth as Hamlet and Barrett as Laertes. Booth's superior portrayal was already acknowledged years before as the world's greatest Hamlet. But the passing years had not dimmed the performance; he was as magnificent as ever, according to the Picayune. That newspaper praised Barrett for stepping down from the title role and playing the small role of Laertes so well. The gesture was the mark of a great actor, the Picayune declared. Nothing could prove more the versatility of Booth than his performance as Iago and then as Hamlet on two successive nights, the Times-Democrat avowed:

... The spectator cannot convince himself that the part of the studious and princely Dane is being played by the same man he saw the night before as the most supersubtle and exquisitely villainous traitor that Shakespeare ever drew. The change in the expression of the face is extraordinary... the features themselves and even the stature of
the man seem to have altered, and . . . his very voice sounds like that of a different person. So startling indeed is the difference that the impressive might almost be described as uncanny. (Times-Democrat, February 8, 1888.)

The cast that supported included Ben Rogers as Polonius, E. J. Buckley as the Ghost, Charles Hanford as the King, John A. Lane as Horatio, Owen Fawcett as First Gravedigger, Gertrude Kellogg as the Queen, Minna Gale as Ophelia. Finally, the scenery, costumes and staging of Hamlet was described as the most beautiful ever seen for the play in the city. (Picayune, Wednesday, February 8, 1888.) Another immense audience gathered to see King Lear on Wednesday. The Picayune noted with interest that the male audience was so scholarly and absorbed that they did not feel it necessary to retire to nearby barrooms in the intermissions, but remained in the theatre to discuss the play with friends. The acting was regarded to be superb. Booth was said to be so magnificent as Lear that the women of the audience cried as one person collectively at the woes of the old King. Barrett was excellent as Edgar. Others in the noteworthy performance were E. J. Buckley as Edmund, John A. Lane as Kent, Owen Fawcett as the Fool, Ben G. Rogers as Gloster, Charles Hanford as Albany, Lawrence Hanley as Cornwall, Frederick Vroom as King of France, Elizabeth Robbins as Regan, Gertrude
Kellogg as Goneril, Minna Gale as Cordelia. (Picayune, Thursday, February 9, 1888.) Julius Caesar was the exciting fare at the matinee on Thursday, February 9. It was described as the strongest offering in the Booth-Barrett repertoire, and featured Barrett in his greatest part, Cassius, with Booth, the greatest living Brutus on the stage of the day, in that celebrated role. The unequaled combination chose to close their engagement in the same play as Saturday night, February 11. On that closing night, with hundreds of people turned away, the receipts of that one performance alone was well over $4,000. (Picayune, Sunday, February 12, 1888.) The Picayune described the Julius Caesar cast as the strongest and most perfect ever seen in New Orleans. It included: Brutus..Edwin Booth, Cassius..Lawrence Barrett, Marc Antony..E. J. Buckley, Julius Caesar..John A. Lane, Decius..Charles Collins, Casca..Ben G. Rogers, Octavius Caesar..Lawrence Hanley, Metellus Cimber..L. J. Henderson, Popilius Lenas..Frederick Vroom, Titinius..J. L. Finney, Trebonius..Charles B. Hanford, Cinna..Edwin Royle, Soothsayer..Beaumont Smith, Pindarus..Kendall Weston, Dervius..Walter Thomas, Flavius..M. C. Stone, Lucius..Mariam O'Leary, First Citizen..Owen Fawcett, Second Citizen..Charles Koehler, Portia..Minna Gale, Calpurnia..Elizabeth Robbins. Summing
up in superlatives a description of the performance, the Picayune noted: "... These great characters lived in great actors through great art last night." (Picayune, Sunday, February 12, 1888.)

On Thursday night, Macbeth was the offering, played with two male witches and one female witch. The cast included as Macbeth...Edwin Booth, Macduff...Lawrence Barrett, Duncan...Ben G. Rogers, Malcolm...E. J. Buckley, Donalbain...L. J. Finney, Banquo...John Lane, First Witch...Owen Fawcett, Second Witch...L. J. Henderson, Third Witch...Emma Marble, Lady Macbeth...Gertrude Kellogg. Booth made Macbeth an intellectual whose fears and guilt make life a hell. He discarded the old nineteenth century style of bringing on a murdered physical Banquo with gaping wounds, in the banquet scene, as had been the custom. Instead Booth's expression of horror while glimpsing the murdered man in the empty chair, made the invisible Banquo more real than the physical man had been. (Picayune, Friday, February 10, 1888.) On Friday, February 10, The Merchant of Venice was performed with the following cast: Shylock...Edwin Booth, Bassanio...Lawrence Barrett, Antonio...John Lane, Gratiano...Charles B. Hanford, Lorenzo...Lawrence Hanley, Duke of Venice...Charles Collins, Tubal...Edwin Royle, Leonardo...Beaumont Smith,
Portia...Minna Gale, Nerissa...Elizabeth Robbins, Jessica...
Mirian O'Leary. Booth gave a wholly sympathetic portrayal of Shylock, mocked by heartless Christians, cursed and spat upon by men who despised him without cause, mocked his religion and robbed him of wealth and his only child. Booth caused Shylock to be in the end a pitiable, poor old man.
The *Picayune* regarded the performance as grand, and one which wrung tears from the mammoth audience. (*Picayune*, Saturday, February 11, 1888.) Barrett made a handsome and intelligent Bassanio. The only member of the company to fall below expectations all week was Minna Gale, an unfortunate choice as leading lady in the most powerful company of the era. She never rose in her portrayals above the commonplace, and failed utterly in the important roles of Portia in *Julius Caesar* and *Merchant of Venice*. (*Picayune*, Sunday, February 12, 1888.) It should be remembered that Minna Gale disappointed utterly also as leading lady to Lawrence Barrett in 1886.

Another exciting attraction followed that of Booth and Barrett. A. M. Palmer brought a strong company from his Madison Square Theatre in New York to appear in Sir Charles Young's drama, *Jim, the Penman*, played for the first time in New Orleans. This billing filled again every seat in the
theatre all week. The cast was headed by George Edgar, a fine actor who had a New York reputation of the highest merit, and May Brooklyn, who had been the popular ingenue of the Star Dramatic Company during the previous season. The whole cast included: James Ralston, George Edgar, Louis Percival, Wright Huntington, Baron Hartfeld, Harry Eytinge, Capt. Redwood, Louis Baker, Lord Dreilincount, John Archer, Jack Ralston, J. H. Browne, Caphstone, John T. McKever, Dr. Pettywise, John Mathews, Netherby, Percy Winters, George, A. C. Hilsdore, Nina, May Brooklyn, Anges, Mary Sanders, Lady Dunscombe, Fannie Jackson, Mrs. Clapstone, Adele Clarke. The Picayune applauded May Brooklyn as being the top star of the cast, and said: "... She is great, and does powerful acting." (Picayune, Monday, February 3; Thursday, February 16, 1888.)

Beginning on Sunday, February 19, 1888, for two weeks until Sunday, March 4, both the Grand Opera House and the St. Charles remained closed. The Grand Opera House reopened on March 4, presenting Lillian Lewis in her first appearance at the theatre in a new play, Through a Looking Glass, a dramatization by Lawrence Marston of the novel of the same name. Marston was an actor in the company of Lillian Lewis, and the play was a major success in New York that season and was
still playing at the time in that city. Despite the New York raves, the *Picayune* found the first two acts of the four-act drama to be weak, with only the last two giving Lillian Lewis scope for acting. In these later acts, she proved herself an emotional actress of much ability. (*Picayune*, March 5, 1888.) The supporting company was only fair. They included Lizzie Ingles as Lady Balfour, Fannie Tanner as Beatrice Vyse, Bessie Taylor as Felicia, Cora Mason as Lady Damer, Minnie Gilbert as Lady Gage, Lawrence Marston as Algernon Balfour, Allen Dumond as Capt. Fontinbras, Waldemar Dahlcane as Paul Drominoff, Frederick Monie as Lord Daisey, Ralph Bell as Sir Thomas, Harry Mantell as Footman, Robert Terry as Operator, Frank Hilliard as Clerk. Lillian Lewis revealed, in an interview with a *Picayune* reporter, an abnormal conceit and over abundance of self-assurance. The twenty-five year old girl, a native of Kentucky, was interviewed in her St. Charles Hotel suite. She was described as being big and buxum, with a mop of brown hair and a rattling tongue. She had been on the stage for five years, and considered herself as having been a star for four of them. She asserted that she was going to step into the shoes of Clara Morris, Modjeska and Fanny Davenport. She bragged that when she decided to become an actress, she merely went to New York.
"... with a lot of money and splendid clothes." She flaunted:

... I had not a single dress that cost less than $400. ... I had not been on the stage a week before I decided I would have the place of Clara Morris, Modjeska and Fanny Davenport. ... Some day their honors will fall to me. ...

She had started at the Fifth Avenue Theatre for $25 a week, but now declared that she only enjoyed playing with or to people of culture and intelligence. (Picayune, Sunday, March 11, 1888.) The egotistical star began her second week on Sunday, March 11, appearing in Article 47, repeating this drama on Monday, Tuesday, and Saturday matinee. On Wednesday, Friday, Saturday night, Sunday, and Thursday matinee, she played in The New Magdalen, and on Thursday night, she repeated As In A Looking Glass. She was described as being realistic and strong as Cora in Article 47. The cast was as follows: Cora..Lillian Lewis, Marcell..Bessie Taylor, Nina..Lizzie Ingles, George Duhamel..Allen Demond, Victor Maziller..Lawrence Marston, Poutain..Ralph Bell, De Rives..W. Dahlban, Rene..Frederick Monie, Gerdarme..Robert Terry. In The New Magdalen, Lillian Lewis was completely natural as Mercy Merrick. Her support included Julian Gray..Lawrence Marston, Grace Roseberry..Bessie Taylor, Lady Janet Roy..Lizzie Ingles, Marie..Mamie Brainard, Horace Holmcroft..
Allen Dumond, Surgeon Wetzel..L. W. Dahlbam, Capt. Arnault
..Frederick Monie, Surgeon Surville..Ralph Bell, Officer..
Harry Mantell, James..Robert Terry, Max..Frank Hilliard.

The Grand Opera House was closed for another week
from Monday, March 19, to Sunday, March 25. On the latter
date, for the first time in the city, Gunter's Two Nights
in Rome was brought to the theatre, with Rose Osborne and
her company performing in the romantic drama for one week.
In the cast were: Antonia..Rose Osborne, Louis Bennedetta..
A. J. Muller, Gerald Massey..J. H. Cooney, Herr Franz..
Charles Townsend, Abija Peabody..R. G. March, Captain Warmstree..Ed Rage, General Aubrey..James Murray, Waters..Charles
Adams, Beppe..A. C. Charles, Evelyn Aubrey..Florence Elmore,
Sylvia de Montain..Jenny Cleveland, Teens..Lizzie Seymour.
Florence Elmore, R. G. Marsh and A. J. Muller shared honors
with Rose Osborne for outstanding acting. (Picayune, Monday,
March 26, 1888.)

David Bidwell began his last month as manager of the
Grand Opera House, when on Monday, April 2, Joseph Jefferson
returned to the theatre in his old, familiar part of Rip Van
Winkle in Boucicault's dramatization of Washington Irving's
legend. The eminent actor was described by the Picayune as
being the same finished, delightful actor of old, who had
achieved greatness in the role. The good cast was as follows:

Rip Van Winkle..Joseph Jefferson, Derrick..Edwin Verray,
Cockles..George Denham, Nick Vedder..Barton, Jacob Stein..H.
Waters, Clausen..Joseph Warren, Gretchen..Emma Vadere, Little
Meenie..Gertie Foster, Little Hendrick..Bertie Black, Hend­
rick..G. F. Nash, Seth..Joseph Warren, Meenie..May Wolcott,
Katchen..Belle Stoddard. (Picayune, Tuesday, April 3, 1888.)

A capacity audience appeared to greet Jefferson at his open­
ing. According to the Times-Democrat, the audience was
entranced by the delicacy and strength of Jefferson's mobile
face, his charm and his beautiful voice "... as full, clear
and sweet as the taut strings of a violin ..." and his
wonderful humor kept the mammoth house laughing at his will.
(Times-Democrat, Tuesday, April 3, 1888.)

A big event was the engagement of Lily Langtry, the
international beauty, for the first time at the Grand Opera
House, beginning on Monday, April 9. The European star had
been brought to the United States by Henry E. Abbey, who had
also imported such stars as Bernhardt, Henry Irving and Ellen
Terry.6 The star was seen in the comedy, A Wife's Peril, an

6Daniel Blum, A Pictorial History of the American
Theatre: 1860-1960 (Philadelphia and New York: Chilton Co.,
1960), p. 27.
adaptation by B. C. Stephenson and Clement Scott of Sardou's *Nos Intimes*, and which had also been presented at Wallack's in New York as *Boston Friends*. The actress was described as being both beautiful and natural in the role of Lady Ormond. Her costumes drew much attention from the press, being described as "marvels of simple elegance," and included such expensive dresses as an emerald green silk and velvet dress lined with satin and decorated with pearls, a silver gray dress trimmed with gold embroidery, a black velvet wrap lined with silver fox fur and a gray silk and velvet dress trimmed with gold and steel embroidery and gray feathers. *(Picayune, Tuesday, April 10, 1888.)* The cast was as follows: Captain Bradford..Charles Coughlan, Sir George Ormond..Louis Calvert, Sir Woodbine Grafton..George Ralemond, Percy Grafton..Sidney Herbert, Dr. Thornton,.Frederick Everil, Corol­ lsey Beck..Walter Lennox, Jr., Meadows..William Spenser, Kemp ..Ivan Perlolet, John..W. H. Smithers, Lucy Ormond..Katherine Florence, Mrs. Beck..Helen Russell, Sophie..Rose Robert, Lady Ormond..Lily Langtry. The week's schedule was as follows: Monday and Wednesday nights and Saturday matinee, *A Wife's Peril*; Tuesday, Friday and Saturday, *As In A Looking Glass*; Thursday night, *Lady of Lyons*. Interestingly, the *Picayune* compared the current production of *As In A Looking Glass*,
first seen on Tuesday, April 10, with the one presented a month before by Lillian Lewis, and found the Langtry presentation far superior to "the one seen so badly acted recently." (Picayune, Wednesday, April 11, 1888.) More gorgeous dresses were worn by the star in this play, including a cloak of electric blue plush lined with chinchilla fur, with an immense collar and border of the same fur, over a dress of amber satin with beaded Brussels lace, with train of silk tulle. Another exquisite dress of white silk and silver fox was adorned by jewels worth $10,000. Several other magnificent costumes, equally elaborate, were also described in detail by the Picayune. (Picayune, Wednesday, April 11, 1888.) The cast of the latter play was as follows: Capt. Pontonbras..Charles Coughlan, Lord Daysay..Mark Lynch, Count Dromiroff..Fred Everill, Sir Thomas..George Raiemond, Algernon Balfour..Louis Calvert, Capt. Fairfield..Sidney Herbert, Mons. Camille..George Stokes, Major Roberts..Walter Lennox, Jr., Lord Benley..W. Nicholson, Footman..William Spenser, Walter..David Godbold, Norton..W. H. Smithers, Kolmuck..Harry Goldbold, Lady Damer..Hattie Russell, Beatrice..Katherine Florence, Felicie..Rose Roberts, Lena Despard..Lily Langtry. Saturday, April 15, 1888, was the date of a triple farewell occasion, being the end of the Lily Langtry engage-
ment, the end of the 1887-1888 season, and the end of David Bidwell's association with the Grand Opera House. As of May 1, 1888, the theatre passed under a new lease, into the hands of its greatest manager, Henry Greenwall, who was to govern the theatre longer by far than any other manager in the history of the Grand Opera House.

The season had begun on November 13, with the booking of Jeffreys Lewis for two weeks, to good business. George C. Miln, a clergyman turned actor, came for a week beginning on Sunday, November 27, in a varied repertoire with a poor company with the exception of one brilliant player, William N. Griffith, his main support, and attracted fair houses. On Sunday, December 4, for one night, the W. W. Tillotson Company presented *Evangeline* to a good audience. Mme. Modjeska came on Monday, December 5, and remained a week, playing exquisitely in a varied repertoire to large, fashionable audiences. Bartley Campbell's *Clio*, an expensive extravaganza, moved into the theatre on Sunday, December 11, and attracted capacity houses for a week. Robert Downing followed on Sunday, December 18, appearing for a week in *Spartacus*, supported by a fine company managed by Joseph H. Mack, and attracted good audiences. F. C. Bangs came on
Sunday, December 25, Christmas Day, and appeared for a week in an elaborate production of *Francesca da Rimini*, supported by a powerful company managed by F. G. Stone, and commanding large, appreciative houses. Charlotte Thompson followed on New Year's Day, Sunday, January 1, 1888, playing for a week to big audiences composed of old, faithful fans. Margaret Mather made her debut at the theatre on Monday, January 9, appearing to mixed reviews in *Romeo and Juliet* and attracting large, fashionable audiences. Charlotte Thompson returned for a second week on Sunday, January 15, and appeared for a week in *Jane Eyre* to fair houses. Kellar, a mystic, came on Sunday, January 22, and became such a sensation that he was held over for a second week, playing to big business. The most important engagement of the entire season and in fact of the five years of David Bidwell's management of the Grand Opera House began on Monday, February 6, when Edwin Booth and Lawrence Barrett began a co-starring engagement for a week in a varied classical repertoire that packed the theatre to capacity with elegant audiences at every performance. *Jim, the Penman* moved in on Sunday, February 12, presented by A. M. Palmer's Company from the Madison Square Theatre, and filled every seat in the theatre. The theatre remained closed for two weeks beginning on February 19. Lillian Lewis
came on Sunday, March 4, stayed for two weeks, appeared in several plays, and proved to be an unequaled egotist and pompous braggart. She attracted only fair business. Rose Osborne came on Sunday, March 25, for a week, appearing in Two Nights in Rome, to average business. Joseph Jefferson was the second biggest event of the season. He came on Monday, April 2, in Rip Van Winkle, and commanded huge audiences. Lily Langtry closed the season, arriving on Monday, April 9, and remaining for a week in a varied repertoire, playing to excellent houses that came more to gape at her gorgeous clothes than to watch her act. The season closed on Saturday, April 14, and David Bidwell's era at the Grand Opera House came to an end on this date.

This had been an interesting five-year period, from 1883-1888. At first, Bidwell maneuvered cleverly to keep attractions at his theatres all the time during the season, with no dark periods noted during the entire season. He achieved this feat by moving popular attractions from one theatre to another among his three theatres--the Grand Opera House, the Academy of Music and the St. Charles. In the last few years, Bidwell became slack in keeping his theatres open every week all season. In the last two years of his
managing the Grand Opera House the theatre was closed for three weeks each season during the height of the season, and in the last season of Bidwell's reign, the Grand Opera House was closed simultaneously with the St. Charles for two whole weeks. During Bidwell's era at the Grand Opera House, several important theatrical trends were noted: melodrama became increasingly popular, and the villain of melodrama became increasingly sinister and unsympathetic. During this period, the extravaganza came into its own. Extravaganza productions were staged lavishly, with gorgeous costumes, gigantic casts, elaborate scenery and intricate mechanical effects. Such productions usually included several ballets, and choruses of girls in skin-colored tights—the premiere of the amazon chorus which was to become so popular in the next ten years, in the gay '90's. Moreover, authenticity became a norm in period productions. Greek, Roman or Shakespearean productions showed the results of exhaustive research by experts on historical accuracy, and costumes and sets were meticulously accurate in duplicating the norms of the day in costumes, scenery, architecture and properties. Even contemporary costumes became more important, more elaborate and more costly. Lillian Lewis bragged to a reporter during her 1888 engagement that all her dresses for the stage cost at
least $400, and beautiful Lily Langtry attracted more comment from the press concerning her exquisite and expensive costumes than she attracted concerning her acting. During this era it was first noted that ladies were beginning to remove their bonnets when seated in the theatre. Bidwell had changed the mid-week matinee at the Grand Opera House from Wednesday to Thursday, as a means of lessening competition among his three New Orleans houses. The era maintained the custom that had come into being with Manager Hall of abandoning the stock company of the theatre, a custom now in force all over the country. Although Bidwell perpetuated this norm, he created excitement all over the country when he began a stock company to alternate among his three New Orleans theatres, the Star Dramatic Company. This was an excellent company that functioned for two seasons, 1885-1886 and 1886-1887, and was then abandoned without any stated reason. The successful experiment proved that a good stock company could still exist in this era of declining merit in the theatre: when actors no longer had the necessary and needed schooling in a stock company where they could learn to handle a variety of parts, when new stars were now inferior, being insufficiently trained, and when supporting companies became on the whole worse and worse--being atrophied in a mesh of type.
casting and playing one part all season. The Star Company proved that the stock company was still superior to the new system and that a stock company could be a financial success.

Bidwell's greatest contribution during this era was his formation of the Star Company although it lasted only two seasons. Lastly, the greatest excitement of any booking during the Bidwell reign at the Grand Opera House occurred with the booking of Edwin Booth and Lawrence Barrett in the manager's last season at the theatre. It is not to be forgotten that Bidwell maintained the Grand Opera House as a first-class theatre that attracted the best attractions on tour in the country, and that when taking over the theatre, he had spent considerable sums on improving and beautifying the entire building and in installing electricity so that the Grand Opera House maintained and even increased its reputation of being the most elegant and most beautiful theatre in the entire South.
CHAPTER VI

THE FIFTH PERIOD: FALL, 1888, THROUGH SPRING, 1899,
DYNAMIC ERA OF HENRY GREENWALL, PRIOR TO
RISE AND EFFECTS OF THE
THEATRICAL SYNDICATE

Henry Greenwall's era at the Grand Opera House, from
1888 to 1904, was an era of great expansion, mechanization
and industrial progress in the United States. From 5,200
miles of railroad in 1870, the total mileage in the country
had risen to 93,000 in 1880, and by 1890 to 163,000. By the
latter date, the railway map was complete and the age of
railroad pioneering was over. In 1887, Congress established
the Interstate Commerce Commission to deal with railroad
transgressions. By 1886, a transoceanic cable had been laid;
the telephone, introduced in 1876 by Alexander Graham Bell,
had become a common commodity in the 1880's, when telephone
systems connected every major city. By 1890, over 440,000
instruments were in use. Electricity revolutionized daily
life and lighting effects in the theatre. The incandescent

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light was invented by Edison in 1880 and by 1898 there were 2,774 central electric power stations throughout the country. Electric transportation systems replaced horse-drawn street cars, and more and more electric lighting effects were introduced in the theatre. Many inventions to simplify life appeared every day—but, with mounting mechanization, a negative boomerang appeared with a resounding thud! Big business turned into dangerous monopolies. As the evils of the trusts became increasingly apparent, demands began for legislation to curb the monopolies that flourished under the protection of the Fourteenth Amendment which declared that states may not deprive any "person" of life, liberty or prosperity without due process of law. It was under the banner of this protection that Klaw and Erlanger molded the Theatrical Syndicate. On July 2, 1890, the Sherman Anti-trust Act was passed, branding the trusts as illegal, but enforcement of the act was quite another matter. The act proved to be ineffective in litigation because of the nebulosity of the terms "person" and "interstate commerce." Labor armed itself against capitol with the formation of labor unions, and strikes were a natural aftermath. 340,000 men participated in the May Day strike of 1886. Problems of the 1890's were increased by swelling immigration and the
formation of Negro and foreign minority ghettos.¹ By the last decade of the nineteenth century, the era of continental expansion was over, isolation lost status, and the United States began to play a new important role in international affairs.

It was during this era of expansion, change and political complexity, when the problem of the trusts would move into the theatre and threaten the very existence of free independent theatrical enterprise, that Henry Greenwall became the manager of the Grand Opera House. Greenwall was the most important, the most enduring, the most fearless and the most colorful of all the managers of the Grand Opera House. According to Kendall:

Greenwall was the last noteworthy personality in the history of the New Orleans theatres. He was a remarkable man in every sense of the word. In the annals of the American stage, he will long have the place as the manager who in the Deep South headed the opposition to the . . . syndicate . . . , which in the opinion of contemporary observers did more than anything else to bring to a close the grand epoch of the theatre in this country. His struggle against the Klaw and Erlanger attempt to 'organize' the theatrical business was unavailing; it brought him very near to ruin, but Greenwall made the fight a matter of conscience

and regarded no sacrifice as too great to make for what he regarded as the best interests of a profession to which he was devoted. . . . One must respect the high-mindedness of a man who almost alone set himself against the syndicate in his territory, and carried on a losing battle for nearly a quarter of a century.²

The dedicated, high-minded and energetic new manager was experienced as a theatrical tycoon. He dedicated forty-four years to his profession, and created theatrical history. Henry Greenwall was born in Germany, but was brought to New Orleans by his parents at the age of five, in 1837. Henry got his start in the brokerage business, going into that line of business with his older brother Morris in Galveston, Texas, after the Civil War. It was when Augusta Dargon became stranded in Galveston and in debt to the Greenwall brothers, that the Greenwalls began their theatrical career. They backed Miss Dargon in a successful dramatic engagement, and Morris Greenwall subsequently lost his life as a result of a tour with Miss Dargon to Australia, after he contracted pneumonia.

Before returning to New Orleans, Henry Greenwall became a successful theatre magnate throughout Texas, as manager of a string of theatres, beginning in the early

1870's in Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth and Waco, as well as Galveston. He left Texas in 1888 for his former home city, New Orleans, and made his headquarters thereafter in that city. Greenwall returned just at the time when Bidwell's lease on the Grand Opera House was renewable. The Variété Association was not pleased with the way in which Bidwell was conducting their theatre of late and was eager to make a change and not renew Bidwell's lease. The Association officials approached Greenwall to take over the theatre. But friends of the ambitious tycoon advised him not to take the house, as to do so would implicate him in a quarrel with Bidwell, who did not wish to relinquish the theatre. Since Bidwell was the dominant influence in New Orleans theatrical affairs at that time, any new manager of the theatre must face alienation from any cordial relations with Bidwell. But genial Greenwall felt that he could overcome personality obstacles, and the Variété Association offered him terms so liberal, that he decided it would be disadvantageous to refuse. Therefore, the Grand Opera House was leased to Greenwall in 1888 for a period of five years, to be renewed if desired. The move was unfortunately to alienate Bidwell,

\[^3\text{Ibid., pp. 583-85.}\quad \text{^4\text{Ibid., p. 585.}}\]
and it was this alienation that would serve indirectly to ruin Greenwall. For, in an effort to retaliate, Bidwell would offer great sums to back Klaw and Erlanger in a new booking agency that would become the backbone of the Theatrical Syndicate. Thus, indirectly, Bidwell caused Greenwall's ruin. Conversely, Greenwall's early years at the theatre were the greatest years in the entire history of the Grand Opera House. So prosperous did the theatre become that when Greenwall took over the house, the market value of the 120 Variété shares was $600, and five years later, they had soared to $1,850.\(^5\)

Since the Theatrical Syndicate was not to become a major issue until several seasons after Greenwall became manager of the Grand Opera House, the circumstances surrounding the formation of the activities of and operation of the Trust will be discussed later at the time when the Syndicate made its initial appearance upon the theatrical scene. As stated, however, the creation of the Syndicate followed the actions on the part of Bidwell as a result of Greenwall's assumption of the lease of the Grand Opera House: Bidwell's reaction when Greenwall snatched the most beautiful theatre

\(^5\)Ibid., p. 586.
in the South from his grasp was to purchase the theatrical agency of H. S. Taylor in New York City and to put Abraham Erlanger in charge. In this way, Bidwell hoped to secure top attractions in the city for his Academy of Music and St. Charles theatres, and to freeze out Greenwall's chances for major bookings. But Greenwall countered by maintaining a personal representative in New York all year long with the purpose of booking stars for his theatres, by dealing directly with the stars. This action was taken subsequent to 1890, after two difficult years of strenuous, overt competition from Bidwell between 1888 and 1890. After Bidwell purchased the Taylor agency and advanced large sums to Erlanger to enlarge the agency, Greenwall retorted by opening his own agency on Broadway, and for a time, bitter warfare raged between the two factions. At first, neither gained the advantage, but New Orleans theatre goers profited by being offered the best attractions in the country outside New York. The Academy and the St. Charles were put firmly in the hands of Jefferson, Klaw and Erlanger. (Picayune, Sunday, March 11, 1894.) Bidwell rented the St. Charles to the above firm at the beginning of the 1888-1889 season, the same season

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6 Ibid., p. 587. 7 Ibid.
that Greenwall took over the Grand Opera House. In this way, Bidwell hoped to multiply power to fight Greenwall. But Bidwell was a sick man, and he found it necessary that year virtually to relinquish direction of the Academy, leaving the business there in the hands of a trusted co-worker named Roig. The move allowed him to spend the majority of his time in semi-retirement at his lavish country estate in Pass Christian, Mississippi. Finally, however, he became so ill, that he had to return to New Orleans for constant medical attention. It was in the Crescent City, shortly afterward, that he died suddenly on December 17, 1889, only a year after losing the Grand Opera House to Greenwall.\(^8\) After Bidwell's death, the St. Charles and the Academy were taken over by his widow, but with her lack of experience Mrs. Bidwell relied more and more heavily upon Jefferson, Klaw and Erlanger. Finally, in 1893, wearied of the theatrical struggle, she allowed the firm to take over both of her properties and signed a lease with the three to that effect.\(^9\)

Greenwall's first move as new manager of the Grand Opera House was to order a complete renovation and overhauling of the theatre as Bidwell had done five years before.

\(^8\)Ibid., p. 571. \(^9\)Ibid., p. 573.
The Variété Association approved heartily, and backed the improvements financially with the sum of $15,000. As early as May 1, 1888, Greenwall appointed Harry Dressel to the task of supervising and directing the renovation. In addition, Dressel was named as chief scenic artist and decorator of the theatre, with William West named as ornamental painter. Throughout the summer Dressel and West supervised the extensive improvements which included installing a new proscenium, new boxes and chairs throughout, new interior decoration, and redecoration of the beautiful entrance of the theatre. (Picayune, Sunday, May 6; Sunday, July 15; Sunday, July 22; Sunday, August 26, 1888.) While his theatre was being prepared physically for its greatest era, Greenwall spent the summer in New York, contacting and signing a greater array of stars than had ever been offered at the theatre in one season. While the elegant theatre that had been lost to him was being thus enriched, an angry David Bidwell passed his summer, in 1888, at his sumptuous villa in Pass Christian, nursing his wounds of disappointment and planning future strategy for his two remaining theatres. (Picayune, Sunday, July 22, 1888.)

In comparing the summer of 1888 with the five-year initial period of the Grand Opera House from 1871-1876, when
summer amateur theatre flourished, an astounding transformation had taken place. In 1888, absolutely no summer amateur productions were noted at the theatre, nor at the Academy or St. Charles theatre.

When the Grand Opera House opened in the fall of 1888, Greenwall changed the mid-week matinee back to Wednesday instead of Thursday. Thomas W. Keene was the star selected to open Greenwall's first season at the Grand Opera House, which would be familiarly referred to as the Grand, from now on. On Sunday, October 7, an unusually early starting date, the eminent tragedian opened in Richard III. The production was mounted beautifully with elaborate scenes, the most ingenious of which was a revolving interior and exterior set representing the "Bloody Tower," mechanically contrived, while other realistic sets revealed the tower prison, the intersection of two streets, and other striking sets. Harry Dressel made an impressive initial effect with his intricate sets. The innovation of referring to the theatre as the Grand by the press was first noted in the Picayune on October 8, 1888, and became thereafter increasingly more popular. The cast that supported Keene included several names well known to the theatre patrons, and was as follows: Richard, Duke of Gloster; Thomas W. Keene; Henry, Earl of Richmond.
George Learock, Elizabeth. Louise Pomeroy, King Henry VI.
Arthur Elliot, Buckingham. Eugene Moore, Catesby. Frank
Henning, Stanley. Carl Ahrendt, Tressel. Adolph Jackson,
Lord Mayor. Edwin Lawrence, Edward, Prince of Wales. Jeannie
Norton, Norfolk. Henry Hanscombe, Oxford. Marwood Andrews,
A. R. Allison, Officer. John Benson, Lady Anne. Sadie Holmes,
Duchess of York. Mrs. S. A. Baker. The performance was said
to be admirable. Keene was as compelling as he had been
during his last engagement, and he was well supported by
Louise Pomeroy—who had starred at the theatre before, and
by George Learock. (Picayune, Monday, October 8, 1888.) On
Monday and Tuesday, Keene appeared in the title role in
Richelieu, and gave a subtle and moving performance. Learock
and Arthur Elliot were his most outstanding support, and the
play had handsome sets. Cast: Du Plessis and Cardinal.
Thomas W. Keene, De Mauprat. George Learock, De Barados.
Arthur Elliot, King Louis XIII. Adolph Jackson, Gaston. Edwin
Lawrence, De Beringhen. Henry Hanscombe, Joseph. Carl Ahrendt,
Francois. Eugene Moore, Hugnet. Frank Hennig, De Chermont.
T. A. James, First Secretary. Frank Norton, Second Secretary.
G. B. Bryant, Third Secretary. J. B. Benson, Captain of Guard.
Marwood Andrews, Julie De Mortimer, Sadie Holmes, Marion, Jeannie Ellison. The bill changed again on Wednesday, when Julius Caesar was presented with this cast in lead roles: Marc Antony, Thomas W. Keene, Cassius, George Learock, Brutus, Arthur Elliot, Julius Caesar, Adolph Jackson. Keene's portrayal was described as superb. (Picayune, Thursday, October 11, 1888.) This drama was repeated at the Saturday matinee, while Richard III was repeated on Thursday and on Saturday night, October 13, for Keene's last performance. Hamlet was the offering on Friday, for a single performance, with Keene creating a finished and scholarly Hamlet. Learock was again Keene's most outstanding support, as the Ghost. (Picayune, Saturday, October 13, 1888.)

Fred Hallen and Joe Hart, popular comedians of the day, were scheduled to open on Sunday, October 14, in a comedy variety show called Later On. Fred Hallen did not perform on opening night, however, having missed his train in New York. Nevertheless, the play opened as scheduled on Sunday and played to a capacity house. Later On was written especially for Hallen and Hart by H. Grattan Donnelly, and stars and company were under the personal management of Harry Hine. By Monday, Hallen had arrived and took his lead part of Jack Plunger, an English dude. He was judged as clever and
comical in the role. Hart, who was famous on the minstrel stage, played the role of a racing bookmaker, which he made witty and sparkling. Chief support came from Georgie Parker, a cute soubrette; and from John T. Kelly, a fine eccentric comedian, Miss Porteous, an operatic singer, and Dyllyn, a fine baritone singer. The group stayed for a week. (Pica-yune, Monday, October 15; Tuesday, October 16, 1888.)

Professor Kellar, who had proved a major attraction during the previous year, broke his contract to appear for a week beginning Sunday, October 21, and the theatre remained dark. On Sunday, October 28, 1888, Minnie Maddern, who was later to become the celebrated Mrs. Fiske, made her first appearance as a star at the theatre. The young actress appeared in Howard P. Taylor's drama, Caprice, in the roles of Mercy Baxter and Lucy Ashton. Minnie Maddern was described as "a young actress chuck full of talent." (Pica-yune, Monday, October 29, 1888.) Yet she was judged as being uneven in displaying that talent. Her support was good, and Harry Dressel's sets were described as elegant. Cast: Jack Henderson, William Fayerham, Jethro Baxter, John Jennings, Philander Potts, Harry Davenport, Harry Woodthorpe, H. C. De Witt, Wally Henderson, George Trader, Jake Baxter, Thomas Maguire, Edith Henderson, Sadie Bigelow, Mrs. Henderson, Mary
Maddern, Sylvia Watdon, Annie Lockhart, Mercy Baxter and Lucy Ashton, Minnie Maddern. Caprice was repeated through Wednesday night's performance. Beginning on Thursday, and for the balance of the week, Minnie Maddern was seen in Steele Mackaye's adaptation of Victorien Sardou's Princess Andrea, Mackaye's version being called In Spite of All. Cast: Carroll Clandenning, William Faversham, Herr Kraft, John Jennings, Jake Knickerbocker, H. C. De Witt, Mr. Hartmann, Harry Davenport, Call boy, Tommy Maguire, Stella, Sadie Bigelow, Mary, Mary Maddern, Bessie, Annie Lockhart, Alice Clandenning, Minnie Maddern. The young star was impressive in the lead role, with mobile face, graceful body action and great versatility, turning easily from sad tears to musical laughter. (Picayune, Friday, November 2, 1888.)

On Sunday, November 5, Kate Claxton returned to the theatre, playing for one week in Frank Harvey's melodrama, The World Against Her. The harrowing five-act play concerned a wronged wife whose husband is the villain. Miss Claxton's own husband, Charles A. Stevenson, took the part of the villainous brute. Cast: Jenny Clegg, Judith Berolde, Madge Carlton, Kate Claxton, James Carleton, Charles A. Stevenson, Lucy Danvers, Leslie Tillson, Sallie Millet, Alice Leigh, Liz Markland, Clara Earle, Mary, Mathilda Whitney, Annie.

Nellie McHenry, the soubrette, was star of a musical comedy troupe called the Salsbury Troubadours, who made their first appearance at the theatre on Sunday, November 11. The group who came for a week, opened in a new farcical musical comedy by Fred Williams and George Stout called The Humming Bird. Nellie McHenry was described as "bewitching, bright and bubbling with fun." (Picayune, Monday, November 12, 1888.) The company was considered as good. Cast: Sally Styles..Nellie McHenry, Augustus Honeymoon..John Webster, Joseph Brass..F. B. Blair, Robert Rackett..W. C. Mandeville, Jerry McLaughlin..Felix Haney, James..George Bouvier, H. Nibbs..Charles Whitty, Fanny Honeymoon..Dickey Martinez, Mathilda Fullalove..Frances Herbert. F. B. Blair was Nellie McHenry's chief support. (Picayune, Monday, November 12, 1888.) The lively group switched to another farcical musical comedy, Edward E. Kidder's Three of a Kind, on Thursday, November 15. In this script, Nellie McHenry was compared with wine or champagne, in that she not only
improved with age, but bubbled and sparkled more with each performance. Frances Herbert, a New Orleans girl with a sweet singing voice, rated special mention in this opus. Miss Herbert had sung in New Orleans church choirs only five years before, but since had appeared with several good professional companies. (Picayune, Friday, November 16, 1888.)

For the first time in ten years, Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Florence returned to the theatre, on Sunday, November 18, 1888. The sterling comedians appeared in their famous comedy, The Mighty Dollar, on Sunday and Monday, while Our Governor was performed on Tuesday and Friday, Dombey and Son on Wednesday matinee and Saturday night, Heart of Hearts on Wednesday and Thursday, and The Flirt on Saturday matinee. The Mighty Dollar had been written especially for the pair by Benjamin E. Woolf, who years before had been leader of the orchestra at the old Varieties Theatre. Time had dealt kindly with the celebrated comedy artists, and their polished performances were described as works of art. The excellent company featured such performers of note as Mrs. E. L. Davenport and William Yearance. In the opening cast were: Hon. Bardwell Slote..W. J. Florence, Mrs. General Gilfloy..Mrs. W. J. Florence, Col. Dart..William Herbert, Mr. Brood..J. J.
Fitzsimmons, Lord Cairgorme...C. F. Montaine, Arthur Lemsitre...William Yearance, Roland Vance...Archibald Cowper, George Savill...Newton Dana, George Skidmore...J. W. Williams, Lafayette Barry...Henry Reeves, Caesar...H. Kelley, Tarquinian Darwin...F. Forrest, Senator Weatherwax...H. Walton, Hon. D. Hoghistle...S. Stanley, Clara Dart...Lillian Richardson, Blanche...M. E. Fitzpatrick, Libby Ray...Marion Russell, Miss Hopeful...Moss Hastings. (Picayune, Monday, November 19, 1888.) George Jessop and William Gill's comedy, Our Governor was made for Florence. In the part of Pinto Perkins, the prodigious liar, the star was said to have kept his audiences rolling in the aisles. In this play, as in every play during the engagement, Mrs. Florence was exquisitely attired, and received glowing tributes from the press on her gorgeous gowns. The lady was called the best dressed actress on the stage. Mrs. Florence did her part to keep the audiences howling, playing a satire on the English literary women traveling in America to write. (Picayune, Wednesday, November 21, 1888.) Recreating Charles Dickens' poignant Dombey and Son, Florence was called electrifying in his joyous and pathetic, unique portrayal of Captain Edward Cuttle. On Wednesday night, Henry Arthur Jones' Heart of Hearts was produced for the first time in New Orleans. The cast
included: James Robbins..W. J. Florence, Wilhelmina Fitzralph..Mrs. W. J. Florence, Harold Fitzralph..Archibald Cowper, Marcus Latimer..William Yearance, Dr. Chettle..William Herbert, Daniel Robins..C. F. Montaine, Murch..Lin Hurst, Lady Clarence Fitzralph..Mrs. E. L. Davenport, Lucy Roberts ..Lillian Richardson, Sibyl Latimer..Margaret Fitzpatrick, Barton..Marie Johnson. The play satirized the British upper class, and the comedy couple enacted the humorous parts of a butler and upper-class lady, who were secretly wed. (Picayune, Thursday, November 22, 1888.) In The Flirt, Florence frolicked in a superior comedy role, and Mrs. Florence wore more beautiful costumes.

Charles Gaylor's melodrama, Lights and Shadows, moved in on Sunday, November 25, with Harry Kennedy's company. In this cast were: Mary Bland and Edith Broughton..May Newman, Madam Gerrard..Agnes Herndon, Kate Stanhope..Emma Field, Mrs. Bleeker..Ida Jeffreys, Mark Milburne..Sheridan Block, Rufus Milburne..Harry Custer, Judge Broughton..David Hanebett, Archy Bleeker..Charles Klein, Max Wilton..H. S. Duffield, Claude Maul..C. F. Gotthold, Tom..Joseph Conyers, Chief of Detectives..W. T. Doyle, Police Sergeant..Clarence Moor. Many of the players had been seen before at the theatre. The play remained a week. (Picayune, Monday, November 26, 1888.)
Sir Charles Young's Jim, the Penman performed by the excellent A. M. Palmer Madison Square Theatre Company opened on Sunday, December 2. May Brooklyn was to open as leading lady, but was deterred by a railroad delay. Consequently, on opening night, Jennie Eustace played the role of Nina and was said to do splendidly. By Monday, the part was filled by Miss Brooklyn. F. C. Bangs was leading man. The cast was excellent and commanded full houses all week. Cast: James Ralston,.F. C. Bangs, Louis Percival,.Clarence Handyside, Barton Hartfield,.J. L. Ottomeyer, Capt. Redwood,.Hardee Kirkland, Lord Dresincourt,.Guy Lindsley, Jack Ralston,.Percy Winter, Mr. Clapstone,.John McKeever, Dr. Pettywise,.John Matthews, Netherby,.Alfred Becks, George,.Benjamin Singer, Nina,.Jennie Eustace, Agnes,.Mary Sanders, Lady Dunscombe,.Fanny Jackson, Mrs. Chapstone,.Vida Croly. (Picayune, Monday, December 3, 1888.)

The much talked about spectacular drama, She made an initial appearance in New Orleans on Sunday, December 9, at the Grand Opera House. The play was a dramatization by W. A. Brady of H. R. Haggard's popular novel of that name. According to the Picayune, the cast disappointed. The title and lead character of the novel was, according to the critic, a beautiful, blonde burlesque type, and Anna Boyle, in the lead.
role was not this vision of loveliness. The stage was so littered with people and with spectacular displays, that the merits of the actors were submerged, and remained only of secondary importance. Cast: Homer Holly, George P. Webster, Vincey, J. W. McConnell, John, C. A. Ferguson, Mary, Rose Walbridge, Leo, J. W. McConnell, Job, W. H. West, Aveshe--She. Anna Boyle, Ustane, Laura Bigger, Buena, Marie Rene, Billalb. Frank Richardson, Mohammed, E. J. McCollough, Amahaggers, R. C. Stevens and John Mullery, Captain, Will Jackson, First Sailor, W. J. Carr, Second Sailor, Thomas Williams, Guard. Will Rising. (Picayune, Monday, December 10, 1888.)

Another of A. M. Palmer's Madison Square companies came on Sunday, December 16, 1888, to present The Private Secretary, William Gillette's version of Moser's farce comedy in the German, Bibliothekar (Librarian). The amusing comedy concerned the efforts of a bogus secretary to make love to the daughter of his boss, a country squire. Cast: Rev. Robert Spaulding, David P. Steele, Catternike, Harry Allen, Cattermole, Ed Travers, Marland, Harry W. Emmett, Harry, John Archer, Gibson, Thomas A. Wise, John, John Showler, Jones, H. B. Hoffman, Edith, May Steele, Eva, Ida Murray, Miss Ashford, Adele Clarke, Mrs. Spaulding, Miss Burlingame. This company could not compare with Palmer's prior excellent
troupe that had appeared at the theatre only two weeks before.
(Picayune, Monday, December 17, 1888.)

Theodora, the Lion Queen, a spectacular tragedy adapted from the French by Walter Standish was next on the agenda. Commencing on Sunday, December 23, for Christmas week, the play introduced Phosa McAllister as star, and revealed the same beautiful scenery, effects and costumes as were used at Niblo's Theatre, New York. In the title role, Phosa McAllister was described as being pretty and graceful, but she failed to give the part the delicate handling called for. William Clifton and Will Courtland were the best actors of the company, the remainder of the players being described as only fair. Cast: Fabian, William F. Clifton, Justinian, Andrew Glassford, Marcelius, Will A. Courtland, Childerbert, William Franklin, Bellasarius, John Browbell, Pholius, George Brownlow, Marcus, Harry Waterman, Marius, Martin Semon, Sergius, John Alexander, Harpax, Frank Carlton, Executioner, Richard Carter, Drusus, George Burdette, Persian Ambassador, Harry Clayton, Tamara, Kate Singleton, Antonia, Rachel Deane, Zairie, Julia Melrose, Theodora, Phosa McAllister. (Picayune, Monday, December 24, 1888.)

J. M. Hill's Union Square Theatre Company opened on Sunday, December 30, 1888, in Sidney Rosenfeld's A Possible
Case, a major recent success in New York, and shown for the first time in the city. The farce featured a strong, talented company, leading actors of which were Georgie Drew Barrymore, Robert Hilliard and M. A. Kennedy. The superior cast, that kept large audiences laughing all week, included:


J. K. Emmet returned to the theatre after an absence of five years on Sunday, January 6, 1889, to recreate his popular comedy, Our Fritz. The "standing room" sign was up all week when crowds flocked to see the famous comedy star, and he was accorded a glorious welcome. Emmet's company was only fair, with the exception of Frank Dayton as Grimm, the lawyer, several cute children in the cast and Buster, a $5,000 St. Bernard dog. Emmet shone as usual as Fritz, the Dutchman. Others in the cast were C. D. Bennet, M. J. Cody,

Arthur Rehan's comedy company debuted at the theatre on Sunday, January 13, in a popular New York success called Nancy and Company. The company had appeared in the hit at Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre in New York. A large opening audience gathered to see the play which had never been seen in the city before. Cast: Ebenezer Griffing, Harry Hutto, Kiefe O'Kiefe, Fritz Williams, Capt. Renseliac, Leslie Edmunds, Sikes Stocklow, Percy Brooke, Tipsy Brasher, Owen Westford, Julius, J. S. Hoffman, Mrs. Dangery, Carrie Jamison, Daisy Griffing, Maud Haslam, Betsy, Nellie Edmunds, Oriana, Suzanne Russell, Nancy Brasher, Adele Waters. Augustin Daly had adapted this comedy from the French and created a delightful medley of wicked wives, avenging husbands and naughty young ladies. Adele Waters and Percy Brooke were the standouts of the cast. (Picayune, Monday, January 14, 1889.) For their second and final week, the
Arthur Rehan Company appeared in two plays. From Sunday through Wednesday night, the comedy *7-20-8* was presented, and from Thursday through Saturday, *Love in Harness* was the bill. The crowds were as large during the second week as for the first week of the competent company. The cast of *7-20-8* included: Launcelot Bergiss..Harry Hotto, Prof. Gasleigh..Percy Brooke, Courtney Corliss..Fritz Williams, Paul Hollyhock..Leslie Edmunds, Signor Tambarini..Owen Westford, Postman..J. S. Hoffman, Hapathia Hargiss..Carrie Jamison, Dora..Suzanne Russell, Jessie..Nellie Edmunds, Floss..Maud Haslam. Brooke won top honors, playing a hungry literary character with great skill. Maud Haslam was most outstanding among the women players, and was described as a bewitching ingenue. (Picayune, Monday, January 21, 1889.) *Love in Harness* was another adaptation by Augustin Daly from the French of Abin C. Valabreaue. The cast was excellent, with Maud Haslam and Adele Waters winning top laurels. Cast: Jeremiah Jobiots..Harry Hotto, Frederic Urquhart..Fritz Williams, Julius Naggitt..Owen Westford, Charles Hoffman, M.D... Percy Brooke, John Schiagg..Leslie Edmunds, Mrs. Jobiots..Carrie Jamison, Jennie..Maud Haslam, Antoinette and Myrtilla..Nellie Edmunds, Una..Adele Waters. (Picayune, Friday, January 25, 1889.)
Lotta, the inimitable, perpetual ingenue, made a happy visit to the theatre for a week, beginning on Sunday, January 27, and packed in adoring fans all week. Lotta was compared with Emmet in being a stage mystery with a never-failing hold upon the public. Her sunny bursts of humor and fun were described as being "part of her wonderful little self." (Picayune, Monday, January 28, 1889.) She appeared in the drama, Pawn Ticket 210, a melodrama with a feminine hero. Playing a waif, Mag, Lotta was instrumental in unmasking the villain and assuring a happy ending. The star acted, sang and danced, and was called "as bright and pleasing as a sunbeam." (Picayune, Monday, January 28, 1889.) She had excellent support, particularly from George C. Boniface, Jr., and Charles L. Harris. Appearing in the cast were: Mag, Lotta, Uncle Harris, Charles L. Harris, Montague Flash, George C. Boniface, Jr., John Sternhold, Thomas Joyce, Charles Saxe, Paul Arthur, Osian Gregg, C. W. Hague, Postman 813, F. Waldo Parker, Postman 1211, Edward B. Leland, Ruth, Helen Leslie, Alice, Hattie Starr, Aunt Dorothy, Genevieve Reynolds. Lotta's bill changed on Thursday, when she appeared in the title role in Marsden's comedy, Musette, described by the Picayune as the best play in which she had ever acted. (Picayune, Friday, February 1, 1889.)
Adonis, a famous extravaganza of the day, made its first appearance in New Orleans on Sunday, February 3, when it opened at the Grand. Presenting the play was Rice and Dixey's Burlesque Company, with Henry E. Dixey in his original part in the title role—a part in which he was said to assume excellent character disguises. William Gill authored the play, described as a reversal of Pygmalion and Galatea, in which Talamea, a feminine sculptor, falls in love with the Adonis she has made. He becomes human and takes many disguises, including Henry Irving, Wilson Barrett, a country girl, a barber, Clito, a druggist, a Jewish peddler, and finally becomes the statue again. In the many portrayals, Dixey's imitative qualities were so distinctive, that they were hailed as genius by the Picayune. Surrounding the star was a large group of pretty women and clever men who sang and danced well. Main support came from Ida Bell as Talamea, George W. Howard as an old miller and Carrie Perkins as a mountain "pink." The production commanded full houses all week. (Picayune, Monday, February 4, 1889.)

The prominent star Clara Morris returned for an exciting week, beginning on Sunday, February 10, 1889. The actress was supported by Frederic De Belleville as leading man. Her week's repertoire included The New Magdalen, performed on
Sunday night and Saturday matinee; *Renee de Moray*, performed on Monday through Friday; and *Lady of Lyons* on the Wednesday matinee. In the cast of *The New Magdalen*, in which play Miss Morris had appeared so brilliantly before at the theatre were: Julian Gray..Frederic De Belleville, Horace Holicroft..Walter Kelley, Ignamus Wetzel..J. B. Evenham, Capt. Arnault..F. H. Tyler, Surgeon Surville..Julius Kahn, Max.. John Elliott, James..Frank Norris, German Sergeant..O. S. Barney, Officer..Alfred Cairnes, French Sentinel..John Kersey, Lady Janet Roy..Octavia Allen, Gracy Roseberry.. Mittens Willett, Mercy Merrick..Clara Morris. Miss Morris' whole company was applauded, and Frederic De Belleville was described as a fine leading man. (*Picayune*, Monday, February 11, 1889.) On Monday, February 11, a large audience greeted Miss Morris in a new role, that of Renee de Moray in the play of that name, a drama adapted from D'Ennery's French play and novel by Clifton Stuart. In the "tear jerker," a once happy mother is abandoned by her husband, separated from her child, disowned by her father, and sees another woman in her place. But things are righted in the end. This frame allowed the emotional actress a field day in running the gamut of emotions. The *Picayune* called the performance great, and said that no Bernhardt could move an
American audience as Morris could. The drama was staged handsomely with beautiful sets created by Harry Dressel. The cast appeared as follows: Count De Moray..Frederic De Belleville, Admiral de la Marche..J. B. Everham, Antonio Palmeri..Julius Kahn, Claude Burel..Walter Kelley, Ernest Drake..F. H. Tyler, Walte.r..M. W. Rawley, Cecile De Moray..Kate Massi, Duchess de la Marche..Octavia Allen, Renee De Moray..Clara Morris. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 12, 1889.) In The Lady of Lyons, Clara Morris did not appear, and Mitten Willett and Frederic De Belleville took the lead roles of Pauline and Claude. (Picayune, Thursday, February 14, 1889.)

He, She, Him and Her described as a comedy, musical extravaganza with pantomime and variety all combined, was the next attraction. Opening on Sunday, February 17, the production's sole aim was to produce laughter, and this it did to such an extent that the roaring audiences created more noise than did the cast: Toby Periwinkle..George H. Adams, Hosea Perriwinkle..F. E. Dumm, Otto..Sam Bernard, Bobby White..Will H. Mays, Stephen Gaynor..W. H. Murphy, Julian Fitzpots..Charles Hagan, Jim Barnes..W. S. Beiknap, Walter..Charles Adams, Avery Hill..Andy Morris, Demon..John Wood, Tootsie..Toma Hanlon, Mrs. Murray Hill..Alida

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Perrault, Claire, Carrie Francois, Kate, Blanche Nicholls, Mary Marden, Olive Tremaine, Ella, Annie Martel, Grace, Bella Harrison, Blanche, Ada Marvin. Toma Hanlon, of the famous Hanlon theatre family, was the star of the troupe. She was a sweet soubrette who acted and danced as well as she sang. *(Picayune, Monday, February 18, 1889.)*

Opera moved into the Grand next when the Carleton Opera Company commenced an engagement on Sunday, February 24, 1889. The company consisted of W. T. Carelton, Charles H. Drew, Jay C. Taylor, S. K. Murray, E. DeMesa, Robert Broderick, Charles Fais, Clara Lane, Alice Vincent, Clara Wisdom, Rose Beaudet, Maggie Baxter, Emily Seymour and a chorus of forty. The group stayed a week, and played this schedule: Sunday, Monday and Wednesday matinee, Mynheer Jan, first time in New Orleans; Tuesday, Wednesday night, Alfred Collier's Dorothy; Friday, Queen's Lace Handkerchief; Saturday night, Manon; Saturday matinee, Erminie.

As the last regular attraction of the season, Bartley Campbell's powerful drama, Siberia, came to the Grand Opera House on Sunday, March 3, 1889, for one week. The play depicted the injustice of Jewish persecution in Russia in that era, and featured a strong cast managed by Thomas B. McDonough, that had been on the road for five years. Eleanor

The Grand Opera House's season made an excellent showing for the new manager, Henry Greenwall. Opening the 1888-1889 season on October 7, an exceptionally early date for that theatre, Thomas W. Keene, the eminent tragedian, appeared in a dramatic repertoire. He was followed on October 14 by the Hallen and Hart Company in Later On. Keene did splendidly, while the latter company did well. On October 28, Minnie
Maddern appeared in Caprice and In Spite of All, and showed optimistic signs of developing into the big star that she was later to become. She did average business. Kate Claxton returned on November 4 in The World Against Her and did moderately well. On November 11, Nelly McHenry came and did well by presenting Three of a Kind and Humming Bird. Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Florence appeared prominently on November 18, after an absence of some years, in a comedy repertoire, and did gigantic business. Harry Kennedy's Lights and Shadows Company came on November 25, and did moderate business. On December 2, A. M. Palmer's Jim, the Penman company returned with F. C. Bangs as star, and commanded big business all week. More big business followed with Webster and Brady's She on December 9. On December 16, A. M. Palmer's Private Secretary company appeared, and proved to be a much less perfect company than Palmer's preceding troupe, thus faring not as well. On December 23, Phosa McAllister came in Theodora and did moderate business. Very big business greeted J. M. Hill's fine company beginning on December 30, in A Possible Case. J. K. Emmet, the famous comedian, came on January 6, 1889, in Our Fritz and played to huge houses. On January 13, Arthur Rehan's comedy company came for two weeks, playing to good business in Nancy and Company and Love
in Harness. The popular little star Lotta followed on January 27, and attracted fans in droves in Pawn Ticket and Musette. Rice and Dixey's Adonis, opening on February 3, proved to be another popular booking. The biggest event of the season was the appearance of Clara Morris on February 10. She appeared for a week in Renee and The New Magdalen to large and appreciative houses. He, She, Him and Her, acted by George Hadam's Company, opened on February 17. Only opera engagement of the season was that of the Carelton Opera Company who came on February 24, in a varied repertoire of opera. The last booking of the season was that of the Thomas B. McDonough Company who appeared for a week in Siberia to gigantic audiences. They closed on Sunday, March 10, 1889.

At the end of the season, the Picayune praised Greenwall's choice of attractions and printed an interview with the new manager in which Greenwall had some significant comments to make concerning booking practices in general, his opposition from Bidwell, and the success of that season:

. . . I am more than satisfied with the result of my first season here. . . . I was late in the field in securing attractions and met with warm opposition and active competition in New York from agents for other theatres here. Engagements are made one and two years ahead. I had but a few summer months in which to book such attractions as had not bound themselves to go elsewhere, and I was obliged to hustle. . . . I do not care
to brag, but the attractions that I have played speak for themselves. I have been told no better showing has been made in the Grand Opera House during the past ten years. (Picayune, Sunday, March 10, 1889.)

Immediately after the closing of the regular season, an event occurred, unfortunate in nature, that brought activity to the theatre. Only a few nights before the closing of the Grand Opera House, Faranta's Theatre, only several years old, burned. W. H. McBride and Frank Bryant had organized a specialty company, called Muldoon's Picnic Company, that was playing at Faranta's at the time of the fire. Actors and entertainers from all over the city volunteered their services at a benefit performance at the Grand Opera House for the victimized troupe on Monday, March 11, only one day after the season closed. Greenwall, reputed always to be a generous and gracious man, volunteered his theatre for the benefit. Among the artists to appear were performers of the Juvenile Opera Company, the Continental Quartette and Charles McCarthy, star and manager of the production of One of the Bravest at the Avenue Theatre along with the entire troupe. The benefit concluded with the production of Muldoon's Picnic with W. H. McBride as Mulcabey and Frank Bryant as Muldoon. Greenwall and all of his attaches were on hand to facilitate the event's success. The Grand Opera House attaches under
Greenwall were named for the first time, by the Times-Democrat in connection with the benefit. They included Charles Ronyer, H. Ottmann, H. Theurer, J. Sandak, T. Farrell, W. H. Evans and M. Will. (Times-Democrat, March 10; March 11; March 12; Picayune, March 10; March 11, 1889.)

After this benefit, almost no activity occurred during the summer of 1889 at the Grand. The colorful and active dramatic organizations that had dominated the amateur theatrical scene from 1871-1876 had disappeared in the intervening decade, and no amateur dramatic organizations were noted as having performed at any of the city's theatres. A few spotty performances were given by well-known amateurs at the theatre, but these were not the efforts of organized dramatic clubs. On Tuesday, April 23, 1889, a musical and dramatic entertainment was given for the benefit of the Louisiana State Society for the Prevention of Cruelty of Animals. Individuals performed, but there was no sponsoring group. David Garrick was the featured presentation of the evening, in the cast of which were: David Garrick, Bernard C. Shields, Araminta Brown, Annie Shields, Mrs. Smith, Maud Bogel, Susan, Flo Field, Ida Ingot, Mrs. Bernard C. Shields, Squire Chivy, Robert W. Abbott, Simon Ingot, Charles Shields, Mr. Smith, Claud Bogel, Mr. Brown, Robert Holmes, and Mr.
Flo Field, noted in the above cast, is a prominent New Orleans writer and personality who gave a valuable interview for this study and who remembers appearing as a young girl in this production.
In May, no activity occurred at the theatre, while in June, only one performance was noted. This was an entertainment given by the Young Men's Benevolent Association for the benefit of their relief fund on Thursday, June 6, 1889. The performance consisted of gymnastic exercises, and minstrel and dramatic performances by prominent amateurs. The performers were unnamed and no review was given the entertainment. (Picayune, May 19; May 26, 1889.) After this sole performance in June, no summer amateur activity was noted in any theatre in the city in July or August. On August 4, 1889, the Picayune lamented: "... There is not a ripple in theatrical circles here at present..." Then in September, one final amateur entertainment was given, when Ada Warner was tendered a benefit in the opera Girofle-Girofla on September 17. No cast members were mentioned, and no reason for the benefit was given.

Comparing the dearth of summer amateur entertainment in 1888 and 1889 with the bustle of organized activity conducted by the many dramatic clubs of the city in the period of 1871-1876, a significant decline is noted. No longer did prominent dramatic organizations perform at the theatres in the city in the latter period. Only a few benefits were noted, none in 1889, and only five throughout the summer of
1889. None of the latter entertainments were performed by
dramatic groups, but were sponsored by nondramatic orga­
izations. Only two of these affairs rated reviews. It is to
be concluded that prominent amateurs like Mr. and Mrs.
Bernard C. Shields and Flo Fields did exist. But since sum­
mer entertainment had undergone such a decline in one decade,
it must be concluded furthermore that amateurs restricted
their activity mostly to nonsummer months, or that they were
so unorganized that acting opportunities were spasmodic or
that they performed so informally that there were no news­
paper notices of their activities. In any event, the "Golden
Days" of New Orleans amateur theatre that had existed in the
1870's had come to an end by the 1880's.

As soon as the 1888-1889 season was over, Greenwall
went to New York. By June 15, he had wired the Picayune that
he had already engaged the Boston Ideal Opera Company for
$10,000, and had booked Little Lord Fauntleroy and Evange­
line, plus other important attractions to fill twenty-nine
weeks. (Picayune, Sunday, June 16, 1889.) Once his season
of 1889-1890 was thus booked, the dynamo manager went to
Europe for sessions with European stars. While in Paris, he
purchased the American rights of two French plays. He
returned to New York in mid-August, and in excellent health and great optimism, returned to New Orleans the last week in August. (Picayune, Sunday, August 18, 1889.)

The 1889-1890 season had an informal opening one week prior to the regular fall opening, when Herbert Marsden, a young New Orleans native, made his professional debut at the Grand. Young Marsden, a wealthy twenty-year-old lad, liberally educated abroad, appeared at the Grand on Thursday, September 19, 1889. Possessing a fortune and wanting to be an actor, he hired a cast, rented the theatre for three days and opened on Thursday in The Fool's Revenge. Louis XI was given on Friday, The Fool's Revenge was repeated for the Saturday matinee, and Richard III was performed on Saturday night. The Picayune was not satisfied with Marsden's performance in The Fool's Revenge, but his acting in Louis XI was a different story. In the latter role, he succeeded beyond all expectations, and gave an impressive performance of the king. His cast included a combination of some local actors who had done professional work, like Garbiel Santini who had been in Bidwell's Star Company and H. Coulter Brinker, and some talented amateurs. His company included, in addition to those mentioned, Griffith Evans, Frederick Perry, Edwin Marlowe, Charles Madison, Walter Palmer, Nina Lansing,
Lulah Ragsdale, Carrie Wright, Alice Freeman, Maurice Wheeler, John Norris, Alex Carleton, Edwin Bearhope, Charles Malcolm, Leslie Thompson, David McKittrick, Edwin Martin, Allen Stephens, G. Van Housen, Charles Stender, John Moore and Alice Freeman. (Picayune, Sunday, September 15; Friday, September 20; Saturday, September 21, 1889.)

The regular fall season opened officially on Sunday, September 22, 1889, when Duncan B. Harrison, actor and playwright, headed the cast of the melodrama, The Paymaster. The play revealed elaborate effects, including a four-foot tank of water--48,000 cubic feet of real water. In the tank scene, the heroine, played by Martha Rudesill, took a plunge deep into the water, and was rescued from drowning by the hero, the Paymaster. The English-Irish play was performed for the first time in the city upon this opening occasion. Reviews ranged from raves by the Daily States to indifferent comments from the Picayune. The former journal rated cast and star as excellent, while the latter judged them from good to fair. A "standing room only" audience greeted the inaugural performance, with many patrons turned away. The Daily States hailed Harrison as an excellent actor with fine stage presence and a well-trained, sonorous voice. The cast
was praised for individual excellence, and the ladies in the
cast were regarded as young, beautiful and handsomely dressed.
(Daily States, Monday, September 23, 1889.) The Picayune
found little literary merit in the play, which the critic
felt was a common fault of all current drama. (Picayune,
Monday, September 23, 1889.) Cast: Col. Francis Houghton,
Charles Thornton, Adjutant W. J. Harding..Thomas A. Wise,
Capt. Hammersleith..Edwin Browne, Paymaster Robert O'Connor..
Duncan B. Harrison, Sgt. Fitzgerald..T. A. Wise, Drill Sgt.
Upton..Charles Harris, Cpl. Henly..A. Ralph, Larry O'Brien..
Neil O'Brien, John Dawson..Thomas Moore, Ethel Miley..Martha
Rudesill, Mrs. O'Connor..Ethel Douglas, Mrs. William Harding..
Annie Allaston, Moyna Sullivan..Ida Wood, Hetty..May Halcomb,
Nettie..Jeanette Randolph, Lettie..Frederick Paulton, Pettie..
Estelle Henriquez. (Picayune, Monday, September 23, 1889.)

A minstrel show invaded the Grand on Sunday, September
29, when George Wilson and his George Wilson Minstrels opened
a week's engagement. The opening audience tested the capacity
of the house, proving the troupe's popularity. Wilson had
been a star for years in the famous original Haverly Min-
strels, and now had the best minstrel organization on the
stage at that time. The group met with a royal reception all
week. Featured in the cast were George Wilson and Lew
Benedict as end men, Jimmie and Willie Fulton--popular New Orleans brothers, Thomas Lewis, Will Walling, George Gale, and the sensational musical combination--Howard, Howe and Wall. (Picayune, Sunday, September 29; Monday, September 30, 1889.)

Another tank scene was the feature of a new melodrama, Boucicault's *After Dark*, that moved into the Grand on Sunday, October 6. The production, which starred and was under the direction of William Brady, had been most successful in New York and Boston. The play's sets were the work of Hurley Merry, scenic artist of Palmer's Theatre, New York. A full house witnessed the tank scene in which several actors swam, and a striking saloon scene in which Kelly and Murphy, two well-known boxers of the day, fought a lively bout with gloves. William Brady was thoroughly impressive as Old Tom, and the rest of the cast were equally successful. Cast: Old Tom...William A. Brady, Gordon Chumley...J. W. McConnell, Medhurst...Stanislaus Stange, Dicey Morris...E. L. Walton, Knatchbull...Frank Richardson, Poynter...Harry McDargh, Crumpote...Harry Morton, Area Jack...John Mullery, The Borgee...J. F. Frazer, Jemmy...Will Jackson, Josie...L. J. Case, Peter Smith...Frank Hart, M. C...Harry Little, Bartender...James Keith, Eliza...Laura Biggar, Rose Egerton...Lillian Lee. (Picayune,
Monday, October 7, 1889.) The play did booming business all week.

Lillian Lewis returned on Sunday, October 13, and brought Will Whitecar as leading man. During the week, she appeared in a repertoire of four plays. True to her egotistical nature, she announced at the arrival that she would appear in new costly gowns and that she would hold court on Thursday afternoon, October 17, between 2 and 5 P.M., at which time fans might "... receive from her own hands, copies of her photograph as souvenirs." (Picayune, Sunday, October 13, 1889.) Opening in As in a Looking-Glass on Sunday, the star was found to have improved since her last appearance in the play. She was seen again as Lena Despard, with Whitecar as Algernon. On Tuesday, October 15, Lillian Lewis appeared as Cora in Article 47 and was a complete "fizzle" in the role, rating a roasting from the Picayune which said:

As Cora, Miss Lewis--as when playing Lena Despard--never quite succeeds in making the audience sympathetic with her heroine. There is missing the gentler touch of art that reaches the tender spots of human hearts. She is a brass instrument sounding notes written for the German flute. . . . (Picayune, Wednesday, October 16, 1889.)

The latter play was seen again on Wednesday night with the former play seen at the matinee. On Thursday and Saturday,
a diluted version of Victor Hugo's *Hernani*, called *Donna Sol*, was offered. Whitecar was praised for his excellent performance as Don Carlos, but of Lillian Lewis it was said only that she should never have attempted the role. (*Picayune*, Friday, October 18, 1889.) *The New Magdalen* was played on Friday night and on Saturday matinee, and as Mercy Merrick, Lillian Lewis failed utterly again. She was completely lacking in pathetic and tender touches. Whitecar was found to be the only worthy member of the cast, and was applauded for his fine portrayal of Julian Gray. (*Picayune*, Saturday, October 19, 1889.)

More minstrels arrived, when the Cleveland-Haverly Minstrels opened on Sunday, October 20. W. S. Cleveland, called "the Prince of Minstrel managers," was manager of the troupe. The group was described as remarkable in the talent and excellence of each cast member. Moreover, both the *Daily States* and the *Picayune* noted that the elaborate sets were more spectacular than in any minstrel show ever seen before. One scene set in Venice showed the Grand Canal in Venice with grand buildings and towers in the distance, while a boy glided by on a gondola. This scene was described as a fairy-land, with soft lights, entrancing music and Venetian gentlemen in silhouette. A feature of the performance was the
Takaragawa Imperial Japanese Troupe, and stars of the group were Johnny Queen and Billy Emerson. The stage setting had cost over $20,000 for the first part of the show alone. On opening night, over 2,300 people crammed themselves into the theatre while half that many more were turned away unable to secure even standing room. For three weeks prior to their arrival, flaring wall posters announced their coming all over the city. (Daily States, Monday, October 21; Picayune, Sunday, October 20; Monday, October 21, 1889.)

Dore Davidson, a New Orleans native with considerable professional experience came to the Grand on Sunday, October 27, as star of the melodrama Guilty Without Crime. Although Davidson had played at the theatre before this was his first appearance as star. This was also the first time that the melodrama was seen in the city. Ramie Austin appeared opposite Davidson in this excellent vehicle. As Rawson, Davidson played skillfully, ending with a powerful death scene. Ramie Austin was pretty and capable, but lacked the qualities of a first-rate leading lady. Jerry Herzell was Davidson's best support, with the rest of the cast as only fair. Cast: Stella. Ramie Austin, Tom Rawson. Dore Davidson, Sir Ralph Waldren. Sidney Bowketi, Stephen Douglas. T. B. Thornton, William Mortimer. A. Mercer, Isaac Plunskey. Jerry Herzell,

Margaret Mather returned on Sunday, November 10, supported by J. B. Studley and a strong company under the management of Gilmore and Tompkins of New York. The varied week's repertoire included: Sunday, Tuesday, Saturday, *Gretchen*; Monday, Thursday, Saturday matinee, *Romeo and Juliet*; Wednesday matinee, *Lady of Lyons*; Wednesday night, Friday, *Honeymoon*;
Sunday, November 17, *As You Like It*. Opening in W. S. Gil­bert's dramatization of Goethe's *Faust*, Margaret Mather made a strong impression upon the press. She was found to have improved considerably since her last visit to the theatre. In the simple garb of the young peasant girl Gretchen, she was lovely in face and figure. The *Picayune* called her interpretation exquisite, and the *Daily States* praised her dramatic ability and high intelligence of interpretation. Not only was she called before the curtain after each act, but in the third act, where she left Faustus, she was forced to return and bow her acknowledgment to the enthusiastic applause of the audience "... something seldom done on the dramatic stage." (*Daily States*, Monday, November 11, 1889.) Studley's portrayal of the devil was considered a lazy interpretation by the *States*, but pleased the *Picayune* which called the portrayal sustained and self-reliant. (*Picayune*, Monday, November 11, 1889.) Cast: Mephisto..J. B. Studley, Faustus..Charles Welles, Gottfried..Eugene Jepson, Anselm..Harry Hanscombe, Dominic..J. F. McGregor, Friedrich..Percy Sage, Martha..Mary Berrell, Lisa..Lizzie Goode, Agatha..Virennia Marlowe, Bessie..Blanche Brown, Barbara..Meda Brown, Gretchen..Margaret Mather. In *Romeo and Juliet*, Margaret Mather showed careful study in her

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portrayal of Juliet, and received excellent reviews instead of the contradictory notices that greeted her performance during her prior enactment of the role. (Picayune, Tuesday, November 12, 1889.) But in Leah, she was utterly disappointing. The Picayune complained that the young star lacked the physique and power to achieve the passion needed in the role, and said that only Kate Bateman, Lucille Weston and Fanny Davenport had been able to achieve the greatness of Leah. Studley was applauded, however, for his electrifying performance as Nathan. (Picayune, Thursday, November 14, 1889.)

John Tobin's Honeymoon proved to be a delightful comedy, and Miss Mather was charming as Juliana. (Picayune, Saturday, November 16, 1889.) Margaret Mather's last performance was in As You Like It on Sunday, November 17. Her Rosalind was light and joyous, and a full house turned out to enjoy the performance. (Picayune, Monday, November 18, 1889.)

H. C. DeMille and David Belasco's new play, The Wife, was presented for the first time in New Orleans when it played at the Grand for the week beginning on Monday, November 18. Daniel Frohman's name was mentioned for the first time on this occasion when it was stated that Frohman had organized the company that performed the society comedy. Frohman, who was later to be identified with the Theatrical...
Syndicate, was at this time manager of the Lyceum Theatre in New York. It was at this New York theatre that his hit comedy had played during the previous season. The present company was described as being not so good as the original, but as fine as New Orleans had seen yet that season. Cast:

Senator John Rutherford..Boyd Putnam, Mathew Culver..Henry Herman, Robert Gray..S. Miller Kent, Silas Truman..Henry Talbot, Major Putnam..Thomas Barns, Jack Dexter..Stanley Rignold, Randolph..A. W. Gregory, Lucille Ferrant..Frances Gaunt, Mrs. Ives..Ethel Greybrooke, Kitty Ives..Etta Hawkins, Mrs. Armory..Eliza Logan, Agnes..Olive Dunton, Helen Truman..Mrs. Berlan Gibbs. A full house greeted the opening of the play. Putnam, lead man of the cast, played with dignity and feeling, but Mrs. Gibbs disappointed in the role of the leading lady. *(Picayune, Tuesday, November 19, 1889.)*

The first representation in the city of Richard Stahl's musical comedy extravaganza, *Said Pasha*, was given at the Grand Opera House during the week beginning Sunday, November 25. The Thompson Opera Company performed the musical play whose libretto and music were by Richard Stahl. The production's sets were rich in oriental splendor; the scenes in Constantinople and of the rajah's palace in India being particularly magnificent. Frank David, as a tramp sailor,

J. W. Hill's Union Square Company returned on Sunday, December 1, in Henry Rosenfeld's comedy, A Possible Case, which had been given by the troupe during the previous season. Although the company had been changed considerably in the interval, the piece was performed just as admirably as the year before. M. A. Kennedy retained the role of Brinker-off, and gave the same masterly performance of the retired business man as he had before. Helen Russell replaced Georgie Drew Barrymore as Violet and proved to be an acceptable replacement. The remainder of the cast performed creditably. New in the cast in supporting roles were the following players: Howell Hansel, Charles Dickson, N. C.
Forrester, Herbert Archer, Henry Simon, William Ranous, Henrietta Lender, Jean Harold, Belle Archer, Katie Oesterie and Marie Hartley. (Picayune, Monday, December 2, 1889.)

Nellie McHenry and her company were next on the agenda, appearing on Sunday, December 8, and the following week in a new comedy called For Sweet Charity's Sake, by Bronson Howard. Reveling in the antics of a group of amateurs who get up a dramatic production for a charity, the play was invested with new music. Nellie McHenry was described as "fat, fair and frisky." (Picayune, Monday, December 9, 1889.) Cast: Kittie Plumpet..Nellie McHenry, Booth Forrest..W. A. Lytell, Rev. Duckworth..John Webster, Capt. Opydyke..Charles Shackford, R. Rufus Morton..Louis Finninger, Herr Horrmeister..W. Robinson, Barker..George Bouvier, Brown..B. L. Sooyer, Camilla Westlake..Blanche Mortimer, Marchionesse..Camilla Westlake, Mrs. Morton..Hattie Atkinson, Dixie..Frances Herbert.

On Sunday, December 15, 1889, Little Lord Fauntleroy was produced for the first time in the city and at the theatre. No play of the era was a greater success than was this drama by Frances Hodgson Burnett who wrote both the story and its dramatization. On this occasion, the play came South for the first time after enjoying enormous successes.
from Maine to California and from London to Australia. The mold of the perfect little boy in this story became the incentive for every mother in America to attempt to mold her male child after the little hero. Hair and clothes in the style of Little Lord Fauntleroy became the popular style for little boys of the next several decades. The late Julius Friend, in an interview with the writer, told of being sent with his Negro nurse to see Little Lord Fauntleroy at the Grand Opera House, dressed in clothes of and with hair in the style of the little Lord. He remembered particularly how he despised the long "girl-like" curls which he was forced to wear by his mother. His Little Lord Fauntleroy suit included velvet breeches and lace collar and cuffs. A further memory is pertinent in revealing the "color" restrictions in the theatre. Because the child was with his Negro nurse, they were not allowed to sit in the orchestra, but had to climb way up to the colored gallery.\(^{11}\)

The Grand Opera House was full to overflowing on opening night with excited crowds that flocked to see the famous hit play. The Picayune noted that Mrs. Burnett herself was Mrs. Errol of the play, and that her own little boy was the

\(^{11}\)Interview No. 3, Sunday, July 1, 1962, New Orleans, Louisiana.
original from which the Little Lord was sketched. The company was managed by T. H. French of New York, who supplied the cast with two clever child actresses to alternate in the title role. These were Georgie Cooper and Flossie Ethyl. So great was the demand for tickets that with the exception of Monday, there were matinees scheduled every day of the week's run of the play. Georgie Cooper was chosen to open on Sunday, December 15, with the cast playing as follows: Cedric Errol, "Little Lord Fauntleroy". Georgie Cooper, Earl of Dorincourt. Carl Haswin, Mr. Havisham. James Peakes; Mr. Hobbs. C. Jay Williams, Dick. Charles Klein, Higgins. J. H. Howland, Wilkins. F. A. Cooper, Thomas. George Marston, James. L. Browning, Mrs. Errol. Minnie Radcliffe, Minna. Dorothy Rossmore, Mary. Emma Marble. The ideal child of the drama was depicted as a "mama's boy" who was always on his good behavior, with good clothes and long hair, who always said wise things. The Picayune commented that such a child should be pitied, since he was not allowed to go barefooted and make mud pies, and be freckled and dirty, and be slightly bad with other little boys. This critic found the play lacking in plot and said that its dramatic force lay only with the actors. Georgie Parker was found by the Picayune and the Daily States to be a remarkable little actress. She was
only seven years old, petite, with bright face, blue eyes and golden hair, who performed without a single let-down for three solid hours although she had only assumed the role seventeen performances before. She not only read without a break, but revealed an intelligence and sweetness that was considered by the States to be remarkable. (Daily States, Monday, December 16, 1889; Picayune, Sunday, December 15; Monday, December 16, 1889.)

For the second time in three weeks, Said Pasha returned for Christmas week on Sunday, December 22, and played again to big houses.

The "standing room" sign was displayed at the theatre on Sunday, December 30, 1889, for the first performance there of Rice's popular and spectacular musical extravaganza, Evangeline, performed with a cast of sixty. The production managers were E. Rosenbaum and Charles J. Rich. The lavish show was performed brilliantly with excellent staging, acting, and singing. The production had many lovely girls, beautiful costumes and brilliant scenery. Yolande Wallace took the title role and was an immediate hit with her youth, beauty and sweet singing voice. George Fortescue, the amusing female impersonator, was a feature of the cast, and another stand-out was Ada Chamberlain who played Gabriel well, revealed a fine
singing voice, and wore exquisite costumes. The amazon march was considered to be dazzling and delighted the huge house. But the States lamented the way in which the orchestra stayed half a bar ahead of the usual time of the music, and caused the girls in the march to make blunders. (Daily States, Saturday, January 4, 1890; Picayune, Monday, December 30, 1889.) Cast: Evangeline..Yolande Wallace, Eulalie..Sadie Dargen, Catherine..George J. Fortescue, Rose..Helene Smith, Marie..Ella Hazen, Gabriel..Ada Chamberlain, LeBlanc..Peter Daly, Benedict..W. H. Collings, Felecien..Ella Rock, Heifers..F. L. Turner and R. Watson, Capt. Deitrich..Gus Frankel, Hans..W. H. Mack, Fritz..Maud Emerson, Maurice..Ada Williams, King Boorioboola..H. Collins, Police Chief..Harry Kelly, Headman..James Finn, Unambeebe..Ella Rock, Lo..James Finn, Charley..Robert Watson, Arizona Abraham..W. H. Mack, Rosemary..Fred Turner, Millie..Joseph McKinley, Fisherman..James Maffit. In addition to the regular performances, on Friday and Saturday, January 3 and 4, George Fortescue gave his highly amusing impersonation of Little Lord Fauntleroy. (Picayune, Friday, January 3, 1890.)

For one night only on Sunday, January 5, 1890, Frank W. Sanger's Company moved from the Academy of Music to the Grand to perform in Mr. Barnes of New York, a delightful
comedy which had played all week at the former house. (Picayune, Sunday, January 5, 1890.)

Emma Abbott's Opera Company returned for a week beginning on Monday, January 6. There were sixty people in the large troupe who performed in English in Verdi's tragic opera of Ernani, based on Victor Hugo's Hernani. The repertoire following opening night was as follows: Tuesday, The Yeoman of the Guard; Wednesday matinee, Bohemian Girl; Wednesday night, Rose of Castile; Thursday, Il Trovatore; Friday, Norma; Saturday matinee, Romeo and Juliet; Saturday night, Martha. (Picayune, Sunday, January 5, 1890.)

Bootles' Baby, a comedy success of London and the New York Madison Square Theatre, was presented at the theatre for the first time in the city on Sunday, January 12, 1890. The comedy hit was a dramatization of the army story by John Strange Winter. A great success, it had played for 350 nights at the Globe in London, and for 600 nights at the Madison Square Theatre. The wholesome story concerned a genial English soldier who adopts a baby and eventually becomes the husband of the baby's natural mother. Clarence Handyside took the lead role and handled it masterfully. He was handsome, talented, graceful and convincing and was supported by a fine company. Cast: Bootles. Clarence
Handyside, Capt. Lucy. Alexis Markham, Capt. Gilchrist.
Edwin Bovie, Lt. Gray. J. S. Stevens, Lt. Miles. George Cory,
Dr. Blantyre. Percy Kingsley, Pvt. Saunders. Hart Conway,
the Baby. Little Robert Lothian, Mignon at seven years.
Lena Bereison, Laura Norris. Jennie Kennark, Mrs. Smith.
Alice Brown, Humpty Dumpty. Alice Brooks, Helen Grace.
Gabrielle Du Sauld. Miss Du Sauld, a charming French actress,
changed from tears to smiles in a charming easy manner, as
the baby's mother. The baby was played at first by little
Robert Lothian who spoke not a word but performed excellent
pantomime acting. When Lena Bereison portrayed the child
later on, she acted so realistically that she brought tears
to the eyes of the patrons. (Daily States, Monday, January
13, 1890; Picayune, Sunday, January 12; Monday, January 13,
1890.)

Over 1,000 people who could not even secure standing
room were turned away from the Grand on Sunday, January 19,
when J. K. Emmet returned to the theatre in Uncle Joe, or
Fritz in a Madhouse. In the new play, Emmet portrayed a
guardian angel who helped the weak and fought the wrong.
Helping Emmet amuse his audience was a good cast including
a cute Irish actress with a thick brogue—Maude White, some
cute children and a large St. Bernard dog. Cast: Uncle Joe
Irme Kiralfy produced and directed his company in a mammoth and spectacular production of John Brougham and Paul Pelel's melodrama *Lagadere, the Hunchback of Paris*, that opened on Sunday, January 26. The play was substantially the same as *The Duke's Motto* and was adapted from the French novel *Le Bosu* (The Hunchback). The production was said to be excellent, with good scenery and handsome costumes, and with an impressive ballet that performed several times during the play. Mlle. De Rosa, a premiere danseuse from the San Carlos Theatre in Naples was featured dancer of the ballet that included ten petite young ladies. Virgie Graves and

Arthur Rehan's Company, a leading troupe of the day, opened on Sunday, February 2, in Surprises of Divorce, to play a week. A comedy success of both continents, it had played 105 nights at Daly's Theatre, New York, and 300 nights at Vanderville Theatre, Paris. The comedy was bright and clever and featured a group of good actors, with Adele Waters, J. H. Ryley and Carrie Jamison leading the cast. Cast: Jo, Adele Waters, Diana, Madeline Lucette, Mrs. Sherramy, Carrie Jamison, Anna Eliza, Nellie Wright, Adolphus, J. H. Ryley, Benjamin, Harry Hotto, Tom, Burr McIntosh, Capt. Sam Merrimac.
Another troupe moved into the Grand on Sunday, February 9, when W. H. Power's Company came for a week to present the Irish comedy-melodrama, *The Fairies' Well*, which starred Carroll Johnson. A talented and handsome Irish comedian, Johnson had been until late of Johnson and Slavin's Minstrels. The actor stole the play, being charming, attractive, with a delicious brogue, a beautiful singing voice and much dancing ability. The only other striking performer was Charles Frew as the villain. Cast: Larry Dee, Carroll Johnson, Andy Coogan, John F. Ward, Dan Carmody, Charles Frew; Condon, Alfred Fremont, Farrell, A. J. Miller, Kelley, P. Toohy; Patsy, John Mc Laughlin; Eunice, Belle Stoddard, Mona, Kate Foler, Mary Ellen, Mary Fox, Nellie, Little Zella. (Picayune, Monday, February 10, 1890.)

The famous Hanlon Company arrived for Mardi Gras week on Sunday, February 16, to produce their spectacular variety and pantomime extravaganza called *Fantasma*. Edward Hanlon was star of the group which was so well-known that it attracted the largest audience of the season for its opening. The scene was set in England, and the play was described as being astonishing, laughable and staged magnificently. The
combination rated deafening applause from the mammoth house. Cast: Fantasma..Catherine Goode, Close..Edward Hanlon, Zamailel..E. S. Goodwin, Pico..Francis Zeitner, Lena..Martha Phoite, Arthur..Geoffrey Stein, Farmer Flint..Joseph Harris, Hagwrath..George Griffiths, Sereus..Rene Ferrers, Lover at the Gate..Elmer Roy, Ballos..Joseph Phoite, Hazzard..T. C. Coughlin, Icthyo..Harry Hughes, Zarzar..William Garrene, Erebus..C. Launcelot, Zauthos..Thomas Tournour, Verberia.. Etta Lyons, Fuschia..Emma Waters, Dahlia..Lena Zeitner, Camilia..Nellie Walters, Milkmaid..Rene Ferrers, Boniface.. Joseph Harris, Landlady..Harry Hughes, Hunter..J. C. Morton, Peddler..Arthur Lovejoy. (Picayune, Monday, February 17, 1890.)

The Boston Ideal Opera Company, managed by Colonel W. R. Foster, was the next attraction that came on Sunday, February 23, for two weeks. With a cast of eighty, the troupe featured Chevalier Scovel, Mme. Pauline L'Allemand, W. H. Mertens and Leo Miranda. The schedule was as follows: first week, Sunday, Lucia Di Lammermoor; Monday, Saturday matinee, Il Travatore; Tuesday, Rigoletto; Wednesday, Saturday, Faust; Thursday, Carmen; Friday, Martha. Second week: beginning on Sunday, March 2, 1890, Sunday, Saturday, Carmen; Monday, Rigoletto; Tuesday, Il Trovatore; Wednesday, Lucia;
Thursday, Faust; Friday, Saturday matinee, Norma. The company was a good one, but coming at the start of Lent, they did not do well. They closed on Saturday, March 8. (Picayune, Sunday, February 23; Sunday, March 9, 1890.)

Lewis Morrison made his first appearance at the Grand Opera House on Sunday, March 9, 1890, at which time he performed the role in which he became famous and in which he was identified throughout his career, that of Mephisto in Goethe's Faust. The familiar story had been dramatized for the stage by Bayle Bernard. Beautiful, young Rosabel Morrison, the star's daughter, co-starred as Marguerite. The lovely girl was a native of New Orleans and was only twenty-one years old. This cast performed: Mephisto..Lewis Morrison, Sycoraz..Emma Marloe, Zendor..Marie Thall, Faust..Russ Mytal, Valentine..Porter White, Wagner..J. C. Miller, Frosch ..Frederick Belasco, Brander..Charles Santer, Marguerite.. Rosabel Morrison, Martha..Carrie Certer, Siebel..Florence Roberts, Liza..Nettie De Courcey. Morrison was described by the Picayune as one of the great actors of the American stage as Mephisto. He was said to be unsurpassed in the role. His devil was plausible, pleasing, companionable and enticing; and not a horned, cloved-footed terror. The Daily States contributed a highly favorable review also, saying that
Morrison's acting was of great artistic merit. (Daily States, Monday, March 10, 1890; Picayune, Monday, March 10, 1890.)

Another minstrel troupe filed into the Grand on Sunday, March 16—the popular Primrose and West Minstrel Company, considered to be at the head of all minstrel groups of the day. The two managers were also the company's lead performers. Chief support came from Lew Dockstader, a comedian who kept the audience laughing. The minstrels wore court dress of satin and silver, and their beautiful stage setting was of shirred white satin drapery caught up in graceful folds with gold cord and tassel. (Picayune, Monday, March 17, 1890.)

Kate Castleton, inimitable variety and comedy star, was the last attraction of the season. She returned on Sunday, March 23, 1890, and was seen for a week in a light comedy called A Paper Doll. The Daily States regarded the vehicle as a plot of nothingness, contrived merely to give the pretty star the opportunity to look captivating and sing her popular songs. The States complained of the musical accompaniment of the orchestra in an amusing comment. It seems that the orchestra was unfamiliar with Kate's songs, and the girl had a difficult time trying to look sweet-
tempered and bewitching while fighting to keep up with the music. Finally, in the last act, while singing "Just in the Old Sweet Way," she gave up, and stormed: "Never mind the music, I'll sing without it!" while giving the orchestra a ferocious look. (Daily States, Monday, March 24, 1890.)

Cast: Horace Buckley, Harry Clarke, Simon Dovetail, Ben F. Grinnell, Herbert Noble, T. B. Bridgeland, Temple Tolever, Richard Groman, Mrs. Gimp, Grace Ottillie, Rebecca Buckley, Lizzie Conway, Delia, Liz Conway, Sophie, May Montford, Dollie Chirruper, Kate Castleton. (Picayune, Monday, March 24, 1890.) The season ended on Saturday, March 29, 1890.

Despite the short notice in which Greenwall worked to secure stars, he ended his second season at the Grand Opera House with the longest season in the theatre's history. All of Greenwall's subsequent seasons were to begin earlier and terminate later than under any prior manager. Dominating the 1889-1890 season were extravaganzas, melodramas and minstrel troupes. The minstrel shows were noted for the first time during this season, and each that was presented was lavishly staged and exceedingly popular with New Orleans audiences. The record of attractions was as follows: the season began on Sunday, September 23, 1889, with Duncan B. Harrison's The Paymaster Company, a booking that drew very abundant business.
George Wilson's Minstrels followed on September 29, and averaged fine houses. W. A. Brady's After Dark Company came on October 6, and did only fair business. Lillian Lewis performed badly and brought a poor company when she arrived on October 13; yet she did surprisingly good business. The Cleveland-Haverly Minstrels followed on October 20, and drew heavy business. Dore Davidson and Ramie Austin entered the scene on October 27, and lacked support from a bad company in Guilty Without Crime. Business was bad. Julius Kahn's company came on November 3, and attracted fair business to see Held by the Enemy. November 10 brought Margaret Mather back in an impressive repertoire that guaranteed good business. The Wife came on November 7, featured a good company and drew good business. Said Pasha entered the scene on November 24, brought by the Thompson Opera Company, and did well. A Possible Case, coming on December 1, did fair business. Nellie Mc Henry was next on December 8. She tried hard but did only fair business. December 15 brought Little Lord Fauntleroy and capacity business. The Thompson Opera Company returned with Said Pasha on December 22, but did only fair business. The Rich and Harris Evangeline Company debuted on December 29, and fared well. On January 5, 1890, Emma Abbott's Opera Company came again and drew fine audiences. Bootles' Baby
came on January 12, and was produced artistically, but did not draw. J. K. Emmet returned on January 19 in a new play—Fritz in a Madhouse, and drew heavy business. Irme Kiralfy's Lacadere Company appeared on January 26 and attracted full houses. On February 9, W. H. Power's Fairies' Well Company came and did only fair business. Hanlon's Fantasma entered the theatre on February 16, playing to big audiences. February 23 brought the Boston Ideal Opera Company in two weeks of losing business. Lewis Morrison appeared in Faust for the first time on March 9, but did only moderately. March 16 brought Primrose and West's popular Minstrels who did excellent business. Kate Castleton came on March 23 in A Paper Doll, and closed the season. The Picayune praised Greenwall at the end of the season saying:

... Greenwall has proven himself to be an energetic and liberal manager. He has pocketed his earnings without boasting and suffered his losses without crying. Every year he is becoming more experienced and more conversant with the tastes of the public ... and has given such satisfaction to the association ... owning the theatre, that on Saturday he was allowed to renew his lease for three years more ... the present lease having one year more. ...

The article went on to cite Greenwall's popularity with the press, Variété Association and with the public. (Picayune, Sunday, March 30, 1890.) At least two interviews with former associates of the genial manager reveal his popularity and
warmth in interaction with colleagues. Since these memories are of a slightly later period, however, they will be discussed subsequently.

The 1890-1891 season opened even earlier than in the previous season. Over the summer, the stage of the beautiful theatre was enlarged, improved and stocked with new scenery. First attraction of the season, beginning on Sunday, September 7 was the melodrama The Cattle King, starring James H. Wallick, the playwright, and a fair company, with three beautifully trained horses. The opening cast was as follows:

Bob Taylor and Daredevil Dick..James H. Wallick, Don Pedro Mexia..F. F. Nagle, Bill Mexico..Edward Phillips, Barney Ryan..Charles Crosby, Parson Squires..W. O. Parsons, Tom Patterson..H. G. Barrett, Rolland Foster..C. Coutes, Hans..J. Gooke, Jacob..H. H. Wheeler, Katherine Paxon..Lena Onthank, Theresa Davene..Nettie Leland, Molly Mexico..Viola Crosby. (Picayune, Monday, September 8, 1890.) Miss Onthank made a pretty, graceful heroine, who rode her horse well. The play ran through Wednesday. On Thursday, Wallick changed his bill and starred in Sam Houston, another play of his own creation, seen for the first time in the city. Lena Onthank was seen as Victoria, opposite Wallick as General Houston;
but the most impressive member of the cast was Viola Crosby, who appeared as Senora Le Grand. Impressive stage pictures were created by the bombardment of the Alamo and the horseback combat at the battle of San Jacinto. (Picayune, Friday, September 12, 1890.)

In describing the next attraction, Dion Boucicault's After Dark, the Picayune offered an interesting definition of melodrama:

Melodramas permit more departure from nature than the ordinary drama, admit of exaggeration and other liberties of dramatic construction, and depend upon skill in handling the sensational rather than upon literary merit. (Picayune, Monday, September 15, 1890.

William A. Brady's spectacular production of the melodrama began on Sunday, September 14, with Edmund Collier and Stella Rees in lead roles. Among the spectacular scenes were a London bridge scene, with a tank and a locomotive, and a boxing scene with two well-known boxers, Kelly and Murphy, performing. Cast: Old Tom, Edmund Collier, Gordon Chumley, J. W. Mc Connell, Sir George, Fred Mayer, Dicey Morris, John S. Marble, Richard, Frank Richardson, Poynter, Jeremiah Murphy, Crumpets, C. Lewis, Area Jack, J. P. Frazler, the bargee, J. C. Carter, Jenny, Will Jackson, Josie, L. J. Case, Peter, Frank Hart, Master of Ceremonies, Harry Little,
Bartender...James Keith, Eliza...Stella Rees, Rose...Adora Andrews. (Picayune, Sunday, September 14, 1890).

Charles A. Gardner's romantic comedy, Fatherland, coming on Sunday, September 21, introduced the playwright as star. The play revealed Gardner as a clever actor who sang and danced well. Cast: Herman Leopold...Charles A. Gardner, Digby Barnes...Robert V. Ferguson, Henry Stafford...Frederick Roberts, Hans Veeder...Hugo Hicks, Otto Wolf...Nelson Compton, Rudolph...Seppel Thaler, Klinger...Ignace Conradi, Katz...John Ward, John...Royce Alton, Rhoda...Eva Byron, Dorothea...Marion May, Charlotte...Ida Valeance, Meenie...Annie Cahn, Huido...Pepi Mahler, Bertha...Rose Thaler, Rosa...Bertie Alton. Sidney R. Ellis directed the production. (Picayune, Monday, September 22, 1890.)

W. S. Cleveland's Minstrels began an engagement on Sunday, September 28, and played all week to "standing room only." Willie P. Sweatman and Billy Rice headed the troupe which sported exquisite stage settings and costumes. W. S. Cleveland produced the spectacular entertainment. (Picayune, Monday, September 20, 1890.)

Jim, the Penman returned on Sunday, October 5, bringing A. M. Palmer's Madison Square Theatre Company. Charles H. Riegel and Louise Rial impersonated the Penman and his wronged
wife with perfect comprehension. Cast: James Ralston.
Charles H. Reigel, Louis Percival..Hardy Vernon, Baron Hartford..James Carhart, Capt. Redweed..Edwin Travers, Jack Ralston..William Sheldon, Lord Dinlincourt..J. A. Washburn, Dr. Pettywise..Evelyn Evans, Notherby..J. T. Mc Kever, George..W. T. Randolph, Nina..Louise Rial, Agnes..Evelyn Hardy, Lady Dunscombe..Grace Graces, Mrs. Chapstone..Charles Livingston.
(Picayune, Monday, October 6, 1890.)

W. J. Gilmore's Twelve Temptations was the next booking to begin, on Sunday, October 12. A beautiful allegory, the drama dealt with the spirits of good and evil striving for a mortal hero. A gorgeous ballet was a feature of the extravaganza whose lead dancers were maitre de ballet—Victor Chiado, and premiere ballerina—Mlle. Brambilta. The elaborate ballet sequences featured magnificent costumes: Even the hair color changed with the individual dance and the dress. Mai Estelle and Ida Lillian Abrams were the biggest stand-out performers of the show. Cast: Prince Hal..Mai Estelle, Appropos..Charles H. Stanley, Sterno..Charles O'Brien, Runso..William De Van, Magnus..Francois Viadmir, Rulla..George France, Tycho..Henry Grune, Gurner..Ed Jones, Suerno..Millis Favor, Frances..Ida L. Abrams, Dame Wursa..Burton Stanley, Solaris..Emma Wesner, Zero..Amelia Neville, Bright
Eyes..Minnie Conway, Jack Frost..Louis Vladmir, Hall..James Leopold, Sleet..George Aubrey, Snow..Philip Crossen, Ice..
Henry Peters. (Picayune, Monday, October 13, 1890.)

Lillian Lewis returned on Sunday, October 19, with a new play, Credit Lorraine, a melodrama written especially for her. The play was set in France at the time of Napoleon III, and allowed the actress the opportunity to wear some lovely gowns. She surrounded herself with the same poor company as during her previous visit, with the exception of W. A. Whitecar, excellent in the role of Phillippe Rameau, the hero, and Archibald Cowper, impressive as Count De Lusiguan, the villain. Miss Lewis appeared as Lenora Di Castiglioni. Other cast members were: M. Beaumont..Edward Warren, La Valliere..Frank Kendrick, Jacob Lustig..L. Marston, Delamonie..Frank Hilliard, M. Vandille..Robert Terris, Mme. Bonhon..Eleanor Merron, Mlle. Vouloir..Adele Bray. (Picayune, Monday, October 20, 1890.)

George Wilson's Minstrels put in a reappearance on Sunday, October 26 and remained a week. The Picayune called Wilson: "...the Edwin Booth of minstrelsy." (Picayune, Monday, October 27, 1890.)

More melodrama came on Sunday, November 2, when Greenwall booked the first local production of George H. Jessop
and Ben Teal's melodrama, *The Great Metropolis*. There were such stunning scenic effects as an elevated railroad scene, a shipwreck in a terrible storm and a beach and lighthouse. The company on the road was not the original New York cast, and only J. J. Tighe and Robert Neil pleased. Leads were taken by: Jack Webster, J. J. Tighe, Jack Holt, Robert Neil, Neil Carr, Jennie Bright, Gertrude, Jennie Kennark, Clara Maitland, Margaret Montgomery, Fantine, Camille Cleveland, Walter Mowbray, Willard Lee. (*Picayune*, Monday, November 3, 1890.)

Another spectacular Kiralfy production appeared on Sunday, November 9, at which time *The Water Queen* made its local debut. Bolosey Kiralfy came personally from New York to supervise the production which had been a major success at Niblo's Garden in New York. The grand spectacle was a fantasy play concerning a brave young knight, a fair lady, and good and evil in the forms of a demon and the Water Queen. Florence Hamilton and J. Frank Sherry played the lead romantic roles with deftness. A beautiful ballet, a feature of the production, introduced Mlle. Rodmann as premiere ballerina, and Nicode and Julienne as other lead dancers. The enchanted forest scene was particularly striking. Cast: Sir Egbert, J. Frank Sherry, Lady Elsa, Florence Hamilton, Ernest
Still another elaborate extravaganza made its appearance on Monday, November 17, at which time was introduced the most beautiful extravaganza ever to be produced on the stage of the Grand Opera House. This was the spectacular Bluebeard, Jr., which a completely sold out house waited to see in vain on Sunday, November 16, the announced and expected opening night. With the house filled and all standing room sold, the cast came rushing in only moments before the curtain was to go up. The train had been late and the scenery did not arrive until 8:30 P.M. When at 9:00 P.M. it was apparent that all the elaborate scenery could not be put up, company manager James H. Meade and Greenwall agreed that the audience should not be shown a half-staged production, and over $1,200 was returned to the disappointed patrons who packed the house. J. J. Murdock, treasurer of the company, announced that the unfortunate delay was due to an accident on the railroad near Lake Charles, Louisiana. A side-tracked train had been struck by a fast freight train, and the road
was completely blocked for hours from the collision. But when the beautiful spectacular burlesque was staged by the Ideal Extravaganza Company on Monday, it proved to be well worth waiting for. The fantasy that dealt with a monster who planned to kill his eighth wife was filled with every effect imaginable. It had exquisite scenes painted by Voegtlin; a scene in Constantinople, a glittering grotto, a street scene that changed to the golden terrace of Bluebeard's palace, and the gorgeous, sumptuous wedding palace. It had a cast of one hundred, grand ballets, amazon marches, and colorful music. In the fairy grotto, a ballet of birds and insects was performed, showing lovely girls as grasshoppers, white moths, lady bugs, and butterflies, with soloists Mlle. Paris as an ostrich and Mlle. Pertini as a hawk. There was a Persian march of shapely soldiers. The climax scene of beauty revealed a web of spider's weaving lifted to reveal white clouds and twinkling stars. Figures appeared of night and of day—with sunlight on her head, and of poetry and music, culminating in a tableau of light and color, so elaborate that it was impossible for the Picayune to describe. The Picayune explained that no such spectacle had ever been seen before at the theatre. The beautiful show had just come from Chicago where it played for sixteen weeks, and it had

More melodrama with horses moved in on Sunday, November 23, when The Still Alarm opened. Billed as a fireman's love story, the opus featured a real fire engine and white Arabian steeds. The realism of the reckless firemen riding to the rescue waked the capacity opening house to enthusiasm that shook the roof. Captain Kalinski of the New Orleans Fire Department was in the audience, and held the watch when the alarm was given. He said that it took only seven seconds for the machine to get into motion. Frank Roberts as the hero and Julia Arthur as the heroine both showed great

Patti Rosa, a clever comedienne, made her debut at the Grand on Sunday, November 30, when she appeared for a week in Fred Marsden and Clay M. Greene's comedy-drama, Imp. Leading man was George C. Boniface, Jr. The petite actress was managed by William Calder. The playing vehicle was found to be weak, but Miss Rosa was praised for her sparkle and vim. She had music in her voice and possessed the spirit of mischief. Her support was only fair. Boniface, who had shown much promise when first cast at the theatre, now had developed awkward mannerisms. Cast: Luke Ratmond, William N. Griffin, Laroque Duval, John W. Dunne, Sampson Salt, George C. Boniface, Jr., Aspen Timid, Gerald Griffin, Tom Timid, Edgar Halstead, John McGuilligan, Harry Rich, Amelia Claiborn, Ernestine Floyd, Clarissa Timid, Margaret Hatch, Marcy Winden, Belle Stokes, Nanine Duval, Patti Rosa.
The Spider and the Fly, a vaudeville burlesque extravaganza, entered the scene on Sunday, December 7. Irene Verona headed the cast of forty players. As was typical of burlesque extravaganzas, the show was short on plot but long on specialties and effects. Beatrice Goldie, who like Miss Verona was young and attractive, was the other hit of the show. Cast: Dazzle...Irene Verona, Queen of Mermaids...Beatrice Goldie, Philip Space...Thomas W. Ryley, Hanlup...John P. Hill, Harteur...P. H. Reilley, Enery...J. A. Keernan, Pepe...Alexander Zanfretta, Mowhard...Leo Zanfretta, Ecco...August Seigrist, Sprite...Will Seigrist, Rainbow...Lida Clark, Sea Wind...Virgie Ardold, Fanchette...May Curtis, Calm...Victoria North, Aynez...Carrie Levingston, Seaweed...Kitty Clark, Wild Waves...Emma Zanfretta, Oralinne...Ada Leyton, Mariane...Nellie Parks, Tarpolan...Laura Zeifel, Excelsior...Bob Leyton, Trueball...Lillie Leyton, Seashell...Marie Leyton, The Clown...Alexander Zanfretta, Old Man...Leo Zanfretta, Old Woman...William Seigrist, The Fly...May Curtis, The Spider...Lida Clark, The Swell...August Seigrist. (Picayune, Monday, December 8, 1890.)

The Hanlon troupe returned on Sunday, December 14, with their spectacular production, Fantasma, which had been
presented at the theatre in February of the previous season. The cast which was almost the same as when last presented was headed again by Edward Hanlon as Farmer Close and included also Cora Macy as Fantasma plus E. S. Goodwin, Louis Pizzarello, Ida Maussey, J. H. Smiley, Fred Hill, Kate Alma, T. C. Coughlin, William Bell, Harry Hughes, John M. Coughlin, C. Launcelot, C. M. Joney, Emma Walker, Ella Carr, Hilda Haslam, Carville Deveze, A. C. Orcutt, Kate Alma, John Haslam, J. C. Morton and Arthur Lovejoy. (Picayune, Monday, December 15, 1890.)

Conried's Comic Opera Company came to the theatre for Christmas week on Sunday, December 21. This was a brilliant opera group, under the direction of Heinrich Conried. The Gypsy Baron by Johann Strauss was introduced on Sunday, and played through Wednesday matinee and at a special Christmas matinee on Thursday. Paul Steindorff was musical conductor. On Wednesday night, December 24, and for the balance of the week, The King's Fool was played. (Picayune, Sunday, December 21, 1890.)

Another extravaganza was billed beginning on Sunday, December 28, when Rice and Dixey's production of Charles A. Byrne's musical comedy The Pearl of Pekin took over the Grand. This was the first local showing of the production which had
played for two hundred and fifty nights in New York at the Bijou Theatre. Louis Harrison was the star, and Ed Chapman was lead comedian. The cast included: Pearl of Pekin., Gussie Broshie, Pepine., Minnie Parker, Tyfoo., Ed Chapman, Sing High., George Bruening, Paul., Walter Van Allen, Sororiki., Oscar Girard, Pierre., Edward Webb, Fontine., Pearl Seward, Angelique., Susie Marion, Finnette., Bertha Fisch, Pierrette., Jessie Charron. The opus was considered to be disappointing by the Picayune. (Picayune, Sunday, December 28; Monday, December 29, 1890.)

Primrose and West's Minstrels returned on Sunday, January 4, 1891 for a week with the same group as were featured the previous season. Heading the cast were Lew Dockstader, John Queen, J. M. Janson, and George Powers.

The distinguished tragedian Thomas W. Keene, the first big star to appear at the theatre in two seasons, made an appearance on Sunday, January 11, 1891, and presented a varied legitimate repertoire for one week. He brought Lavania Shannon as leading lady and a fine supporting company headed by George Learock. His repertoire was as follows: Sunday, Richard III; Monday, Richelieu; Tuesday, Louis XI; Wednesday matinee, Othello; Wednesday night, Hamlet; Thursday, Richard III; Friday, Louis XI; Saturday matinee, Julius Caesar;
Lorme..Jeannie Ellison. Again the company performed well in 

**Louis XI**: Louis XI, King of France..Mr. Keene, Duke de 
Nemours..George Learock, Charles..Edmund Lawrence, Cortier.. 
Frank Henning, de Commines..Julius Scott, Tristan..E. Moore, 
LeDain..John Griffith, DePaul..Carl Ahrendt, DeDreup..A. H. 
Roberts, Balfour.. Thomas Eagleson, Andre..J. B. Peters, 
Didier..Geoffrey Stein, Richard..Marwood Andrews, Marie.. 
Lavinia Shannon, Barbel..Jeannie Ellison, Jacques..J. J. Cum- 
mings, Officer..Frank Norton, D'Ore..C. N. Elberts. The 

**Daily Item** (mentioned here for the first time, as the newest 
major New Orleans newspaper to emerge) considered **Hamlet** to 
be Keene's greatest role, particularly because of the great 
skill used to portray the Prince in such a way that the audi­ 
ence was left wondering whether Hamlet was insane or whether 
the insanity was feigned. This newspaper considered the 
interpretation to be perfect. (Daily Item, Thursday, January 
15, 1891.) **Hamlet** was played with this cast: Hamlet..Thomas 
W. Keene, Ophelia..Lavinia Shannon, Ghost..George Learock, 
Claudius..Frank Henning, Laertes..Eugene Moore, Polonius.. 
Carl Ahrendt, Horatio..Julius Scott, Rosencrantz..Geoffrey 
Stein, Guildenstern..Thomas Eagleson, Marcellus..John 
Griffith, Bernardo..J. J. Cummings, Francisco..A. R. Allison, 
First Grave Digger..J. B. Peters, Second Grave Digger..F. A.
James, Priest..Frank Norton, Gertrude..Henriette Vaders, 
Player Queen..Jeannie Ellison, First Actor..Edmund Lawrence, 
Second Actor..Marwood Andrews. (Picayune, Thursday, January 
15, 1891.)

Annie Pixley, a new face at the theatre, made an 
initial appearance on Sunday, January 18, appearing in three 
comedies: Brett Harte's M'liss, which played Sunday, Monday, 
Saturday matinee and Saturday evening; The Deacon's Daughter 
on Tuesday evening and Wednesday matinee; and 22 Second Floor 
on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. In M'liss, a play in 
which the star first won success, Miss Pixley sang and danced 
and displayed bubbling comedy techniques. This cast included: 
M'liss..Annie Pixley, Yuba Bill..Joseph Brennan, John Grey.. 
John Burke, Judge Beeswinger..Charles H. Bradshaw, Juan 
Walers..Charles Brandt, Templeton Fake..Ben Grinnell, Old 
Smith..George Sprague, Jack Brown..W. F. Macmichel, Don.. 
William Maxwell, Mrs. Smith..Carrie Reynolds, Clytie..Mollie 
Ravel. (Picayune, Monday, January 19, 1891.) The Deacon's 
Daughter was written especially for Annie Pixley by A. C. 
Gunter. It gave the star scope for versatility, playing a 
country girl in Connecticut and a dashing New York actress, 
leading a double life. In this cast were Ruth Homewebb.. 
Annie Pixley, Isiah Homewebb..Charles H. Bradshaw, Charley
Lawton..John Burke, Irving..Charles C. Brandt, Tompkins..Ben F. Grinnell, Squire Slinbergast..Joseph Brennan, Amandie..W. F. Macmichel, Mrs. Rachael Homewebb..Annie Douglas, Mrs. Dashington Brown..Carrie Reynolds, Mary O'Dougherty..Mollie Ravell. (Picayune, Wednesday, January 21, 1891.) In 22 Second Floor Miss Pixley chose a play in which she could play another double role, that of twin sisters, one being a lively actress and the other a domestic little lady who meet after a long separation. It was not explained by the Picayune how Miss Pixley managed the scene in which she must meet herself. But her acting was considered splendid. (Picayune, Thursday, January 22, 1891.)

Melodrama was the bill again on Sunday, January 25, when The Stowaway made its initial appearance at the Grand, for its first run in the city. Typical of melodrama, the play had generous sprinklings of vice, long suffering virtue, and final triumph of the good. Being a particularly good melodrama, it contained, in addition, fine scenery, sensational scenes, murder and mystery. The leading lady was Maude Edna Hall, a New Orleans girl, who returned home for the first time since becoming a professional actress. The city showed its pride in its native daughter by packing the house on opening night and by giving the star what amounted
to an ovation. She had acted in former days with the old Shakespeare Club (no longer active at this time), and was presented by the group with a floral offering taller than she was. Walter Edwards enacted well the hero, and the audience approved of the entire cast: Tom Ingliss, Walter Edwards, Charles Etherington, Mark Lynch, Percy Ewert, Jo Paige Smith, Dixey, Harry Booker, Paul, William McVay, Hickey, R. J. Moyle, Sandy Prowse, William McVay, Edward Johnson, Louise Lee, Porky, Edward Barnes, Chuckey, Libbie Kirke, Althea Dale, Maud Edna Hall, Florence, Madge Carr, Jeffreys, Margaret Robertson. (Picayune, Monday, January 26, 1891.)

W. S. Cleveland's Minstrels returned for another big week at the theatre beginning on Sunday, February 1. Featured minstrels were Luke Schoolcraft, a popular New Orleans native, and Billy Emerson, Hughey Dougherty, Fields and Hanson, Griffin and Marks, Eddie Fox, J. Marcus, Fred Winans, Charles Noble and Raymond Show. (Picayune, Sunday, February 1, 1891.)

Mardi Gras week was ushered in with the appearance of A. M. Palmer's excellent company in a double bill: a one-act comedy, A Man of the World, by Augustus Thomas and the three-act farce, Aunt Jack by Ralph Lumley. The thoroughly good group was directed by H. S. Thayer. Aunt Jack proved to be
A whimsical comedy. The title was a nick-name for Miss Joan Bryson, a strongminded spinster with whom an opposing lawyer falls in love during a law suit. The court room scene was an amusing highlight. Joseph Haworth played brilliantly the lead role of the old barrister, while Pfolliott Paget gave a most successful portrayal of the spinster. She was a handsome woman who dressed in beautiful style. George Backus did a striking job of the young attorney nephew of Aunt Jack. A Man of the World was a satire on marital fidelity and served also to display Haworth's great versatility as an actor. In the cast of the latter play were Charles Bowser, George Backus, Jerome Kinsbury, J. Fenton, Charles W. Butler, E. A. Eberle, W. B. Murray, Dean Smith, Bertha Creighton, Alice Butler, and Pfolliott Paget. Aunt Jack's cast included: S. Berkley Brue..Joseph S. Haworth, Caleb Cornish..George Backus, Juffin..Charles W. Butler, Colonel Tavenor..E. A. Eberle, Lord Brompton..Lewis Baker, Mr. Mundle..Charles Bowser, Swoffer..J. Kingsbury, Associate Justice..John Blake, Usher..J. R. Russell, Policeman..W. DeWitt, Joseph..W. B. Murray, Foreman of Jury..Dean Smith, Mrs. Van Streek..Alice Butler, Mildred..Bertha Creighton, Joan Bryson..Pfolliott Paget. (Picayune, Monday, February 9, 1891.)

A new play by Rankin and Meader, The Canuck, was
brought to the Grand for its New Orleans premiere, beginning on Sunday, February 15. The play starred McKee Rankin, considered an excellent actor, in his first appearance at the theatre. The vehicle was noteworthy in that it provided a striking new kind of character—Jean Baptiste Cadeaux—for the thorough actor. The part was a dialect role in broken French. Rankin had starred as Cadeaux in New York for a successful run of one hundred six nights. Now he brought most of the New York cast with him. The group played as follows: Jean Baptiste Cadeaux, McKee Rankin, Chris Stebbins, Charles Cowles, Tom Stebbins, Walter Hodges, Jim Hogan, Clarence Arper, Zeb Hawley, Fred Moyer, Angelique Bisquitte and Archange, Mable Bert, Hester, Lorena Atwood, Martha, Anne Stebbins, Lutie P. Mower. (Picayune, Monday, February 16, 1891.)

Things got lively around the Grand Opera House the week beginning Sunday, February 22, with the arrival of The Clemenceau Case. The drama was adapted from the French of Dumas by Fleron, and was on the order of La Tosca. The extravaganza was presented under the management of W. A. Brady, and proved to be the sensation of the year of any local theatre: it had the distinction of being the first play ever shown at the theatre to have been banned in Boston! The Picayune
noted: "The play enjoys the advertising distinction of hav­
ing been suppressed by the city authorities in Boston for its
immorality." (Picayune, Sunday, February 22, 1891.) The eye-
 opener was literally packed on opening night with excited
curiosity seekers. The play had become famous over-night
throughout the country through the condemnation of its cele-
brated studio scene. In the shocking scene the heroine
appeared in flesh colored, skin-tight silk tights—creating
the effect that she was naked. To enhance the excitement,
she posed as a model before her artist husband. The effect
was electrifying; but the Picayune critic found it not so
shocking. The reviewer reasoned in his absorbing account:

In a moral way, it is no worse than many erotic
plays that we have come to see. The appearance of
the woman in the model scene is a touch of 'Black
Crook'-edness that causes no special wonder or sur-
prise among auditors familiar with modern ballet
dancers and the long-limbed ladies of the Amazon
Marches. (Picayune, Monday, February 23, 1891.)

The shocker lacked moral lesson. The trusting hero was made
a victim who was deceived and outraged by the woman he loves
as a reward for that love. In the sensational cast were
Pierre Clemenceau..Charles B. Welles, Constantin Ritz,.M. J.
Jordan, Count Voinoff,.L. E. Lawrence; Mons. Ritz,.R. J.
Branick, Bertin,.Fred Howard, Theodore,.T. F. Ashley, Foot-
man,.M. K. White; Countess Dombronowsky,.Genevieve Beaman,
Mme. Clemenceau..Josephine Laurens; Mme. Lesperon..Beatrice Norman, Georgette..Madge Winthrop, Iza..Laura Biggar. Miss Biggar played the lead role of the brazen siren aptly and realistically, while Charles B. Welles was clever, handsome and completely life-like as the artist hero. The company was judged as good and the audience was amused and shocked to their hearts' content. (Picayune, Monday, February 23, 1891.)

Another unique event followed. John L. Sullivan, the famous prize fighter, had recently turned actor. Now he made his first appearance upon a New Orleans stage, choosing the Grand for his debut. The exciting event occurred during the week beginning Sunday, March 1, 1891, and as was to be expected, mammoth crowds fought their way to the theatre to see their pugilistic hero. Sullivan made his debut as a star, with force substituting for experience. His acting vehicle was Duncan B. Harrison's Honest Hearts and Willing Hands, a melodrama written for the fighter. Especially featured in the cast were Duncan Harrison, the playwright, and, as leading lady, Virgie Nelson, a New Orleans girl who had gone on the stage. Both of the latter proved additional drawing cards; all standing room went quickly, and not a soul was disappointed. A heavy melodrama, the play had a villian whom
the Picayune described as "... too bad even for several worlds below this," and some of the scenes were long and constructed poorly. (Picayune, Sunday, March 1, 1891.) But Sullivan proved himself a winner again with a plucky portrayal of the hero, and the play had some moving incidents and climaxes and featured an exciting sparring scene in the last act which displayed the fighter's charms. Sullivan was no Booth, of course; but he was earnest, spoke and acted sincerely, and entered fully into the spirit of his part to such an extent that the audience almost forgot that he was the famous fighter. Sullivan was described as "... fleshy but still superbly muscular, towering above the others and ... a statue of strength ... at times quite effective as an actor." (Picayune, Sunday, March 1, 1891.) In the fight scene he sparred three rounds with Joe Lannon, also a heavyweight of repute. "... Here," according to the Picayune, "Sullivan showed that he could still hit with old-time vigor, is quick on his feet, and ducks under a blow fast enough for a featherweight." (Picayune, Sunday, March 1, 1891.) As for his effectiveness, "The crowd howled with delight, and gave him an ovation all the way through. There is no discount on Sullivan's drawing powers." (Picayune, Sunday, March 1, 1891.) Virgie Nelson received a cordial welcome home and a
handsome floral offering, and Charles M. Collins was a stand-out as the villain. The competent cast included: General DeLacy Dare..Fred Strong, Arthur Dare..Charles M. Collins, John Daly..Duncan B. Harrison, James Daly..John L. Sullivan, Teddy Hinton..John D. Griffin, Terrence McNabb..William Sheldon, Inspector Francis..John Atwell, Master of Ceremonies..Jack Barnitt, James..R. B. Frisbie, Paddy Burns.. Carroll Daly, Tug O'Brien..Joseph Lannon, Silly Mike..Fred Speldon, Emily Poignford..Virginia Nelson, Mrs. Daly..Mary Maddern, Nora Daly..Grace Ottilie, Martha O'Neill..Carrie Rose. (Picayune, Sunday, March 1, 1891.)

The long and brilliantly entertaining season continued on Sunday, March 8, when another spectacular hit the theatre. Edward E. Rice's musical extravaganza, The Corsair, opened a week's run on Sunday, March 8, 1891; and sported amazon marches, sparkling music, pretty girls, brilliant costumes, and handsome stage settings. Such dazzling sets were displayed as a ship scene with moving sails and rolling hull, the pasha's garden with a fountain of real water thrown up fifteen feet with prismatic effects and changing colors, the scene of the amazon marches, Stamboul by moonlight, the Palace of Pearls, and other such exotic scenes. Rose Dana, described as a shapely miss and a member of the original New
York cast, commanded the Amazon Marches; and Bessie Tannebill, another attractive lass, assumed the title role. She was sprightly, curvacious, and sang well. Cast: The Corsair.


Duncan B. Harrison's melodrama, The Paymaster, which had been presented in the previous season with the playwright starring, returned on Sunday, March 15, without Harrison. Instead Charles Chappelle was starred. Chappelle was a handsome fellow with some acting ability. Only other standouts in the cast were Steve Maley—who stole the play with his comic songs and Irish brogue, and Clara Coleman—who sang, danced, and looked pretty. The cast revealed: Robert O'Connor.
Katie Putman, a charming soubrette, put in her first New Orleans appearance in five years when she began a week's engagement at the Grand in C. T. Daney's comic melodrama, *Love Finds a Way*. The versatile little star acted well, sang and played the banjo. She was described as pretty, petite and delightful. Charles Mortimer was the handsome young hero, Harry Colton was an effective villain and Edwin Gardner was a hilarious comedian. The whole performance was rated as enjoyable. Leads and their roles were Gay Howard, Katie Putnam, Frank Clifton, Charles Mortimer, Samuel Smirks, Edwin Gardner, and Ralph Whitmore, Harry Colton. (*Picayune*, Monday, March 23, 1891.)

Sunday, March 29, marked the return of *The Clemenceau Case* with the same cast that had performed the play three
weeks before. It was now Easter week, and Greenwall felt that the sensational play which had not done well during Lent might now do the business it deserved. (*Picayune*, Sunday, March 29, 1891.)

Lillian Lewis returned next, on Sunday, April 5, and brought the drama *Credit Lorraine*. She appeared under the management of E. G. Stone, and in her company were such well-known actors as George Wessels and E. K. Collier. The drama played through Saturday, April 11, and featured the following in chief roles: Lenora di Castiglioni..Lillian Lewis, Count de Lesignon..George Wessels, and Philip Rameau..Edmund Collier. (*Picayune*, Monday, April 6, 1891.) Miss Lewis was held over for a second week, beginning on Sunday, April 12, the final week of the season. The varied repertoire included this schedule: Monday, Tuesday, Saturday, *As In a Looking-Glass*; Sunday, Wednesday matinee and night, *Article 47*; Thursday, *Credit Lorraine*; Friday, Saturday matinee, *Camille*; Sunday, April 19--last day of the season--*The New Magdalen*. The performance on Sunday, April 12 of *Article 47* was a benefit for the executive staff of the Grand Opera House including Theodore C. Stewart, treasurer, Morris Marks, assistant treasurer and energetic young nephew of Greenwall, Thomas J. Boyle, stage manager, and Harry Jacobs, business manager.
The announcement of the benefit is important in that it mentioned the executive staff of the theatre for the first time. (Picayune, Monday, April 13, 1891.) The cast of Article 47 on the benefit occasion was as follows: George Duhamel.
Edmund Collier, Victor Maziller..George Wessells, De Rives.
Frank Peters, Pontain..Barry Johnston, Rene..Fred Moule, Dr.
Coombs..George Hilliard, Gens d'Arm..Frank Terris, Marcelle.
Mildred Holt, Nina..Helen Beaumont, Cora..Lillian Lewis. In As In a Looking-Glass, Miss Lewis was seen again as Lena Despard with Edmund Collier as Algernon Balfour. The New Magdalen featured Miss Lewis as Mercy Merrick, and presented Marion Hunt, a young New Orleans girl, in her professional debut. In principal roles in this play were: Julian Grey.
Edmund Collier, Surgeon Wetzel..George Wessells, Capt.
Arnoult..Frank Hilliard, Marie..Marion Hunt, Janet..Mildred Hall, Grace..Helen Beaumont, and Miss Lewis as Mercy. On Saturday, April 18, 1891, an Elks benefit was announced, with a combined professional and amateur group of performers. In the unique billing was Credit Lorraine with Lillian Lewis and her company, followed by Othello with Edmund Collier as Othello and George Wessells as Iago. Finally, the amateurs took over when the Elks presented Hamlet with Bernard C. Shields as Hamlet, Ed Curtis as the Ghost, Barry Johnson as
Horatio and Edward Shields as Marcellus. As if this full program was not sufficient, the Elks concluded with a medley of variety talent, featuring other prominent local amateurs, including Ed Curtis, Ollie Berkley, Minerva Adams, Louise Dickson, Lester Victor, Harry Huans, C. H. Shields, Steve Corey, and a host of others. (Picayune, Saturday, April 18, 1891.)

The long and successful 1890-1891 season began on September 7 and closed on April 19. On September 7, 1890, James H. Wallick produced The Cattle King and Sam Houston to good houses. September 14 ushered in W. A. Brady's Company in After Dark to more good business. September 21 brought Charles Gardiner in Fatherland and splendid business. September 28 saw W. S. Cleveland's popular minstrels coming for a week and playing to large houses. October 5 ushered in A. M. Palmer's Jim, the Penman company, inferior to other Palmer companies, and business was not good. October 12 brought Gilmore's Twelve Temptations and fine business. Lillian Lewis followed on October 19 in Credit Lorraine to good business. On October 26, George Wilson's Minstrels came and did only fair business. November 2 brought The Great Metropolis and more fair business. Kiralfy's Water Queen made an appearance on November 9 and brought a week of rather good business.
Meade and Henderson's Blue Beard, Jr., on November 17, proved to be a splendid and handsome spectacle, and brought immense business. The Still Alarm opened on November 23 and played to fair business. Patti Rosa was next, coming on November 30, and finding business bad. December 7 brought M. B. Leavitt's Spider and Fly Company and poor business. Only fair houses accompanied the Hanlons' Fantasma beginning on December 14. The company was not up to expectations. December 21 brought the Conried Opera Company for Christmas week in The Gypsy Baron, and business was fine. December 28 ushered in The Pearl of Pekin and fair business. January 4, 1891 marked the appearance of Primrose and West Minstrels and business was big. Thomas W. Keene proved to be the biggest attraction of the season. He came on January 11 and produced a varied repertoire to huge business. On January 18, Annie Pixley came in three plays, and did well. The Stowaway followed on January 25 and brought average business. W. S. Cleveland's Minstrels appeared on February 1 and crowded the theatre. February 18 produced Aunt Jack with Joseph Haworth and a good company with fine business. Mc Kee Rankin's Canuck company came on February 11, and did fairly well. Laura Bigger and The Clemenceau Case made a sensational appearance on February 23 and did an immense business that
week. More immense business accompanied John L. Sullivan in his first local appearance as an actor when he came on March 1 in *Honest Hearts and Willing Hands*. *The Corsair* played next, beginning on March 8, to fair business. *The Paymaster* came on March 15 and reflected both a bad company and bad business. Katie Putnam brought fair business for a week beginning on March 22. March 29 saw the return of *The Clemenceau Case* and more big business. Lillian Lewis came for two weeks beginning on April 5, and closed the season. On the whole, the attractions were good and they did well financially. (*Picayune*, Sunday, April 19, 1891.) This season the extravaganzas remained extravagant—with shapely girls, amazon marches and elaborate sets and costumes. Melodrama remained a big drawing card and minstrel shows were the third biggest type of entertainment to assure packed houses usually at the theatre.

The opening of the 1891-1892 season was again exceptionally early. On Sunday, September 6, the farce *A Breezy Time* moved into the theatre to become the first bill of the season. The play was classed as a musical farce, and it featured E. B. Fitz and Kathryn Webster as stars. The former was a comedian who played the role of a peculiar old man from Vermont. The latter was a clever soubrette. The rest
of the company was only fair, but business was good all week. Dan Shelby was manager of the troupe. (Picayune, Sunday, September 13, 1891.)

A new theatre opened this season, a minor playhouse called the People's Theatre. Another house of minor competition, it opened initially on Sunday, September 20, 1891. Located on Magazine Street, between Washington and Sixth, the new theatre opened with the Georgia Minstrels. (Picayune, Sunday, September 13, 1891.)

Tim Cronin and Harry Standish headed the cast of U and I, a comedy that came to the Grand on Sunday, September 13. The play was a satire on New York apartments. The co-stars played an Irishman and Dutchman, respectively, who supplied the fun of the piece. They were assisted by Josie Sutherland, a soubrette, and Minnie Miller, also a singer, in other principal roles. (Picayune, Sunday, September 13, 1891.)

Bobby Gaylor headed the cast of Sport Mc Allister, One of the 400, the next attraction which began a week's engagement on Sunday, September 20. The farce was under the direction of William A. Brady. Gaylor gave an excellent portrayal of an Irishman, and sang and danced well. The successful cast included: Jeremiah Mc Allister, Robert Gaylor, Dennis Mc Ginty, J. P. Carroll, John, Hugh Mack, Percy Danvere.

W. A. Brady's production of Dumas' The Clemenceau Case returned again by popular demand for a week, beginning on Sunday, September 27. New actors formed the latest cast and were judged to be only fair artists and not at all of the calibre of the cast of the previous season. In lead roles were Willard Newell as Pierre Clemenceau, Isabella Preston as Mme. Clemenceau, Emma Bell as Iza, Charles Sutton as Ritz and Max Rosenberg as Count Serge Volnoff. Alma Starn, F. B. Howard, T. F. Ashley, M. K. White, G. Beaman, May C. Standish and Claudie Eline composed the rest of the cast. The cast had been advertised as the original, and the Picayune took a dim view of this false advertising, since none of the players were in the original cast. (Picayune, Sunday, September 27; Monday, September 28, 1891.)

Castles in the Air, described as a musical comedy,
began a pathetic week's engagement on Sunday, October 4. The production had had a run of 107 nights at the Broadway Theatre in New York, ironically. It starred John D. Gilbert, a well-known comedian, as the Judge, and had colorful scenery and costumes. However, as presented, the play had so little merit, and its music was so dull, that most of the audience left before the last act. Concerning the "flop," the Picayune stated: "... The singers were to be pitied." (Picayune, Monday, October 5, 1891.)

W. S. Cleveland's Minstrels attracted a full house when they returned on Sunday, October 11, for a week. John Queen, Arthur Rigby and John H. Blackford headed the popular cast.

A spectacle called Kajanka, produced by the Miller Brothers, occupied the stage of the Grand the week of Sunday, October 18. The cast were variety actors and featured Frank Gillette and Charles Ravel in chief roles. Mlle. Bertotto was the premiere danseuse and a lead actress. Heading the cast were: Electra, Clara Lavine, Zamello, Frank Gillette, Clown, Charles Ravel, Beezelbub, Nellie Sennet and Zamo, Nellie Sanson. (Picayune, Monday, October 19, 1891.)

Steele Mackaye's play, Paul Kauvar, moved into the theatre on Sunday, October 25. The drama was based on the
French Revolution of 1794 and its gruesome incidents, and starred Edward L. Snader. The large company included 100 auxiliaries, carloads of scenery, great mob scenes and an impressive, realistic set of the historic Bastille. The production was striking, and a capacity opening audience was well pleased with the play. Edward Snader and Roselle Knott in lead roles did their parts well, were both attractive young people, and gave impressive portrayals. The whole cast was a good one. It included: Paul Kauvar..Edward L. Snader, Duc de Beaumont, alias George Le Blanc..Arthur G. Smith, Marquis de Vaux..F. R. Spencer, General Delaroche..Samuel Forrest, General Kleterre..Edward Knott, Colonel La Hogue..George Conway, Dodolphe Pottin..Daniel Kelly, Garrac..Del La Barre, Bourdette..William Grogan, Gaujon..Larry Reist, Tabooze..Walter Goodwin, Orderlies..J. W. Barry and M. A. Palmer, Diane de Beaumont..Roselle Knott, Nanette..Iva Nilli, Scarlotte..Henriette Jollyn. (Picayune, Monday, October 26, 1891.)

Lewis Morrison returned on Sunday, November 1, to appear in his familiar production of Faust. The greatest mark of the production in its latest appearance was the striking use of electricity. The Picayune noted:

... Electricity is made to work more wonders than
in any other production. The scene on the Brocken is made weird and doubly impressive by the lightning flashes and the rain of fire. (Picayune, Monday, November 2, 1891.)

Morrison's best support came from W. R. Owen as Faust and Florence Roberts as Marguerite. The Times-Democrat noted that the striking mechanical effects guaranteed and captured a capacity opening audience, which was one of the largest of the season. (Times-Democrat, Monday, November 2, 1891.)

Hazel Kirke, the popular drama by Steele Mackaye, played for the first time at the Grand the week of Sunday, November 8. Effie Ellsler and Frank Weston were the leading players. Both stars had created their roles in the original New York production at the Madison Square Theatre. Both stars pleased the critics, while the supporting cast was a disappointment. Cast: Hazel Kirke..Effie Ellsler, Pittacus Green..Frank Weston, Dollie Dutton..Loula Porter, Emily Carringford..Rose Anthorn, Mercy Kirke..Fannie L. Burt, Clara..Annie Athey, Dunstan..C. W. Couldock, Arthur Carringford..Walter Brooks, Aaron Rodney..George F. Farren, Methuselah Miggins..John A. Holland, Barney O'Flynn..John Rose, Joe..John Hall. (Picayune, Monday, November 9, 1891.)

Conried's Comic Opera Company returned on Sunday, November 15 for one week, to present for the first time in the city, Carl Millecker's comic opera, Poor Jonathan. The
large orchestra was under the direction of Maurice Gould. Big audiences attended the performances of the operetta through Friday. *Poor Jonathan* was first a British success, and then had played for over 250 nights at the New York Casino. The company included fifty performers. On Saturday, last day of the engagement, at both performances the bill changed to *The Gypsy Baron*. (*Picayune*, Sunday, November 15; Monday, November 16, 1891.)

Rose Coghlan made her debut at the Grand Opera House on Sunday, November 22. On this occasion, the popular star brought a fine comedy company and the three-act comedy, *Dorothy's Dilemma*. The play was seen for the first time in the city on this occasion. It was adapted by Leopold Jordan from the German of Van Moser. Although she had not appeared locally before, she had played many important roles at Wallack's Theatre in New York, and was popular by reputation. A fine house greeted the star at her opening, and both she and the play were an immediate hit. The house rocked with laughter all evening. Miss Coughlan was described as great in the part. Her personality was well suited to the abundant wit of her lines. The support was sterling, with biggest impression made by Thomas Whiffen, a fine actor who had been for ten years the leading comedian of Madison Square Theatre,

(Picayune, Sunday November 22; Monday, November 23, 1891.)

An important event occurred at the Grand Opera House on Sunday, November 29, at which time Henry Greenwall brought to the theatre a company which he had organized during the previous summer to play in The Little Tycoon. The work was a comic opera by Williard Spencer. Greenwall had secured from Spencer the rights to play the opera, had rehearsed the company during the summer, and had opened the production in Philadelphia in September to capacity houses. It had been a major success, and since its opening, had toured the country under the direction of J. J. Rosenthal, an associate of Greenwall and an advance man of fine ability and great experience. The company was managed by H. H. Jacobs, another Greenwall associate who looked after the finances. (Picayune, Sunday, November 29, 1891.) The theatre was filled to its utmost capacity for the opening in New Orleans. At the time, the Picayune noted: "... No American opera has ever attained such a success." (Picayune, Monday, November 30,
1891.) R. E. Graham made his New Orleans debut in his original role of General Knickerbocker. The result of Greenwall's initiative was described thus: "... It was the best performance of the best company ever given of the popular comic opera in this city." (Picayune, Monday, November 30, 1891.) Moreover, the electrical effects were said to be more elaborate and more beautiful than anything of the kind ever given in the city. (Picayune, Monday, November 30, 1891.) Owing to the great success of The Little Tycoon, it was held over for a second week. On Sunday, December 6, 1891, the occasion of the 3,000th performance, elaborate satin souvenir programs were given. When the production left the theatre after its local closing on Saturday, December 12, 1891, it traveled throughout Greenwall's Texas circuit and then returned to Philadelphia for an indefinite run, where it had played already for 139 weeks but was still in great demand. (Picayune, Sunday, December 6, 1891.)

Victor Hugo's intense tragedy, Ruy Blas was chosen by Joseph Haworth as an opener when the actor began a week's engagement on Sunday, December 13. The drama was preceded by a short comedy entitled Cupid's Messenger, and this double bill played through Wednesday's performances. St. Marc, the Soldier of Fortune was presented by Haworth on Thursday,
Friday and on Saturday's matinee, and on Saturday night, he changed the bill to present another double bill: Parrhasius by Espy Williams of New Orleans, and The Bells. A large Sunday night audience greeted Haworth for his initial performance. Cupid's Messenger, a one-act, proved to be a charming story of the sixteenth century. Kathryn Kidder, Marion Abbott, Ann Mc Veigh and Atkins Lawrence composed the cast. Haworth appeared in Ruy Blas in the title role, and was said to give a splendid interpretation. The Picayune exclaimed: "Haworth is young, magnetic and a wonderfully good actor . . . with fine stage presence and facial expression. He was dramatic . . ., natural . . ., and superb!" Katheryn Kidder was gracious and stately as the Queen. (Picayune, Monday, December 14, 1891.) Cast of Ruy Blas: Ruy Blas..Joseph Haworth, Don Salent..Robert Drouet, Gudiel..E. J. Morgan, Marquis of Santa Cruz..John Dailey, Don Priego..Horace Mitchell, Don Emanuel..Charles White, Marianne de Neuberg..Katheryn Kidder, Duchess of Alburquerque..Marion Abbott, Donna Cassilda..Anna McVeigh. St. Marc proved to be an historic, heroic romance in which Haworth played the role of the gallant, dashing St. Marc. Atkins Lawrence shared honors as an excellent Gismondo. Other principals were Katheryn Kidder as Dianora, Robert Drouet as Prince Lorenzo, Marion Abbott as
Theresa, E. A. White as Duke Leoni and John Dailey as Count Rossario. (Picayune, Friday, December 18, 1891.) The Bells and Parrhasius were also well received. In The Bells, Haworth displayed great talent in the difficult, trying part of Mathias. Atkins Lawrence, E. A. White, Annie Mc Veigh, Katheryn Kidder and Marion Abbott headed the competent support. Haworth played well the title role in Parrhasius, making a dashing impression in this first professional production of the play. (It had been produced before by local amageur players.) Miss Kidder made a beautiful Lydia, and other standouts were W. A. White, Robert Drouet, Horace Mitchell and E. J. Morgan. (Picayune, Sunday, December 20, 1891.)

Alexander Salvini, the handsome son of the great Tommaso Salvini, returned to the theatre on Sunday, December 20, for the first time since he played there in Bidwell's Star Dramatic Company. The younger Salvini chose a varied repertoire for his one-week booking: Don Caesar de Bazan, Sunday, Monday, Saturday night; The Three Guardsmen, Monday, Thursday, Wednesday matinee; and A Child of Naples, Tuesday, Friday, Saturday matinee. D'Ennery's romantic comedy, Don Caesar de Bazan played with Salvini in the title role. A hearty welcome was given the young actor, who gave a splendid
impersonation of the dashing hero. He spoke his lines intelligently, and was charming and versatile. The Picayune found that the youth had improved greatly since his last performance six years before when he was struggling with the English language. Now he spoke fluently, with a slight but charming Italian accent that doubled his fascinating continental flavor. (Picayune, Monday, December 21, 1891.) Cast: Don Caesar de Bazan. Alexander Salvini, Charles II. Lucius Henderson, Don Joseph. Elmer Delamater, Marquis de la Rotunda. W. J. Constantine, Don Diego Alvarez. George Clare, Don Manuel. William Morton, Captain of Guard. Ben Johnson, Perez. Augustus Hilsdorf, Soldier. Frank Beamish; Maritana. Selena Fetter, Lazarillo. Maud Dixon, Marchioness de la Rotunda. Augusta de Forrest. Salvini made another favorable impression in The Three Guardsmen, and was found to be ideal as the brave hero; handsome, dashing and chivalrous. Moreover, he was subtly humorous and genuine, and thoroughly impressive. Selena Fetter as Anne of Austria was statuesque. (Picayune, Tuesday, December 22, 1891.) Horace Townsend's drama, A Child of Naples was a further excellent vehicle for the dashing young star. The scene was laid in Naples, and Salvini played the role of dark-souled, revengeful, reckless, agile Cirillo with consummate skill. His role was judged as
"... an exquisitely faithful picture of a fascinating type of character." (Picayune, Wednesday, December 23, 1891.) Selena Fetter did well as Lucia, and the supporting cast was excellent.

Another exciting engagement followed Salvini's. Otis Skinner made his debut at the Grand the week beginning Sunday, December 27, as Margaret Mather's leading man. The pair co-starred in Julius Barbere's historic drama of Joan of Arc, translated from the French of William Young. The play contained poetic music by Gounod. A large crowd gathered to see Miss Mather who scored a triumph in the lead role. She was said to thrill her audience again and again in the best portrayal she had ever done locally. In his first role in the city, Otis Skinner was described as a handsome leading man who gave an artistic characterization of the wavering, pleasure-seeking King. The scenery used was the same as in the original Broadway production, and the company was good. Cast: Joan of Arc, Margaret Mather, Jacques d'Arc, H. A. Langdon, Thibault, White Whittlesey, Simard, Frank Wise, Isabelle, Carrie Jameson; King Charles VII, Otis Skinner, La Hire, Joseph Whiting, De Thourare, James Cooper, Lays, Mrs. S. Wright, Iseult, Josephine Eytinge, Dunois, S. Gilmore, Archbishop of Rhiems, James Guise, Messenger, W. A. Shaw,
Emma Juch, a popular prima donna of the day, and her opera company came next for a week beginning on Sunday, January 3, 1892, and presented a varied operatic repertoire. Supporting Miss Juch in leading roles throughout the week were Gertrude Stein, William Mertens, Fernando Michelena and Sofia Remani. The schedule for the week was as follows: Sunday, _Cavalleria Rusticana_; Monday, _Martha_; Tuesday, _Faust_; Wednesday and Saturday matinee, _Cavalleria Rusticana_ and the balcony scene from _Romeo and Juliet_; Thursday, _Tannhauser_; Friday, _Carmen_; Saturday night, _Lohengrin_; Wednesday matinee, _Il Trovatore_.

James O'Neill returned in his famous role of _Monte Cristo_ for a week beginning Sunday, January 10, 1892. Although the play was no longer a novelty, having now been performed for a dozen years, the public had never tired of the actor, according to the _Picayune_, and they took the role because O'Neill performed it. (_Picayune_, Monday, January 11, 1892.) That the city had not tired of seeing the play was proved by the following fact: _Henri de Beaugency_ was selected to replace _Monte Cristo_ on Thursday for the remainder of the week, but the latter drama was playing to such excellent...
audiences, that Greenwall decided it would be senseless to change the bill. *Henri de Beaugenay* was cancelled therefore. O'Neill was classified by this time as one of the foremost actors in America. He was judged as talented, handsome and compelling, was a major romantic drawing card, and the public adored him. (*Picayune*, Friday, January 15, 1892.)

A new star lit the stage of the theatre beginning the week of Sunday, January 17, when the opera star Corinne made her debut at the Grand. She starred in the title role of *Carmen Up to Date*, a spectacular comic opera burlesque of Bizet's opera *Carmen*. The comedy burlesque had been a big success in London, and had a cast of sixty. The production was noteworthy in that it was under the direction of Mrs. Jennie Kimball: this was the first time that a woman had directed a play to be produced at the Grand Opera House. In fact, only Henrietta Chanfrau had been active in the production end of dramas at the theatre. This had been years before, and Mrs. Chanfrau was not a director, but the theatre's manager. The *Carmen* burlesque contained bits of comic opera, grand opera, burlesque, farce and variety. It had a large chorus of shapely girls who sang, marched and posed. Corrine was found to be delightful. Cast in principal roles were Carmen...Corrine; Michaelo...Charles Postelle; Don Jose...Maud

An inferior company brought The Burglar for the week beginning Sunday, January 24. The comedy-drama by Augustus Thomas was advertised as being strongly cast by a Madison Square Theatre Company, but as had happened on a previous occasion during the last season, the advertising was misleading. Not only was this company not up to the caliber of the Madison Square companies, but it was rated by the press as being "... not good enough for the Grand Opera House." (Picayune, Monday, January 25, 1892.) The single exceptions were two fine actors, A. S. Lipman and Irene Franklyn, classed as "excellent" and "delicious" respectively. Cast: William Lewis. A. S. Lipman, Paul Benton. William Lee, Edward Batubridge. Charles Lothian, John Hamilton. Frank Allen, James. Robert Irving, Alice. Helen Ottolengul, Fanny. Cordelia Daveza, Martha. Marguerite Franklyn, Editha. Irene Franklyn. (Picayune, Monday, January 25, 1892.)

A packed house greeted Charles A. Gardner, clever comedian and sweet tenor singer, when he appeared in a new comedy-drama, Captain Karl, beginning on Sunday, January 31. Gardner dominated the show in the part of a vine-grower. He
charmed the house with unique comedy and a beautiful singing voice. Nellie Walters, well-known soubrette, proved to be Gardner's best support. Cast: Karl..Charles A. Gardner, Rudolph..Ogden Stevens, Adolphus..Robert Furguson, Fr. Baptist..William H. Leyden, Bruno..Henry Kingsley, Klinger.. Ignace Contradi, Rudolph..Royce Alton, Katz..Frank Grauss, Boatman..Alex Johnstone, Gertrude..Eva Byron, Baroness.. Marion May, Wilhemina..Nelly Walters, Little Otto..Hazel Regan, Christina..Carrie Grauss, Katrina..Mir Melster, Margaret..Bertie Alton. (Picayune, Monday, February 1, 1892.)

The highlight of the 1891-1892 season was the return to the Grand Opera House of Sarah Bernhardt after an absence of ten years. In the intervening decade, Bernhardt's fame had mounted and the Picayune did not now refer to her as "that skinny foreign woman" as it had previously. Now she was referred to by that newspaper as "... the greatest tragedienne on the stage." (Picayune, Monday, February 8, 1892.) Bernhardt came for a week beginning on Sunday, February 7, opening in La Tosca. In this play, she ran the gamut of emotions from light comedy to jealousy to anger. In the third act, the star reached full intensity of her emotion. The Times-Democrat relates:
... Her little fingers that have been carefully drumming on the table are poised in mid air and stiffened as if frozen in horror ... when confronted by Mario's bitter words ... and the look of saucy defiance fades out of her face and one can see only horror and amazement. (Times-Democrat, Monday, February 8, 1892.)

Bernhardt played completely in French, but it was not difficult to follow her meaning: "... Her every look, tone and gesture speak with infinitely keener emphasis than could the most fervid sentences." (Times-Democrat, February 8, 1892.)

As Bernhardt moaned and wept over her lover, her auditors were moved to tears. In killing Scarpia, the star rose to the heights of tragic intensity. After the gruesome pantomime, deadly silence prevailing the solemn religious rites, the patrons burst into thunders of applause. (Times-Democrat, February 8, 1892.) The drama had been written for Bernhardt by Sardou. The Picayune applauded Albert Darmont, Bernhardt's leading man, who played Scarpia, but found the rest of the cast to be only fairly good. Cast: Floria Tosca, Sarah Bernhardt, Reine Maria Caroline, Jean Mea, Princess Orionia, Gilberte Fleury, Gennarino, Leylor, Suciana, Nadrey, Un monsignor, Simonson, Le Baron Scarpia, Albert Darmont, Mario, Fleury, Cesare, Angelo, Le Marquis Attavanti, Munie, Spolletta, Rebel, Eusebe, Charton, Vicomte de Trevilhac, Trefer, Trivulce, Deschampe, Capreola, Duberry,
Bernhardt appeared in Sardou's *Fedora* on Monday, February 8, in the title role. Her breadth of treatment of the strong scenes thrilled the house. Albert Darmont as Louis Ivanoff acted with "absolute intelligence," while the Countess Olga of Gilberte Fleury was marked by cleverness. (*Picayune, Tuesday, February 9, 1892.*) *Leah, the Forsaken* was presented on Tuesday, with Bernhardt as Leah, the Jewish heroine. The play had been adapted for the French stage by Bernhardt's leading man, Albert Darmont. The powerful tragedy gave Bernhardt great opportunity for histrionics, and she showed vigor and force, gracefulness and pathos. In the murder and curse scenes, she reached tragic heights. Darmont's French adaptation of the play was splendid, and as Nathan he gave a remarkably fine performance. Only a small house greeted the moving play. Lead parts were as follows: Leah. Sarah Bernhardt, Madeline. Jean Mea, La Petite Leah. Juliette, Nathan. Albert Darmont, Abraham. Rebel, Rudolph. Gilberte Fleury. (*Picayune, Wednesday, February 10, 1892.*) *Camille* played at the Wednesday matinee, and *Jeanne D'Arc* followed on Wednesday night. Bernhardt's French version was different from the one seen a month before with Margaret.
Mather. Bernhardt acted the part admirably, and she had good support from Jean Mea as Iseult and M. Rebel as Lahire.

(Picayune, Thursday, February 11, 1893.) Cleopatra, on Friday, was unique in that in this dramatic vehicle Bernhardt was utterly wanting. In fact, the criticism of the actress was so intensely negative that it seems apparent that a different Picayune critic wrote this review that differed so sharply from the other more glowing ones. It is known that different critics wrote from time to time, and since the reviews are anonymous, it might be assumed that this is the case here. The review praised the production of Victorien Sardou and Emil Morea's Cleopatra as a gorgeous spectacle, with its splendid costumes and efforts, but the critic said:

. . . Bernhardt's Cleopatra does not differ much in its essential elements from most of the other roles . . . presented during the past week. The same uncontrolled passions and methods and the entire absence of any controlling motive, except the woman's selfish and fleshy appetite that is so often falsely called love are the characteristics of most of her roles. (Picayune, Saturday, February 13, 1892.)

The critic concluded: "Cleopatra as presented by Mademoiselle Bernhardt is merely an abandoned woman." (Picayune, Saturday, February 13, 1892.) For the play, Bernhardt wore soft, clinging tulle, caught with jeweled pins. Darmont as Antony, was handsome and elegant. Cast: Cleopatra..Sarah Bernhardt, Octavia..
Jean Mea, Charmmiane, Simenson, Tras, Gilberte Fleury, Un Esclave, Merie, Erosnodrey, Marc Antoine, Albert Darmont, Demetrius, Angelo, Dercetae, Duberry Delluis, Fleury, Hephern, Rebel, Devin, Piron, Le Messager, Munie, Thyreseus, Deschamps, Octave, Thefer, Olympus, Charton, Amosis, Dupont, Juba, Cartereau, Le Gouverneur, Dubois, Le Marchand, Thefer, Le Notable, Veiliers, Strepsiade, Besson, Un Eoclave, Marchand, Un Officier, Charles. (Picayune, Saturday, February 13, 1892.) Bernhardt played Frou-Frou at the Grand for the first time in 11 years on Saturday. As Gilberte, she was full of light touches, and quite a different viewpoint of the star's ability was presented by the Picayune critic of this review from that of the review of the day before. This critic said that "... the fineness of her art is a study."

(Picayune, Sunday, February 14, 1892.) On Sunday, February 14, 1892, Bernhardt made her farewell appearance by repeating Cleopatra.

A welcome change of pace ensued with the engagement beginning Monday, February 15, of Al G. Field's Minstrels. The well-known group traveled on and arrived in their own train of palacial pullman cars and announced their arrival in the city by staging a gala street parade at 11:30 A.M. The Picayune noted the welcome relief of the comical group
from Bernhardt and said, "... as a matter of fact, the minstrels will make more fun and play at lower prices."
(Picayune, Sunday, February 14, 1892.)

Lillian Lewis returned on Sunday, February 21, for a week, supported by Edmund Collier, her fine leading man from the previous season and a good company. Her schedule was as follows: Sunday and Wednesday matinee, Credit Lorraine; Wednesday and Saturday, Forget-Me-Not; Thursday and Saturday matinee, As in a Looking Glass; Friday, Article 47. Her company as seen in the cast of Lawrence Marston's Credit Lorraine included: Count de Lusinan., Frank Peters, Philleppe Rameau., Edmund Collier, Beaumont., Walter Eytinge, La Val-liere., Ralph Bell, Joesh Lustig., Frederick Monie, Deinotre., Frank Hilliard, Vanzille., Robert Terris, Mademoiselle Boubon., Helen Beaumont, Mademoiselle Vouloir., Mildred Hall, Lenora De Castiglione., Lillian Lewis. (Picayune, Monday, February 22, 1892.)

Robert Mantell returned for the first time in some years to the Grand Opera House for the week beginning Sunday, February 28. During his absence, the matinee idol had grown in dramatic stature and in popularity and now commanded crowded houses. The star presented three plays: he opened in The Corsican Brothers which was performed from Sunday
through Wednesday; on Thursday, Friday and for the Saturday matinee Monbars was played; and on Saturday evening he changed to The Louisianian. In the opening drama by Dumas, Mantell starred as the twin brothers, and made a sure hit, being described as handsome, with a fine voice, subtle, and an excellent actor. (Picayune, Monday, February 29, 1892.) This cast displayed the following actors in the Mantell Company: Fabren Del Franchi and Louis Del Franchi; Robert Mantell, M. Renaud; Albert Bruning, M. Mayort; Nathaniel Hartwig, Baron Montgiron; B. T. Ringgold, Baron Martelli; W. Morton Baker, Gaetano; George Bird, Maree Colena; Sid Pryor, Beauchamp; Martin Clark, Verue; Henry Peabody, Griffo; Verner Clarges, Genee; Walter Ashton, Antonio Sanola; Charles E. Odlin, Surgeon; Ferris Stetson, Tomasco; George Hammond, Servant; John Lewey, Jose; James Hynes, Rossec; Harry Stanhope, Larroix; Charles Hawley, Genee; Tom Jansen, Lefeud; George Farrell, Elilie de Lasparre; Charlotte Behrens, Mademoiselle Del Franchi; Minnie Monk, Celestine; Charlotte Malcolm, Estelle; Jessie Busley, Marie; Violet Evans. (Picayune, Monday, February 29, 1892.) Monbars, a powerful drama, was an adaptation by Louis Nathan, especially for Mantell, of Adolphe D'Envery's La Darve de St. Tropoz. The scene was in France in 1810, and the action was
sensational and highly romantic. Mantell was at his best with another duel scene brightening the action, as in Corsican Brothers. He made another hit in the title role. (Picayune, Friday, March 4, 1892.) The theatre was packed to the doors—as was the case all week—when Mantell presented on Saturday, March 5, for the first time in New Orleans, a new five-act drama called The Louisianaian by Edward Alfriend. The play had debuted in New York at the Madison Square Garden on June 4 of the previous year. Mantell played Louis St. Armand, a young and ardent Creole of earlier days. His love interest was Ruth Claiborne, daughter of the first governor of Louisiana, played by Jessie D. Busley. Mantell was again handsome and dashing.

A short one-act playlet, A Lesson In Acting, by Nugent Robinson and John E. McCann, preceded the drama in which Mantell played Maurice Lassarge, a pathetic actor of the Comedie Francaise, while Jessie D. Busley played the wife of Lassarge. (Picayune, Sunday, March 6, 1892.)

Lillian Lewis filled another week at the playhouse beginning on Sunday, March 6, when she returned with her same company to stage the following plays: Sunday, Friday, and Saturday matinee, Forget-Me-Not; Monday and Thursday, The New Magdalen; Tuesday, Credit Lorraine; Wednesday, matinee,
Article 47; Wednesday night, *As in a Looking-Glass*; Saturday evening, *Camille*.

A new actor made his first appearance at the Grand Opera House on Sunday, March 13, when Clay Clement came for a week to present *The Bells* through Wednesday, and *The Montebank* for the remainder of the week. The New Orleans public, being wary of a new actor, turned up in slim numbers for the young actor's debut. However, the *Picayune* gave the youth a nod of assent as it judged him in *The Bells* as a good actor who played naturally and forcefully, and predicted he would succeed. His cast in *The Bells* included: Matthias, Clay Clement, Frank Walter, Edwin Wight, Hans, Bertram Hood, Christian, Oliver Fiske, Judge, Walter Vincent, Dr. Zinimer, Julian Geiger, Mesmerist, W. J. Stivigeon, Clerk of Court, Arthur Billings, Notary, Frederick Bell, Annette, Agnes Lane, Catharine, Carra Bonneau, Sozel, Edith Talbot. *(Picayune, Monday, March 14, 1892.)*

The final billing at the Grand Opera House that season was Primrose and West Minstrel Troupe, which came for a week beginning on Sunday, March 20. Primrose served as an end man while West was interlocuter. *(Picayune, Sunday, March 20, 1892.)* The season was ended on Saturday, March 26, 1892.
Greenwall was more than satisfied with the results of the 1891-1892 season. By this time, Greenwall had been able to plan ahead and secure bookings several years in advance, and the result of these bookings were now seen in the increased caliber of stars booked. In his first few seasons, he had to get what was still available for the most part, but now his advance planning reaped the harvest of securing stars like Bernhardt, O'Neill and Lewis Morrison. The 1891-1892 season began on Sunday, September 6, with Dan Shelby's company in *A Breezy Time*; business was good. Then came Lederer's insignificant number two company of *U and I* on September 13, which did poorly. Bobby Gaylor in *Sport McAllister* came September 20, and did well. Emma Bell followed in *The Clemenceau Case* and did fairly, beginning on September 27. The week beginning October 4 brought a less than poor company in *Castles in the Air* under the management of Randall and Dickson of New York. This was an utter failure, and charity was evoked to send the deserted people home. (*Pica-vune*, Sunday, March 27, 1892.) On October 11, W. S. Cleveland's Minstrels showed up and did good business. On October 18, *Kajunka* fared badly. October 25 saw the entry of Eugene Robinson's *Paul Kauvar* company, which commanded good business. November 1 brought Lewis Morrison in *Faust* for a week of fine
business. Effie Ellsler and C. W. Couldock headed the cast of Hazel Kirke that came on November 8 and did an immense business. On November 15, the Conried Comic Opera Company presented Poor Johnathan and did very well. Rose Coghlan appeared on November 22 with a varied repertoire and was very well received. On November 29, Greenwall gave the city the first highlight of the season when he brought his own company from northern engagements to produce The Little Tycoon. The production played for two weeks to immense business. Joseph Haworth was ushered in on Sunday, December 13 for a week of varied dramatic repertoire and commanded fine business. Beginning December 20, for Christmas week, Alexander Salvini returned after several absent years and presented several dramas to big houses. Margaret Mather and Otis Skinner headed the cast of Joan of Arc beginning on Sunday, December 27 and did sensationally. On January 3, 1892, Emma Juch came with her English Opera Company and produced a varied repertoire of opera but did badly. James O'Neill reappeared after a long absence on January 10, and was so electrifying in Monte Cristo, that another play to be produced later in the week was cancelled while the crowds flocked to see the celebrated play. Corrine came for her debut in Carmen Up To Date on January 17, with big business.
The Burglar, with a poor company, came on January 24 and did badly. Charles A. Gardner appeared on January 31 in Captain Karl and did big business. The Al G. Field Minstrels debuted on February 14, and did very well. Lillian Lewis appeared on February 21 in a varied repertoire to good business. On February 28, Robert Mantell came as a star in three dramas, proved to be a sensational young matinee idol, and had a week of splendid business. Lillian Lewis returned on March 6 for another week. Clay Clement debuted on March 13 in two dramas during the week, but did very bad business. Primrose and West's Minstrels closed the season, beginning on March 20 for a week, and did very big business. According to the Picayune, the season was remarkably successful. It was announced at the closing of the season that T. J. Boyle, who, for many years had been a faithful friend and stage manager for Henry Greenwall, would have an interest in the business at the Grand Opera House beginning with the 1892-1893 season. (Picayune, Sunday, March 27, 1892.)

Another typically long Greenwall season got underway, the season of 1892-1893, when, even earlier than usual, the Grand Opera House opened its doors on Sunday, September 4, 1892. T. J. Boyle took over as acting manager of the theatre.
W. Bradley and Company inaugurated the season with a presentation of Boucicault's melodrama *After Dark*. A side attraction in conjunction with the engagement was the announcement that a special wire would be run from the Olympic Athletic Club Arena to the Grand Opera House so that the rounds of forthcoming championship fights could be given on Monday through Wednesday nights, between acts of the play. The Olympic Club was a bright spot of cultural and sporting life in New Orleans in this era. It combined a social club, a military drill team and a professional gymnasium. The championship fights announced referred to the Jack McAuliffe and Billy Myer fight on September 5, the Jack Skelly and George Dixon fight on September 6, and the John L. Sullivan and James Corbett fight on September 7. *(Picayune, Sunday, September 4, 1892.)* An immense audience caught the opening night performance of *After Dark*. Although the play had been seen many times before, this production was unique in that in the fourth act scene in the concert ball, clever variety specialties were introduced including McIntyre and Heath of minstrel fame and Danish singers Dagmar and DeCelle. The dramatic cast included: Old Tom..Atkins Lawrence, Dicey Morris..Russell Bassett, Gordon Chumley..Burr Caruth, Sir George Medhurst..W. C. Martin, Richard Knatchbull..George C.
Robinson, Poynter..Bert Tuerner, Crumpete..Frank Murtha, Area
Jack..Daniel McCullough, The Bargee..F. C. Carter, Kiddie..
Mamie Murphy, Master of Ceremonies..Frank Hart, Eliza..
Nannie Palmer, Rose Edgerton..Nellie Buckley. (Picayune,
Monday, September 5, 1892.)

Nora Machree, an Irish melodrama was the fare for the
week beginning Sunday, September 11. It presented Sadie
Scanlon in her first local appearance. Irish humor lightened
the melodrama, and Miss Scanlon proved herself to be sweet
and natural. Cast: Nora Machree..Sadie Scanlon, Grace
Moore..Nellie Walters, Mrs. Mulvany..Emma Howard, Raymond
Morris..Harry Thayer, Cornelius O'Hara..Marcus Moriarty,
Martin..Charles Hallock, Captain Lannigan..George Brennan,
Larry..Thomas McCarthy, Horace..Henry Kingsley, Constable..
Alexander Johnston. (Picayune, Monday, September 12, 1892.)

E. B. Fitz and Kathryn Webster headed the cast of A
Breezy Time which blew into the theatre on Sunday, September
18. Both were regarded as bright, clever and full of fun,
and Orient Anson shared honors by charming the house with
her serpentine dance. Cast: Reuben Herrifield..F. B. Fitz,
Jack Dauber..Bert C. Thayer, Smiley Spooner..William Clayton,
Heinrich Blotz..Harry West, Wallie Fairbanks..Richard Daven-
port, Edward Carrollton..F. F. Russell, Constance Dunner..
Knox Johnson, Parson Davies, Fred Walton, Ambrosia Merrifield, Marrie Donahue, Mrs. Dooley, Joe Morton, Miss Loveless, Maria Thompson, Bessie, Bessie Varse, Tessie, Orient Anson, Jessie, Jessie Charron, Daisey, Kathrym Webster. (Picayune, Monday, September 19, 1892.)

Gorman's Minstrels came next, on Sunday, September 25 for a week, and starred John and George Gorman in a minstrel operatic production, The Golden Ball, that was judged to be monotonous. (Picayune, Monday, September 26, 1892.)

Charles A. Gardner returned to a big welcome at the Grand Opera House on Sunday, October 2. He appeared in his Tyrolean comedy, Fatherland, and pleased a happy audience. He was supported by an excellent company. Cast: Herman Leopold, Charles A. Gardner, Henry Stanford, Louis Glover, Digby Barnes, Robert Ferguson, Hans Veeder, James Gorey, Otto Wolfe, W. H. Turner, Klinger, Harry Donoham, Katy, Ignace Comradi, Rudolph, Carl Hofer, Ludwig, Royce Alton, Rhoda Stanford, Virginia Bray, Dorothea, Marion May, Charlotte Wagner, Ethel Gray, Little Meenie, Virgie, Bertha, Olga Sweitzer. (Picayune, Monday, October 3, 1892.)

Charles H. Yale produced his extravaganza New Devil Auction for the first time at the theatre during the week beginning Sunday, October 9. The production was to return
many times. The theatre was packed full for the opening of
the handsome play which boasted beautiful scenery, lavish
costumes, and a musical and variety cast. A fine ballet
backed the extravaganza, with Signorita Cocettina Chiten as
premiere danceuse. Carrie Perkins as the Fairy was described
as one of the most gorgeous women on the stage. Cast: Carlos
..Mai Estelle, Toby..Henry Browne, Pere Audoche..Thomas
Plummer, Count Fortuno..Wallace Block, Madeline..Jean Mawson,
Janet..Josie Sesson, Kow Wow Shang..Thomas Plummer, Rajah..
T. H. Lothrop, Muil..Charles Frost, Khan of Tartary..W. H.
Burns, Crystaline..Carrie Perkins, Mephiston..Henry Thomas,
Chaos..William Ruge. (Picayune, Monday, October 10, 1892.)

Katie Emmett, a new face, was next to grace the Grand
Opera House. An actress and soubrette, she had a really good
company in support. Killarney, an Irish melodrama, was the
play that revealed Miss Emmett's talents, and it premiered
on Sunday, October 16. A warm welcome was accorded the
versatile star. Harry Leighton was a standout as the hero,
as was Frazer Coulter as the villain. Cast: Kittie Burke
and Terry Doyle..Katie Emmett, Felix Driscoll..Frazer Coulter,
Allen Tracy..Harry Leighton, Paddy Dorman..Robert Mc Nair,
Capt. Deming..Herbert Sackett, Martin Kavanaugh..George C.
Boniface, Dan Dooley..Thaddeus Shine, Teddy..James Tuohy,
Tim..Thomas Massengale, Edward..James Ellsworth, Judith Kavanaugh..Grace Thorne, Oma Kray..Annie Haines, Mrs. Burke.. Eliza Hudson, Carrie Kray..Katie Bennetteau, Mrs. Willard.. Carrie Coles. (Picayune, Monday, October 19, 1892.)

Hazel Kirke made a return on Sunday, October 23, with Effie Ellsler, C. W. Couldock, and Frank Weston again in lead parts, most of the company being the same. Miss Ellsler appeared again in the lead role, with Couldock again as Dunstan Kirke and Weston as Pittacus Green. The only replacements were George F. Farren as Aaron Rodney, Charles Bates as Miggins and John Rose as O'Flynn. (Picayune, Monday, October 24, 1892.)

An exciting return was that of Stuart Robson, the veteran actor who was in the first company of the Third Varieties when it opened in 1871. Robson reappeared on Sunday, October 30, but was now without his familiar comedy partner, William Crane. The two had been for years almost inseparable as a comedy team. But they had separated, and Robson now brought a new partner who appeared with him for the first time—Mrs. Robson. The lady used only the name of her husband, as Mrs. Stuart Robson, and appeared as Robson's leading lady. Bronson Howard's The Henrietta and Goldsmith's She Stoops to Conquer were the two offerings of the week.

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with the former play being aired from Sunday through Friday, and the latter appearing only on Saturday noon and night, November 5. In *The Henrietta*, the comedy satire on Wall Street, Robson appeared as Bertie, a part that fit him like a glove. He gave a thoroughly finished performance. Mrs. Robson was described as a charming and delightful actress, who as the widow wore lovely gowns. The *Picayune* said of Mrs. Robson: "... Her laugh is worth the price of admission, and her comedy is sunshine." (*Picayune*, Monday, October 21, 1892.)

Cast: Nicholas Vanalstyne..George S. Woodward, Dr. Parke Wainwright..W. H. Elwood, Nicholas, Jr. ..George D. Mac Intyre, Bertie Vandalstyne..Stuart Robson, Lord Trelawney..George Hallton, Rev. Dr. Hillton..William Yerance, Watson Flint..J. J. Farrell, Musgrave..John Wooderson, Cornelia Opdyke..Mrs. Stuart Robson, Rose..Madeline Bouton, Agnes..Olive May, Lady Mary..Grace Huyck. She Stoops to Conquer commanded huge crowds at both performances. Robson was delightful as Tony Lumpkin, with the gait, gawkery, stare and boisterousness that made the part seem real. Mrs. Robson was charming as Kate Hardcastle, and the rest of the cast were all top notch. (*Picayune*, Sunday, November 6, 1892.)

Paul Kauvar returned for another week on Sunday,
November 7. Robinson’s Company brought the historical play; and all the featured players did well, including Porter White in the lead role of Paul Kauvar, Mildred Holland, leading lady, as Diannce De Beaumont, Thomas Garrick, the villain, as Marquis de Vaus, and Olga White as Nannette Poten. (Picayune, November 7, 1892.)

Herrmann, the Great, most important magician of the era, delighted theatre goers for a week beginning on Sunday, November 13, 1892. Herrmann came directly from New York, where he had appeared for a run of 150 nights at his own theatre. He presented a thrilling bill in three parts: a spirit seance, Chinese mystery, and miscellaneous magic. Every seat was taken all week of the popular performer’s booking. Highlights were the last half-hour devoted to spiritualism, and the hypnotizing of pretty Mme. Herrman while she was suspended in midair. (Picayune, Monday, November 14, 1892.)

Ambitious Henry Greenwall brought another company to the Grand Opera House that was under his own personal auspices for the week of Sunday, November 20, 1892. The latest Greenwall company appeared in the new musical comedy, Larry, the Lord, and starred the comedian, Robert E. Graham. The play had met with success as performed by the company in the
East, but was not as entertaining or valuable a vehicle as *The Little Tycoon*, Greenwall's great success of the previous season. The house was packed to overflowing on opening night, nevertheless, with enthusiastic well wishers. The new company, like the play, was not as entertaining as that of the previous hit Greenwall combination, but, they were conscientious and worked hard to please the audience. Robert E. Graham, in the title role, carried the honors of the performance. He was humorous, sang well, and the audience seemed never to get enough of him. Cast: Larry O'Rouke...

Robert E. Graham, Lord Kelleen..Will Mandeville, Jack Easy.. Roland Carter, Major Dorincourt..Sidney Price, Dr. Schmidt.. Charles Graham, Felix..Jack Bryant, La Sange..C. E. Graham, Tompkins..Allen May, Gumpy..C. C. Miller, Jennie..Mamie Cerbi, Amelia..Dickie Martinez, Miss Frank..Lizzie Hight, Lulina..Carrie Jordan, Clarise..Marie George, Kitty..Clara Randall, Polly..Lizzie Winner, Guest..Edith Craske. (Picayune, Monday, November 21, 1892.)

The Al G. Field Minstrels made a welcome return on Sunday, November 27, for a week of black-face antics. A big street parade advertised their presence on Monday morning, November 28. Featured players were Al G. Field, Frank E. McNish, Jerry Hart, Tommy Donnelly; the team of Clayton,
Jenkins and Jasper; Joe E. Lewis and the Three Rackett Brothers. The Darktown Circus was the feature of the show. (Picayune, Sunday, November 27, 1892.)

Sunday, December 4 saw the return of Corinne and the Kimball Opera Comique Company, a group of sixty artists under the management of Mrs. Jennie Kimball. Arcadia, a new extravaganza burlesque was the playing vehicle. It was written by William Gill and was founded on the nursery rhyme "Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son." Corinne played the part of Tom-tom, in piper's clothes, and was bewitching to watch—whether she posed, acted, danced or sang. Charles Fostelle, the excellent female impersonator, shared honors with Corinne. He appeared as a dancing girl, to the deception of the entire audience. James Sturges was a hit as the comedian, while the rest of the cast had little to do. The amazon march which concluded the performance was estimated to out-glitter anything on any local stage so far that season. (Picayune, Monday, December 5, 1892.)

For the first time since the Grand Opera House opened its doors in 1871, a play was presented the week of December 11, 1892, in which a Negro character was the hero of the
plot. The Black Detective or The South as It Was, the play presented, was significant for two reasons: it presented a Negro character as a serious hero for the first time in melodrama at the theatre, and it was a vehicle that tested the prejudice of New Orleans audiences in 1892. There was an overt reaction of hostility and resentment on the part of theatre goers to the plot of the play. The Black Detective, produced by Daniel Shelby, had an excellent cast headed by the distinguished actor Wash T. Melville. In the melodrama, Melville played the part of a Negro hero who came to the rescue whenever virtue was attacked. Charles E. Bowen, as the villain, was described as "... a villain blacker in crime than the hero's skin." (Picayune, Monday, December 12, 1892.) Both Melville and Ada Beshell, as a sweet Negro heroine, played their parts in black-face make-up. But, a shocked New Orleans theatre-going public showed their distaste and their narrow attitudes by deserting the Grand Opera House all week. (Picayune, Sunday, December 18, 1892.)

Cast:  Jeff...Wash T. Melville, Capt. Jack Howard...Charles

12 There are the possible exceptions of Othello and Uncle Tom's Cabin, of course. However, it is a question of interpretation usually that classifies Othello, the Moor, as a Negro or a dark skinned Caucasian.
The boycott was over on Sunday, December 18, when every seat in the house was sold for the opening of A. C. Gunter's *Mr. Potter of Texas*. The comedy was presented then for the first time in the city. The lead role of a Texas millionaire abroad was well taken by Henry Weaver, with Georgia Busby as a convincing leading lady. The comedy was a hit with this cast: Hon. Sampson Potter, Henry Weaver, Jr., Baron Lincoln, Hugh Gibson, Arthur Lincoln, Harry Brinsley, Teddy Lincoln, Charles Hayes, Charlie Errol, Charles Tingay, Ralph, Hugh Gibson, Van Cott, John Hynes, Dr. Lambirth, Earl Gilbert, Lubbins, Lewis Mitchell, Brackett, Guy Nicholls, Lady Sarah, Stella Boniface, Ethel Lincoln, Millie James, Ida Potter, Georgia Busby, Martia, Rose England. (*Picayune*, Monday, December 19, 1892.)

On Christmas Day 1892, Frank Daniels brought his comedy company to produce two comedies during the week: *Little Puck*
played through Wednesday matinee, and Dr. Cupid was aired for the remainder of the week. A. C. Gunter's Little Puck commanded a full house for Frank Daniels' opening. The huge audience had an abundance of fun, and laughed from beginning to end. Daniels was described as a wonderfully clever comedian who had surrounded himself with clever people. Variety bits were woven into the action: C. E. Grapewin did a clever act on a high trapeze in the schoolyard scene, and Richard Baker and Camille D'Elmar did delightful rapid crayon drawing along with their acting. Cast: Packingham Giltedge, Frank Daniels, Billy, D. L. Don, Dr. Savage, Robert Evans, Jinks, J. C. Canfield, Stryber, Richard Baker, Sluggers, George Campbell, Prof. Loverjam, C. E. Grapewin, Mossback, Richard Baker, Bloker, J. C. Canfield, Clara, Harriet Waters, Tabitha, Camille D'Elmar, Mrs. Mossback, Ella Wilson, Minnie Titters, Minnie Miller, Serephena, Annette Zelma, Voilette, Violet Carleton, Miranda, Bessie Sanson. (Picayune, Monday, December 26, 1892.) A special Christmas Sunday matinee preceded the first night performance on Sunday. When Dr. Cupid replaced the opener on Wednesday night, December 28, Daniels shone at his best. In this vehicle, he romped through the tribulations of a hotel proprietor with flying colors, acting well and singing cleverly. Harry Clarke did well in the
title role and D. L. Don as the inventor kept the house howling with laughter. Other standouts were J. C. Canfield, Bessie Sanson and W. S. Belknapp. *(Picayune, Thursday, December 29, 1892.)*

Jeffrys Lewis returned for a week after a long absence on Sunday, January 1, 1893; and opened in Sardou's *Clotilde*. Miss Lewis was described as mediocre in the title role, being more powerful than tender, and strong rather than finished. Esta Williams, an emotional actress of much ability, won most of the applause as Fernande, the real heroine of *Clotilde*. Cast: Coltilde..Jeffrys Lewis, Andre..Harry Mainhall, Ponerol..Hereward Hoyte, Baron Morrell..Kraft Walton, Frederick..Howard Elmore, Alfred..Will Rush, Fernande..Esta Williams, Georgette..Miss Constantine, Therese..Ida Verner. *(Picayune, Monday, January 2, 1893.)*

John McCullough, the actor who was so beloved by Grand Opera House audiences, had died in 1885. Since that time, Herbert Downing had taken over some of the beloved star's repertoire, including the tragedian's role of the Gladiator. Downing now came to the Grand for the first time on Sunday, January 8 in *The Gladiator*, and found the theatre full, with a society upper-class audience. In comparison with Mc Cullough, Downing was found to be heroic enough, satisfying the
eye and the intellect in conception and interpretation. But he failed to mark the element of tenderness which was distinctive of McCullough. Eugenie Blair was beautiful as Neodmia, and her art was considered as exquisite. The engagement marked the lovely actress' first appearance since her billing as leading lady with Lawrence Barrett in Bidwell days at the Grand. Cast: Nero..Herbert Downing, Flavian..F. C. Mosley, Pagan Priest..Mark Price, Origon..George Macomber, Tribune..W. B. Downing, Neophyte..Herbert Marsden, Octavius..D. B. Williams, Lucius..Richard Tappan, Caius..D. C. Bangs, Hermia..Hattie Collins, Faustina..Florence Erwin, Neodmia.. Eugenie Blair. (Picayune, Monday, January 9, 1893.) Next, Richard the Lion Hearted, a new historical drama by A. D. Hall was produced. The plot was based on the historical king of England, and was produced lavishly. Downing was judged as impressive in the title role, while Eugenie Blair was beautiful and correct as a princess who donned men's clothes to aid in rescuing her lover. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 10, 1893.) On Wednesday night, the bill changed to Knowles' tragedy, Virginius. Downing was satisfying in the title role, with his splendid physique and dignified bearing. Eugenie Blair was lovely as Virginia. (Picayune, Thursday, January 12, 1893.) On Friday night, Othello was offered, but failed to
show Downing at his best, and the Picayune gave the icy com-
ment that the star was less than ideal in the role. As Desdemona, however, Eugenie Blair was lovely and impressive. Fred C. Mosley was outstanding as Iago. (Picayune, Saturday, January 11, 1893.) The same bill greeted matinee goers on Saturday; and on Saturday night, The Gladiator was repeated.

Annie Pixley displayed her charm again at the theatre for the week beginning Sunday, January 15, when she appeared in the title role of Miss Blythe of Duluth, a satire on mining in the West in that day. "Standing room only" greeted her opening, and her reception was heart-warming. The star was delightful in the light role, and her voice was sweet and powerful when she sang. Frederic Sackett was a competent leading man. Cast: Bessie Blythe, Annie Pixley, Ida Barkley, Lulu Klein, Lady Astley, Genevieve Beauman, Miss Letitia, Annie Douglas, John Barkley, Frederic Sackett, Abner, Harry Bell, Sir Talbot Astley, Fred Butler, Buggles, Joseph Brennan. (Picayune, Monday, January 16, 1893.)

An important date that year was Sunday, January 22. On this evening, Richard Mansfield, the first big star to debut at the Grand Opera House in some time, made his debut. Mansfield entered the local scene for a week with a varied repertoire, and was billed as "... the most creative and
original actor now before the public." (Picayune, Sunday, January 22, 1893.) In appraising the new star, John Rankin Towse thought less of Mansfield than the actor's adoring public. Towse notes that Mansfield was, throughout his theatrical career, a man who was imperious, willful, and self-centered. He was a temperamental terror to his managers. Nevertheless, his talent can not be disputed. Towse comments that Mansfield fell short of genius--his manner was stiff, precise and angular; yet he had a power that was exciting. But he never learned how to take advantage of his deep resonant voice: he adopted an annoying falling inflection that ended on the same note at every period. Moreover, Mansfield's inveterate egotism and negative mannerisms marred much of his most ambitious work. His mannerisms such as his rigid, spasmodic gestures; his stiff, jerky walk, and his monotonous utterance were part of every Mansfield role.\footnote{13} The New Orleans press, however was delighted with the new star. Mansfield opened in Beau Brummel, Clyde Fitch's drama. The plot was concerned with an historical view of George Bryon Brummel, an English fop of the late eighteenth century.

\footnote{13}{John Rankin Towse, Sixty Years of the Theatre (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1916), pp. 318-19, 339.}
and a favorite of the Prince of Wales. Creating the lead role, Mansfield was judged by the *Picayune* to be a master of acting in its most artistic form. He was considered perfect in detail and repose, in power and strength used in a quiet way. (*Picayune*, Monday, January 23, 1893.) The *Times-Democrat* echoed the praise, judging Mansfield as a rare impersonator with a master hand; and an actor of refined and pure art, without any trace of effort. This critic also praised "... a rare intensity in his acting for which he stands pre-eminent." (*Times-Democrat*, Monday, January 23, 1893.)


On Monday night, with the production of Octave Fuillet's *A Parisian Romance*, Mansfield's triumph in New Orleans was
complete. He appeared as Baron Chevrial, to a crowded house. Arthur Forrest played the role of the long suffering noble son, De Targy, of the hateful old Baron who indulges his tastes until he is a wreck. Mansfield's portrayal was considered to be the effort of patient study. Every line of his face, every gesture showed meaning according to the Picayune, that voted the role a work of art. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 24, 1893.) With another sold-out house on Tuesday, Mansfield played the title role in A. C. Gunther's Prince Karl. The witty love story gave Mansfield the opportunity to show his versatility. He did some clever imitations of singers and pianists hired to exhibit themselves in drawing rooms. Beatrice Cameron made a charming role of Florence Lowell, the young widow whom the Prince loves. (Picayune, Wednesday, January 25, 1893.) The Scarlet Letter was the new offering on Wednesday night. The play of Hatton was not equal to the book of Hawthorne; yet the effect was none-the-less potent. As Rev. Arthur Dimmiesdall, Mansfield received great praise. His was a portrayal that reaped the victory of intelligent study. Miss Cameron marked her lead role of Hester a fit companion piece with a delicate handling. (Picayune, Thursday, January 26, 1893.) A Parisian Romance was repeated on Thursday and Friday. On Saturday, January 28,
the last day of Mansfield's triumphant engagement, the young actor took the dual roles in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Edward R. Mawson's melodrama, The Fair Rebel, produced the week starting Sunday, January 29, showed that the Civil War was now far enough away so that a southern heroine could fall in love with a hero who was a Union officer. The villain in the peace was a jealous French cousin of the girl. But in the end, North and South are happily wedded. Modern effects were used in the play, with a telegraph instrument being a prominent dramatic object of the action and an elaborate prison scene being electrically revolved. Fanny Gillette played the heroine, while the hero, Colonel Mason, was enacted by the playwright, Edward R. Mawson. Cast:

Colonel Ezra Mason..Edward R. Mawson, Major Stillman..J. P. Keefe, Captain de Perrin..Ernest Foster, Bill Bronson..J. W. Kingsley, Major Watkins..J. H. Wright, Major Mouteith..Almer Rion, Nelse..Thomas Dunn, Captain Stone..J. W. Martin, Captain Henderson..J. N. Binkley, Captain Stone..J. H. Wright, Lieutenant Wilson..Robert Thorne, Captain Harding..J. W. Martin, Sargeant. Thompson..Frank Glenn, Sgt. Bernheim..Herman Meyer, Bill Wood..Frank Collins, Orderly..C. L. Van-Drake, Margeretta Wyeth..Kate Oesterle, Joan Fitzhugh..Jennie Whitback, Sally Wood..Jennie Elberts, Mrs. Stewart.
After a long absence, Fanny Davenport returned to grace the stage of the theatre for two weeks beginning Sunday, February 5, 1893, in an elegant production of Sardou's Cleopatra. The drama was presented as an extravaganza, being a spectacle rich in magnificent costumes, scenery and mechanical effects, beautiful lighting and a huge cast. This production surrounded Fanny Davenport as Cleopatra with splendor and oriental beauty. Davenport was faithful to Sardou's creation, projecting a magnificent interweaving of passion and majesty. Throughout the long play, she showed her artistry, intelligence, and talent. Melbourne McDowell headed the huge cast which included large numbers of beautifully dressed supernumeraries. The play was among the most glittering, costly productions ever to hit the boards of the Grand Opera House. Cast: Cleopatra..Fanny Davenport, Marc Antony..Melbourne McDowell, Octavia..Ida Frohawk, Octavius Caesar..Mark Frederick, Dellius..Ellis Ripe, Dercetas..Edward Powell, Thypeus..Archibald Cooper, Demetrius..Henry J. Begge, Kephren..Oscar Eagle, Ilus..Lillian Burke, Amosis..Claire Sara, Clara..Annie Thornton, Olympius..Frank Tonnehill, Sr., Governor of Tarsus..Frank Willard, Sarapsiade..
John Hynes, Merchant..Frederick Harris, a noble..Charles Fuller. (Picayune, Monday, February 6, 1893.)

Charles Frohman produced the next attraction which opened on Sunday, February 19. This was Belasco and De-Mille's comedy *Men and Women* which played for a week with the usual Wednesday and Saturday matinees. A major hit, the hilarious comedy had played three hundred nights in New York, one hundred and fifty nights in Boston and one hundred and eighty nights in Chicago. The characters were believable, warm human beings, and the play was just as much a hit in New Orleans as it had been in the North. Most memorable were the performances of Frank Burbeck as a heroic Jewish banker with a great heart, Maclyn Arbuckle with a fine portrayal of Rodman, and Kate Meek, that old favorite of the theatre, who headed the feminine cast and was wholly good in her part. Cast: Israel Cohen..Frank Burbeck, William Prescott..Frank Mills, Edward Seabury..Fred Ross, Pendleton..Louis Grisel, Calvin Steadman..Will Bernard, Neil O'Brien, Sam Delafield..Walter Perkins, Arnold Kirke..Edgar Mackey, Agnes Rodman..Lilla Vane, Dora Prescott..Nanette Comstock, Kate Delafield..Lillian Lawrence, Margery Knox..Maud White, Jane Prescott..Kate Meek, Mrs. Kerke..Roy Bernard, John..H. F. Phillips, Deputy Marshal..A. J. Knight. (Picayune,
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Monday, February 20, 1893.) Large audiences treated themselves to the play all week.

Primrose and West's famous Minstrels made a return the week of Sunday, February 26, 1893. The show featured comedians George Primrose, Billy Van, J. Melville Janson, Tom Lewis, Lew Randall, J. P. Johnson, A. Riane, F. P. Bentley; the celebrated quartet..F. W. Oakland, W. H. Thompson, Joseph Natus, and Joseph Garland; and specialty artists Morris Cronin, Albachi and Massand, and Johnson, Riane and Bentley. (Picayune, Sunday, February 26, 1893.)

On March 5, Harry B. Smith and Reginald De Koven's comic opera Robin Hood opened to play a week. Produced by Barnaby, Karl and McDonald, the production had recently completed an entire season at the Madison Square Garden. Sporting a cast of fifty, the featured artists included Caroline Hamilton as prima donna, and Edward D. Palfrey, a New Orleans boy, who sang the lead part of Robin Hood. (Picayune, Sunday, March 5, 1893.)

A Jolly Surprise was the pleasant title of the musical comedy billed into the Grand Opera House on Sunday, March 11, 1893. Fanny Rice, comedienne and songstress was the star of the amusing plot in which two couples get tangled up. As a comedienne, the actress was rated to have method, magnetism
and skill; but as a songstress, the *Picayune* did not think much of her ability. A pretty little tuneful sketch by Offenback, called *Little Broom-Seller* was used as a curtain raiser. In this, Miss Rice played as Lischen and proved herself again more of an artist than a singer. The proficient cast of *A Jolly Surprise* included: Violet Gray..Fanny Rice, David Bradbur..Charles H. Bradshaw, Charles Carroll..Melville Stewart, A. J. Hustle..B. McDonough, Patsy McGuire..Frank Jones, Robert..Harold Leslie, Jimmy..John Duckman, Simpson Sullivan..C. Bolwal, Mrs. Ten Eyck..Eva Randolph, Lucy Bradbur..Olive Evans, Kitty..Beckie Haight, Mary..Carrie Birkie, Eugene..Rose Floiding, Mille..Nellie Smith, Tillie..May Harcourt, Carl..Himself. (*Picayune*, Monday, March 13, 1893.)

*The Froth of Society*, an adaptation by Mrs. Frank Lester of Alexander Dumas' drama, *The Demi Monde* made its initial debut to a packed house on Sunday, March 19. Joseph Haworth headed the cast all of which gave an excellent performance. Haworth played with such skill that his part stood out in bold relief. Emily Rigl was tender and tigerish by turns as Suzanne, and Sheridon Block was also noteworthy as Raymond. Cast: Olivier..Joseph Haworth, Raymond..Sheridan Block, Maurice de Rochmond..George S. Robinson, Marquis de
John L. Sullivan returned amid cheers and rave notices, for a week beginning Sunday, March 26. He appeared in The Man from Boston, an original drama written for him by Edmund E. Price of New York. Sullivan had recently been defeated, but the situation only seemed to increase his popularity. The populace adored him, he remained their idol, and his tour in this play had amounted to a triumphant procession. New Orleans was no different. The Grand Opera House was jammed to capacity for Sullivan's opening, and the minute he stepped on stage, the crowd gave him an ovation greater than any star had received in years. Nor was the house to be disappointed. The pugilist had improved considerably in his acting ability, to such an extent, in fact, that the Picayune declared "... John L. Sullivan is no longer a champion pugilist but an actor ... and comes very near to being a champion attraction." High point of the play was a prize fight between Sullivan and boxer Dan Dwyer that made the spectators go wild. Cast: Captain Harcourt..John L. Sullivan, George Overton, Sr...William McCleady, George Overton,
Jr...Edward Wonn, Dick Darrell..W. F. Gilpin, Tom Barclay...
W. S. Pollard, Mugger..H. G. Clarke, Pat..Bobby Mack, George
Green..Eugene Sandford, Robert Brown..Sidney Craven, Jim
Jones..Clint Maynard, Referee..Phillip Rees, Umpire..W. Davis,
Pete Jenkins..John Currie, Dan Dwyer..Himself, Susan Summerfield..Grace Ottillie, Mrs. Overton..Mary Maddern, May Fielding..Cecelia Clay. (Picayune, Monday, March 27, 1893.) The play closed Sunday, April 2, 1893.

The long season continued as the Grand Opera House stood as the only major New Orleans theatre still open. Marie Wainwright made a welcome return on Monday, April 3, and remained for three weeks in a varied repertoirs. Amy Robsart, the dramatization of Sir Walter Scott's Kenilworth, was chosen as the opener, with Andrew Holliday's adaptation being used. Miss Wainwright was conspicuously devoid of her former co-star and mate, Louis James. Replacing James as Wainwright's leading man was handsome young William Ingersoll. The lavish production was historically correct..every costume and prop were of Elizabethan style. The fine veteran actor Barton Hill headed the very good supporting cast. Cast:
Richard Varney..Barton Hill, Earl of Leicester..William Ingersoll, Tressillian..Nathaniel Hartwig, Earl of Sussex..
Alfred Burnham, Bowyer..Phillip Brou, Lambourne..Percy
Brooke, Smith..Edward Eliot, Foster..E. Y. Brady, Gosling.. Wallace Brou, Goldthread..John Foster, Queen Elizabeth.. Eleanor Carey, Janet..Kate Blands, Duchess of Rutland..Lillian Thurph, Amy Robsart..Marie Wainwright. The star was considered as ideal in the part by both the Picayune and the Daily Item. The latter newspaper praised her naturalness in the role while asserting that she rose to the pinnacle of grandeur. (Picayune and Daily Item, Tuesday, April 4, 1893.) Continuing her good efforts, Marie Wainwright produced Twelfth Night for the second week of her booking, beginning on Monday, April 10. It was a grand production, with authentic scenery and props created by Graham, Goatcher, Schaeffer and Meader, masters of their craft. The costumes were equally authentic. Miss Wainwright was admirable as Viola and she had admirable support from Barton Hill--called the best Malvolio on the stage of the day, Eleanor Carey--a charming Olivia, and Kate Blancke--a pert Maria. Cast: Malvolio..Barton Hill, Duke..Tom Ingersoll, Sir Toby Belch.. E. T. Backus, Sir Andrew Aguecheek..Percy Brooke, Sebastian ..Edward Elsner, Feste..Nathaniel Hartwig, Fabian..Wallace Bruce, Antonio..Alfred Burnham, Valentine..Lillian Thurgate, Roberto..Phillip Brent, Curio..Cecil Magnus, First officer.. John Foster, Olivia..Eleanor Corey, Maria..Kate Blancke,
Viola. Marie Wainwright. (Picayune, Tuesday, April 17, 1893.) Beginning her third and final week, also the final week of the season, Marie Wainwright began on Sunday, April 16, a production of Sheridan's comedy, A School for Scandal. As Lady Teazle, the star's performance was happy, gay and wholly creditable, according to the Daily Item which also praised the lovely actress' versatility. (Daily Item, Monday, April 17, 1893.) The Picayune agreed with these comments noting that Miss Wainwright invested each role with charming individuality. This production was also authentic in staging and costumes, down to the smallest character. Barton Hill's Sir Peter was a stand-out, and Ingersoll was a dashing Charles Surface. (Picayune, Monday, April 17, 1893.) Cast: Lady Teazle. Marie Wainwright, Sir Peter Teazle. Barton Hill, Charles Surface. William Ingersoll, James Surface. Nathaniel Hartwig, Sir Olivier. E. Y. Backus, Crabtree. Percy Brooke, Sir Benjamin Backbite. Edward Elsner, Rowley. Alfred Burnham, Moses. Wallace Bruce, Trip. John Foster, Snake. Phillip Brent, Servant to James Surface. Cecil Magnus, Servant to Lady Sneerwell. George Orton, Mrs. Candour. Eleanor Carey, Lady Sneerwell. Kate Blancke, Maria. Lillian Thurgate. (Picayune, Monday, April 17, 1893.) This last week produced varied bills: the scene changed on Wednesday.
and Thursday, when *As You Like It* was produced with Miss Wainwright as Rosalind. Then, as a final offering, on Friday through Sunday nights and on Saturday matinee, Clyde Fitch's *The Social Swim* was presented for the first time in the city. Fitch had borrowed the plot's idea from Sardou, and it concerned the attempt of a socially ambitious couple to get into the "four hundred." Miss Wainwright was strong, gentle, and sympathetic as Helen Burton-Smith, and wore gorgeous gowns. William Ingersoll was excellent as her husband, Smith, being forceful yet natural. *(Picayune, Friday, April 21, 1893.)*

The season ended on Sunday, April 23, 1893.

The 1892-1893 dramatic season was a productive one, artistically and financially. It saw the return of three important stars who had not trod the stage of the theatre in some years—Marie Wainwright, Fanny Davenport and Stuart Robson. Two of these stars appeared for the first time in years without their usual co-stars: Robson came without Crane, but had a new co-star, Mrs. Robson; and Miss Wainwright had dropped Louis James, her husband, in favor of handsome William Ingersoll. Richard Mansfield came for the first time as a star, and became an instant matinee idol; and John L. Sullivan returned to prove he was an actor as well as a fighter, having improved significantly since his first
appearance. Extravaganzas and melodramas continued to be the most popular types of entertainment; but the minstrel shows lost ground and had only fair response from the public; and successful productions continued to be lavish and authentic. In summary, the 1892-1893 season began on Sunday, September 4, 1892, with W. A. Brody's After Dark Company and good business. Sadie Scanlon came on September 11, and had only fair houses. On September 18, Fitch and Webster's A Breezy Time Company came and did only light business. Gorman's Minstrels came on September 25, were considered as second-rate and did no business. On October 2, Charles A. Gardner appeared in Fatherland to fine houses. Charles H. Yale's New Devil's Auction which came on October 9, also did top business. On October 16, Katie Emmett opened in Killarney with only a fair reception. Effie Ellsler and C. W. Couldock co-starred in Hazel Kirke beginning on October 23, and did well. October 30 saw the return of Stuart Robson in The Henrietta and She Stoops to Conquer and did big business all week. A bad company came in Paul Kauvar on November 6 and played to little business. Professor Herrmann reversed the financial scene when he entered the picture on November 13—packed houses resulted all week. On November 20, R. E. Graham headed the cast of Larry, the Lord, a Greenwall
production that did only fair business. Al G. Field's Minstrels appeared on November 27, and did not do as well as expected. When Corinne came in Arcadia, business began heavily, but ended with only scant houses. On December 11, W. T. Melville came in The Black Detective, the melodrama in which the hero was a Negro but 1892 audiences refused to accept the fact and boycotted the theatre all week. Georgia Busby and Henry Weaver's efforts in Mr. Potter of Texas starting on December 18 rated fair response. Frank Daniels appeared on Christmas Day for a round of Little Puck and Dr. Cupid to more fair business. January 1, 1893 brought Jeffreys Lewis back in Clotilde. She disappointed and did light business. Robert Downing, who had taken over Mc Cullough's repertoire, came on January 8, inherited the dead actor's many fans, and did a roaringly large business. On January 15, Annie Pixley moved in with Miss Blythe of Duluth, and did well. Richard Mansfield made his local debut on January 22. He appeared in varied repertoire, was applauded loudly by press and public, and did splendid business. A Fair Rebel, melodrama with a new twist in which a southern belle and Union officer fall in love, and he becomes the hero, proved—as did The Black Detective—that the plot was not the sugar to serve with a Southern cup of tea. Like the earlier
play, it did decidedly bad business, when it came on January 29. On February 5, Fanny Davenport reappeared happily in a lavish production of Cleopatra that did splendidly for two weeks. Charles Frohman's Men and Women followed on February 19 with a good company and did glowing business all week. Primrose and West's Minstrels came on February 26 and received only fair response. On March 5, Robin Hood came as a comic opera, but despite the fact that the star, Edward Palfrey, was a New Orleans native, it did only average business. When Fanny Rice appeared on March 12 in A Jolly Surprise, she rated only fair response also. Emily Rigl and Joseph Haworth headed a good cast of Froth of Society beginning on March 19, that played to fine business all week. John L. Sullivan made a triumphant return on March 26 in The Man from Boston, and drew capacity houses. Marie Wainwright made a welcome return on April 3, as the last engagement of the season. She came for three weeks in varied repertoire and did good business. The dramatic season closed on Sunday, April 23 and was rated a financial success by the Picayune. (Picayune, Sunday, April 23, 1893.) Although the dramatic season was officially over, Greenwall continued to keep the Grand Opera House open by commencing a season of summer opera as presented by the Marie Greenwood Comic Opera Company.
Miss Greenwood and her company came on Sunday, April 23 and remained until July, producing a different opera each week. Admission was reasonable for the summer opera—only 15 cents, 25 cents and 50 cents. The playing schedule was as follows:


There was no performance on Tuesday of that week, due to an event of significant interest to amateur theatrical training in the city in that era: on Tuesday, June 27, 1893, the Grand Opera House was taken over by Miss Lily C. Whitaker's Elocution School, on the occasion of the annual
entertainment and commencement always held at the Grand. The program included two original plays by Miss Whitaker, Among the Stars and Indignation Meeting of the Modern Reform Society—Subject, Prize Fights. Scenes from Shakespearean plays were also presented. (Picayune, Sunday, June 25, 1893.)

The Grand Opera House opened early again for the 1893-1894 season, the customary condition under Greenwall's auspices. On Sunday, September 4, the theatre's doors opened for the first play of the season, that of the comedy, Ups and Downs, starring Lydia Yeamans-Titus. The actress, playing the part of the daughter of a banker, fresh from school, was described as delightful, sprightly and vivacious, with a well-trained, sweet and beautiful singing voice. Charles S. Titus and Harry Edwards headed the supporting cast and were both clever. Cast: Jack Elting, Henry Edwards, Major Hayes, Robert Broderick, Thomas Carter, Charles A. Titus, Hiram Wolf, M. M. Parker, Sing Hi, Johnny Williams, Mrs. Hayes, Ada St. Claire, Kitty, Alice Coleman, Marian Hayes, Lydia Yeamans-Titus. (Picayune, Monday, September 4, 1893.)

Another new theatre was added to the Crescent City's theatrical scene when on September 11, Wenger's Theatre...
opened on the corner of Burgundy and Customhouse streets. This was not a major house, and despite its closeness in proximity to the Grand Opera House, it was not to be a source of competition. *Down South* was this theatre's inaugural production.

a blonde wig, read intelligently and was effective. Charlotte Behrens was a fair Ophelia, while Minnie Monk was a good Queen. The rest of the cast were not impressive. (Picayune, Wednesday, September 13, 1893.) Monbars was repeated at the Wednesday matinee, and The Corsican Brothers played Wednesday night. Mantell played the dual roles of both De Franchi brothers in this drama, and was graceful and sympathetic. (Picayune, Thursday, September 14, 1893.) Espy Williams' Parrhasius was produced on Thursday with Mantell in the title role and Charlotte Behrens as Lydia, his wife. Kathleen Kerrigan as Clytie and William Stuart as Demetrius shared honors with the lead players. The play was well received, and author Williams was called upon for a speech. (Picayune, Friday, September 15, 1893.) A Face in the Moonlight ended Mantell's successful week.

Primrose and West entered the Grand scene on Sunday, September 18. As was noted during the previous season, black-faced minstrels were losing their popularity. Consequently, this season Primrose and West sought two departures from their usual minstrel norms: they appeared in white-face, that is without blackening their faces; and they presented a musical comedy with a company which featured a number of actresses among the minstrels. Monte Carlo was the name
given to the production which was a hit, and the theatre was packed on opening night. The play was arranged by Ed Marble. George Wilson, star of the troupe was judged a great success—in black or white face—and literally stole the show. Minstrelsy was included cleverly in the second half of the production when a minstrel show took place within the action of the plot in the scene in the concert salon of Monte Carlo. Cast: Virginia..Nellie Burt, Edmond..Dan Quinlan, Lord Darry..Dan Quinlan, Petrovski..Jay Quigley, Bloom..Thomas Hyland, Dejumerre..George Wiseman, Bouncer..Mack Menter, Croupler..Arthur Eaton, Luckey..Dave Lassard, Walter..William Vandee, Messenger..James Devlin, Higgins..Henry Carmody, Hannah..Clinton Whitney, Adelina..Marie Broughton, Duchess..Kate Howard, Lillie..Edith Arnold, Fleurette..Marie Clayton, Carrie..Fern Melrose, Rose..Beatrice Adams, Count..George Wilson. (Picayune, Monday, September 18, 1893.)

Nellie Mc Henry brought out a full house when she came on Sunday, September 24 in A Night at the Circus, H. Grattan Donnelly's farce. The little bundle of energy was so full of magnetism that she inspired every member of her company and the effect was most pleasant. Cast: Mlle. Electra and Mlle. Madeline..Nellie Mc Henry, Bud..Vernie De Witt, Belvedere Banger..Helen Gladden, Calliope Fiske..Beatrice Hastings,
Bill Sticker..William Allen, Archibald..Will West, Finke..
Harry Booker, Kicker..Robert Wilson, Snifty..Pinkerton Kopp,
Wild Man of Borneo..Nicholas Fiske, Jockey..Bud Manhatten.
(Picayune, Monday, September 25, 1893.)

Charles H. Yale's The Devil's Auction found its way back to the Grand on Sunday, October 1. The production was bigger than before, with more spectacle, bright new scenery and new pantomime, music and variety acts. Mlle. Chitton, the premiere danseuse was an-eye-catcher in her beautiful solos, and was surrounded by a pretty ballet troupe. Cast:
Carlos..Mai Estelle, Toby..Augustus Bruno, Jr., Pere Andoche..Thos. Plumer, Count Fortuno..Anna Moore, Going Gone..James Short, Tresbian..George Coleman, Madeline..Mildred Holden, Janet..Josie Sisson, Kow Wow Shang..Thos. Plumer, Thee Sing..W. H. Smart, Kehang Kan..Eddie Snow, Moon Snow..Wm. Speurl, Kopet..Madge Torrance, Rajah..T. H. Lothrop, Mint..Chas. Frost, Khan..W. H. Burns, Chrystaline..Madge King, Mephisto..Henry Thomas, Chaos..Wm. Ruge. (Picayune, Monday, October 2, 1893.)

Herbert Hall Winslow's Count Casper was the vehicle in which Charles T. Ellis made his debut at the Grand. Both Ellis and the play were regarded as utterly disappointing. Only two little children were considered clever: Florie
O'Brien and Mattie Grier who appeared as Tot and Herman, respectively. Ellis was seen in the title role. In the remainder of the cast were Al Harris, Gilbert Gregory, Earl Brown, George Giltens, Abi Strange, Clara Moore, and Esther Moore. (Picayune, Monday, October 9, 1893.)

James T. Powers, the comedian, moved in on Sunday, October 16, and brought a British comedy, Walker, London by J. M. Barrie. The hit had been running for several years at Toole's Theatre, London, where it was the biggest success of the day. Now, the Picayune found it so thoroughly witty that it was equally funny to American humor. In the elaborate production, real water was used to represent the Thames River. Cast: Jasper Phipps...James T. Powers, Kit Upjohn...W. H. Crosby, Andrew...Harry Morgan, Willie...Walter Thomas, Benjamin Baggs...Ellis Cipe, Nannie O'Brien...Rachel Booth, Mrs. Golightly...Lillie Eldridge, Belle...Lorraine Dunne, Sarah Riggs...May Tyrell, Penny...Mollie Sherwood. (Picayune, Monday, October 16, 1893.)

Lewis Morrison returned in his celebrated performance of Mephisto in Faust on Sunday, October 23. Supporting him this trip in top roles were Florence Roberts as Marguerite, Edward Elsner as Faust and F. D. Montague as Valentine. The play ran all week with the exception of Saturday night when
Richelieu was played for the only time. Morrison made an ideal Richelieu, with a repose, dignity and force that thrilled the audience. (Picayune, Sunday, October 29, 1893.)

Bartley Campbell's Siberia returned on Sunday, October 29, and played to a large audience on opening night. Katie Vanderhoff and Charles Brandt played excellently the roles of the Jewish girl and her sweetheart in Russia. Principal players were Nicholas...Charles Brandt, Ivan...Sidney Omer, Jaracoff...Will Ingram, David...Vining Wood, Sara...Maud Hosford, Marie...Katie Vanderhoff, Vera...Frankie Mc Clellan, Phedora...Vivian Edsall, Princess Jaracoff...Addie Snyder. (Picayune, Monday, October 30, 1893.)

The Isle of Champagne, a comic opera by Charles Byrnes and Louis Harrison, drew a full opening house on Sunday, November 5. The clever comedian, Thomas Q. Seabrooke, was incomparable as King Ponnery. Other assets included humorous songs, a beautiful chorus, steady good humor, gorgeous scenery and a talented ballet. The supporting cast included Walter Allen, Joseph Sheridan, Sim Collins, Richard Watts, Karl Formes, Jr., H. C. Davis, Arthur Carlton, W. W. Black, Rosa Cook, Elvia Croix, Grace Daniels, Estelle Morton, Florence Willey, Hattie Moore, Dora Allen, Sadie Dean and Lulu Cosgrove. (Picayune, Monday, November 6, 1893.)
Beginning on Sunday, November 12, Fay Templeton came for a week with her opera company in a magnificent production of Offenbach's sparkling comedy, *Madame Favart*, with a company of fifty, including Richard F. Carroll, Annie Myers, John E. Brand, William Blaisdell and W. G. Stewart in lead parts.

Herrmann the Great, the great magician, returned on Sunday, November 19 with an entirely new array of mystic novelties, a new spirit seance, and bewitching dances performed by Mme. Herrmann in which she used colored lights to create artistic hanging lighting effects. (*Picayune*, Monday, November 20, 1893.)

A very big occasion for the Grand Opera House ensued with the next engagement. On Sunday, November 26, the world-famous French star, Coquelin, came to the theatre for his first appearance in the city, and brought with him as co-star the celebrated French actress, Jane Hading. Both were the top stars of the Comedie Francaise. The engagement was considered by the *Picayune* to be "... perhaps the most notable engagement in theatrical annals of this city." (*Picayune*, Sunday, November 26, 1893.) Coquelin brought along a brilliant all-French company for a repertoire of French plays, performed in French. The superior stars and company were
presented under the management of Abbey, Schoeffel and Grau. The exciting repertoire included the following schedule:

Sunday, November 26, L'Adventuier; Monday, Mlle. de la Seigilere; Tuesday, Nos Intimes; Wednesday matinee, Le Maitre de Forges; Wednesday night, La Joie Fait Peur Gringoire and Monologue; Thursday, November 30, special Thanksgiving matinee, Le Gendre de M. Poirie; Thursday night, Tartuffe and Les Precieuses Ridicules; Friday, Les Surprises du Divorce; Saturday matinee, La Dame aux Camilias; Saturday night, La Megere Apprivoisee (The Taming of the Shrew). For twenty-three years after his first appearance on December 7, 1860, Coquelin was a leading star at the Comedie Francaise. Then like Bernhardt, he decided to break away; and in 1888, having formed a dramatic company in association with Jane Hading, he first came to America, making his initial United States appearance in New York at Palmer's Theatre. According to William Winter, Coquelin was best in low comedy: his tendency was toward broadly comic aspects of human nature, grotesque attributes of character and the absurdities of experience which he depicted with admiral fidelity.14 Henry James praised Coquelin for his versatility.

James has a broader view of the star's ability than has Winter. To James, Coquelin represented the pathetic and the extravagantly droll as the two opposite extremes of his large gamut. To James, Coquelin could turn from one extreme to the other, with ranges between, with incomparable freedom and ease and with the assurance of a conquerer— in face, manner, voice and genius.  

The opening play, on November 26, was Emil Augier's *L'Adventuriere*, an exquisite comedy about a woman as beautiful and clever as her brother was unscrupulous. Mme. Hading and Coquelin shone in the parts like diamonds. Hading was described by the *Picayune* as an exquisitely beautiful woman, with personal fascination, expressive eyes and a wholly charming voice. Coquelin was no beauty— his mouth was large, his nose turned up and his eyes were small. But his face was completely mobile, and his every gesture, every change of expression and every attitude were the clay from which he molded an infinite number of original human types. (*Picayune*, Monday, November 27, 1893.) The *Times-Democrat*, like the *Picayune*, applauded the

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double genius displayed as "mastership," "consummate art" and "perfection." Hading was judged as "superb" while Coquelin's art was found to be so memorable, that his every moment on stage was felt to be a gem to be held precious to the memory. (Times-Democrat, Monday, November 27, 1893.)

Cast: Don Annibal..M. Coquelin, Horace..M. Volny, Prade.. M. Chameroy, Fabice..M. Maury, Dario..M. Deroy, Valet..M. Chambly, Clorinde..Mme. Hading, Celie..Mme. Dulca. (Picayune, Monday, November 27, 1893.)

On Monday, Mlle. de la Seigilierie, a comedy by Jules Sandeau was presented with this cast: Destournelles..Coquelin, Le Marquis..Jean Coquelin, Bernard Stamply..M. Maury, Raoul de Vanbert..M. Ramy, Jasmin..M. Chambly, Mlle. de la Deigliere..Mme. Jane Hading, La Baronne de Vanbert..Mme. Patry. Again, the stars elevated their roles with their great art. Hading as Helene de la Seigliere had made a careful study of the innocent, sweet-tempered girl. Dressed in plain drab gowns, she was said to be a striking contrast to the vivid figure of the adventuress of the previous evening. Coquelin's strength and vividness shone through his perfect characterization of the irrepressible advocate, Destournelles. Jean Coquelin, the son of the great actor, made his first appearance in the leading male role of the play. He did not
have the spark of his father, but had absorbed something of his manner, and his role was carefully drawn. (Picayune, Tuesday, November 28, 1893.) Nos Intimes produced on Tuesday, was Sardon's play that had been produced in English as Bosom Friends and A Wife's Peril. Mme. Hading was considered to be wonderful in the wooing scene; and Coquelin was delicious as Marecot, the fussy, irascible Parisian. Jean Coquelin was conscientious and careful as Dr. Tholosan. (Picayune, Wednesday, November 29, 1893.)

La Joie Fait Peur and Gringoire proved to be a double opportunity, on Wednesday, to appreciate Coquelin. In the first play, Coquelin played the part of an old, faithful servant whose joyous task it is to announce the return to a mother of a long lost son. His facial expression was indescribable, and his acting immense. In de Bouville's Gringoire, Coquelin played the title role of the poet who attracted the attention of Louis XI of France, and was youthful, proud and manly. Jane Hading, as Louise, the innocent country girl, was said to be more beautiful and more dazzling than ever. Coquelin ended the exciting evening by giving two monologues, appearing as himself in dress suit. He recited Francois Coppee's "Le Naufrage" and Grenet Dancourt's "La Vie" in a brilliant manner. (Picayune, Thursday,
November 30, 1893.)

Tartuffe and Les Precieuses Ridicules constitute another exquisite double bill on Thursday. Coquelin's fame rested on his portrayals of Tartuffe and Mascarilla. Thus, to have both of these triumphant performances on one evening made that occasion, according to the Picayune, "... one that has never been equaled in New Orleans." When Coquelin appeared as Tartuffe:

... his sober face, his staid demeanor, his sanctimonious face, his varying facial expression, his cautious inflection—all made the character a marvelous piece of study of the hypocrite that was a marvelous creation.

As Elmire, Jane Hading's beauty, her bewitching coyness, her unique half-laugh were totally admirable. Cast: Tartuffe.. Coquelin, Orgon..Jean Coquelin, Valere..M. Volny, Cleante.. Chaneroy, L'Exerupt..Deroy, Damis..Nicollina, Loyal..Chambly, Elmire..Jane Hading, Dorin..Mme. Patry, Marianne..Mme. Duluc, Mme. Pernelle..Mme. Deroy. Coquelin completed his conquest as Mascarilla in Les Precieuses Ridicules. His vain strut, affectation of elegance, his prideful gestures, captured the audience, and put them in the palm of his hand. (Picayune, Friday, December 1, 1893.) At the Thursday matinee, Augier and Sardou's Le Gendre de M. Poirier presented Coquelin in the title role of the quaint, old retired shopkeeper who
marries his daughter into nobility and then regrets it. Again, he was wholly admirable. (Picayune, Friday, December 1, 1893.) J. Bisson and Anthony Mars' *Les Surprises du Divorce*, given on Friday, served to keep the audience on tip-toe of excitement or in roar of laughter. Coquelin played Henri Duval, a young man who secures a divorce to rid himself of his mother-in-law. Mme. Patry aided the great comedian to reach comedy poetic heights as his much hated mother-in-law. (Picayune, Saturday, December 2, 1893.) Coquelin closed his historic engagement on Saturday, December 2, in Paul Delain's *La Megere Apprivoisee*—an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*. Coquelin and Hading made merry in the lead roles and were wildly applauded. Hading was never more beautiful than as Catarina. At the Saturday matinee, *La Dame aux Camelias* (or *Camille*), presented Hading in the lead role, and she gave a brilliant portrayal. At the conclusion of the memorable week the *Picayune* commented: "... The engagement of Coquelin has been a treat that will live in the history of theatricals in New Orleans." (Picayune, Sunday, December 3, 1893.)

*The Country Squire*, especially written for Archie Boyd by Charles A. Krone, was brought by the comedian to the theatre on Sunday, December 4. Boyd gave a clever portrayal of
a hayseed squire who adopts an orphan only to learn that she is the child of his wayward son. A good quartet and chorus aided the entertaining play. Cast: Ebenezer Tobias..Archie Boyd, Bob Grierson..Charles A. Krone, Edward..Ralph Bell, Jack Morrison..Hamilton Adams, Daisey..Ida Stembler, Rebecca Lina John, Emily..Mildred Conner. (Picayune, Monday, December 4, 1893.)

Abbott and Tillotson's Comedy Company took over on Sunday, December 10 with the comedy, Niobe by Harry and Edward Paulton. Actually the playwright stole the plot of Gilbert's Pygmalion and Galatea, with a statue coming to life. But it was amusing and the audience enjoyed it. Cast: Peter Dunn..James R. Smith, Cornelius Griffin..Lillian Dix, Hattie..Julie Ring, Beatrice..Daisey Mayer, Phiness Inninge..Benjamin Howard, Caroline Dunn..Josie Stoffer, Jefferson Tompkins..Frank Short, Parker Silox..Robert Iving, Helen Griffin..Red-dick Anderson, Madeline..Coralie Clifton, Mary..Lottie Hollywood, Niobe..Margaurite Faely. (Picayune, Monday, December 11, 1893.)

The Barnabee, Karl and McDonald Opera Company came on Sunday, December 17 to present a week of De Koven and Smith's comic opera, Robin Hood. The cast of sixty featured Jerome Sykes in the title role and Edwin Isborn, Edward Wentworth,
Riccardo Ricci, Mary Palmer, James Nicholas, Ross David, Fatman Diard, Agnes Stone and Ethel Blacy. (Picayune, Monday, December 18, 1893.)

On Christmas Day, Monday, December 25, another historic treat was given the theatre patrons when Modjeska returned, bringing Otis Skinner as her leading man. In a week of very varied repertoire, Modjeska opened at a special Christmas matinee in As You Like It starring as Rosalind, with Skinner as Orlando. On Sunday night she executed the role of Portia in Merchant of Venice with Skinner as Shylock; on Wednesday night, Friday and Saturday matinee, Magda was offered, with Macbeth as the final offering on Saturday night. As You Like It was presented with this cast: Rosalind..Modjeska, Audrey..Anna Proctor, Celia..Maud Durbin, Phoebe..Pamela Keith, Jacques..Howard Kyle, Duke Frederick..Wadsworth Harris, Banished Duke..Charles Collins, Touchstone..R. Peyton Carter, Adam..F. H. Sylvester, Oliver..Guy Lindsley, LeBeou..W. R. Morris, Jocques Dubois..Charles G. McGee, Sylvius..Frederick Guest, Coren..Alfred Carlisle, Amiens..W. R. Morris, William..Henry Vincent, Charles..M. J. Fenton, Orlando..Otis Skinner. Modjeska brought back Schiller's Mary Stuart on Sunday night and was again judged to be superb as the wronged Queen. Otis Skinner was a worthy match for the
brilliant artist as Leicester, and the Picayune said of him ". . . Otis Skinner, looked upon as the coming man in tragedy and high class drama, was excellent." The Times Democrat regarded Modjeska's performance as an "... immortal performance worthy of reverence." (Times Democrat, Tuesday, December 26, 1893.) Elizabeth was well taken by Anna E. Proctor, with Guy Lindsley as Mortimer, Howard Kyle as Burleigh and Wadsworth Harris as Shrewsbury. (Picayune, Tuesday, December 26, 1893.) In The Merchant of Venice, Modjeska used the same six-act version used by Booth and Barrett "... when she was with that great combination." (Picayune, Wednesday, December 27, 1893.) Her Portia was charming and the Picayune applauded Skinner's Shylock as the best then before the public. (Picayune, Wednesday, December 27, 1893.) The whole performance was regarded as superb. Chief support came from Anna E. Proctor..Nerissa, Maud Durbin..Jessica, Guy Lindsley..Bassanio, Howard Kyle..Gratiano, Frederick Gust..Lorenzo and Wadsworth Harris..Gobbo and Tubal. (Picayune, Wednesday, December 27, 1893.) Madga was produced for the first time in New Orleans by Modjeska on Wednesday, December 27. Her newest play was adapted from the German and was a heavy tragedy. As Magda, the heroine, Modjeska was perfect in her part, while Skinner proved his
versatility as Major Schubert. Cast: Magda..Modjeska, Marie..Maud Durbin, Mrs. Schubert..Anna Proctor, Miss Von Wendel..Hannah Sargent, Countess Von Kelbs..Miss Keith, Countess Von Elrich..Lula James, Mr. Fellman..Helen Singer, Theresa..Pamela Keith, Dr. Weber..Howard Kyle, Von Kellar.. R. Peyton Carter, Von Wendel..Guy Lindsley, Von Helbs.. Wadsworth Harris, Prof. Beckman..Charles G. McGee, Maj. Schubert..Otis Skinner. (Picayune, Thursday, December 28, 1893.) A full house viewed Modjeska's final performance on Saturday night December 30, at which Macbeth was offered. The star was an ideal Lady Macbeth. Particularly electrifying were her letter and sleepwalking scenes. Otis Skinner gave a noble performance of Macbeth, being reminiscent of Edwin Booth. Heading the excellent supporting cast were Howard Kyle..Macduff, William Edgerly..Duncan, Charles Collins..Banquo, Guy Lindsley..Malcolm, M. J. Fenton..Donalbain, and as the witches: R. P. Carter, W. R. Morris and Mrs. Crawford. (Picayune, Sunday, December 31, 1893.)

The Honeymooners, a new comic opera, with book by C. M. S. McLellan and lyrics by William Furst opened on Sunday, December 31, 1893. Featured in lead roles were Pauline Hall as Amadee and Richard Golden as Rewski. Miss Hall, one of the most attractive women on the American stage at that time,
had been the star of the New York Casino for several years. Among with Lillian Russel and Marie Tempest, Pauline Hall was considered one of the three Queens of comic opera or music comedy, and the visit of any one of them was a local event of note. In the supporting cast were Eva Davenport, Caroline Hamilton, Helen Jaxon, Marie Booth, Edna Andrews, Emma Marsh, Alma Russel, Lillian Ward, Mabel Howe, Margaret Clark, Helen Dunbar, John Cansome, Duke Jaxone, James Reynolds, Thomas Reiley, Walter Burr, Downing Clarke. Besides the usual matinees, there was a special New Year's matinee on Monday. (Picayune, Monday, January 1, 1894.)

Marie Tempest, another of the reigning musical comedy queens, followed on Sunday, January 7, 1894 for a successful week's run of Reginald De Koven's, The Algerian, a comic opera new to the city. The performance of Miss Tempest was considered to be brilliant and enjoyable. In good support were Julius Steger, Walter Browne, Clara Thropp, Bertha Dayliss, Edna Winton, Marion Bender, Frank David, Joseph Herbert, Ben Lodge, James Mariet, Harry Scarborough, Stella May and Alice Norton. (Picayune, Monday, January 8, 1894.)

An immense audience greeted James H. Wallack when he brought The Blue Grass King, a new horse drama, replete with several beautifully trained horses, for a week's run
beginning Sunday, January 15. With the exception of Wallack and his pretty leading lady, Gertrude Adrian, the horses were found to provide more entertainment than did the supporting cast. The historic play was based on Morgan's raid through the Blue Grass section of Kentucky in the Civil War. Cast: Rex Roylson, James H. Wallack, Jonas Beauford, David Davies, Seth, Walter Greene, Squire Slocum, Bossett Rodgers, Val Vaughn, Walter Adrian, Hank, John Robinson, Dusky Dan, George De Vere, Captain Burroughs, Harrison Armstrong, Lt. Dix, Albert Henderson, Sgt. Smith, Harry Eustes, Sgt. Wagner, Will Payne, Cpl. Jones, Lew Wood, Brown, George Shufeld, Kentucky Bill, Joseph McCarthy, Missoure Bob, George Edwards, Tennessee Dove, H. H. Wheeler, Alabama Sam, J. Emmendorf, Texas Jake, P. Termyck, Arkansas Pete, A. Cambridge, Belle Beauford, Gertrude Adrian, Mrs. Beauford, Mary Wallack, Sukey, Date Donohue. (Picayune, Monday, January 15, 1894.)

Although the French actress Rhea had been absent from the theatre's stage for years, only a fair house greeted the star when she returned at last on Sunday, January 21 in a varied repertoire. Rhea brought rare intelligence and understanding to each role of the week. Opening in Josephine, she chose a role well suited to her talents, and her portrayal was life-like. W. S. Hart was introduced as leading man, and
was considered in his role of Napoleon to be a most promising young actor. The drama remained until Thursday when on that night and the Saturday matinee *Camille* was played; while on Friday and Saturday, *La Giaconda* had an airing. Cast of Josephine: Napoleon..W. S. Hart, Talleyrand..John Palmer, Murat..Benson Pierce, de Beauharnais..Joseph O'Meara, Fouche..C. W. Mac Donald, Duke of Dantziek..Richard Ridgeley, Junot..N. H. Conniers, De Bourrienne..Edward Phillips. (*Picayune*, Monday, January 22, 1894.) In Dumas' *Camille*, Rhea found one of her best parts, she looked and felt the part, and her costumes were eye-catching. Fanny Hunt, a clever little New Orleans actress, did good work as Mme. Prudence and W. S. Hart was forceful as Armand. Cast: Armand..W. S. Hart, Duval..John F. Palmer, De Varville..Benson Pierce, St. Ganders..Edward Phillips, Gaston..Richard Ridgely, Gustave..Joseph O'Meara, Doctor..James Robinson, Messenger..Mc Bowers, Servant..J. W. Lawes, Camille..Rhea, Maxine..Annie Fording, Olympa..Minnie Bowen, Prudence..Fanny Hart. (*Picayune*, Friday, January 26, 1894.)

When Rhea presented Victor Hugo's *La Giaconda* on Friday, January 26, the lack of copyright laws was glaringly apparent. Rhea had rewritten, herself, the Hugo classic, to be a "better" acting vehicle. She did a good rewrite job
however, the drama played well, and Rhea was judged as striking in the lead role. Cast: Homodel..W. S. Hart, Angelo..John F. Palmer, Rodalfo..Benson Pierce, Anafesto..N. H. Conniers, Lorendano..C. W. Mc Donald, Gaudoguini..Richard Ridgeley, Berezonini..Joseph O'Meara, Father Lorenzo..M. C. Bowers, Catherine Bragadine..Minnie Bowen, Reginella..Annie Fording, Blanca..Fanny Hunt, La Giaconda..Rhea. (Picayune, Saturday, January 27, 1894.)

Stuart Robson returned on Sunday, January 28, and brought the familiar production of The Comedy of Errors in which he and William Crane had flourished for many happy years. Now in Crane's role of the Dromio of Ephesus, a new actor by the name of Giles Shine made his local debut. Shine proved a good choice for the exacting comedy role. His principal task of resembling Robson was considered to be remarkable, and the Picayune asserted that there were moments when the spectator lost the identity of the two actors. The production remained lavish and authentic and the company was good. Cast: Dromio of Ephesus..Giles Shine, Dromio of Syracuse..Stuart Robson, Sollinus..C. H. Macklin, Aegeon..William Yerance, Antipholus of Ephesus..John Farrell, Antipholus of Syracuse..W. H. Elwood, Angelo..J. L. Wooderson, Baltbazar..Joseph Zahner, Officer of Guard..George Birch, Adriana..Mrs.
Robson, Luciana..Grace Lynch, Phryne..Helen Gilmore, Aemillia ..Gabriella Mc Keon, Lesbia..Camille Campbell, Lorella..Annie Mc Cormack, Biousabella..A. Campbell. (Picayune, Monday, January 29, 1894.) The comedy hit played through Wednesday. On Thursday and through Saturday, Buckstone's comedy, Leap Year became the new bill, with Robson as Dionysius Dimple. The event was one of general interest, being the local premiere of Robson in the play. He had arranged and modernized the old comedy and was delightful, particularly in the scene in which he came home "tipsy." Mrs. Robson played a rollicking Irish lady with whom Dimple falls in love. Only fault with the play was that Robson was not on-stage enough. Cast: Dionysius Dimple..Stuart Robson, Solomon Solus..John Wooderson, Captain Mouser..J. J. Farrell, William Walder..William Elwood, Digges..W. L. Yearance, John Thong..F. H. Macklin, Joseph..George Lollton, Sarah O'Leary ..Mrs. Robson, Mrs. Flowerby..Grace F. Lynch, Mrs. Crisp..Gabriella McKean, Miss Desprate..Helen Gilmore, Susan..Camille Campbell, Netty..Annie McCormick. (Picayune, Friday, February 9, 1894.)

Richard Mansfield returned on Sunday, February 11 to present a week of constantly changing repertoire. His active schedule was as follows: Sunday, A Parisian Romance; Monday
and Friday and Saturday matinee, Beau Brummel; Tuesday night and Wednesday matinee, Prince Karl; Wednesday, The Scarlet Letter; Thursday, A Parisian Romance; Saturday, Merchant of Venice. That the Picayune did not appreciate the usual caliber of Sunday night audiences is apparent by this remark: "... The audience last night was one of more intelligence, culture and discrimination than the usual Sunday night audience." (Picayune, Monday, February 12, 1894.) In Octave Fouillet's A Parisian Romance, Mansfield handled the role of the baron, an old roué, in such an artistic manner that the Picayune hailed the portrayal as one of the finest pieces of acting on the stage (Picayune, Monday, February 12, 1894), and the Daily Item hailed the characterization as consummate genuine art. The critic of the latter maintained that Mansfield was so different in each role that if it were not known that the actor was cast in the different plays, it would have been impossible to recognize him. (Daily Item, Monday, February 12, 1894.) Cast: Henri De Targy..Arthur Forrest, Dr. Chesnel..D. H. Hawkins, Baron Chevrine..Richard Mansfield, Juliani..A. G. Andrews, Ambrose..W. E. Bonney, Tirandel..F. F. Smiles, Vaunartin..J. W. Weaver, Laubaniere..W. N. Griffith, Mme. de Targy..Julia Brutone, Theresa..Helen Gliddon, Mme. De Luce..Rolinda Rainbridge, Mme. De
Valmery..Sydney Worth, Marie..Ethelyn Friend, Rosa Guerin.. Beatrice Cameron. Beau Brummel, in which Mansfield had already been acclaimed previously, commanded an attendance that jammed the theatre to the doors. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 13, 1894.) D. H. Hawkins played the Prince of Wales. Mansfield's versatility was applauded again in Prince Karl, judged to be one of his happiest impersonations; and already seen during his previous engagement. (Picayune, Wednesday, February 14, 1894.) The Scarlet Letter drew an immense audience. Although the play lacked much of the brilliance of Hawthorne's great work, Mansfield was hailed for his fine performance as Rev. Arthur Dimmesdale. The suffering, remorse, anguish and repentance of the character were faithfully and touchingly depicted. (Picayune, Thursday, February 15, 1894.) In The Merchant of Venice Mansfield closed his engagement on Saturday, February 17. The theatre was jam-packed, and at the conclusion of the trial scene in the fourth act, Mansfield was called before the curtain and forced to make a talk in which he thanked the New Orleans public for its kindness to him. (Picayune, Sunday, February 18, 1894.)

An excellent company moved in on Sunday, February 18 to present Clay M. Greene and Joseph Grismer's The New South,
a play with a pro-Negro theme. As with *The Black Detective*,
the Picayune reflected much prejudice in reviewing this play.
In referring to a Negro character who was a political leader
and who stood up to whites, the critic admonished: "... Such a Negro would be speedily hurt in this part of the South." (*Picayune*, Monday, February 19, 1894.) Pheobe Davis headed the company, cast as follows: Captain Harry Ford..Joseph Grismer, General Houston Groynne..Holbrook Blenn, Kott Fessrenden..Eve Ackloon, Bessie..Bebe Vining, Dr. Tom Lincoln..Frank Lander, Mrs. Newport..Ella H. Wood, Paul Fitzburg..Ross O'Neil, Corporal Ferry..Frank Martha, Sampson..Clarence Ferguson, Sal..Ulric Collins, Ebon..William Mock, Hannah..Susie Johnson, George Gwynne..Phoebe Davies. (*Picayune*, Monday, February 19, 1894.)

The popular comic opera, *Wang* came to the theatre on Sunday, February 25, and brought with it a new star, Edwin Stevens, who played the leading role. The D. W. Truss Company was seen in the musical comedy, which was the work of J. Cheever Goodwin and Woolson Morse. Stevens was judged to be "immense" in the lead role. (*Picayune*, Monday, February 26, 1894.)

It was a red-letter day for the Grand Opera House on Sunday, March 4, 1894. On that date the celebrated British
star, Wilson Barrett came for a week, and brought his London Company for a round of noted plays. Each play was given with the same scenery and appointments as in the original production at the Princess Theatre, London. There was no advance in prices despite the exciting event. Barrett's playing schedule was as follows: Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday, Claudian; Monday and Thursday, Ben-My-Chree; Wednesday matinee, The Stranger; Friday, Hamlet; Saturday matinee, The Color Sergeant, Chatterton and A Clerical Error; Saturday night, The Silver King. Claudian was performed with this cast: Claudian Andiates..Wilson Barrett, Holy Clement..Austin Melford, Theorus..Edward Erwin, Zosimus..Stafford Smith, Volpas..Paul Belmare, Symachus..T. W. Percyval, Sealshon..H. B. Gibbon, Demos..T. Bolton, Slave..Haidee Wright, Caris..Cissie Gers, Almida..Maud Jeffries, Alcares..Ambrose Manning, Belos..Horace Hodges, Agazil..H. Cooper Cliffe, Thariogalus..Franklyn McLeay, Chountes..T. Bainbridge, Goths..H. H. Barker and W. Ford, Officer..A. Lynd, Edessa..Daisy Belmore, Theresa..Marie Dorey, Clea..Annie Bedford, Golena..Kate Barton, Hero..Alice Gambler, Sabelia..Elsie Chester, Grate..E. Royson, Clorit..Clarissa Reynolds. The famous English actor was a sensation in Henry Herman's Claudian, set in the time of the Byzantine empire. The production was
judged as exquisite as to acting and production, and all appointments were exactly as when given in the Princess Theatre in London. The *Picayune* described Barrett as being handsome, graceful, manly, and a picturesque figure. The company was described as adequate but not great. (*Picayune, Monday, March 5, 1894.*) The *Daily Item* hailed Barrett's performance as thrilling, and said that the audience was entirely enraptured. His every word was effective, and he was noted to be polished, refined and finished as well as fascinatingly handsome. (*Daily Item, Tuesday, March 6, 1894.*) *Ben-My-Chree*, a tragedy, was adopted from Hall Caine's novel, *The Deemster*, by Hall Caine and Wilson Barrett. Sacrificing his physical beauty, Barrett donned humble fisherman's garb to portray Dan Myirea. The characterization was perfect—from the rollicking of the reckless boy, through his troubles of homicide, his trial, banishment, and his return a changed man to meet his death at the church altar. (*Picayune, Tuesday, March 5, 1894.*) Again, in the title role of Kotzebue's *The Stranger*, Barrett gave an exquisite performance. He was ably supported by Haidee Wright as Mrs. Haller, Franklyn Mc Leay as Baron Steinfort, T. W. Percyval as Count Wintersen and Elsie Chester as Countess Wintersen. (*Picayune, Thursday, March 8, 1894.*) The *Daily Item* hailed Wilson Barrett's
performance as Hamlet as the most original in the world. This was an honor given to the actor by the English and American press collectively. (Daily Item, Saturday, March 10, 1894.) Only Henry Irving rivaled Barrett in producing plays in a masterly manner, historically correct as to costumes and properties. His Hamlet was such a production—and as the Prince, Barrett was handsome, graceful and his readings were sensitive and highly intelligent. Maud Jeffries, a young slender girl, was charming as Ophelia. (Picayune, Saturday, March 10, 1894.) Cast: Hamlet—Wilson Barrett, Claudius—Austin Melford, Laertes—H. Cooper Cliff, Horatio—Edward Irwin, Ghost—Franklyn McLeay, Polonius—Horace Hodges, Rosencrantz—Paul Belmore, Guildenstern—A. Barber, Marcellus—F. Ruben, Bernardo—Mr. Warren, Francisco—Mr. Hutton, Actors—Stafford Smith and E. James, Osric—T. W. Percyval, Priest—T. Bolton, First gravedigger—H. B. Gibbons, Gertrude—Elsie Chester, Player Queen—Alice Gambler, Second gravedigger—Ambrose Manning, Ophelia—Maud Jeffries. The important engagement ended with three one-acts at the Saturday matinee—Chatterton, The Color Sergeant and A Clerical Error and on Saturday night with a great production of The Silver King, as originally played by Barrett in London. Barrett was praised at the conclusion of the week as a really
fine actor of the thoughtful, modern quiet school. (Picayune, Sunday, March 11, 1895.)

It is to be remembered at this point that Bidwell's widow had signed over the Academy and St. Charles to Jefferson, Klaw and Erlanger during this season. Now bold advertisements announced the theatres as leased by the latter—who would soon, as the Theatrical Syndicate, become a major threat to the Grand Opera House.

Coquelin and Jane Hading made a heralded return again on Sunday, March 12, for one week. Since playing at the Grand Opera House in November of 1893, the celebrated pair had played in New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston and Havana, delighting audiences everywhere. The stars stayed in the Hotel Royal, the exclusive hotel of that era on the site of which today the Royal Orleans Hotel stands. Interviewed in her suite in the hotel by a Picayune reporter, the beautiful Jane Hading had some arresting comments to make. Her favorite role, she said, was that of Frou-Frou, with Adrienne Lecouvreur a close second. Other pet parts she regarded as Elmire in Tartuffe, Fabianne in Thermidos and Camille. She was particularly delighted with New Orleans audiences' understanding of Moliere, which being in classical French she regarded to be as difficult to comprehend as
Shakespeare's classical English. She insisted that the Grand Opera House audiences applauded and laughed at just the right places in Molière which was rare even in the cities of France! (*Picayune*, Wednesday, March 14, 1894.) The Coquelin-Hading return brought the following repertoire for the week: Sunday, *Nos Intimes*; Monday, *Les Surprises du Divorce*; Tuesday and Saturday matinee, *Thermidor*; Wednesday matinee and Saturday night, *Tartuffe* and *Les Precieuses Ridicules*; Wednesday, *Frou-Frou*; Thursday, *Adrienne Lecouvreur*; Friday, *L'Ami Fritz*.

Of this varied repertoire, several of the plays had been produced in November, and were repeated now with the same cast. Produced for the first time were *Thermidor*, *Frou-Frou*, *Adrienne Lecouvreur* and *L'Ami Fritz*. In *Thermidor*, Sardou's drama, Coquelin and Hading added new laurels to their great histrionic reputations. The play depicted the dismal days of the French Revolution, and the unhappy courtship of a young soldier and an aristocratic maiden who abandoned the world and became a nun. As Labussiere, Coquelin gave evidence of his great versatility. Now he showed that in addition to his great comic talent, he possessed genuine dramatic power, and could be truly pathetic. Jane Hading, too, was effective and powerful in the drama.

Cast: Labussiere..Coquelin, Martial Hugon..M. Volny,
Berillion..M. Chameroy, Ribout..M. Chameroy, Chateuil..M. Maury, Sanson..Maury, Percheur..Peurveyeur; Pourboyeur, Mar-teur, and Caveruier..M. Deroy; Lupin and Simonnet..M. Nicol-lini; Vasselin, Deburn and Gawin..M. Ramy; Bricard and Jumelot..M. Chambly, Broult and Pierre..M. Moriere, Riviere..M. Maxine, Un Crieur..M. Gillett, Fabienne Lecoulteux..Mme. Jane Hading, Francoise..Mme. Patry, Jocquelin..Mme. Barety, Mme. Broult..Mlle. Duluc, La Mariotte..Mlle. Dauville, Gaspard.. Mme. Simonsen. (Picayune, Wednesday, March 14, 1894.) 

Jane Hading's performance of Frou-Frou equaled the dramatic power of Bernhardt. Hading had thoroughly mastered her favorite role. She was wholly feminine and sentimental and the Picayune praised her as being "marvelous." Coquelin appeared as Brigard, an unimportant role which he made important. (Picayune, Thursday, March 15, 1894.) Cast: Brigard..Coquelin, Sartorya..Volny, Valreos..Malery, de Cambre..Chameroy, Pitou..Cambry, Demostique..Moriere, Gilberto..Jane Hading, Louise..Mme. Marety, Mme de Cambri..W. Danville, Zanetoo..Simonsen, Pauline..Mme. Dalba, La Gouvernoute..Mme. Durand.

In Scribe and Legouvé's Adrienne Lecouvreur, Hading was described as being more picturesque and attractive than any previous actress in the role, including Bernhardt. As Michonnet, the veteran stage manager of the Comedie Francaise, Coquelin was
inimitable, and kept the audience in a constant state of laughter. *(Picayune, Friday, March 16, 1894.)* *L'Ami Fritz* was the last new play of the repertoire to be introduced. The play was well known locally. Coquelin's Rabbi David was a worthy picture—every detail was perfectly drawn, and in the delightful creation of the rabbi Coquelin's identity was entirely lost. Cast: Le Ribba David..Coquelin, Fritz..Volny, Hanezo..Chameroy, Frederic..Deroy, Joseph..Ramy, Christel..Chambly, Catherine..Patry, Suzel..Mme. Dulud, Lisbeth..Mme. Dauville. *(Picayune, Saturday, March 17, 1894.)*

Their second engagement terminated with this comment from the *Picayune:* "... The visit of Coquelin and Hading to this city will always be remembered with the greatest pleasure, for it is seldom that such great artists come this far South." *(Picayune, Sunday, March 18, 1894.)*

*Little Puck* was a let-down after the great previous week. The farce was brought by Frank Daniels, the comedian, who pleased a satisfied house and the light play was a hit. In Daniels' company were Daniel Baker, Frank Giroud, John Canfield, Tony Williams, Nellie Bulkley, Odele Farrington, Fanny May, Leona Ambrose, Rose Mitchell, Viola Canfield, Marjorie Darr, Myra Smith, Ellie Rock, Walter Long, Thomas Kiernan, Oliver Howe, James Grant, John Donnelly, Rome Harris,
Another stellar day of that glowing season was Sunday, March 25. On that date the famous Mrs. John Drew returned to the theatre after an absence of many years and brought with her two younger members of the Drew family, Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Drew. Mrs. Drew was the most celebrated Mrs. Malaprop on the English-speaking stage, and it was in this famous role in *The Rivals* that the great old actress made her significant return. Cast: Mrs. Malaprop..Mrs. John Drew, Bob Acres..Sidney Drew, Lydia Languish..Mrs. Sidney Drew, Sir Anthony Absolute..Verner Clarges, Captain Absolute..Charles B. Hanford, Sir Lucius O'Trigger..Charles E. Verner, Faulkland..James Kearney, David..Al Harris, Fag..Edwin Wallace, Thomas..Carl St. Aubyn, Lucy..Anita Rathe. The veteran star played her role as well as when she was a young woman. She was hailed as an artiste in every sense by the *Picayune*, was rapturously applauded by a capacity audience, and given many bouquets of flowers. The presence of her old friend Joseph Jefferson could not but have proved another source of gratification to Mrs. Drew. Jefferson sat in the audience with her son and daughter-in-law, and heartily enjoyed and applauded her acting. It is remembered that the two veteran
stars had appeared together years before when Mrs. Drew last played at the Grand Opera House. Sidney Drew was fairly effective as Bob Acres, but Mrs. Sidney Drew was considered to be too boisterous as Lydia Languish. (Picayune, Monday, March 26, 1894; Daily Item, Monday, March 26, 1894.) The playing schedule of The Rivals included performances on Sunday, Monday and Wednesday matinee. On Tuesday and Thursday, Thomas Holcroft's comedy, The Road to Ruin was performed, while on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday matinee and night, Coleman's comedy, The Jealous Wife was the offering. In The Road to Ruin, Mrs. John Drew appeared in the role of Widow Warren, a part which she played as perfectly as she played Mrs. Malaprop. In the latest role, she was cast as a ridiculous old woman, made shameless by her money, who makes love to a boy in love with her granddaughter. She smirked, simpered, over-dressed, danced a hornpipe as nimbly as a girl, and was considered to be masterful in her interpretation. Sidney Drew and his wife were more happily cast in this play; he was excellent as Goldfinch and she was effective as Sophia. Cast: Widow Warren..Mrs. John Drew, Goldfinch..Sidney Drew, Mr. Dornton..Verner Clarges, Harry..Chas. B. Hanford, Sulky..James Kearn, Silky..Al Harris, Milford..Chas. Verner, Smith ..Edwin Wallace, Hosler..Carl St. Aubun, Jacob..Thomas

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Russell, Footman..Thos. Russell, Jenny..Anita Rathe, Mrs. Ledger..Kate Horan. (Picayune, Wednesday, March 28, 1894.)

The Jealous Wife was an adaptation of Fielding's Tom Jones. Mrs. John Drew did a beautiful portrayal of Mrs. Oakley, the jealous, painted old creature—suspicious of her husband, with a terrible temper. Her performance was another gem of art. Mrs. Mc Kee Rankin, another great old comedy actress, joined the cast to appear as Lady Freelove, with charming dash. The Sidney Drews were effective as Mr. Oakley and Harriet. Cast: Mrs. Oakley..Mrs. John Drew, Oakley..Sidney Drew, Maj. Oakley..Chas. E. Hanford, Charles Oakley..James Kearney, Mr. Russet..Verner Clarges, Lord Trinket..Chas. Verner, Sir Harry..Al Harris, Thomas..Edwin Wallace, John and Paul..Thomas Russell, Servant..Carl St. Aubry, Harriet..Mrs. Sidney Drew, Lady Freelove..Mrs. Mc Kee Rankin, Tilet..Anita Rathe, Maid..Katie Horan. (Picayune, Thursday, March 29, 1894.) Mrs. Ray Aschaffenburg, informant for this study, when interviewed, remembered well the occasion on which she attended a performance of the celebrated Drew family during that week. To Mrs. Aschaffenburg, the gala appearance of the several generations of the celebrated Drew family, together in one cast, constituted her most unforgettable memory of

16Interview No. 22.

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any play she saw at the Grand Opera House.

Nat C. Goodwin returned after an absence of eight years, to appear next on the season's agenda. On Sunday, April 1, Goodwin came in The Gilded Fool for a week, and raised prices to $1.50 minimum per seat. But the Times-Democrat felt that the price raise was justified because of the caliber of the star's comedy acting in the humorous role of Chauncey Short. (Times-Democrat, Monday, April 2, 1894.)

Cast: Chauncey Short..Nat C. Goodwin, Mathew Ruthven..R. C. Wilson, Bannister Strange..William G. Beach, De Peyster Rutven..Charles Allen, Jack Duval..Arthur Hoope, Rev. Howell ..Theodore Babcock, Perkins..Louis Payne, Morgan..Louis Barrett, Janitor..John Lock, Sophia Ruthven..Jean Walfers, Jessica Reed..Estelle Mortimer, Nell..Minnie Dupree, Margaret Rutven..Lilla Vane. Goodwin changed his bill on Saturday night, April 7 to give one performance of his own comedy, The Nominee, which was preceded by a one-act, Gringoire.

Augustus Pitou, who was in the first stock company of the Grand Opera House in 1871-1872, turned up as playwright now, when his moving drama, The Power of the Press was produced for the first time in the city. Pitou's work was given an elaborate production with beautiful sets showing the Manhattan Athletic Club, the lobby of the Imperial Hotel and a

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ship at anchor. The play dealt with the influence of the press upon the public, and opened at the Grand on Sunday, April 8. Lavania Shannon and Luke Martin headed the large company. Cast: Steve Carson..Louis Mabb, Morgan..Davenport Bebus, Harold..Chas. F. Gotthold, De Witt Norwood..Chas. Riegel, Freeborn..Thomas Dempsey, Sid Varen..David Wall, Hosford..Richard Webster, Joe Hawes..Charles Edwin, Tom Wyatt..George Stowell, O'Callighan..Luke Martin, Warner..Bruce Hayes, Captain Vale..Frank Sloan, Silas Smith..Albert Brown, Delegate..Henry Clarkson, Jim..Robert Frankson, Dan..Mary Hudson, Cabman..Arthur Bateman, Pete..Peter Sanderson, Annie..Etta Baker Martin, May..Sallie Riegel, Julia..Lavania Shannon, Mrs. O'Callahan..Lizzie Washburne. (Picayune, Monday, April 9, 1894.)

Finally, the long brilliant season was at an end. The 1893-1894 season was one in which the important stars, Coquelin and Jane Hading, made their histrionic debuts in New Orleans at the Grand Opera House, in which prominent stars like Mrs. John Drew and Nat C. Goodwin returned after years away from the city, in which recent new stars like Robert Mantell, Otis Skinner, De Wolf Hopper, and Richard Mansfield enhanced their popularity, in which minstrels--being overexposed--had to play in white face to attract crowds, and in
which musical comedy glamour girls like Marie Tempest and Pauline Hall entered the local scene. The sinister shadow of the Theatrical Syndicate began to get a stronger local foothold when at the beginning of this season, Mrs. David Bidwell leased both the Academy of Music and the St. Charles Theatre to Jefferson, Klaw and Erlanger under long-term lease and retired to her country home in Pass Christian, Mississippi. Spectaculars were more extravagant than ever, but melodramas were fewer and more actors came in good classical repertoire. The season had begun on September 4, 1893 with Lydia Yeamans-Titus in *Ups and Downs*. The supporting company was wretched and business was bad. Robert Mantell came on September 11 with a good company in a week of varied repertoire and drew big houses. September 17 brought George Wilson and his minstrels in white-face in *Monte Carlo*. The company was not well organized nor well rehearsed and business was only fair. Nellie Mc Henry followed on September 24 with *A Night at the Circus*, and gave a good show to big business. Charles Yale's *Devil's Auction* appeared on October 1 and stayed a week to very big business. On October 8, Charles T. Ellis came in *Count Jasper* and experienced a week of bad business. James T. Powers followed on October 15 in *Walker, London*, with a good company and play and did well.
On October 22, Lewis Morrison returned to do Faust and Richelieu to fine houses and big business. Siberia followed on October 29, and drew average business. On November 5, Thomas G. Seabrooke made an appearance with Isle of Champagne and did good business. On November 12, Fay Templeton came with Mme. Favart, which disappointed and failed to draw business. Herrmann the Great came on November 19 and did an immense business for a week. On November 26, the biggest event of the season was ushered in with the appearance of Coquelin and Jane Hading, who came with an all-French company and played a constantly changing repertoire to big audiences. Archie Boyd appeared on December 3 with The Country Squire and a disorganized company, and failed to make a hit. Abbott and Tillotson's Niobe followed on December 10 and fared reasonably. Robin Hood came on December 17, and played to good business. Modjeska made a happy reappearance on Christmas Day, 1893 with Otis Skinner as leading man and remained a week in varied repertoire to big business. Pauline Hall debuted on December 31 in The Honeymooners and fared well. But when Marie Tempest debuted on January 7, 1894, this musical comedy star did only a fair business in The Algerian. On January 14, James H. Wallack came in two plays that did not fare well. Rhea returned on January 21 after a
long absence and played in several heavy dramas with only fair response. Stuart Robson came on January 28 in *Comedy of Errors* and *Leap Year* to big business. Richard Mansfield brought a constantly changing repertoire on February 11 and did an immense business. On February 18, *The New South* came for a week and failed to draw. On February 25, *Wang* came and fared well. Wilson Barrett was the second outstanding attraction of the season; he appeared on March 4 in a varied repertoire and played to good business. Coquelin and Hading reappeared on March 11 and drew less heavily than on their first go-around. March 18 brought Frank Daniels in *Little Puck*. He did not impress and business was bad. On March 25, Mrs. John Drew returned significantly after a long absence in three celebrated comedy hits and did big business. Nat Goodwin reappeared with a good company on April 1 and brought several comedies and big business to the Grand. Augustus Pitou's *The Power of the Press* ended the 1893-1894 season, beginning on April 8. It was a failure in New Orleans although the play had been a success in New York, and did the worst business of the entire season. (*Picayune*, Sunday, April 15, 1894; *Times-Democrat*, Sunday, April 15, 1894.)

As the summer amateur theatrical interest in the city continued to stagnate into an all-time low of non-activity,
the *Daily Item* printed an editorial on Saturday, April 14, 1894, lamenting the dirth of amateur theatre:

Editorial—Amateur Theatricals: Quite a number of ladies and gentlemen in this city possess decided histrionic talent. Why let it slumber if it can be put to use without causing family jars? There are many gifted ladies and gentlemen here whose talents exercised upon the boards would afford the people great pleasure, and so far as the ladies are concerned, whose families would interpose no objection whatever to their appearance in public.

Summer is fast approaching. The theatres will soon close, so to remain until next fall. The people want amusement. Then why not get up a local dramatic and operatic combination and satisfy the popular demand? Not for money making purposes, but in the interest of affording pleasure and diversion to the people.

The Item therefore suggests that those ladies and gentlemen who are fond of the stage and have the ability to act or sing, hold a meeting to consider the feasibility of forming a dramatic and operatic company for summer entertainments. (*Daily Item*, Saturday, April 14, 1894.)

As the 1894-1895 season emerged, the conflict between Henry Greenwall and Klaw and Erlanger began to be manifested overtly. Before this season was over, the conflict would have gathered momentum, and would draw attention from the press all over the country. The Theatrical Syndicate did not have its actual birth until the summer of 1896. But preceding the beginning of the Syndicate, it is pertinent to
review at this point the network of factors leading up to the joining together of Jefferson, Klaw and Erlanger. For Greenwall's first friction with opposing forces came from this firm. The opposition would increase catastrophically after the formation of the Syndicate. But already foreboding signs of conflict emerged in the 1894-1895 season, when Jefferson, Klaw and Erlanger became firmly cemented in New Orleans with their taking over of Mrs. David Bidwell's leases to Bidwell's two New Orleans theatres.

The uniting of Klaw and Erlanger as a booking agency was an outgrowth of the conditions of the time. The demand to see stars had led to the death of the resident stock companies. Stars demanded much money, with the consequence that local budgeted productions built around a star suffered in quality. The condition had given rise in the 1860's and 1870's to the combination company system—a star with his own troupe. Tom Davy, the father of Minnie Maddern Fiske, had become the first to manage a circuit of theatres in and about New Orleans in 1865. Other circuits sprung up in the early 1870's. These circuits controlled groups of theatres in different parts of the country, and were originated for two significant reasons: they simplified booking problems, and they allowed the booking of one actor or company from coast
to coast. The two most important booking agencies to develop in the late 1880's and early 1890's were operated by Charles Frohman and by Klaw and Erlanger. Frohman's agency was the first to appear and was the largest in the country, having a chain of 300 theatres. Frohman had begun in partnership with W. W. Randall in 1887, but Randall withdrew in 1889, leaving Frohman as sole head of the firm. Frohman's circuit did a gigantic business in the United States and Canada.

Klaw and Erlanger established their agency in 1888, taking over an agency already established by H. S. Taylor. This agency had in turn been started by John E. Warner, and sold to Taylor in 1884. The agency was purchased for Klaw and Erlanger in 1888 by David Bidwell, just one year before his death. Bidwell not only bought the agency but supplied the funds to operate the mammoth business. His motivation for the huge expenditure was to fight and curb the booking and managerial activities of Henry Greenwall. ¹⁷ Charles Jefferson, son of the famous actor Joseph Jefferson, was associated in the beginning. But Jefferson withdrew from the partnership in 1895, to devote his efforts to managing the interests of his famous father. Klaw and Erlanger forged ahead to

build up a large circuit. By 1895 they controlled a chain of over 200 theatres, mostly in the South. Al Hayman had the third most important agency in the country, controlling the theatres in the West. Hayman cooperated with the Frohman agency to allow bookings from the North to the West coast. These four men—Klaw, Erlanger, Frohman and Hayman—would become the "big four" of the Theatrical Syndicate. At this point, in 1894, they were, however, still operating separately.

With arbitrary business methods and unfair tactics being employed by the several men in charge of organized booking, independent circuit managers found reason to combine in order to fight the octopus tactics beginning to be manifest. Foremost among these independent managers of the "open door" movement were Henry Greenwall and Albert Weis, President and Manager of the American Theatrical Exchange in New York. In 1894, Weis and Greenwall formed a partnership to protect their interests. The American Theatrical Exchange established a chain of theatres in the Deep South and Texas. This chain represented the interests of both Weis and Greenwall, amounting to nearly two hundred Southern theatres. By 1895, no star or company of prominence could tour below the Mason-Dixon line except under the auspices of the American
Theatrical Exchange.\textsuperscript{18}

As both sides became larger and more powerful, and as Klaw and Erlanger became closer to Greenwall in proximity—now that the former were in control of Bidwell's New Orleans interests, a face to face clash was imminent. The first news of the clash between Greenwall and the firm of Klaw and Erlanger came in the \textit{Picayune} of October 21, 1894. At that time the newspaper reprinted a report from the \textit{Charleston News and Courier} of the previous day which indicated that the skirmish was being waged in the South Atlantic states as well as in the Deep South:

\begin{quote}
  The Theatrical War Between Mr. Henry Greenwall and Messrs. Klaw, Erlanger and company goes merrily forward, and the indications are that it will grow fiercer as time goes on. One of the latest announcements made in this connection is that Klaw and Erlanger will have a new theatre in Savannah to offset the advantage which Mr. Greenwall gained over them when he bought Tom Johnson's house there. Charleston may be brought into the fight more than many people suppose. This city occupies a strategic point in the Southern circuit, and it is scarcely probable that either of the combinations will be content to see the other with a monopoly of the business here. The bitterness with which the fight is being conducted precludes the possibility of any
\end{quote}

manager in the circuit affiliating with both sides. . . . Such a contest will more than likely result in the South getting all the best attractions in the country, each side vieing with the other to bring us novelties. . . . (Picayune, Sunday, October 21, 1894.)

By March 10, 1895, the Picayune commented again upon Greenwall's increasing theatrical chain:

Henry Greenwall, manager of the Grand Opera House and the Texas Circuit, . . . has added to his circuit by leasing the Vendome Theatre in Nashville. . . . Manager Greenwall who also has the Grand Opera House in Nashville . . . has also leased the new Lyceum Theatre in Louisville. . . . This gives Greenwall control of theatres in New Orleans, Galveston, Houston, Fort Worth, Dallas, Atlanta, Savannah, Charleston, Nashville and Louisville, which arrangement assisting attractions in the South, will be all the better for New Orleans. (Picayune, Sunday, March 10, 1895.)

The 1894-1895 season was to be a vital, triumphant period for energetic, ambitious Henry Greenwall. With the earliest opening day in the history of the Grand Opera House, the theatre opened for the 1894-1895 season on Sunday, September 2, 1894. The event was marked by the return of Nellie Mc Henry in the farce, A Night at the Circus, the vehicle in which she appeared during the previous season. The company was almost the same as it was in the previous year, but the few substitutes seemed to have strengthened the troupe. John Webster, an admirable light comedian
appeared as Archibald; and Billy Barry scored a hit as Kicker, the office boy. The third worthy substitutes were the Taylor sisters—May and Maud, who replaced the De Witt sisters to play Oriole and Ida, respectively. The sisters aided the plot with musical specialties. (Picayune, Monday, September 3, 1894.)

Robert Gaylor appeared next, returning in the farce, Sport Mc Allister, on Sunday, September 9. The genial Irish comedian was a familiar face at the theatre and was well received. His play was held over through Sunday, September 16, since the next attraction was delayed in arriving. Cast: Jeremiah Mc Allister..Robert Gaylor, John Mc Allister..George C. Pearce, Dennis..John P. Carroll, Percy..Walter Goldie, Chauncey..Joe Kelly, Servie Time..William Gilbert, Conrad..Samuel Rose, Francoise Boulanger..H. E. Dark, Giuseppi Spaghetti..J. H. Davis, Policeman Bands..F. H. Jackson, Tilda..Mabel Craig, Genevieve..Marion Chester, Mrs. Mc Allister..Maggie Fielding, Minnie Chester..Kathleen Warren, Katy..Lillie Heckler, Mamie..Frankie Morey, Sadie..Jessie Burns, Sallie..Lizzie Ennis, Lizzie..Payson Graham. (Picayune, Monday, September 10, 1894.)

Ellie Norwood's farce, Our Uncle Dudley, fresh from a great success in London and Northern cities, made its New
Orleans debut at the theatre on Monday, September 17. The delightful story concerned an elderly man, accidently hypnotized, who performs amazing feats under hypnosis. Russell Basset headed the cast, and was impressive as Uncle Dudley, while L. L. Ottomeyer as the hypnotist and August Cook as the middle weight champion were inimitable in their roles. Cast: Dudley Fullalove..Russell Basset, Charles Fullalove..Earle Browne, Bulwer Brady..Frank Carrier, Prof. Tranz..J. L. Ottomeyer, Peter Siedge..Augustus Cook, Walters,.Harold Leslie, Call Boy..James Devlin, Gertie..Nina Mattland, Tilly..Augusta Nelson, Jenny..Minnie Thurgate, Winifred ..Lena Merville. (Picayune, Tuesday, September 18, 1894.)

Farce comedy was replaced by melodrama on Sunday, September 23, when twin brothers Willard and William Newell made their first appearance in New Orleans in The Operator. The sensational melodrama featured scenes of a shipwreck and a railroad bridge disaster that kept the audience jumping. The brothers were described as being startlingly alike in voice, physique and gestures. The play featured a racially integrated cast in that a quartet of Negro singers rendered sings within the context of the action, and met with favor. Cast: Silas Jackson..Willard Newell, George Darrington..William Newell, Joe Wilson..Harry English, Rags..John
The scene changed to musical comedy on Sunday, September 30, when The Colonel strode into the theatre. The play was adapted from the German by Oscar P. Sisson who was also star of the show. As co-star, making her debut at the theatre was Josephine Florence Shepherd, daughter of comedy stars Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Florence, who had now both died. The whole cast was so clever that the Picayune applauded: 
"... The play is the best that has come to the Grand Opera House so far this season." (Picayune, Monday, October 1, 1894.) Cast: Alfred Hummer..Oscar P. Sisson, Raymond Orme ..C. Clint Post, Simmons..Millard Simonson, Jehsoaphat.. Edward Hume, Rose..Lucy Taylor, Diana Dimple..Ida Marie Rogers, Anna..Marguerite Gonzalez, Susan..Emily Lascells, Honora Gringlethorpe..Josephine Florence Shepherd.

Charles Dickson, described as a clever, fresh comedian,
moved in the Grand for the week beginning Monday, October 8, and opened in Mrs. Pacheco's comedy, *Incoq*, an adaptation of the English comedy success *Tom, Dick and Harry*. The amusement came from the comedy of errors situation involving three men who looked exactly alike. Supporting Dickson as his look-alikes were Augustus Halbach and Frederick Backus. Cast:

*Cast:* Tom Stanhope, Charles Dickson, Gen. Rufus Stanhope, George W. Barnum, Harry Winters, Augustus Halbach, Dick Winters, Frederick Backus, Ned, Thomas W. Rose, Dr. Siegfried Hartmann, Gustave York, Mathew, Samuel Doherty, Moses, Edgar Allen, Kate Armitage, Lillian Burkhardt, Molly Somers, Gertrude Whitty, Minerva Winters, Kathryn Karmen, Isabella Howard, Florine Campbell. (*Picayune*, Monday, October 8, 1894.) The fun changed to more breezy comedy on Thursday, October 11, when Dickson presented for the first time in the city, Stanislaus Stange's *A Jolly Good Fellow*. In the title role of Captain Mark Wetlerill, which demanded that the actor run a gamut of emotion from tears to laughter, Dickson was outstanding. He was praised as pleasing, handsome and versatile. (*Picayune*, Friday, October 12, 1894.)

A red-letter week began with Sunday, October 14, at which time Thomas W. Keene returned for a week of varied classic repertoire and big business. He opened as Richard

On Tuesday and Friday, Keene appeared as Hamlet. His production of the tragedy was handsomely costumed and staged, and he introduced artistic original stage business. Keene's soliloquies and his management of the closet scene were particularly hailed as being exquisite. In the striking latter scene, Keene had a full portrait of the dead King on a transparency at the back of the stage, and with a clever arrangement of lights, the picture faded away at the climax and revealed the Ghost. Lillian Lawrence was an interesting Ophelia. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, October 16, 1894.) On Tuesday,
Keene appeared as Louis XI, and gave a fascinating and consistent portrayal of the inconsistent old wretch of a King. (Picayune, Wednesday, October 17, 1894.) At the Wednesday matinee, Keene appeared as Romeo in Romeo and Juliet, with Lillian Lawrence as Juliet. On Wednesday night, Keene appeared as Richelieu, with Miss Lawrence as Julie de Mortimer. In the emotional role of the Cardinal, the eminent tragedian scored another histrionic triumph. (Picayune, Thursday, October 18, 1894.) At the Saturday matinee, The Merchant of Venice was performed with Keene excelling again in the role of Shylock.

Herrmann the Great, who was always certain to attract mammoth crowds, returned on Sunday, October 21, 1894, and at his opening, he broke all audience records at the theatre: $1391.75 was taken in—with 24 people in the boxes, 961 in the orchestra, 584 in the balcony and 1,002 in the gallery. His skill was reputed to be so amazing that it baffled human belief. Standout features included "Mystery of the Caliph of Bagdad" in which a lady seated on a chair vanished and reappeared in the wings, and "The Artist's Dream" in which an artist's sketch of a beautiful girl turned to life. Mrs. Herrmann enchanted with her dance of the veils. (Picayune, Monday, October 22, 1894.)
The Silver King reappeared on Sunday, October 28, with Carl A. Haswin in the title role. The melodrama played throughout the week with the single exception of Saturday noon, when Little Lord Fauntleroy was offered. Cast of The Silver King: Wilfred Denver..Carl A. Haswin, Nellie Denver..Frances R. Haslin, Daniel Jalkes..H. S. Verney, Elijah Coombe..Charles Proter, Sam Baxter..Louis Giford, Capt. Skinner..J. D. Walsh, Harry Crockett..Frank Davis, Cripps..Presley Milton, Geoffrey Ware..Charles Roomer, Frank Selwyn..Thomas Wilt, Parkyn..Jerry Hunt, Tremens..Bennett Ridgeley, Tabitha..Pauline Rhodes, Susy..Marie Dudley, Olive..Annie Morton, Mrs. Gammage..Martie Edwards, Ned..Harold Walsh, Cissy..Mabel Walsh; and in smaller parts: George Morehead, Ed Cromwell, William Ballert, J. H. Milliken, George Kenny, Cal Stone, Joe Gaines, John Rotto, R. S. Brown and Will Burton.

(Picayune, Monday, October 29, 1894.)

Otis Skinner appeared at the theatre for the first time as a star and not as a supporting player when he came on Sunday, November 4. He had last appeared in support of Helene Modjeska. The new young star appeared in a varied week's repertoire including: His Grace de Grammont on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday noon, Friday and Saturday noon; The King's Jester on Wednesday and Saturday nights;
and *The Merchant of Venice* on Thursday. Skinner had been prepared well, as support for such stars as Lawrence Barrett, Augustus Daly, Edwin Booth and Modjeska. He was now regarded as a superior leading man, equipped with an air of refinement and magnetism. The cast of *His Grace de Grammont* included: Count de Grammont..Otis Skinner, Charles II..Frederick Mosley, Lord Jermyn..R. Peyton Carter, Lord Arlington ..Wadsworth Harris, James Hamilton..Frank Sylvester, Chamberlain..J. Burgess Weeks, Servant..J. Hamilton Bradshaw, Lady Castlemaine..Sarah Truax, Mrs. Middleton..Pamela Keith, Mistress Warnster..Rose Shuman, Hester..Maude Marean, Mistress Hamilton..Maude Durbin. The verdict of the initial effort was one of unqualified approval. Skinner played the lead role with dash, energy, earnestness and great intelligence. (*Times-Democrat*, Monday, November 5, 1894; *Picayune*, Monday, November 5, 1894.) *The Merchant of Venice* showed Skinner in quite a different type role as Shylock. The *Picayune* praised the performance by saying: "... He is clearly the best Shylock on the American stage today. ...

Maud Durbin was charming as Jessica, while Sarah Truax disappointed as Portia, having a disagreeable voice which was often uncontrolled. (*Picayune*, Friday, November 9, 1894.) Other leads were taken by Frederick Mosley as Bassanio, Wadsworth
Harris as Antonio and Frank Sylvester as Lorenzo.

Thomas Q. Seabrooke, the comedian, entered the scene next on Sunday, November 11. Seabrooke brought two fun-producing vehicles: Tabasco, which played through Wednesday, and Isle of Champagne on Thursday through Saturday. Both plays were musical comedies. Tabasco, a musical burlesque with libretto by R. A. Baret and music by G. W. Chadwick, was described as catchy. The production had a large number of people, including handsome chorus girls, well drilled and richly costumed. Seabrooke's funmaking power was strong throughout, and the production was a success. Cast: Dennis O'Grady, Thomas Q. Seabrooke, Hot-Head-Ham-Pasha, Walter Allen, March, A. S. Kingsley, Ben, Edgar Smith, Hawkins, Charles Mc Donald, Dusty Rhodes, Daniel Baker, Sol, George Thomas, Ambassador, D. S. Loeb, Attendant, John Crane, Hassem, Wilfred Arling, Fatima, Catherine Linyard, Has-Been-A, Carrie Perkins, Lola, Elvia Crox, Saa-Dee-Hassem, Hattie Moore. (Picayune, Monday, November 12, 1894.) Isle of Champagne, like its predecessor, was delightful. Seabrooke was inimitable as King Pomeroy II, and his comic songs were tuneful. Catherine Lingard was charming and provocative in the principal feminine role of Priscilla. (Picayune, Friday, November 16, 1894.)
In the mornings at the Grand Opera House for several weeks beginning on Thursday, November 15, Greenwall—a humanitarian and gentleman—donated the use of the theatre to Dr. Evans, described as a magnetic physician. Dr. Evans gave free treatments to the ill. Attended by large and enthusiastic crowds every day, the doctor presented first an interesting lecture, after which he treated some of the most urgent cases present. His uniform success was almost instantaneous, and the miraculous cures kept the vast audiences in rapt attention and excitement. The Picayune reported:

... An old gentleman with two crutches who had not been able to take a step in eleven years..., after five minutes threw down his crutches and walked across the stage like a boy.... A middle aged man, ... a cripple ... from sciatic rheumatism ... was cured in three minutes. An old lady was cured of paralysis, a young man was relieved of a severe cough.... Mr. Thomas Mullen of Calliope Street was very deaf .... and his hearing was restored in a few minutes.... (Picayune, Friday, November 16, 1894.)

The interest in the phenomenal cures spread throughout the city, and each morning during the several weeks of Dr. Evans' appearance, the populace of the city jammed the theatre. The newspapers swore that Dr. Evans was no hoax, but a man of God-given power. The event is significant in showing the charitable, kindly elements of Greenwall's personality.
Cleopatra was brought to the theatre by Lillian Lewis on Sunday, November 18. Miss Lewis wore beautiful costumes and performed a seductive dance in the adaptation of Shakespeare's drama. Cast: Cleopatra..Lillian Lewis, Charmain..Fanny Sprague, Iras..Lucy Moore, Alexas..Fanny Gonzalea, Antony..William Humphrey, Enobarbue..Hugh Gibson, Soothsayer..Fred Moule, Scarrus..Harry Minnick, Mardian..Geo. Sprague, Eros..Harry Pearson, Canidius..Hollis Alexander, Caesar..George R. Sprague, Lepiodis..H. Minnick, Agrippa..Harry Pearson, Octavia..Bessie Humphrey, Comitus..Eugenia Moonie.

(Picayune, Monday, November 19, 1894.)

Felix Morris, a comedian, brought a comedy repertoire for the week beginning Sunday, November 25, including A Game of Cards and Behind the Scenes from Sunday through Thursday, and The Old Musician and The Best Man on Friday and Saturday. Morris was considered as a top comedy man with dialects. His opener was the one-act, A Game of Cards in which he performed beautifully. In this cast were Rose Mercier..Fanchon Campbell, Mercier..W. J. Constantine, Anatone..Charles Chartes, Chevalier de Rochefelriier..Felix Morris. Behind the Scenes was the main play of the performance, and in it Morris ran the gamut of emotions. In the lead, he proved himself a capable artist. Cast: Miss Bernsford..Harriet Dellenbaugh,
Rose Duford..Gertrude Rivers, Miss Sharples..Florence Wood, Miss Koliar..Agnes Baxton, Miss Neal..Franchon Campbell, Bertie..Herbert Carr, Albert..Charles Chartes, Mr. Flat.. W. J. Constantine, Mr. Vamp..Fred Thompson, Waddles..Alfred Becks, Call boy..J. W. Bowen, Achille--Talma Dufard., Felix Morris. (Picayune, Monday, November 26, 1894.) The Old Musician was a one-act, portraying Morris at his best, with a French accent as Jacques, a wreck of a man, unhappily married. Agnes Paxton played opposite the star as Nina. The Best Man by Ralph Lumley had been a major London hit. In it Morris portrayed Price Puttlow, a nervous, fussy little Englishman; and he played with great skill. Cast: Mrs. Montanlyn..Harriet Dellenbaugh, Brenda..Gertrude Rivers, Ada ..Agnes Paxton, Nina..Franchon Campbell, Sarah..Florence Wood, Sir Lovel Gaze..W. J. Constantine, Allen..Herbert Carr, Walter..Charles Chartes, Minch..F. A. Thompson, Williams.. Alfred Becks, Pemble..John Bowen, Price Puttlow..Felix Morris. (Picayune, Saturday, December 1, 1894.) Eva Eddy, a renowned spiritualist medium, was booked next for one night on Sunday, December 2. She appeared in conjunction with Nora Belmonte, a famous European telepathist, spiritualist and Theosophist. The ladies performed a materialization seance at which spirit hands, faces and forms were
materialized in full gas light. (Picayune, Sunday, December 2, 1894.)

Charlotte Corday, an historical drama, appeared on Monday, December 3. It starred Cora Urquhart Potter in the leading role, and played the entire week. Mrs. Potter was described as a beautiful woman of some ability. In principal support was Kyrie Bellow as Marat. Bellow was called an actor of merit who carried the honors of the play. (Picayune, Tuesday, December 4, 1894.) Mrs. Potter remained a second week, appearing on Monday, December 10 through Wednesday, December 12 in Franchillon, Alexander Dumas' comedy. Mrs. Potter showed great improvement in the role of Francine, as compared with her role of the previous week. She acted her part well and won much appreciation from the audience. Kyrie Bellow was again excellent, as Lucian, and was described as being handsome and compelling. Henry Chanfrau and Arthur Bawtree gave fine support. Chanfrau is remembered as the star and husband of Mrs. Chanfrau, the Grand Opera House's only lady manager. It was his first appearance at the Grand in years. Cast: Lucien de Riverolles..Kyrie Bellow, Marquis de Riverolles..Verner Clarges, Stanislaus de Grandredon..Henry Chanfrau, Henri..Arthur Bawtree, Pinquet..Guy Nicholls, Celestin..John Ward, Eliza..Ida Ward, Baroness..Helen Lowell,
Annette Peedita Hudspeth, Francine de Riverolles, Mrs. Potter. *Picayune*, Tuesday, December 11, 1894.) On Thursday, December 13, the bill was changed for the remainder of the week to Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*. Mrs. Potter appeared as Kate Hardcastle and gave a portrayal almost serious in its intensity. Kyrie was applauded for his admirable portrayal of Young Marlowe. In top support were Verner Clarges as Hardcastle, Henry Chanfrau as Sir Charles Marlowe, and John Ward as Tony Lumpkin. *Picayune*, Friday, December 14, 1894.)


*The Devil's Auction*, Charles H. Yale's extravaganza, returned for Christmas week, beginning on Sunday, December 23, 1894. The play was as lavish as seen previously, and featured Sadie Stevens, Augustus Brano, Jr., Al Decker, James Short, George Cole, Mildred Holden, Vera Vernon, W. H.

New Year's week, 1895, brought on Sunday, December 30, 1894, the society comedy *Friends* by Edwin Milton Royle. The playwright was also star of the company which was managed by Arthur C. Aiston. Royle was a hit in the role of Jack. He proved himself a clever actor as well as a capable playwright, and the play was judged to possess considerable literary merit. Selena Fetter Royle, wife of the star-playwright, co-starred as Marguerite, and proved to be pleasing and consistent. Cast: Marguerite Otto..Selena Fetter Royle, Hans Otto..E. D. Lyons, John Paden, Jr...Edwin Royle, Harold Hunting..Adolph Jackson, John Paden, Sr...Harry Allen, Adrian Karie..Lucius Henderson, Jennie..Gretchen Lyons, Miss Wolfe ..Esta Williams, Miss Hartman..Zoe Halbert, Henry..M. Kelly. (*Picayune*, Monday, December 31, 1894.)

On Sunday, January 6, Marie Wainwright returned to the Grand to perform for a week in *Daughters of Eve*, a drama by A. E. Lancaster and Julian Magnus. Miss Wainwright's coming was hailed with delight, and her fine ability was afforded broad scope for display in the dual roles of twin sisters of very different personalities. Her charm, her
great dramatic talent and her melodious voice brought to the
dual role ample amounts of grace, force and interest. Cast:
Robert Hawthorne, Nathaniel Hartwig, Roderick Mc Allister,
Edward Poland, Wycherly, J. P. Keefe, Fred Bentam, Cecil Magn-
nus, Lord Talbot, Joseph Zehner, Dr. Desey, Alfred Burnham,
Tom, John Borden, Robin, Walter Crans, Mlle. Martini, Estelle Dale, Grace, Jeanette Northerd, Lady Harlow, Dorothy Thorne-
ton, Mrs. Dobbs, Kate Bromley, Jane, Imogene Hoyt, Rose Wych-
cherly and Rhoda Daintry, Marie Wainwright. (Picayune, Monday,
January 7, 1895.) Informant Mrs. Julius Cahn\textsuperscript{19} remembers
attending a performance at the Grand during that week, and
vividly recalls Marie Wainwright's splendid acting ability.
Mrs. Cahn considers Marie Wainwright to be the most unfor-
gettable actress she ever saw at the Grand, and this perform-
ance is Mrs. Cahn's most poignant theatrical memory of that
time.

Richard Mansfield returned to the Grand on Sunday,
January 13, 1895 for a week of varied repertoire, including:
Sunday, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde; Monday and Saturday night,
Napoleon Bonaparte; Tuesday, Arms and the Man; Wednesday
matinee and Friday, Beau Brummel; Wednesday night, The
Scarlet Letter; Thursday, A Parisian Romance; Saturday matinee,

\textsuperscript{19}Interview No. 2.
Prince Karl. Mansfield was given a warm reception in the dual role of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, a dramatization of the story by Robert Louis Stevenson. His change from one character to the other was described as "remarkable," as "genius" and as "exquisite art" by the Picayune. Cast: Sir Danvers Carew., W. N. Griffith, Dr. Lanyon., D. H. Harkins, Gabriel Utterson., A. G. Andrews, Poole., C. J. Butlidge, Inspector., F. F. Smiles, Jarvis., Addison Pitt, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde., Richard Mansfield, Mrs. Lanyon., Helen Gliddon, Agnes Carew., Katherine Gray, Rebecca., Ethel Chase Sprague. (Picayune, Monday, January 14, 1895.) In Lorimer Stoddard's Napoleon Bonaparte, Mansfield appeared in the title role. The audience was reputed to have sat in rapt silence for three hours under Mansfield's spell. The production was costly, with authentic scenery, costumes and properties. Mansfield's make-up was startlingly like Napoleon. Josephine was played by Helen Gliddon. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 15, 1895.) George Bernard Shaw's Arms and the Man was given its first performance in New Orleans on Tuesday, January 15, with Mansfield playing the role of the Swiss Captain. The actor played the part coolly, bluntly, and as the typical blasé man of the world; and was judged to be excellent. Cast: Major Paul Petkoff., A. G. Andrews, Nicola., W. N. Griffith, Major
Saranoff..William Harcount, Captain Bluntschli..Richard Mansfield, Catherine..Mrs. Mc Kee Rankin, Louka..Katherine Grey, Raina..Beatrice Cameron. (Picayune, Wednesday, January 16, 1895.) Beau Brummel, The Scarlet Letter and Prince Karl were performed as well as they had been during the previous season.

Nat C. Goodwin was the next big name to trod the stage of the Grand. He came for a week, beginning on Sunday, January 20, and performed in a varied repertoire including: In Mizzoura, Sunday through Wednesday and Saturday matinee; A Gilded Fool, Thursday and Saturday; David Garrick and Lend Me Five Shillings, Friday. In Augustus Thomas' melodrama In Mizzoura, Goodwin had a role, as Jim Radburn, the sheriff, admirably adapted to display his talent; and he gave a skilled, finished performance. Minnie Dupree was a hit as the heroine, a country lass; and William Ingersoll was a standout as the villain. Cast: Jim Redburn..Nat C. Goodwin, Col. Bollinger..Robert Wilson, Robert Travers..William Ingersoll, Jo Vernon..Clarence E. Holt, Bill Sarber..Louis Barrett, Sam Flower..Arthur Hoops, Dave..Louis Payne, Estrom..Julius Johnson, Kelly..Henry Lewis, Col. Chas. Miller, Kate..Blanche Walsh, Mrs. Vernon..Estelle Mortimer, Lisbeth..Minnie Dupree, Emily..Edith Randolph. (Picayune, Monday, January 21, 1895.) Goodwin excelled again as Chauncy Short in A Gilded
Fool, as performed during the previous season. In David Garrick, Goodwin starred in the title role and proved his versatility by presenting a delicate, dignified portrayal. Goodwin was ably assisted in the drama by Robert Wilson as Simon Ingot, William Ingersoll as Squire Chivey and Blanche Walsh as Ada Ingot. The tireless Goodwin performed the latter play on a double bill with the comedy Lend Me Five Shillings, in which he was hilarious as Golightly. (Pica­yune, Saturday, January 26, 1895.) Goodwin's versatility all week equaled the versatility of Mansfield during the previous week.

In this brilliant season, with one big star following another, Robert Mantell was the next important actor to appear. He came on Sunday, January 28, and chose a varied repertoire in which to appear for a week, most of which he had performed in the previous season. The schedule was as follows: The Corsican Brothers--Sunday and Wednesday, The Marble Heart--Monday and Saturday matinee, Romeo and Juliet--Wednesday matinee, Monbars--Tuesday and Thursday, Parrhasius--Friday, Hamlet--Saturday night. Charlotte Behrens was Mantell's leading lady, and she and the company proved good support for the star. Mantell appeared at his best in The Corsican Brothers, in which vehicle he had made a glowing
impression the previous season. Mantell introduced a new role when he appeared as Raphael in *The Marble Heart*. Raphael was said to be a part well suited to the personality and sympathetic acting of the young star, and he gave a sympathetic performance throughout. Charlotte Behrens was impressive as Marco. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, January 29, 1895.)

As Monbars, Mantell was at his best, giving to the role both dignity and charm. Cast: Monbars..Robert Mantell, de Maran ..William Stuart, Mouten..R. T. Ringgold, Dr. Daniel..Edward Hoyt, Laurent..Albert Brunning, Andre..Frank Smith, Taylenler ..William Young, Seward..Edward McGregor, Diane..Charlotte Behrens, Blanche..Eleanor Merron, Mme. Laurent..Mary Timmerman, Lucille..Henrietta Howard. (*Picayune*, Wednesday, January 30, 1895.) *Parrhasius*, in which Mantell had already been seen the previous season, was repeated with a more lavish production. Singers and dancers enlivened the play, and costly sets embellished it. (*Picayune*, Saturday, February 2, 1895.) *Hamlet*, which had also been seen before, was given in a most creditable manner. Charlotte Behrens was graceful as Ophelia, and the play was well received. (*Picayune*, Sunday, February 3, 1895.)

James A. Herne's hit drama, *Shore Acres*, was the next big attraction. The play, which had never been seen in New

A musical interlude enlivened the season when Marie Tavary's Grand Opera Company came on Sunday, February 10 for a week of grand opera. The array of singers was directed by Charles H. Prate, and included Marie Tavary, Nina Bertini Humphries, William Mertens, Payne Clark, A. L. Guille, H. Vondoennhoff, William Hamilton, Thea Dorre, William Scuster, Sophia Romani, S. H. Dudley, Dora Scott, H. S. Keady, Joseph Witt, Martin Pache; with Emerico Morrealle as musical
director. Playing schedule was as follows: Sunday, _Il Trovatore_; Monday, _Pagliacci_ and _Cavalleria Rusticana_; Tuesday, _Carmen_; Wednesday matinee, _Martha_; Wednesday night and Saturday matinee, _Bohemian Girl_; Thursday, _Tannhauser_; Friday, _Lohengrin_; Saturday night, _William Tell_.

Stuart Robson returned on Sunday, February 17 for two weeks, and began his series by presenting his familiar production of _The Henrietta_. Since Monday was taken over by a Mardi Gras ball, that of the Elves of Oberon, _The Henrietta_ opened on Sunday, and then continued on Tuesday through Saturday nights, with the exception of Saturday matinee, when _She Stoops to Conquer_ was performed. _The Henrietta_ was produced as it had been previously, and Mrs. Robson was again his chief support. Robson played the role of Bertie Vanal styne, with Mrs. Robson appearing as Cornelia. Goldsmith's _She Stoops to Conquer_ was as well received as it had been on previous occasions. Robson played again as Tony Lumpkin with Mrs. Robson as Kate Hardcastle. For the first time on any stage, Robson presented on Sunday night, _Lightfoot's Wife_, a comedy adapted from the French of Adrien Barvusse, and directed by William A. Hayden. The play dealt with gay Parisian life, and was well written, lifelike, and had bright situations and amusing dialogue. The production was
elaborate and meticulous in detail, and the company was judged to have performed excellently. Robson played Marmaduke with his usual easy, natural manner, his chatty way of speaking and his remarkable facial expression. Mrs. Robson was excellent as Peppa, an attractive retired singer married to a fierce Mexican. Cast: Lafayette Marmaduke,, Stuart Robson, Alphonse..John Webster, Jr., Taureau..William Yerance, Lightfoot..John L. Wooderson, Francois,,C. F. Montaine, Cobb..George W. Macintye, Webb..J. G. Bauer, Don Guzman y Montezuma..Henry Bergman, Bisque..W. D. Mc Givern, Roulette..Edward Mortimer, Masliere..Homer Penn, Penasse..Arthur Sun, Tournett,.J. Talest, Beautiful Perra..Mrs. Robson, Mme. Beaufort,.Gabriella McKean, Mme. Poissengal..Camille Campbell, Margaurite,.Grace Lynch, Theresa..Carrie Berg, Mouriette..Mary Green, Mlle. Dubosque..Kate Horne, Mlle. Demaire..Jene Jones, Felice..Marie Maze, Hortense..Dollie Dore, Louise..Sara Dorne, Gayotte..Youvette Yaw. (Picayune, Monday, February 25, 1895.) Then on Saturday night, for the last performance of Stuart Robson's engagement, he changed bills, and created the humorous role of Dionysus Dymple in Buckstone's comedy, Leap Year. The performance was accompanied by screams of laughter. (Picayune, Sunday, March 3, 1895.) For the first time since Greenwall became manager of
the Grand, a cancellation darkened the theatre from Sunday, March 3 through Thursday, March 7. On Friday, March 8, the playhouse was lighted again for three performances of *The Shepherd's Fold*, a domestic drama by Lucille Rutland, a Louisiana writer and poet. The strong drama was given on Friday and Saturday noon and night, and featured the best semi-professional and amateur actors of New Orleans at that time. In the cast were Guinno Socola, Claus Bogel, Annie Pitkin, Mirian Nelke, George Heath, Harry English, Fannie Hurt, N. Moody, Margaret Brisbane, Helen Foster and Clara Lewis. (*Picayune*, Friday, March 8, 1895.)

James O'Neill opened an engagement after a two-year absence, on Sunday, March 10, and the advertisement in the *Picayune* announcing his coming clearly marked the competitive clash between Greenwall and Klaw and Erlanger theatres: O'Neill was billed as "... the only star in town this week!" (*Picayune*, Sunday, March 10, 1895.) O'Neill returned with his celebrated *Monte Cristo*, which by now had been performed by the star over 30,000 times in the previous ten years according to the *Picayune*. But the newspaper insisted that theatre-goers never tired of the play because of the superior acting of O'Neill. (*Picayune*, Sunday, March 10, 1895.) The drama was played on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday,
Thursday and Saturday night; while on Monday, Friday, and Saturday matinee, Sheridan Knowles' **Virginius** was offered.

In *Monte Cristo*, O'Neill assumed his famous parts of Edward Dantes and the Count of Monte Cristo. Despite his many performances, he did not lose spontaneity, and he was judged to be handsome, graceful and accomplished in the role. In O'Neill's company were Hallett Thompson, William H. Pascoe, Albert Sackett, William Dixon, Sidney Booth, Frederick Howard, Robert Haines, Charles Fisher, George Williams, Frank Martin, George Edwards, M. Richards, Joseph Hawk, Seward Manuel, Fred Carroll, Frank Dean, James Travers, Edward Rankin, John Dobbins, Ed Laine, Kate Fletcher, Genevieve Harrison, Marie Floyd, Florence Rockwell. When O'Neill switched to *Virginius*, he proved that he was capable of performing beautifully in roles other than the one with which he was singularly identified. As Virginius, O'Neill was regarded as being well fitted in appearance, voice, classic features and manly, poised bearing. The star was by turns heroic, tender, terrible in revenge and startling in madness. The portrayal was received with great applause, and he was repeatedly called before the curtain. Florence Rockwell, as Virginia, was equally pleasing and lovely. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, March 12, 1895.)
Wang, the popular comic opera, made a return to the theatre on Sunday, March 17, for a week's performance by the D. W. Truss troupe. Leading roles were assumed by Virginia Earl and Marion Singer, as Mataya and the widow, respectively. The work of Goodwin and Morse, Wang was regarded as the most enjoyable comic opera on the American stage in that era.  
(Picayune, Sunday, March 17, 1895.)

Sadie Martinot, described as one of the most fascinating actresses on the American stage of that day, made her debut in the city and at the theatre on Sunday, March 24. She appeared all week in B. C. Stevenson and William Yardley's comedy, The Passport, assuming the lead role of Mrs. Darcy, a young widow. In this part, Miss Martinot revealed her beauty of face and figure, her gracefulness and her charming personality. She wore magnificent costumes, was delightful and versatile, and moved like a "light breeze." The lovely star was well supported by Max Figman who played excellently well in the role of a young English nobleman.  
(Picayune, Monday, March 25, 1895.)

A new trend in popular entertainment was noted when, on Sunday, March 31, the renowned composer, conductor and violin cello virtuoso, Victor Herbert, made an auspicious debut at the Grand Opera House. The celebrated musician
came that week to conduct the Gilmore Band, a famous musical orchestra of the day. The event ushered in a mounting interest in popular music and light opera as performed by bands. Listening to the music as performed by leading bands of the day would become as great a craze as attending minstrel shows had been only several years before. Victor Herbert was the prime celebrity of the musical engagement, but two other famous musical personalities were featured—Louise Natall, a prima donna soprano, and Frieda Simonson, regarded then as the greatest child prodigy pianist in America. Fifty instrumentalists composed Gilmore's famous Band. *(Picayune, Sunday, March 31, 1895.)*

On Sunday, April 7, *Robin Hood* came to continue the musical treat at the Grand. The comic opera was presented for four days—from Sunday through Wednesday noon and night, by Barnabee and Mac Donald's Opera Company, a group which included a company of sixty and a chorus of forty. R. E. Graham starred in the title role. *(Picayune, Sunday, April 7, 1895.)* The house remained dark for one night on Thursday, and then on Friday and Saturday that week, the United States Marine Band performed at the Grand Opera House. This well-known band was composed of fifty artists under the baton of Signor Fancuilli, one of the top band masters in the country.
at that time. It was unusual for this band to leave Washington, D. C., and never before had it appeared in New Orleans. This engagement was a great feat for Harry Greenwall. The band performed on Friday, and Saturday noon and night. Leading soloist was Carrie Roma, a soprano of note. (Picayune, Saturday, April 13, 1895.)

It should be noted that at this point in theatrical history, Greenwall was faring victoriously in his fight with Klaw and Erlanger. Greenwall's season at the Grand Opera House had been far more auspicious than those at the theatres of the former in New Orleans. In fact, the Academy of Music and the St. Charles were already dark the first week of April, 1895.

Lewis Morrison made a return for a week on Sunday, April 14, to present for a week his well-known role of Mephisto in Faust, a role in which he was now as solely identified as O'Neill was in Monte Cristo. Florence Roberts supported the star, as Marguerite, with Edward Elsner as a handsome, dashing Faust. (Picayune, Monday, April 15, 1895.)

Now another auspicious event occurred during this brilliant season. An important date in New Orleans theatrical history was Monday, April 22, for on this date, Madame Rejane, considered as the most brilliant and successful comedienne on
the French stage in that era, made her first appearance in New Orleans, at the Grand Opera House. The famous French actress came for a week and two days of outstanding and varied repertoire. As the final engagement of the season, Rejane's appearance was the culmination of one of the most eventful and brilliant seasons in the history of the Grand Opera House, and indeed in the history of New Orleans theatre. Mme. Rejane was brought to the United States by Abbey, Schoeffel and Grau, who managed the star and her French company in this country. The entire troupe, scenery, costumes and properties were brought from the Theatre of Vaudeville in Paris. Her playing schedule was as follows: Monday, April 22 and Tuesday, Wednesday matinee and night and Sunday, April 28—Sardou and Moreau's Mme. Sans-Gene, Thursday night and Saturday matinee—Henry Meilhac's comedy, Ma Cousine, Friday—Daudet and Belot's Sapho, Saturday night and Sunday matinee—Sardou's Divorçons, Monday, April 29 and Tuesday, April 30—debut of Ibsen's A Doll's House. In Rejane's opening, she scored a triumph. Mme. Sans-Gene was described as an historical comedy which had been especially written for her by Sardou, then regarded as the world's greatest living playwright. The Picayune described her portrayal in the title role in this way:
Comedienne to her finger tips, her sinuous yet angular body, her irritating mouth, her wicked eyes, her vivacity, her feline ways, her caressing and crackling voice, her impertinent swagger, all proclaimed her the Parisian washerwoman. . . .

The long review concluded:

. . . She is droll. . . . She is richly endowed by nature to fascinate and provoke laughter. She is by no means beautiful, but her large mouth, her tip-tilted nose, significant eyes, quaint figure and odd gestures, fit the character of the laundress elevated by force of circumstances to title and position in the court of Napoleon. She is the ideal comedy actress. (Picayune, Tuesday, April 23, 1895.)

Top support came from M. Caude-Lefehvre, M. Maury. De Neippert, and Mmes. Aimee Martial and Dulve-Maury as Napoleon's sisters. Ma Cousine had been especially written for Rejane by Henry Meilhac. As a pretty and admired actress, Risquette, the comedy star was shown in a very different aspect. In this play, she was far prettier, and wore becoming gowns.

The Times-Democrat especially praised the star's dancing ability and said her dancing was indescribable. Cast: Risquette..Mme. Rejane, Clotilde..Daluc, Victorine..Martial, Mme. Berlandet..Claudia, Rosalie..Marchette, Chancourtier..Numes, Gaston..Maury, Raoul..Rambert, Servant..Provost.

(Picayune, Friday, April 26, 1895; Times-Democrat, Friday, April 26, 1895.) Sapho was an adaptation of Daudet's novel, by Daudet and Belot. Although classified as a comedy, pathos
permeated the play, and Rejane was presented in an entirely
different kind of part, a dramatic one. Her emotional scenes
were hailed by the Picayune as comparing with those of Hading
and Bernhardt, and her versatility was regarded as remarkable.
The Times-Democrat argued that Rejane was so magnificent as a
tragedienne that Bernhardt could not surpass her. (Times-
Democrat, Saturday, April 27, 1895; Picayune, Saturday, April
27, 1895.) Cast: Fanny Legrand..Mme. Rejane, Irene..Duluc-
Maury, Alice..Martial, Hettema..Claudia, Francine..Samuel,
Divonne..Dauville, Rosario..Netza,Dechelette..Cande, Cessaire..
Numes, Jean Gaussin..Maury, Rettema..Courcelles, Pere La-
grand..Glides, De Potter..Moncharmont, Borderie..Kemm.
Divorçons was added to Rejan's triumphs. In the lead role
of Cyprienne, the fine actress revealed yet another facet of
her great versatility. In this role, she was wonderfully
happy and vital. (Picayune, Sunday, April 28, 1895.)
Ibsen's A Doll's House, given in French as La Maison de la
Poupée, was presented for the first time in New Orleans by
Mme. Rejan on Monday, April 29, 1895. The drama received
one of the most controversial receptions by the press of any
drama ever produced at the Grand Opera House. The Picayune's
narrow, introspective review was completely the opposite of
the objective, aesthetically intelligent review contributed
by the Times-Democrat. The Picayune decided that Rejane made no favorable impression in Ibsen's drama, which the latter critic attacked as being "... too dreary, unreal and immoral to please any gathering of playgoers." The Picayune, continuing the panning, complained:

... It struck a blow at the home circle that no one could understand or approve. Ibsen has made his own world and should live with his own creations. Imagine an unthinking, illogical, childish woman, a husband's idol, who being guilty of forgery and reprimanded by her husband for her crime, deserts fireside and children. It is said that Ibsen seeks to solve the problem, "What should a woman do who no longer wishes to live with her husband, but who is the mother of his children?" Go or stay? How does Ibsen solve it? He says: "Go!" But the world thinks otherwise and does not approve of the morbid tendency of so unhealthy and unnatural a theory. "The Doll's House" is a war on society ..., on civilization, government, honor, law and order. It is to be regretted that Mme. Rejane includes so weird and morbid a play in her repertoire. ... (Picayune, Tuesday, April 30, 1895.)

Despite the panning, the Picayune did praise Rejane's acting as Nora. With a completely different reaction to the drama, however, which was destined to become an ageless classic, the Times-Democrat judged The Doll's House to be a startlingly poignant and realistic drama. The excellent review is significant in its perception of the play's meaning:

... The events recorded in "The Doll's House" one might easily expect to find in some American household. ... Mme. Rejane remains French and as such
is probably but little appealed to by the profound motives of Ibsen's philosophic drama. The Latin races... are far less in touch with the Norse ideas than are the people of Anglo-Saxon origin.... The details Mme. Rejane executes to perfection. Her movement, intonation, pose and expression... are fine. Artists in painting pictures sometimes cast over their subjects a veil of most delicate gauze; not to be represented as a reality, but to give a tone to the ensemble. Ibsen's works have such a tone, and the veil which dims the highlights and lightens the shadows, bringing a wonderful unity of effect, is the semi-mysticism which plays upon one's feelings, fills the most commonplace events with vague uncertainties. "The Doll's House" is less weird than the generality of Ibsen's works, but the veil is there just the same.... There is a striking resemblance with Wagner's music, there are a great many sustained notes.... If Nora could let down and cry it would be an immense relief to herself and to the audience, but practically the same emotion has to be maintained through two acts and a half. In the story, the entire social scheme of the civilized world is... hinged upon the simple problems therein propounded.... Here are half a dozen questions which would divide the world into almost equal parts in a debate, and it is told of the play that in Norway discussions were wont to become so bitter that invitations to soirees often bore the request: "'The Doll's House' will please not be discussed." In Germany, the play was only given after having been changed. There, Nora, at the moment of starting away, relented and returned to her children. (Times-Democrat, Tuesday, April 30, 1895.)

Mme. Rejane gave her final performance on Tuesday, April 30, 1895, after a memorable engagement of nine days. The Times-Democrat judged that Ma Cousine had been the most popular presentation, with Sappho in second position. Mme. Sans-Gene
was regarded as better suited because of its patriotic story to France than to America. Divorçons was judged as over-noisy, and The Doll's House as too philosophic to be popular—since: "... It causes one to think rather than to applaud." (Picayune, Wednesday, May 1, 1895.)

As Greenwall's brilliant season at the Grand Opera House ended, the ambitious, tireless President of the New York American Theatrical Exchange acquired yet a new theatre. On April 29, Greenwall formally dedicated the Lyceum Theatre in Atlanta with Georgia's Governor Atkinson present at the ceremony. (Picayune, Sunday, May 5, 1895.) Although the country was suffering from a recession, the theatrical season in New Orleans prospered because of Greenwall's brilliant bookings at the Grand Opera House. (Picayune, Sunday, May 5, 1895.)

The long successful season of 1894-1895 began on September 2, 1894 and ended on April 30, 1895. Nellie Mc Henry appeared first on September 2 in A Night at the Circus, and played to fair business. Bobby Gaylor followed with Sport Mc Allister on September 9 and created only light business. On September 17, the Frank J. Currier Company came with Our Uncle Dudley, a good comedy that brought bad
business. The Newell Brothers followed on September 23 in *The Operator*, and business got even worse. More bad business resulted from *The Colonel* with Oscar Sisson, beginning on September 30. Nor did things pick up when Charles Dickson came on October 7 with *Incoq* and *A Jolly Good Fellow*. But the season took on a new perspective when Thomas W. Keene began a brilliant engagement of varied repertoire during the week of October 14. Business was big for Keene's engagement, and got even bigger when Herrmann, the Great created audience magic along with stage magic beginning on October 21. Carl Haswin appeared on October 28 in *The Silver King* and *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, while business remained big. Otis Skinner kept the theatre full when he came along on November 4 in a week of varied repertoire. And Thomas Q. Seabrooke's engagement in *Tabisco* and *Isle of Champagne* kept the big-business-ball rolling the week of November 11. Lillian Lewis did only fairly, however, when she returned on November 18 in *Cleopatra*. The reversal remained when Felix Morris failed to find appreciation during the week of November 25. Eva Eddy, a famous spiritualist, brought forth a capacity house when she appeared for one night on December 2. Cora Urquhart Potter and Kyrie Bellow debuted on December 3 in two weeks of varied repertoire, and created only a fair response
of business. On December 9, Sandow and his Trocadero Variety Company appeared for only one night, and found business very poor. Christmas business began to boom on December 16, when the Whitney Opera Company moved in with *The Fencing Master* starring Dorothy Morton. Charles Yale's *Newest Devil's Auction* returned on December 23, and kept business big. Holiday business remained big when, on December 30, Edward Milton Royle and Selina Fetter Royle appeared in *Friends*. The New Year's first billing brought Marie Wainwright on January 8, 1895 in *Daughters of Eve* and *An Unequal Match*, and big business continued. On January 13, Richard Mansfield came in varied repertoire and experienced a week of immense business. Splendid business also greeted Nat C. Goodwin when he followed on January 20 in a week of varied repertoire. Another star followed on January 27 when Robert Man­tell appeared in more varied repertoire, but business was only fair all that week. *Shore Acres* picked up the financial activity when it came on February 3. But business was only fair when Marie Tavery's Opera Company brought a week of grand opera on February 10. Stuart Robson returned for two weeks of comedy repertoire beginning on February 17, and kept the theatre packed. James O'Neill followed on May 10 in *Monte Cristo* and *Virginius* and did a week of expected good
business. March 17 brought forth a return of Wang which warranted big business all week. Sadie Martinot followed on March 24, appearing with Max Figman in The Passport, and found business light. March 31 began five performances of Gilmore's Band, conducted by Victor Herbert, with accompanying huge business. Robin Hood played for five performances beginning on April 7, featured Robert E. Graham, and brought good business. The United States Marine Band followed on April 12 and played four concerts to mammoth business. On April 14, Lewis Morrison returned in Faust and attracted big houses. The brilliant season ended with the most important engagement of the entire season, that of Mme. Rejane, who made her New Orleans debut at the Grand on April 22. The great French star brought a French company and played for nine days in a challenging repertoire that included comedy, drama and tragedy. However, her most important performance was as Nora in the New Orleans debut of Ibsen's A Doll's House. The celebrated play met with a scathing review from the Picayune, but the Times-Democrat gave an objective, positive review of the controversial drama. The season ended on April 30, 1895.

With a new mounting interest in the country in bands to provide musical entertainment, the Grand Opera House had
two of its most profitable engagements in the bookings of two bands: Victor Herbert and the Gilmore Band, and the United States Marine Band. On the other hand, not one minstrel troupe appeared during the season. As Greenwall's profitable season at the Grand ended and his interests elsewhere continued to mount, the Picayune said of the theatre magnate:

During the season, Manager Henry Greenwall's attention to home affairs has been largely devoted to extensive theatrical interests elsewhere. . . . including the new Savannah Theatre, the new Lyceum Theatre, Atlanta; the Vendome Theatre, Nashville; Nashville Grand Opera House; Lyceum Theatre, Memphis; Gavelston Grand Opera House, Houston Opera House, Greenwall Opera House, Fort Worth; Dallas Opera House. All these enterprises, together with the Abbey Theatre Building and American Theatrical Exchange in New York . . . involve $1,500,000 in theatrical property, 566 employees and an average weekly expenditure of $68,000. (Picayune, Sunday, May 5, 1895.)

The New York Dramatic Mirror applauded the significant territory gains and mounting theatrical interests of "... this great southern manager." The Dramatic Mirror's owner and editor, Harrison Fiske, would come forth as one of Greenwall's greatest allies against the Theatrical Syndicate in the next several years. In an article in the Mirror reprinted in the Picayune, the New Orleans Grand Opera House was listed as Greenwall's most beautiful theatre, with the greatest amount
of individuality, heading the list of many Greenwall thea-
tres all over the South. Particularly praised were the
beautiful auditorium and the stage, considered by Fiske to
be unsurpassed in facilities for fine scenic display. (Picay-
une, Sunday, May 5, 1895.)

While Greenwall controlled a large chain of theatres,
his interest in the Grand Opera House remained paramount; and
during the summer of 1895, the dynamic manager-tycoon ordered
a renovation of his most beautiful theatre. In an excellent
descriptive article, the Picayune of Sunday, September 1,
told of this renovation:

. . . When Greenwall first took over the Grand
Opera House, he had had the interior of the thea-
tre fitted with a color scheme of brown and gold.
The effect, although rich and impressive, was
somewhat somber. Greenwall and the Variété Asso-
ciation agreed during the Spring of 1895 to re-
decorate. Accordingly, when the 1894-95 season
closed, Frank Cox, a prominent theatrical archi-
tect, was engaged to undertake the task. No
expense or labor had been spared and at the com-
pletion, Cox vowed that: "No place of amusement
in the Union would present as attractive an
interior!" (Picayune, Sunday, September 1, 1895.)

The beautiful stairway, said in this article to be patterned
after an entrance in the Louvre, was changed but little.
However, the lobby at the head of the stairway was papered in
a light cream-color, the frieze of which was exquisitely
decorated by hand with a delicate fresco of vines, cupids
and emblems. The inner lobby, or foyer, was also papered in cream-color and painted by hand. New, more comfortable seats were installed in the orchestra and dress circle. The gallery, which was formerly at right angles from the wall, causing a heavy shadow below, was changed. Instead of the obstructive projection, a gentle incline was substituted, closing on the sides with an arch. Moreover, the gallery was extended forward by three feet, raising the capacity of the theatre by 200. The walls in the upper part of the house were colored in cool grays, creams and yellows, and exquisitely decorated with paintings that bore a close relation to frescos, but were a series of delicate murals. A large sounding-board was constructed across the top of the proscenium, and was decorated with a beautiful mythological group, surrounded by doves and cupids. Cox removed two gilt pilasters that had stood on either side of the proscenium, adding ten feet to the width of the stage, and eliminating a barrier that had cut off the view from the boxes. The horseshoe was remodeled to increase the number of boxes to twelve. Gallery and orchestra were graded for better viewing. Cox also reformed lighting facilities by installing an improved system of electric and gas lights. All woodwork in the theatre was painted white and trimmed in gold. By
rearranging the stockholders' seats, the span of the orchestra was doubled. Moreover, dressing rooms and property rooms were made more accessible to the stage. The lofts were equipped with fresh new scenery prepared by Cox in his studios in the French Opera House. Too, Cox created an elaborate and beautiful new curtain, with a design representing the "Judgment of Paris." In the painting a shepherd sat in the center, surrounded by goats, and held an apple while rival goddesses clustered about, awaiting his decision. The new curtain was described as being "... far prettier than the old one, which represented Othello, Desdemona and Brabantio. . . ." (Picayune, Sunday, September 1, 1895.) The latter curtain was described in detail as having been seen by informant Flo Field during an interview with the writer,20 and is illustrated in the study.

As the 1895-1896 season at the Grand Opera House got under way on Sunday, September 15, 1895, a feature story appeared in the Picayune of the four important men at the Grand Opera House who assisted Greenwall, with individual pictures of these four men who included Theodore C. Stewart, Morris Marks, Will Norton and William Evans. Theodore C.

20Interview No. 6, July 4, 1962.
Stewart, the treasurer of the theatre, was described as a courteous, honest gentleman, who had been long in Greenwall's employ. Stewart was born in New Orleans in 1852, and was educated at the private school of Prof. Larender; after which he attended and graduated from Jefferson College in St. James Parish. Prior to joining Greenwall's staff, Stewart had worked in the cotton business, and then as a private detective. Stewart had been treasurer of the Grand Opera House ever since the theatre came under Greenwall's management. Morris Marks, young assistant treasurer, was Greenwall's nephew. The boy was born in Houston, Texas on August 19, 1873, two years after the Grand Opera House had opened. Morris was only six months old when his parents moved to New Orleans, and he had lived in the city ever since. He was now only twenty-two years old, but had been with the theatre ever since his uncle took it over. Despite his youth, Marks was described as quick and correct in business "... with a smile for everyone on his handsome face, and universally popular." (Picayune, Sunday, September 15, 1895.) Will Norton was another attaché of the theatre who appeared when Greenwall took over. Norton worked with Will Evans in advertising and public relations, was an assistant stage manager, and served as boss of the extra actors.
Moreover, he was useful in many capacities, as a general utility man. William Evans was busy also in several capacities. He was in charge of advertising, was lithographer and chief doorkeeper for the theatre. He was born in New Orleans on October 29, 1864, and was schooled at St. Joseph's Catholic School. He had started out as advertising man for the Mc Nish, Slaven, Johnson Minstrels; and then became advance man for Cleveland-Haverly Minstrels, before joining forces with Greenwall. Each of these four gentlemen was described as being very popular with all classes of people, as was Greenwall, himself. (Picayune, Sunday, September 15, 1895.) Other staff named for that season in a subsequent article included: Henry A. Ottmann, press agent and chief usher; William Specht, leader of orchestra; Bernard Schiff, balcony doorkeeper; Martin Weil, gallery doorkeeper; Al Levy, J. G. Lynch, J. O. Diamond and A. J. Michel, ushers; M. J. Walsh and T. J. Griffin, officers; James Keegan, master mechanic; Joseph Thomas, assistant mechanic; M. J. Clark, master of properties; Browne Camille, assistant master of properties; Leon Swift Prosper, electrician and gas mechanist; Henry Magee, engineer; Al Marx, Al Wagner, John Kanal, W. D. Norton, Charles Scanlan and P. Magee, stage hands; Mrs. George, Mrs. Pfeffler and Miss Julia George, cleaners; Mrs.
Reed, matron. (Picayune, Monday, September 16, 1895.) This singular master list of personnel hired to operate the Grand Opera House gives a concrete picture of the complexity of the theatre's operation, and of the large number of paid employees needed for the theatre's smooth functioning.

Darkest Russia, realistic drama by H. Grattan Donnelly, opened the season on Sunday, September 15, 1895. The cast included O. M. Barr, who as Colonel Septimus Cobb, a breezy American, kept the house in laughter. Will Sands as Karsicheff, O'Kane Hillis as Paul and Maurice Drew as Alexis Nazimoff carried the dramatic parts to the great satisfaction of the entire house. Florence Roberts was a hit as Baroness Von Rhineburg, and Katherine Roland was forceful as Lida Baroski. (Picayune, Monday, September 16, 1895.)

Charles H. Yale's Newest Devil's Auction returned for another go-around on Monday, September 23, 1895. The extravaganza sported new specialties and new costumes. In lead roles were Chris Bruno as Toby, Maud King as the Fairy Queen, Mildren Holden as the shepherd boy and Mamie Fulton as the milkmaid. (Picayune, Monday, September 23, 1895.)

The White Squadron, described as a new patriotic naval drama by James W. Harkins, Jr., made its way into the theatre on Sunday, September 30, for a week. Its setting was in
Brazil, and it was concerned with the "Congress of Navies," formed when the rights of foreign citizens were encroached upon earlier that century. The play was acted well and was received warmly. Cast: Victor Staunton, M. L. Alsop, Demetric De Romacio, Frederick Julian, Francisco, J. H. Smiley, Paulo, George Turner, Santos, Charles Maclin, Marlinspike, O. J. Reynolds, Horatio Fritters, Henry Dixson, Da Fonseca, Randolph Murray, Bache, J. J. Morris, Jaco, C. E. Guere, Admiral Kromelof, George White, Admiral Von Wiegand, John Firth, Admiral Vivani, William Vesta, Admiral D'Antonia, J. J. Harmon, Commander Robinson, Alvin Chandler, Questa Da Silvera, Anna Barclay, Theresa De Romacio, Edith Julian, Hope Staunton, Florence Morrow. (Picayune, Monday, September 30, 1895.)

The theatre scene was set with melodrama on Sunday, October 6, when Henry C. De Mille's Lost Paradise appeared for a week. Two sets were particularly elaborate and realistic with decorator's art and intricate stage mechanics. These included a luxurious reception room and the superintendent's room at the factory, the latter set being replete with buzzing wheels and steaming whistles. The company was a good one, and featured in lead roles William Morris as the hero, Reuben Warner; Bingley Fayles as the villain; and
Frances Gaunt as Margaret Knowlton, the heroine. The production was directed by Gus Frohman and contained one member of the original New York cast, Etta Hawkins, as Cinders.


After a long absence, Louis James returned to the theatre on Sunday, October 13, for a week of varied repertoire. Since his last appearance with his wife, Marie Wainwright, Miss Wainwright had appeared frequently at the Grand Opera House. The couple no longer co-starred, and in the intervening years James had become a prominent actor. Now, he returned as a star. Alma Kruger was James' new leading lady. The star's repertoire was as follows: Sunday, Wednesday and Saturday matinee, Virginius; Tuesday, Wednesday matinee, Hamlet; Monday, Thursday, Saturday, Othello; Friday--first time in the city of Marmion. James was now regarded as Mc Cullough's successor as Virginius, and was regarded as ideal
in the role—with strong voice and remarkably adaptive expression and vocal techniques. James' company was judged to be only fairly good. *Virginius* best support came from William Harris as Apellius Claudius, Guy Lindsley as Icilius, Harry Langdon as Dentatus and Alma Kruger as Virginia. *(Picayune, Monday, October 14, 1895; Times-Democrat, Monday, October 14, 1895.)* Like *Virginius*, *Othello* came to James from the Me Cullough succession. The *Picayune* stated that no one could do the title role better than James. He was natural and impressive, and the production was lavish. All scenery and costumes were supplied by Wagenhals and Kemper.

**Cast:** Othello..Louis James, Iago..Guy Lindsley, Cassio..
William Harris, Duke..James Harrison, Brabantio..Harry Langdon, Gratiano..William Hunt, Roderigo..Thomas Cook, Montano..
Wilfred North, Lodovico..Richard Waite, Antonio..George Powell, Messenger..Charles Penley, Desdemona..Alma Kruger, Emilia..Alphie Hendrick. *(Picayune, Tuesday, October 15, 1895.)* James' Hamlet was thought to be careful and intelligent, but it was conceded that he was less than ideal. Alma Kruger, found in no way to be comparable to Marie Wainwright, was only a fair Ophelia. *Marmion*, a tragedy in five acts, was produced for the first time on any stage on Friday, October 18, 1895. Founded on Sir Walter Scott's poem, the
stage adaptation was by Percy Sage. In the lead role, James was thoroughly impressive, and he had ample opportunity for fine acting. Cast: Marmion..Louis James, De Wilton..Guy Lindsley, King James of Scotland..William Harris, Surrey.. Wilfred North, Blount..Collin Kemper, Fitz-Eustace..Thomas C. Cooke, Abbott..Harry Langdon, Host..James Harrison, Usher ..William Hunt, Constance..Alma Kruger, Janet..Aphie Hendricks, Abbess..Emily Grey, Monks..George Pevley and Richard White. (Picayune, Saturday, October 19, 1895.)

Another first occured on Sunday, October 20, when William Calder's Company made its initial appearance in the city at the Grand in Sutton Vane's melodrama, The Span of Life. The scene of the British melodrama was set in England and in Africa, and the excitement it produced exacted whis­ting, cheering and constant applause. Cast: Richard Blunt ..Milton Leffingwell (hero), Dunstan Leech..Wm. R. Hatch (villain), Cecile Jelf..Alice Ainscoe (heroine), Nutty.. William Friend, Dismal..Walla Walhalla, Dapper..Arthur Wal­halla, Tiptop..Charles Walhalla, Joshua..W. S. Evans, Azreck ..A. K. Adams, Perry..George Elwell, Inspector Ferguson.. Arthur Hill, Little Cecile..Little Daisey, Kate..Effie Darling, Shrove Tuesday..Clara Coleman, Mrs. Jelf..Florence Foster. (Picayune, Monday, October 21, 1895.)
What was reputed to be the largest production ever seen in New Orleans appeared with the next attraction, beginning on Sunday, October 27. On that date, the American Extravaganza Company, direct from the Chicago Opera House, came for a week to present the operatic spectacular extravaganza, Sinbad. The story concerned the voyage of Sinbad as told in the Arabian Nights, but in burlesque fashion. With a cast of one hundred and twenty-five, the production came directly from 526 nights during the Chicago World's Fair. The music was original, and the scenery and costumes were described as gorgeous. Principal players included Irene Verona as Sinbad and Catherine Barthe, premiere danseuse of the impressive ballet. Top support included Jessie Villars, Maraschina, Flora Evans, Cupid, Anna Suits, Salamagudi, Joseph Doner, Fresco, Douglas Flint, Snarleyow, James Keernan, Count Spaghetti. (Picayune, Monday, October 28, 1895.)

Thomas Keene returned to the Grand for the week beginning Sunday, November 3. Keene was now, since the death of Booth, conceded to be America's foremost tragedian. The classic repertoire of the star included: Sunday, Wednesday, Saturday, Richard III; Monday, Saturday matinee, Louis XI; Tuesday, Wednesday matinee, Richelieu; Thursday, Hamlet;
Friday, *Merchant of Venice*. Keene starred as Gloster in *Richard III* and was hailed as the best Richard on the American stage. The powerful actor was well supported. Cast: King Henry VI..Mr. Eagleson, Edward..Miss Baker, Duke of York.. Miss Regan, Richard, Duke of Gloster..Thomas Keene, Richmond ..Mr. Henning, Buckingham..Mr. Lowell, Norfolk..Mr. Stanford, Oxford..Mr. Quimby, Stanley..Mr. Ahrendt, Ratcliffe..Mr. Allen, Catesby..Mr. Milton, Tyrell..Mr. Garth, Blount..Mr. Josephs, Herbert..Mr. Walpole, Capt. of Guard..Mr. Sands, Brakenbury..Mr. Carleton, Tressel..Mr. Taylor, Dr. Shaw..Mr. Stone, Friar..Mr. Bennett, Lord Mayor..Mr. Baker, Elizabeth ..Miss Timberman, Duchess of York..Mrs. Baker, Lady Anne.. Miss Gallatin. (*Picayune*, Monday, November 4, 1895.) Louis XI was said to give the star great opportunity to display fervor, hypocrisy, love and fear--with transitions that rose to grandeur in his death scene. (*Picayune*, Tuesday, November 5, 1895.) The *Times-Democrat* swore that it had been many years since a comparable impersonation of the half-crazed king had been seen in the city, and added: "... It is a characterization that cannot fail to find a prominent place in the stage history of the present century." (*Times-Democrat*, Tuesday, November 5, 1895.) Richelieu was the next vehicle in which Keene was reputed to have shone brilliantly.
as the old Cardinal, while Miss Galletin, Keene's leading lady, was an attractive Julie. (Picayune, Wednesday, November 6, 1895.) Keene was excellent again as Hamlet and as Shylock. (Picayune, Friday, November 8; Saturday, November 9, 1895.)

Creston Clarke came next, on Sunday, November 10. The young tragedian was the scion of two distinguished acting families. His mother was a sister of Edwin Booth, and his father, John Sleeper Clarke, was a prominent comedian. The youth had made his debut with Edwin Booth in England in 1882, as a member of his famous uncle's company. Unfortunately, Clarke's booking was bad scheduling--having his week of tragic repertoire follow on the heels of Keene's week of tragic repertoire. Nevertheless, he made a most favorable impression in his varied presentations which included: Sunday, Wednesday, Friday, The Fool's Revenge; Monday, Thursday, Saturday matinee, Hamlet; Tuesday, Edgar Allen Poe; Wednesday matinee, Merchant of Venice; Saturday, Richelieu. Clarke showed great improvement as Bertuccio in The Fool's Revenge, and had ample support from Adelaide Prince, described as an attractive Southern girl, who portrayed Flordesila. Clarke's production of Hamlet was replete with elaborate sets and costumes, and the young star was competent as the Prince. The
cast included: Claudius..Frederic Vinson, Hamlet..Creston Clarke, Polonius..J. L. Carhart, Laertes..William Owen, Ghost..George C. Robinson, Horatio..Herbert Pattel, Rosenkrantz..Louis Chase, Guildenstern..George Sylvester, Osric..Ethel Carpenter, Marcellus..Asa Steele, Francisco..Sidney Prior, Bernardo..Vernon James, First Actor..William Owen, Second Actor..Frank Callahan, First Gravedigger..George C. Robinson, Second Gravedigger..Rodney Burton, Priest..John Nelles, Gertrude..Agnes Maynard, Ophelia..Adelaide Prince, Player Queen..Grace Addison. (Picayune, Tuesday, November 12, 1895.) Clarke was pleasing as Shylock and good as Richelieu and as Edgar Allen Poe in a dramatization of Poe's "The Raven." (Picayune, Wednesday, November 13; Thursday, November 14, 1895.)

Stuart Robson returned for the week of Sunday, November 17, 1895. The Picayune said of the comedian that he now appeared not a day older than when he first walked the stage of the Grand Opera House over twenty years before as a member of the first company at the theatre. He appeared in two comedies: Sunday through Wednesday, Forbidden Fruit; and Thursday through Saturday night, Government Acceptance. An immense audience greeted the star when he played Cato Dove in Boucicault's Forbidden Fruit. Mrs. Robson was again his

Daniel Hart's Government Acceptance was a new play for Robson. He played Tecumseh Sheridan, a low comedy hero, and was said to have produced laughter that never stopped all evening. His main supports included Mrs. Robson as Julia Phillips, Benjamin Howard as Robert Gordon, Carrie Radcliffe as Lilly Procter, Fancion Campbell as Mrs. Kingsley, Evangeline Erwin as Bertha Gordon, Henrietta Vaders as Mrs. James Gordon. The new play was a solid hit. (Picayune, Friday, November 22, 1895.)

Fantasma, the Hanlon Brothers' spectacular production, which had played at the Grand several years before, returned the week of Sunday, November 24. The show was described as a combination of Black Crook, Humpty Dumpty and Devil's Auction. Nettie Black played the lead role of Fantasma, with George H. Adams, Sadie Stephens, Orie Gerard and Pauline
Gidden in other important roles. ([Picayune], Monday, November 25, 1895.)

Marie Wainwright came next, appearing the week of Sunday, December 1 in a varied repertoire. Her schedule was as follows: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Saturday matinee, Sheridan Knowles' comedy, The Love Chase; Wednesday matinee, Camille; Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Tom Tayle's comedy, An Unequal Match; Saturday, Sunday, December 8, Daughters of Eve. The star was supported by the fine veteran actor, Barton Hill, and a good company. Seeing Miss Wainwright and Hill together reminded the Picayune critic of the Bidwell era at the Grand when the two important players were a part of the Star Dramatic Company. The Love Chase was considered "old fashioned" by the Picayune, since the fifty-year old drama had no seductions, villains or intrigues. As Constance, Miss Wainwright was said to give her part all the feminine grace, mischievousness and pertness that was demanded in the role; and she wore beautiful gowns. Barton Hill was seen as Sir William Fondlove, a part to which he was reputed to give all the courtly grace of the old school of acting. ([Picayune], Monday, December 2, 1895.) In An Unequal Match, Miss Wainwright played the role of Hester Grazebrood, a light-hearted country girl, in a most artistic manner. In excellent support
were Barton Hill as Dr. Botcherby, Gertrude Elliott as Bes­sie, Hattie Russel as Mrs. Montressor and Nathaniel Hartwig as Harry Arncliffe. (Picayune, Thursday, December 5, 1895.) Miss Wainwright's greatest triumph was in Laveatter and Magnus' strong drama, Daughters of Eve. In a dual role, she ran a full gamut of emotion, and was said to be equally con­vincing as tender, self-sacrificing Rose and as passionate, reckless Rhoda. Barton Hill was praised as being magnificent as the stern father, and the fine company gave excellent support. (Picayune, Sunday, December 8, 1895.)

Tuesday, December 10, 1895 was an important day for the theatre for on that date, the dazzling queen of musical comedy of that era, Lillian Russell, made her debut in New Orleans at the Grand Opera House. Actually, Miss Russell was billed to open on Monday, December 9, and hundreds of people were turned away disappointed when she came down with a cold and was forbidden by a physician to sing on that night. The "Queen of Song" opened a two-week engagement in Offenback's opera bouffé, The Grand Duchess, belatedly on Tuesday. Miss Russell appeared in the title role, and caused a sensation. The Picayune acknowledged that Miss Russell was perhaps the most beautiful woman on the stage of the day. Her grace, loveliness and vivacity were said to have won her
many new admirers. (Picayune, Wednesday, December 11, 1895.)

In support of the star were Marie Celeste, Susanne Leconard, Martha Habelmann, Mamie Sutton, Albert Jury, Claire Selton, Virai Rizl, Richie Ling, Fred Solomon, Joseph Hebert, Owen Westford, William Blaisedell, Florence Wragland and Polly Gobson. The Little Duke was the first offering to be presented during Miss Russell's second week, beginning on Sunday, December 15, and on Monday, Tuesday and Saturday matinee. The star was seen as the Duke de Parthanay. On Wednesday night and at a special Thursday matinee, The Grand Duchess was repeated. On Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Miss Russell starred in Offenbach's La Perichole, as the Street Singer. The songstress appeared under the management of Abbey, Schoef-fel and Grau, and was supported by a mammoth company of one hundred with twenty musicians in the orchestra that traveled with her. (Picayune, Sunday, December 15, 1895.) During her sojourn, Miss Russell gave an interview to the Picayune in which she attributed her curvacious figure to bicycling. She carried along her own bicycle wherever she went on the road, and thought nothing of peddling twenty miles at a time. The star insisted that she never wore bloomers, the then popular vogue, regarding such garments as ungraceful. Instead, when she rode, she donned a fetching costume.
consisting of a short kilt skirt, boots and a jacket. (Pica-
yune, Sunday, December 8, 1895.)

Otis Skinner appeared next, for Christmas week, begin-
nning on Sunday, December 22, in the following repertoire:

Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Saturday matinee, Villon, the
Vagabond; Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Christmas matinee, His
Grace de Grammont; Saturday night, The Merchant of Venice
and The Taming of the Shrew. The young star appeared under
the direction of J. J. Buckley, with scenery by Walter Bur-
ridge and costumes by Percy Anderson of London. Villon, the
Vagabond was a new play written by Charles M. Skinner, a
brother of the star, who was a Brooklyn journalist. In this
vehicle, Skinner appeared as Francois Villon, and was said to
display the dash of the cavalier, the ardor of a Roman lover
and great charm and pathos. Maud Durbin, a vivacious and
interesting young actress who played as Denise was introduced
as the new Mrs. Skinner. She had been discovered by Modjeska
and had improved greatly since her last appearance at the
Grand. Cast: Francois Villon..Otis Skinner, Dauphin..Fred-
erick Mosley, Charles VII..R. P. Carter, De Grigny..Mark
Price, Duke of Rheims..Harry Knight, Mayor of Paris..Robert
Bassett, Blaru..Frank L. Sylvester, Turgis..Custer Cunningham,
Don Nicholas..Paul Gerson, Loup..Earle Ryder, Peosele..John
Weeks, Montigny..J. L. O'Connor, Captain of Guard..Ray Cushing, Lieutenant..Walter Kilbourne, Mlle. Fremin..Adelina Roberts, Catherine de Vaucelles..Sarah Truax, Mme. Villon, Ruth Holt, Suzanne..Kate English, Mother Machicoue..Rose Souman, Margot..Ethel Lang, Simonette..Gilberte Forrest, Denise..Maud Durbin. (Picayune, Monday, December 23, 1895.) Skinner gave another fine performance as His Grace de Grammot, in which he had been seen during the previous season. Maud Durbin, Skinner's bride, was fetching as Mistress Hamilton. (Picayune, Wednesday, December 25, 1895.) In The Merchant of Venice, the Skinners played Shylock and Jessica, with Sarah Truax as Portia. In Taming of the Shrew, Frederick Mosley appeared as Petruchio, with Maud Durbin as Katherine. (Picayune, Sunday, December 29, 1895.) Miss Zillah Mendes Meyer, informant for this study,\(^{21}\) remembers seeing Skinner perform during this week, as the first of several engagements of important stars that Miss Meyer witnessed during the 1895-1896 season.

Alexander Salvini, son of the celebrated Tomasso Salvini, returned to the stage of the Grand, after an absence of several seasons, on Sunday, December 29, 1895. In less

\(^{21}\) Interview No. 28, July 4, 1964.
than a year from this date, the brilliant young actor would
be dead, prematurely at the age of thirty-five, at the height
of his exciting career. In what was to prove to be the fine
actor's last engagement at the Grand Opera House, Salvini
appeared for a week under the management of W. M. Wilkinson.
The star's repertoire was as follows: Sunday, Saturday mati­
nee, Don Caesar de Bazan; New Year matinee, Ruy Blas; Monday,
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, Three Guardsmen;
Friday, Hamlet. In the title role in Don Caesar de Bazan,
young Salvini was praised as "... the best Don Caesar on
the stage today, considering his handsome presence, his fine
eyes, his reckless impetuous methods. ..." (Picayune, Mon­
day, December 30, 1895.) Adelaide Fitz Allen was introduced
as Salvini's new leading lady. Cast: Charles II..Albert
Bruning, Don Jose..J. M. Francoeur, Marquis de la Rotunda..
W. V. Eanons, Don Diego..John Miles, Don Pedro..Walter Vincent,
Judge..Edmund Day, Captain of Guard..Norman Conners, Pacolo..
James Law, Perez..Augustus Balfour, Maritana..Adelaide Fitz
Allen, Marchioness de la Rotunda..Augusta De Forrest, Lazar-
illo..Lulu Klein, Don Caesar de Bazan..Alexander Salvini.
(Picayune, Monday, December 30, 1895.) In The Three Guards­
men, Salvini appeared as D'Artagan, and was reputed to give
a dashing and superb performance. The star was praised again
for his picturesque, dynamic portrayal of Hamlet. But his support was found to be disappointing, and not up to the playing standards set by the superior young star. (Picayune, Saturday, January 4, 1896.) Alexander Salvini had never been more vital nor electrifying that in his last engagement. When he died a scant year later of tuberculosis, shocked New Orleans critics and playgoers remembered the colorful and handsome actor with nostalgia. His death came in Italy on December 16, 1896, and the press met the death with glowing eulogies and disbelief.

A new theatre opened on Saturday, January 4, 1896, just opposite the Grand Opera House. The newest New Orleans playhouse was the Theatre Comique, at 926 Canal Street. The proprietors were E. M. Baehemin and W. J. Wolfson, and the competitors guaranteed continuous entertainment, with variety performances from 12 noon to 10 p.m. (Picayune, Saturday, January 4, 1896.)

Another auspicious occasion at the theatre that season marked the appearance beginning on Sunday, January 5, 1896 of Minnie Maddern Fiske who returned to New Orleans after years of absence, to star at the Grand. The New Orleans native appeared now for the first time since her marriage to Harrison Fiske of the New York Dramatic Mirror. A large photograph of
the star in the *Picayune* on Sunday, January 5, advertised
Mrs. Fiske's engagement and showed her to be a very beautiful young woman with dainty features and large expressive eyes.
Now a fine actress and at the head of her profession, Mrs. Fiske returned triumphantly to her home town where she had made many successes at the same theatre as a child and young girl. Minnie Maddern had been born in the Crescent City, the daughter of Thomas Davey and Lizzie Maddern. Her father was a prominent theatrical manager in the South, and her mother was the daughter of Richard Maddern, an English musician who came to the United States with his large family and organized the family group into a traveling concert company. Minnie's grandfather had also been orchestra leader at the Grand Opera House in its first days as the third Varieties Theatre. Mrs. Fiske's mother had been a fine musician. Minnie began to act at the age of three and thereafter she played a variety of parts, traveling until the age of fourteen. At the age of only five years, she appeared with Laura Keene in New York in *Hunted Down*; and subsequently had appeared with John Mc Cullough, Junius Brutus Booth, Agnes Booth, Barry Sullivan, Lucille Western, J. K. Emmett and Mrs. Scott-Siddons—all before she was fourteen! At the age of sixteen, Minnie Maddern began to star, and in 1890 she married Fiske and retired

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briefly from the stage. But she tired of the quiet life, and now made her first return tour since her retirement six years before. (Picayune, Sunday, January 5, 1896.) John Rankin Towse does not rate Mrs. Fiske as a great star. He complains that in all her roles, she presented her own identity without any substantial modification of speech, gesture or manner. Thus, she failed to reveal any distinct evidence of genuine role adaptation, according to the critic. Situations and circumstances differed, but not her personality. Also, Towse laments, for serious and emotional drama, Mrs. Fiske lacked the necessary histrionic qualifications: "... The deeper notes of passion she could not sound, and her pathos was hard and shallow, without the true ring. ..." Moreover, Towse insists, the star's elocution was faulty and did not lend itself readily to emotional expression.22 Mrs. Fiske's playing schedule was as follows: Sunday, January 5 and for the entire week (except Thursday) and at both matinees, The Queen of Liars; Thursday, Ibsen's A Doll's House and A Light from St. Agnes; Saturday night, The White Pink in addition to The Queen of Liars. Her dominant presentation, The Queen of Liars, was an adaptation by Harrison Grey Fiske, the star's husband,

22Towse, op. cit., p. 413.
from a French drama by Alphonse Daudet and Leon Henrique.

Mrs. Fiske had exclusive rights to the play, and consequently it was performed at her opening for the first time in the city. In the strong tragedy, Mrs. Fiske played the role of Marie Deloche, a victim of the sordid life she lived in Paris. The Picayune hailed the return of the comely star; and applauded that: "... the bud has blossomed into a glorious flower..." with her art now made ripe and full. (Picayune, Monday, January 6, 1896.) The Picayune and the Times-Democrat found particularly electrifying Mrs. Fiske's extreme naturalness, and her gift of playing with quiet restrained intensity. (Picayune, Monday, January 6; Times-Democrat, Monday, January 6, 1896.) This element of forceful but natural intensity served to produce sensitivity and nervous strain in the reaction of her adoring first night audience. (Times-Democrat, Monday, January 6; Picayune, Monday, January 6, 1896.) Cast: Marcel Mattler, James Neill, Pierre de Sonnancourt, Frank B. Mills, Paul de Brives, Albert Grau, Jacques Olivier, Lyster Sanford, Gaston, Harry de Vere, Countess Nattler, Ida Waterman, Lucille, Helen Macbeth, Mere André, Mary Maddern, Marie Deloche, Mrs. Fiske. When Mrs. Fiske appeared in A Doll's House, the Picayune responded with an objective, intelligent review that was a complete reversal of sentiment regarding
the play that had been expressed just a year before by the same newspaper when Mme. Rejane appeared in the drama. It can only be concluded that another critic reviewed the play. To the latest *Picayune* critic, the play was a poignant study of the great principle of individual freedom and independence for women as well as for men. Underneath the gay song of Nora, this critic perceived "... a very real woman, tortured with anxiety and hiding a hideous fear. ..." (*Picayune*, Friday, January 10, 1896.) The critic found particularly effective Mrs. Fiske's still and pantomimic reaction when her husband discovered her forgery—"... She did not speak a word, but her rigid attitude and strained face showed all the horror and despair she was experiencing." It was regarded as a magnificent bit of acting. (*Picayune*, Friday, January 10, 1896.) James Neill gave an excellent portrayal of Torvald Helmer; and the rest of the cast included: Krogstad..Albert Grau, Dr. Rank..Frank R. Mills, Mrs. Londen..Ida Waterman, Anna..Mary Maddern. The little sketch, *A Light from St. Agnes*, was written by Mrs. Fiske. It was said to be a beautifully constructed religious tragedy in which Mrs. Fiske took the leading role. Cast: Toinette..Mrs. Fiske, Michael Kerouac..James Neill, Fr. Bertrand..Albert Grau. (*Picayune*, January 10, 1896.)
Richard Mansfield came next to the Grand for the week of Sunday, January 12. In a few years, the young actor had skyrocketed to fame, yet setting aside many of the most cherished traditions of the stage. Mansfield had been born in Germany, the child to two distinguished musicians. He was educated at Oxford, and became an artist in Paris before turning to acting in England. (Picayune, Sunday, January 12, 1896.) Mansfield's playing schedule for the week was as follows: Sunday, January 12, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde; Monday, The Story of Rodoin, the Student; Tuesday, Prince Karl; Wednesday night and Saturday matinee, The Scarlet Letter; Thursday, A Parisian Romance; Saturday night, "Scenes from Three Plays." Mansfield had appeared before at the Grand in each of these plays except The Story of Rodoin, the Prince, a strong drama founded on Dostoyevsky's Crime and Punishment, and adapted for the stage by Charles Henry Meltzer. The play was produced by Mansfield for the first time in the city, and brought forth on Monday night one of the largest audiences ever to assemble in the theatre. As Rodoin, Mansfield created an exciting role, bringing shudders to his audience. His intense mental agony in the presence of every sight and sound that reminded the protagonist of his guilt was regarded by the Times-Democrat as a masterpiece of dramatic art. (Times-
Democrat, Tuesday, January 14; Picayune, Tuesday, January 14, 1896.) Cast: Rodoin Romanytch..Richard Mansfield, Porphyrius Petrowitch..D. H. Harkins, Warschawsky..Edmund D. Lyons, Sonia..Beatrice Cameron, Pulcheria..Eleanor Carey, Catherine ..Jennie Eustace, Natasia..Johnstone Bennett. On Saturday night, January 18, Mansfield closed his successful engagement by appearing in one act each of Prince Karl, Rodoin and Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Informant for this study, Major George Tate Sheehan saw each of Mansfield's performances during this engagement in the 1895-1896 season. Major Sheehan, a young boy at the time, helped Greenwall backstage; and was rewarded by being allowed to see each performance. He was particularly impressed at Mansfield's ability to change his bill each night, and he calls Mansfield "... the actor of all actors ..." as he remembers the performer with enthusiastic nostalgia.

Robert Mantell was the next star to return for a week of varied repertoire. He came on Sunday, January 19 and appeared in the following plays: Sunday through Wednesday night, first time in the city of Espy Williams' The Husband; Thursday, Friday and Saturday matinee, D'Ennery's Monbars;
Saturday night, The Corsican Brothers. The Husband was the only new play in Mantell's repertoire, and was described as a drama of revenge. Espy Williams, the playwright was a New Orleans man who was a friend of Mantell; and the former's Parrhasius was already in Mantell's repertoire. The newest drama concerned a French naval officer whose wife is dishonored by a villain before she takes her life by poison. In a subsequent revenge plot, the officer causes the death of the villain and makes love to the latter's wife. The plot was considered to be shocking but the play was well acted.


The greatest event of the 1895-1896 season was the unprecedented appearance at one time of the renowned British stars, Sir Henry Irving and Ellen Terry. The event was also a high point in the theatrical history of New Orleans, since the famed pair made their New Orleans debut with the engagement at the Grand Opera House during their first southern
tour in America. The exciting week's appearance began on Monday, January 27, 1896, and provided the following arresting schedule: Monday night and Saturday matinee, *The Merchant of Venice*; Tuesday, *Journey's End in Lovers Meeting* and *The Lyons Mail*; Wednesday, *Nance Oldfield* and *The Bells*; Thursday and Friday, *King Arthur*; Saturday night, *Louis XI*. The artists were brought to the United States by Abbey, Schoeffel and Grau, and were accompanied by the London Lyceum Company, a group of 100 players. The productions were hailed as the most sumptuous and grandest plays ever seen in New Orleans. Irving carried on his tour every piece of scenery and each property for every play. Thus, theatregoers were assured that they were seeing the exact counterpart of each play just as presented at the Royal Lyceum Theatre in London, of which Irving was manager-director. The famous acting group had just come from an extended New York engagement in which they won great praise. (*Picayune*, Sunday, January 26, 1896.) In estimating the artistic position of Irving, John Rankin Towse's appraisal is typical of the views of the star's contemporary critics. Towse maintains that it would be difficult to exaggerate the value of Irving's managerial services to the theatre and to the public. He reawakened popular interest in the legitimate drama; demonstrated the efficiency of the
artistic theatre as a commercial enterprise; showed once more how Shakespeare could be made to pay; and proved the superiority of the stock company over the star system. His acting was representative of suggested and suppressed emotion, rather than in the utterance of liberated passion. His mentality was one of the most potent elements of Irving's acting. Towse regards the star's best roles to be Mathias in *The Bells*, Charles I and Shylock. In these roles, his acting was regarded as memorable.²⁴ William Winter sums up Irving's method as being highly individual and richly fraught with elegant ease, intellectual repose and quiet gravity.²⁵ Regarding Ellen Terry's talent, Towse comments that the actress had indescribable charm of personality. She had grace, archness and was bewitching, but she lacked deep passion. Nevertheless, she was wholly imaginative, poetic and sympathetic.²⁶ William Winter says that Ellen Terry's performances that he witnessed were marked by the following qualities: beautiful carriage, handsome appearance, tones that melted into music, pliant method, effortless power, and absolute

²⁵ Winter, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
²⁶ Towse, *op. cit.*, pp. 296-311.
simplicity.\textsuperscript{27} The elite of New Orleans filled the Grand Opera House to the doors for the opening of the celebrated British stars. It is difficult to determine whether the \textit{Picayune} or the \textit{Times-Democrat} used the greater superlatives in applauding Irving's performance as Shylock. The \textit{Times-Democrat} called the portrayal a sublime one. Irving made Shylock a Jewish patriarch of scripture, portraying the grandeur of his race so that the great injustices which he suffered won for him the entire sympathy of the large audience. Irving's Shylock forced his personality upon the minds of the auditors as a thing electrifying, real and beautiful. In this way, according to the latter newspaper, Shylock became a personal acquaintance; and then he lay bare his forceful character. The portrayal was, then, not comical, but an intense tragedy. (\textit{Times-Democrat}, January 28, 1896.) The \textit{Picayune} regarded the masterful performance in the same light as the other reviewer. The tragedy which Irving portrayed, according to the \textit{Picayune}, was the tragedy of the injustice done to his race:

\ldots The endurance, the sufferings, the fierce desire for retaliation, and the sinking both

mentally and physically under the exercise of the laws of Venice.--these emotions, indigent to the performance, are but parts of the consistent whole with which Henry Irving endows this impersonation. (Picayune, Tuesday, January 28, 1896.)

Both newspaper critics agreed that Miss Terry's Portia was the most exquisite rendering of the role ever seen in the city. Winsome and graceful, she was said to breathe the spirit of Portia in every line of the text. She had great strength, and yet great sweetness. She was described as warm-hearted and tender, yet she was a coquette who captured her audience and held them in the palm of her hand. The Times-Democrat summed up the dual raves by saying that the portrayal would always stand out prominently in its day and generation. (Times-Democrat, Tuesday, January 28, 1896.)

The Picayune summarized by declaring the production as "...the best appointed, best costumed, best mounted and pictured and best acted performance of Shakespeare's 'Merchant of Venice' ever seen in New Orleans." (Picayune, Tuesday, January 28, 1896.) The support throughout was excellent, each member of the cast receiving special mention. Cast: Shylock..Henry Irving, Bassanio..Frank Cooper, Duke of Venice..Mr. Howe, Antonio..F. H. Macklin, Prince of Morocco..F. Tyars, Salanio..Mr. Lacy, Salarino..Martin Harvey, Gratiano..Ben Webster, Lorenzo..Fuller Mellish, Tubal..Mr. Archer, Lancelot.
Gobbio..Sydney Valentine, Old Gobbio..Mr. Reynolds, Gaoler.
G. Taylor, Leonardo..Mr. Marion, Batthazar..Mr. Ricington,
Stephano..Mr. Beimore, Clerk of Court..Mr. Tabb, Nerissa..
Maud Milton, Jessica..Alisa Craig, Portia..Ellen Terry. Miss
Craig was said to be Ellen Terry's daughter, and the sister
of Gordon Craig. Repeated curtain calls followed every act,
and after the fourth act, the curtain was raised and lowered
so many times that Henry Irving was forced to make a speech
and thank the vociferous audience for its tribute. The elite
of the city came to the opening in such numbers that the
press devoted considerable space to the prominent names in
attendance. The event was considered to be the greatest
social occurrence in many years. Since on no other occasion
were the names of the Grand Opera House's elite patrons men­tioned in the newspapers, the space devoted to the delineating
the "who's who" of that opening night is regarded as signifi­cant. Prominent patrons who occupied the boxes included:
Box A, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Jefferson and child; Box C, Dr.
and Mrs. A. W. De Roaldes, Mrs. Britton, Miss Leovy, Mr.
Stauffer; Box H, Hon. and Mrs. R. C. Davey, Mr. and Mrs. F.
R. Johnson, Miss Cora Schwartz, Miss Maggie Davey; Box G, Mrs.
Louis Burthe, Miss Loulou Hall, Miss Dolly Burthe, Mr. and
Mrs. Sidney Story, Mr. Paul Michinard; Box D, Mrs. E. H.
Mayer, Miss Flossie Cohn, Miss Rose Michaelis, Miss Viola White; Box F, Mr. and Mrs. Ike Feitel, Mrs. R. M. Kahn, Miss Selma Shwartz, Miss Tillie Shwartz, Miss Gussie Marx, Miss Selma Samuel; Box E, Miss B. Otero, Mrs. R. Chevallier, Miss C. Otero, Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Otero, Miss Lynch. (Times-Democrat, January 28, 1896.) It was further noted that Joseph Jefferson had now made New Orleans his winter residence. The fact was amplified in a feature story concerning Jefferson in the Times-Democrat on Thursday, February 20, 1896:

... Mr. Joseph Jefferson, the distinguished actor, has finally and definitely adopted the Crescent City as his winter residence. ... He has decided upon New Orleans as the ideal winter resort. ... A serious and weighty tribute to the attractions of the most interesting city in America. ... Tuesday's performance commenced with a short playlet called Journeys End in Lovers Meeting, in which Ellen Terry was cast as Lady Soupire, with Frank Cooper as Sir Philip Soupire and Ben Webster as Capt. Maramour. It proved to be a delightful sketch which portrayed a wife estranged from her husband; and was exquisitely acted. The main play of the evening, The Lyons Mail, was an adaptation by Charles Reade from the French drama Le Courier de Lyon. The play was based on a real trial in which an innocent man so resembled a robber-murderer, that he almost lost his life. The English adaptation was a
melodrama in which Irving played the dual role of the innocent and guilty men--Lesurque and Duboscq. His acting in each role was so distinct and yet so vivid, that the performance was regarded as a great triumph. (Picayune, Wednesday, January 29, 1896.) In chief support were F. H. Macklin as Courriol and May Whitley as Julie Lesurque. The Bells was preceded by the one-act comedy, Nance Oldfield, an adaptation of a French play by Fournier, made into English for Miss Terry by Charles Reade. As Anne Oldfield, Ellen Terry was delightful as a versatile actress. She played with a deftness that was described as exquisite. Following the comedy came Irving's spectacular production of The Bells, adapted from the Erckman-Chatrain play, The Polish Jew. The melodrama was a stirring tale of remorse in which a murderer is tortured by an accusing conscience. His victim was an innocent Jewish Polish peddler, robbed and murdered. The victim's horse escapes and the sleigh bells on the animal begin to ring and refuse to stop. The terrible character of the murderer is presented as a masterful psychological study: his dulled conscience, his agonizing visions, his sickening fear were all said to be portrayed so vividly that Irving held his audience spellbound and horror stricken. The performance was hailed as a great artistic triumph. Again, the scenic effects were remarkable.
Cast: Mathias..Henry Irving, Christian..Frank Cooper, Walter..Mr. Howe, Hans..Mr. Johnson, Dr. Zimmer..Martin Harvey, Notary..Mr. Gurney, Pres. of Court..F. Tyars, Clerk of Court..Mr. Lacy, Mesmerist..Mr. Archer, Catherine..Maud Milton, Sozel..Alisa Craig, Annette..Brenda Gibson. (Picayune, Thursday, January 30, 1896.) In J. Comyns Carr's King Arthur, Henry Irving created another magnificent production said to be replete with sumptuous scenery and exquisite costumes that were designed by Sir Edward Burne Jones. The music was especially written for the production by Sir Arthur Sullivan. An example of one breathtaking scene was the "Queen's Maying" scene: this was a tableau of sensuous beauty of an English woodland of striking colors, with a bevy of beautiful maidens who wandered about the shrubbery and trees. Ellen Terry's beauty, grace and emotional fervor were reputed to fit supremely the role of Guinevere. She wore beautiful gowns that added to the picturesque atmosphere. Julia Arthur played excellently the role of Elaine. Other principals included: Sir Lancelot..Ben Webster, Mordred..Frank Cooper, Sir Gawain..Clarence Hague, Merlin..Sydney Valentine, Morgan Le Fay..Mary Rorke. (Picayune, Friday, January 31, 1896.) In Boucicault's Louis XI, Sir Henry Irving and Ellen Terry concluded their memorable engagement.
in a blaze of glory. The Picayune asserted: "... It has
given New Orleans a series of the finest dramatic productions
ever seen here." (Picayune, Sunday, February 2, 1896.) In
the title role of Louis XI, Irving was said to make the part
of the imbecile king memorably realistic. He did not spare
the fiendish, revolting phases of the role: hatred, resent­
ment, anger, love of power and terror dominated the portrayal,
which was said to be "... a magnificent artistic display of
these emotions." (Picayune, Sunday, February 2, 1896.) In
chief support were Frank Cooper as the Duke of Nemours and
May Whitty as Marie.

Several informants remember with vividness attending
performances of Irving and Miss Terry during that unforget­
table engagement. Miss Louise Guyol remembers seeing The
Merchant of Venice, and particularly recalls Miss Terry as
Portia. She also witnessed Louis XI, and cannot forget the
acting of Irving as the King.28 Miss Zillah Meyer recalls
seeing Irving and Terry in The Merchant of Venice, and de­
clares that she will never forget the occasion.29

Edwin Milton Royle and his wife, Selena Fetter Royle,

28 Interview No. 5.

29 Interview No. 28.
returned for a week at the Grand on Sunday, February 2. The actor-playwright presented two plays of his own composition during the week, both being described as comedy-drama. The first, Friends, was presented from Sunday through Wednesday, while on Thursday and for the remainder of the week, Mexico, or A Modern Petruchio was offered. In Friends, Royle was judged to act with excellence, causing the audience to laugh and weep. Mrs. Royle was said to be charming and magnetic in the role of the heroine. The company was a good one, and sported several particularly fine actors including Lucien Henderson who played the young lover, William Bittner who was the blunt father, and William Humphrey who was seen as a dissipated opium-eater. Cast: Marguerite Otto..Selena Fetter Royle, Hans Otto..William Humphrey, Harold Hunting..Frank Kelly, John Paden, Sr...William Bittner, John Paden, Jr...Edwin Milton Royle, Adrian Karle..Lucien Henderson, Jennie Merryweather..Gretchen Lyons, Miss Wolfe..Florence Morrow, Miss Hartman..Julia Humphrey, Marie..Eloise Martiana. (Pica-vune, Monday, February 3, 1896.) Mexico was offered for the first time at its Thursday premiere. The story was set in Mexico during the Mexican War, and concerned a Captain of the Army who loves unwisely and too often. The play was well written and was staged handsomely. Royce played the Captain

Herrmann the Great returned on Sunday, February 9, and attracted throngs as usual. In his latest appearance, Herrmann was seen as Mephisto in a spectacular setting called "The Demon of Darkness." He was ably supported by beautiful Mme. Herrmann in her lavish and sensual dance of the colors; and a new feature was the appearance of "Trimby, the hypnotic wonder." (Picayune, Monday, February 10, 1896.)

Fanny Davenport made a return on Wednesday, February 19, 1896, in Sardou's Gismonda. Her production was so elaborate that two extra days--Monday and Tuesday of that week--were needed to set up the elaborate scenery and props. Stage carpenters worked all day and deep into the night both of those days to get the complex set ready for Wednesday. Miss Davenport was supported by Melbourne Mac Dowell and an
excellent cast. The star had acquired exclusive American rights to *Gismonda*, and had created a sensation wherever she had appeared in the play. Miss Davenport attracted a capacity audience at her opening. The *Picayune* judged the latest role to be the greatest that the tragedienne had ever played. The lavish drama in five acts was set in Athens in 1451, and the sets were breathtaking. The first act's set showed a view of the Acropolis, to the left of which was the Parthenon with its double row of Doric columns. On the right was an antique well shaded by firs and wild pines. In the distance was seen the Erectheium, supported by six statues of young Athenian girls, while farther upstage was the Propsiaca, flanked by two Roman towers. Other memorable scenes were equally elaborate, with a different set for each act. The fourth act showed a landscape with a view of the Nymphs' Hill on which were seen the ruins of the Temple of Venus with the Acropolis in the distance. The last act's set represented the Byzantine Church of Santa Maria, the nave of which was ornamented by a mosaic on a gold background, representing Christ and the apostles; with the altar ablaze with lights and jewels. The *Picayune* asserted that not even Henry Irving's lavish productions could approach Miss Davenport's production of *Gismonda* in grandeur, and that no production in the country had ever...
equaled it! The Times-Democrat vowed that the magnificent
sets outdid anything ever seen in the history of the city,
and that once seen it would never be forgotten. The costumes
were as lavish as the sets. Not only was Miss Davenport's
wardrobe dazzlingly beautiful, but her diamonds that were
worn in the cathedral scene alone were said to cost $150,000.
As Gismonda, the star was reputed to show more versatility
than in any other Sardou role, with light touches of a happy
widow who was sought in marriage by a gallant nobleman, with
deep love for her child, struggling against pride and con-
science. To this complexity was added another side of the
heroine, the fierceness of a woman who would commit a crime
for love. All these aspects of the character were mastered
by the actress. Melbourne Mc Dowell, as Almerio, brought to
his important role a dignity and pathos that won the audience.
(Times-Democrat, Thursday, February 20; Picayune, Thursday,
February 20, 1896.) Other important supporting players in-
cluded: Acciacioli..W. H. Elwood, Drakos..Fred Mayer, Prince
Jacques..Lauren Rees, Agnello..J. J. Fitzsimmons, Don Bridas
..Frank Willard, Mataxas..Ellis Ryse, Donata..Jean Howard,
Leanardo..Ann Fairchild, Thisbe..Mary E. Baker, Cycriella..
Louise Wakelee, Perciles..R. M. Barton, Delle Careri..Franklyn
Thorpe. The lavish drama ran through Saturday, February 22;
and then was held over the next week with the exception of Sunday, February 23 and on Saturday, February 29 at both of that day's performances. On these three occasions, La Tosca was acted. The lead part was one in which Miss Davenport had been seen several times before, and in which she ran the gamut of emotions. Melbourne Mac Dowell made an outstanding impression as Scarpia. (Picayune, Monday, February 24, 1896.) Both Major George T. Sheehan and Zillah Meyer saw Miss Davenport perform at the Grand Opera House during that engagement. Major Sheehan remembers the star in La Tosca; and Miss Meyer recalls the beautiful Sardou production. The latter informant considers the acting of Miss Davenport in that role to have been marvelous. Later that season, Miss Meyer saw Sarah Bernhardt perform, but in comparing the two stars, she stated that "... Truthfully, I didn't think too much of Bernhardt. ... But I thought so much more of Fanny Davenport's acting. She was marvelous."

Nat C. Goodwin returned for a week on Sunday, March 1, bringing a varied repertoire with this schedule: Sunday and Monday, In Missoura; Tuesday, David Garrick and Lend Me Five Shillings; Wednesday and Thursday, A Gilded Fool; Friday, 

30Interview No. 20. 31Interview No. 28.
Saturday and Saturday matinee, **Ambition.** Goodwin gave an admirable performance in Augustus Thomas' *In Missoura* in which he had been seen before. He was excellent as Garrick in Robertson's *David Garrick* in which he had also been seen before, and was well supported by Annie Russell as Ada Ingot. He was humorous as Golightly in *Lend Me Five Shillings,* and did another vivid comedy characterization as Chauncey Short in Carleton's *A Gilded Fool.* On Friday and Saturday, Goodwin appeared in a new character, when he presented for the first time in the city, the comedy-drama **Ambition** by Henry Guy Carleton. The play, described as the best political drama seen in the city in some time, dealt with the Cuban revolution. Goodwin had found a clever part in that of Senator Obadish Beck, whom the actor made a patriotic statesman-gentleman, strong, witty and ambitious. Annie Russell was delightful as the Senator's charming sweetheart, and the entire cast was excellent. Other important roles were those of Mrs. Cartridge, Estelle Mortimer, Sen. Hardy Marian, George Fawcett, Hon. Rufus Neptune, Louis Bergman, Jerry, and John Craven. *(Picayune, Saturday, March 7, 1896.)*

Lewis Morrison was the next star to return. He appeared on Sunday, March 8 in his familiar production of Goethe's *Faust* as Mephisto. On Friday, March 13, Morrison
switched to *Yorick's Love*, the play that had been translated from the Spanish especially for Lawrence Barrett by William Dean Howells. Morrison's Yorick was filled with jest, simplicity, and was loving and childlike. He changed easily in later scenes to a brokenhearted and frenzied man. His acting was praised as exquisite artistry, and he was well supported by Edward Elsner as Edmund, Florence Roberts as Alice and Mr. Whittelsey as Manager of the Globe Theatre. (*Picayune*, Saturday, March 14, 1896.) On Saturday, March 14, Morrison closed his engagement by presenting *Richelieu* in which he took the title role.

To change the pace, a new musical comedy was booked into the Grand as the next attraction. Beginning on Sunday, March 15, 1896 for a week, *Paradise Alley* played. The musical had pretty costumes, catchy music and novel effects, although the plot was weak. The cast featured Sam J. Ryan as Dominick O'Farrell, John Queen—a popular New Orleans native—as Downson Ups, Anna Suits as Rose O'Hara and Nellie Atherton as Mrs. O'Hara. Each of these players made a favorable impression and shared in the generous applause. (*Picayune*, Monday, March 16, 1896.)

Another new theatre appeared on the theatrical scene when the Bijou Theatre opened on Royal Street only one block...
from Canal. A low-priced house, the new theatre opened on Monday, March 23 with its own stock company featured in popular plays, with an added vaudeville company, to produce continuous entertainment from 2 p.m. until 11 p.m. for only 10 cents and 20 cents. (Picayune, Sunday, March 22, 1896.)

Henry E. Dixey came to the Grand on Sunday, March 22, in Augustin Daly's The Lottery of Love, which played all week with the exception of Saturday, March 28 when Dixey presented a novel performance, "An Evening with Dixey," in which he introduced all his famous songs and specialties from Adonis and The Seven Ages. Dixey, whose photo appeared prominently in the Picayune on Sunday, March 22, had become famous in the original production of Adonis, in which he played the title role for 700 nights in New York. Dixey's leading lady was Margaret Craven, and his company was under the direction of William L. Lykens. Billed with The Lottery of Love was the last act of The Seven Ages. Daly's farce The Lottery of Love was adapted from the French of Carré and Bisson. The play was said to sparkle with sentiment and concerned the matrimonial adventures of a young musical composer at the seashore. Dixey in the lead role was reputed to be pulsatingly handsome. Besides startling good looks and admirable training in comic opera, Dixey was said to be
also privileged to have had considerable New York experience in Augustin Daly's company as a protegé of Daly. But Dixey had never before been seen wearing trousers instead of his customary tights. His clever cast included: Adolpheus Doubledot...Henry E. Dixey, Benjamin Buttercorn...Thomas Keirns, Capt. Sam Merrimac...Hugh Ford, Tom Dangerous...William Bennett, David...Horace Thrum, Rye...W. A. Belasco, Grass...Walter Fry, Mrs. Sheramy...Mrs. Charles Edmonds, Diana...Pauline French, Anna Eliza...Georgie Wells, Jo...Margaret Craven. (Picayune, Monday, March 23, 1896.) In the last act of Seven Ages, Henry Dixey was seen as Albertus Van Loo, and was well supported by Pauline French and Thomas Keirns.

Primrose and West were the next important names of the entertainment world to appear, arriving for a week on Sunday, March 29. George Wilson and George Primrose starred as end men in the popular minstrel company, with Will West as the middle man. (Picayune, Monday, March 30, 1896.) Major George T. Sheehan, who witnessed performances during this engagement, contributes the following interesting note concerning the famous minstrel combination:

... I met George Primrose of the Dockstader-Thatcher-Primrose and West Minstrels. They were outstanding minstrels of the day. They split up, and George Primrose and Billy West stayed together. Then they fell out. Billy West would
leave performances to catch a train for New York to see the fights, missing about three nights, and a super had to go on for him.32

Wang reappeared on Sunday, April 5 for a week, with Albert Hart in the title role. Other important players included Frank Casey as Pepit, Georgie Redfern Cain as Mataya, Ethel Lynton as Widow Primrose, Nora Kopp as Gilette. (Picayune, Monday, April 6, 1896.)

An atypical production interrupted the regular professional season when on Sunday, April 12 and Monday, April 13, for two performances, amateurs of the city presented Clifton Taylor's drama, Won Back, for the benefit of the relief fund of the Continental Guards. For a dollar admission, playgoers saw this cast perform: Hugh Ransome..John F. Markey, Harold King..Claus W. Bogel, Austin Brooks..Henry McEnery, Frank Powers..Jacque Flynne, Abner Decker..Harold Lynwood, Homer Cooke..F. W. Armbruster, Constance..Edna M. Brothers, Lulu Osborne..Mrs. Herman E. Seiferth, Mrs. Barbour..Josephine Moss, Kate Barbour..Mrs. Claus Bogel.

On Tuesday, April 14, the professional season continued with the engagement of M. B. Curtis in the role of Samuel in the comedy, Sam'l of Posen. Formerly the comedy vehicles of Edwin Adams and Edwin Forrest, Curtis had created the role of Samuel, made a fortune and retired. But he had

32 Interview No. 20.
recently made a comeback in his famous comedy. Curtis was well supported by Albena De Mer as leading lady. Cast:

Samuel Plastrick..M. B. Curtis, Winslow..L. P. Hicks, Ellen Winslow..Phillis May, Mrs. Mulcabey..Eliza S. Hudson, Rebecca Dreyfys..Laura Gaden, Celeste..Albena De Mer. (Picayune, Wednesday, April 15, 1896.) The play closed on Sunday, April 19.

It was a worthy climax to the unforgettable season that Sarah Bernhardt was chosen to close this most brilliant season of 1895-1896. The celebrated French star came for her third visit to New Orleans and to the Grand Opera House on Monday, April 20, 1896, for an engagement of eight performances. She arrived with her entire stock company from the Theatre de la Renaissance, Bernhardt's own theatre in Paris. The highlight of her appearance was the presentation of the new drama, Izeyl, written especially for her by Eugene Maraud and Armand Sylvestre. The French star and her group were brought to the United States again by Abbey, Schoeffel and Grau. Her repertoire was as follows: Monday night and Wednesday matinee, Izeyl; Tuesday, La Tosca; Wednesday, La Dame aux Camelias; Thursday night and Saturday matinee, Gismonda; Friday, Adrienne Lecouvreur; Saturday, Phedre. It was now four years since Bernhardt's last engagement; and during the
interval she had founded her Theatre de Renaissance in Paris. Again, each production was given in French. *Izeyl*, a tragedy in verse, was set in the sixth century B.C., and concerned a barbaric woman, Izeyl who tempts a Buddhist prince, kills him and is condemned to torture unto death. Bernhardt's New Orleans debut in the new role was described as a wonder of beauty and power. In her turbulent scenes, she rose to a great pitch of dramatic force and greatness. The *Picayune* hailed this new effort as Bernhardt's greatest play. The support was admirable. M. Darmont was particularly excellent as the Buddhist Prince. Cast: Le Prince..Darmont, Le Yoqui ..Deval, Scundia..Deneuberg, Le Tukkutiki..Chameroy, Le Tisseur..Angelo, Le Lepreux..Lecroix, Un Prete..Castelli, L'Espion ..Piron, Le Mineur..Gerard, Le Pecheur..Jean Dara, La Pauvre ..Dubos, Un Rol Valneu..Ramy, Le Mattre des Ceremonies..Bruniere, Le Gardien..Geraud, Un Homme..Kolb, Un Homme de Justice..Andre, Princesse Harastri..Patry, Une Mere..Grandet; Princesses..Berthilde, Seylor, Moskovitz, Gournay; Yami..Boulanger, Fille..Marie, Une Jeune..Canti, Izeyl..Sarah Bernhardt. (*Times-Democrat*, Tuesday, April 21; *Picayune*, Tuesday, April 21, 1896.) Bernhardt triumphed again as La Tosca in which role she had been seen before. M. Deval was excellent support as Scarpia and M. Angelo was skillful as Mario. *La
Dame aux Camelias was another dramatic vehicle in which the star had already been seen. This play was described as her favorite, since no matter where she performed, at least one performance of the tragedy was given. Her death scene was again particularly unforgettable. M. Deval was poignant as Armand. (Picayune, Thursday, April 23, 1896.) Gismonda was a unique choice for Bernhardt since this drama had a happy ending—an uncommon experience for her. The stage setting was not as elaborate as in Fanny Davenport's production, but the Picayune regarded the acting as superior. She had good support from these players: Castelli as Eveque Sophren, Deval as Baccaria and Darmont as Almerio. (Picayune, Friday, April 24, 1896.) Bernhardt had been seen previously in the other productions presented, those of Adrienne Lecouvreur and Phedre. The Picayune said at her closing that each performance had been great. (Picayune, Sunday, April 26, 1896.) Mrs. Ray Aschaffenburg remembers Bernhardt's performance in Camille (La Dame aux Camelias) as outstanding. Miss Louise Guyol and Miss Zillah Meyer also saw Bernhardt perform. Miss Guyol considers Bernhardt to be the most electrifying

33Interview No. 22. 34Interview No. 5.
35Interview No. 28.
actress she ever saw, particularly unforgettable being her beautiful voice.

This last season to be completed before the menacing Theatrical Syndicate was created during the summer of 1896, was ironically an unforgettably brilliant one. Applauding the significant season, the *Times-Democrat* declared on Sunday, April 26, 1896:

> The season which closed at the Grand Opera House last night with fitting brilliance was in all respects a remarkable one, and one of which New Orleans has excellent reason to feel proud. There are few theatres even in the metropolis of New York that can boast of having put before their patrons in one short season such a list of the very highest class of dramatic attractions as Manager Henry Greenwall has presented during the season just closed. Taking from his list the great quartette which includes Richard Mansfield, Sir Henry Irving, Fanny Davenport and Sarah Bernhardt, it will be recognized that nothing short of the boldest enterprise could have attracted such very costly combinations so far from the regular circuit of the great northern cities, to which they have generally confined themselves and in which they are always sure of satisfactory financial results. These five [sic] attractions have been of material benefit to the city by popularizing it as a winter resort for the wealthier class of pleasure seekers and in further strengthening its claim to recognition as the Paris of the Western hemisphere.

No other season had contained so many brilliant stars, and Henry Greenwall's influence, energy and resourcefulness are acknowledged to be directly responsible for arranging the presence of so many important artists at the Grand Opera House.
in one season, talent that included Louis James, Thomas W. Keene, Stuart Robson, Marie Wainwright, Lillian Russell, Otis Skinner, the Hanlons, Alexander Salvini, Minnie Maddern Fiske, Richard Mansfield, Sir Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, Herrmann the Great, Fanny Davenport, Nat C. Goodwin, Lewis Morrison, Primrose and West and Sarah Bernhardt. This era was marked by the beginning of copyright laws. Several productions were marked by the announcement that the star had the exclusive rights to a given play. In a calm before the storm there were no local newspapers accounts of the friction from Klaw and Erlanger and the brilliant season was one of the greatest in the theatrical history of the city.

In summary, the 1895-1896 season began on September 15, 1895 with the production of Darkest Russia, which netted fair business. On September 22, Yale's Devil's Auction returned and played to good business. Pearson's White Squadron came on September 29 and played to fair houses. Lost Paradise followed on October 6 and also netted only fair business. On October 13, Louis James came in an impressive repertoire and business became very good. Then business slackened when only fair houses greeted Span of Life on October 20. David Henderson's Sinbad followed on October 27, was a fine show and drew big houses. Thomas W. Keene appeared as the next
big attraction on November 3 in a week of varied classical repertoire and netted very big business. Creston Clarke starred next, coming on November 10 in a varied repertoire, and netted fair business. The next star to arrive was Stuart Robson, who came on November 17 in a week of comedy and attracted average business. Fantasma returned on November 24 and played to good business. Marie Wainwright, always popular at the Grand, returned on December 1 in a varied repertoire and found business very good. On December 8, Lillian Russell made her debut at the Grand and appeared for two weeks in several comic operas to big houses. Otis Skinner was the next attraction, coming on December 22 in two dramas, and finding big business. Alexander Salvini came in an exciting series of dramas on December 29 and played to big houses. Minnie Maddern Fiske came on January 5, played in an arresting repertoire, but attracted only fair business. January 12 found Richard Mansfield taking over for two weeks in familiar repertoire and one new play, Rodion, the Student; business was good. Robert Mantell followed on January 19 in several familiar plays, but found business disappointing. Haverly's Minstrels came on January 26 for just one day and played to fair business. The most prominent engagement of the entire season was the debut at the theatre and in New
Orleans of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry. The two important British stars made their debuts on January 27 and stayed for a week of varied, striking dramas, playing to immense business. On February 2, Edwin Royle and Selena Fetter Royle reappeared in two of Royle's dramas, and found business only fair. Fanny Davenport returned on February 13 for two weeks, bringing the greatest, most lavish production ever to hit the city, when she appeared for the first time in Gismonda. For this drama, and for La Tosca, business was immense. March 1 brought back Nat C. Goodwin in his varied repertoire and he found big business waiting for him. Lewis Morrison followed in Faust and two other dramas on March 8. Average business greeted him. Paradise Alley, booked beginning on March 15, proved to be the poorest engagement of the season and business was bad. On March 22, Henry E. Dixey brought his familiar plays and found business fair. Primrose and West's Minstrels did big business when they appeared on March 29. Wang reappeared on April 5 and did very well. On April 14, M. B. Curtis came in Sam'l of Posen and found only fair houses to greet him. The last engagement of the season was the stirring return of Sarah Bernhardt. She came on April 20 in her familiar tragic repertoire with one new play added --Izeyl. Big business greeted her all week. The season
closed on Saturday, April 25, 1896.

During the summer of 1896, the Theatrical Syndicate was born, and a cloud formed that would obscure the Grand Opera House more and more in the next decade,—the last decade of the life of the most beautiful theatre in the South. Immediately prior to the beginning of the 1896-1897 season, on August 31, 1896, the Theatrical Syndicate was formed. Actually, it had been covertly in operation as early as February 1896, six months before, according to the New York Dramatic Mirror. At the actual formal birth of the Syndicate, six men met at an historical luncheon at the Holland House in New York City to formulate the Trust. These six men who together controlled more than 500 theatres throughout the nation included Marc Klaw and Abraham Lincoln Erlanger—who controlled 200 theatres in the South, Al Hayman and Charles Frohman—who together controlled 300 theatres from New York to the Pacific Coast, and Samuel Nirdlinger (called Nixon) and J. F. Zimmerman—who controlled theatres in Pennsylvania, particularly in Philadelphia, and throughout Ohio.


Together these men represented over ten million dollars. Their aim in forming the Theatrical Syndicate was to control the booking of all first class theatres and all touring attractions in the United States and Canada, and eventually in Europe—constituting a veritable theatrical monopoly. Members of the Trust filed open time with Klaw and Erlanger and agreed to book in connection with each other. The agreement of the Syndicate was set up in a preamble and nine clauses, with these specifications: (1) No Syndicate client could play in an opposition theatre uncontrolled by the Syndicate. (2) Any attraction appearing in Syndicate theatres must agree to play in a given city in a Trust theatre only, or remain out of that city. (3) Profits and "other income" were to be divided into three equal shares: 1/3 each to Hayman and Frohman, to Nixon and Zimmerman, and to Klaw and Erlanger. (4) In delegating responsibilities, Klaw and Erlanger were put in charge of all bookings, Hayman and Frohman were given charge of finances and profits, while Nixon and Zimmerman were made traveling representatives. Expenses were paid out of a general fund.

With the shrewd, calculating personalities involved

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38Ibid., pp. 34-38. 39Ibid., pp. 39-43.
in the Syndicate, all combining to pressure out independent bookings, in a surprisingly short time independent theatres were forced to join the Syndicate. Consequently, the Theatrical Syndicate became almost in complete control of American theatre. However, it never realized its dream to dominate the European theatrical market. An understanding of the personalities involved in the theatrical Trust shows more vividly how they achieved such unseeming success in completely dominating and tying up the theatre industry of the United States: Abraham Lincoln Erlanger had great business ability, and was shrewd with finances. He possessed intense knowledge of the "road," particularly in the South. Despite his shrewdness, Erlanger had no personal charm, nor did he have artistic perception. Consequently, he lacked the qualities necessary for an artistic producer, and his independent artistic ventures had not been successful.\textsuperscript{40} Marc Klaw was just the partner that Erlanger needed for success. Klaw was a polished cultured man who had been formerly a successful attorney and drama critic in Louisville. Because he had the personal charm that Erlanger lacked, it was his job to arrange terms with actors who found Erlanger impossible with which to deal.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{40}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 44-45.  \textsuperscript{41}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 46.
"Al" Raphael Hayman, like Erlanger, was a shrewd business man with no pretense to artistic ability or liking. Domineering and autocratic, Hayman was the most unpopular member of the Trust. Moreover, he had been connected in former questionable dealings. Charles Frohman was the only one of the Syndicate leaders interested in artistic production. As one of America's leading theatrical producers, Frohman knew all aspects of the theatre, from business and artistic standpoints. Frohman was the most genial and the most popular member of the Trust. His personality was to be important to the Syndicate, which was to be in sad need of popularity. Samuel F. Nirdlinger was known in business circles as Nixon, a name he preferred to Nirdlinger. Nixon's sole interest was in making money. This Syndicate leader was never given much power in the Trust. He was considered to be as unscrupulous and as unpopular as Hayman, but never wielded the influence in the Syndicate that Hayman did. Nixon and Zimmerman were taken into the Trust because of the theatres they controlled. With such a combination and with the subjection of the art of the theatre to the business of the theatre, what

42Ibid., p. 47. 43Ibid., p. 50. 44Ibid., p. 54.
followed was to be expected.45

By the end of the 1896-1897 season, the harvest of the Syndicate was being reaped at the expense of every independent actor and manager in the country. Typical of the underhanded tactics of the Trust, the terms and intent of the Syndicate were kept under cover and were not made known until the agreement was introduced as evidence in a libel suit with Harrison Grey Fiske on March 15, 1898.46 The manifesting of the Trust's malicious and selfish aims were just beginning during the early part of the 1896-1897 season. Efforts to curb the Syndicate would be underway before the season was over.

While the Syndicate's "Big Six" were meeting in New York to form the Trust, Henry Greenwall was in Boston, looking after the business interests of Pregoli, one of his clients whom he managed. Greenwall did not arrive back in New Orleans until September 10, 1896. (Picayune, Sunday, August 23, 1896.) Meanwhile, preparations for the 1896-1897 season were underway. More improvements were added to those already achieved in the previous summer at the theatre. The entire front of the Grand was painted and redecorated during the summer of 1896. Electric lights were installed over the

entrance, and from the box office to the lobby and including the grand stairway, incandescent electric lights lit the way of the theatre patron. The entire orchestra floor was supplied with new comfortable leather spring cushion chairs, while the chairs that were removed from the orchestra were installed in the balcony in the place of the balcony seats formerly found there. The dressing-rooms were repainted, and new scenery had been prepared. *(Picayune, Sunday, August 30, 1896.)*

The season began early, on September 6, 1896, even before Greenwall returned from Boston. Joseph Hart headed the company that appeared in the first attraction, a musical comedy called *A Gay Old Boy*. Hart took the principal role of Forrest Tree, a widower who must remain single for two years in order to inherit his wife's money. Carrie De Mar, a young singer-actress, co-starred; and the rest of the cast all were said to do well. These included Nellie Hartley, Al Leech, Robert Evans, Frank Gardiner, Donald Harlod, Mimiam Martall, Leona Ambrose and Lillie Reesilk. *(Picayune, Monday, September 7, 1896.)*

Frederic Bryton headed the cast starting on September 13 of Clay M. Greene's *Forgiven*, a melodrama that concerned a gambler who reforms. Pauline Baxter played the heroine,

Sir Charles Young's drama, Jim, the Penman made a return on September 20 after some years. Frank C. Bangs, so strongly associated with the role of James Ralston starred again. Bangs had played the role so often that he was considered quite superior in its interpretation. D. A. Bonta's company supported Bangs. Cast: James Ralston, F. C. Bangs, Baron Hartfield, W. J. Ashley, Louis Percival, Harrington Reynolds, Capt. Redwood, Edward Emery, Lord Drelinvourt, Ed Meyer, Jack Ralston, J. C. Vernon, Chapstone, Frank Battin, Dr. Pettywise, C. St. Martin, Mc Netherby, Norman Campbell, George, Fred Meek, Agnes, Eleanor Perry, Lady Dunscombe, Lillian Schovelia, Mrs. Chapstone, Lillian Secor, Nina, Marie Rice. (Picayune, Monday, September 21, 1896.)

Bert Coote and Nick Long, a comedy team, appeared in
The Other Man's Wife, a farce, beginning on Sunday, September 27. The comedians and their supporting company were managed by Edward C. White. The whole troupe pleased in a brisk and delightful performance. Julie Kingsley, described as a handsome and clever actress, appeared as leading lady. Cast:
Oscar Timid..Bert Coote, Lionel Easyside..Nick Long, Sprinkler..Harry Stanley, Fuller Work..Charles Giflyn, Lightning..Wallace Henderson, Angelica..Julie Kingsley, Ruby Timid..Idalene Cotton, Mrs. Stern..Lillian Dix, Annette..Carrie Medford, Salley..Marion Montrose. (Picayune, Monday, September 28, 1896.)

The Byrne Brothers' spectacular variety production, Eight Bells, premiered for the first time in the city on Sunday, October 4 and made a hit all week. The play's action took place on board an ocean liner and there were impressive mechanical effects such as the ship rolling and tossing. Richard Griffin and William C. McElroy were lead comedians of the cast and played well the roles of Antoine Macorone and Daniel McGozzle, respectively. Outstanding support came from Mary Clinton, Pauline Cook, Harry E. Baker, Gladys St.John and Harry Kramer. (Picayune, Monday, October 5, 1896.)

On Sunday, October 11, the Whitney Opera Company came for a week with a spectacular production of the comic opera,
Rob Roy, with music by Reginald De Koven and book by Harry B. Smith. The operetta had had a two-year run in New York and now was making a hit on the road. Lead players were Arthur Donaldson in the title role, Florence Wolcott, described as a pretty little blonde, as Janet, and comedians Edwin H. Carroll and Sandy Mc Sherry as the Mayor of Perth and the town crier, respectively. The whole company were reputed to give a delightful performance.

A new magician debuted at the theatre when Bancroft appeared on Sunday, October 18 for a week. The magician combined scenic effects and juggling with magic, and was supported by dancer "Wee Wee" Cubitt and by Satsuma, a Japanese juggler. (Picayune, Sunday, October 18, 1896.)

Louis James returned on Sunday, October 25, to present the most elaborate production of Robert Montgomery's tragedy of Spartacus that New Orleans had ever seen, as to scenery, costumes and properties. Moreover, James was now considered, since the death of Mc Cullough, as the unrivaled Spartacus of the stage. The entire effect was so spectacular that the production was said to rival Henry Irving's grand stage settings. Cast: Spartacus..Louis James, Pharsarius..Guy Lindsley, Crassus..Collin Kenper, Lentuius..William Sprague, Bracchius..John Steppling, Florus..Thomas Cooke, Jovius.
Cassius Quimby, Enomaus..W. A. Lincoln, Crixius..Warner Prani, Gellius..James Du Sang, Icrophs..Frederick Wright, Fighting Gaul..R. E. Jamison, Sonona..Florence Encrett, Julia..Alma Kruger. (Picayune, Monday, October 26, 1896.) James changed the scene on Friday, October 31 by presenting Theo. Kremer's comedy My Lord and Some Ladies, and proved his versatility by giving a brilliant and vigorous performance of Lord Bollingbroke. Florence Everett co-starred with a sterling portrayal of the Duchess. This play closed the brief engagement on Saturday night. Cast: Lord Bollingbroke..Louis James, Sir Arthur Farrer..Guy Lindsley, Marquis..John Steppling, Thompson..Cassius Quimby, Queen Anne..Alma Kruger, Duchess of Marlborough..Florence Everett, Marion Churchill..Aphie Hendricks. (Picayune, Friday, October 31, 1896.)

Charles Hoyt's military drama, A Milk White Flag, was brought to the Grand for its New Orleans debut for the week of Sunday, November 1, 1896. The mammoth production had a cast of fifty and a military band, and was the same original company that had played for 200 performances at Hoyt's Theatre, New York. The lavish entertainment delighted the overflowing audience. John S. Marble and Charles Stanley headed the fine company. Cast: Colonel..Charles Stanley, Major..Lloyd Wilson, Judge Advocate..E. S. Wentworth, Surgeon..Ed
Garvic, Band Master..W. H. Distin, Private..Harry Gilfol, 
Drum Major..W. H. Kilpatrick, Lieutenant..John S. Marble, 
Standard Bearer..Carrie Reager, General..Matt B. Snyder, 
Dear Departed..George Schiller, Orphan..Clarence Agnew, Be­
reaved..Belle Archer, Friend..Marie Denbi, Girls..Aimee 
Angeles, Leah Angeles, Florence Stevens, Elsie Fay. (Pica­
yune, Monday, November 2, 1896.) Major George Sheehan recalls 
seeing and enjoying this presentation.47

Rhea reappeared on Sunday, November 8, supported by a 
company directed by Rich and Naeder, and presented this 
schedule of plays: Sunday through Tuesday and Saturday mati­
nee, Josephine, Empress of the French; Wednesday matinee, The 
Merchant of Venice; Wednesday through Friday, Mary, Queen of 
Scots; Saturday night, Nell Gwynne. Rhea was a French girl, 
born in Brussels, who played first in France and then in Lon­
don. She had made her American debut in 1882, and by now, 
her French accent had lessened. It was said that Rhea then 
looked not a day older than when she first appeared at the 
Grand, and she was described as a beautiful woman who was 
always exquisitely gowned. As Josephine in Albert Roland 
Haven's historical drama, Josephine, Rhea gave a poignant 

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portrayal that was sweet, tender and entirely sympathetic. Edmund O'Connor, an earnest young actor, was convincing as Napoleon. Cast: Napoleon..Edmund O'Connor, Talleyrand.. Howard Hall, King of Naples..Joseph O'Meara, Pauline Bonaparte..Helen Singer, Hortense..Nancy Gibson, Josephine..Rhea. (Picayune, Monday, November 9, 1896.) As Mary in, Mary, Queen of Scots, Rhea gave a stirring performance in Schiller's memorable play. Her leading support was well managed by Edmund O'Connor as Robert Dudley, Roland Garak as Mortimer, Frank Wright as Kent and Helen Singer as Elizabeth. (Picayune, Thursday, November 12, 1896.)

The first signs of Greenwall's efforts to fight the Theatrical Syndicate came the week of Sunday, November 15, when the admission to the elite theatre was slashed drastically. Prices were reduced to 50 cents, 25 cents and 15 cents. Ushering in the new "popular price" policy was H. Grattan Donnelly's comedy-drama, The American Girl, featuring R. E. Graham, and directed by A. Q. Scannon. The happy theme concerned two American girls and an American hustler who go to Europe. Graham played the latter role, Ross Bolton, admirably, and received a hearty reception and many curtain calls. Violet Moore and Becky Kaufman, two little girls each ten years old, appeared as twins, and acted, sang and danced

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splendidly, sharing honors with Graham. Cast: Ross Bolton
..R. E. Graham, Sampson Craft..J. Irving Southard, Philip..
Frank Hope, Sir John Balfour..John Fenton, James..John Willard,
Snapper..W. H. Cook, Jasmine..Anita Hendric, Twister..Jeanette
Lewis, Lady Georgiana Derwent..Emma Southard, Laura..Abbe
Johnson, Catherine..Helen Roberts, Roy Devon..Violet Moore,
Virginia Devon..Becky Kaufman. (Picayune, Monday, November
16, 1896.)

Another theatre opened in the Fall of 1896, the latest
playhouse being the grecian style Athenaeum of the Young
Men's Hebrew Association, located on St. Charles Avenue at
Clio Street. The first major event at this new playhouse
was the presentation of the famed Metropolitan Concert Company
of New York, featuring Lillian Nordica and other leading
singers of the New York Metropolitan Opera Company. (Picayune,
Sunday, November 15, 1896.)

Lewis Morrison returned to the Grand on Sunday, November
22 with the same repertoire as was presented during his
last engagement. His schedule included Faust on Sunday, Mon-
day, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday; Richelieu on Wednesday
matinee and night; Yorick's Love on Saturday matinee. He was
again supported by Florence Roberts as leading lady.

Immediately following Morrison's engagement, his
daughter, Rosabel Morrison, came to the Grand as star of Carmen, making her debut at the theatre. Rosabel was born in New Orleans at the time when her father was an actor in the company of the old Varieties Theatre. (Picayune, Sunday, November 22, 1896.) Miss Morrison gave a clever performance of Carmen, in a play adaptation made especially for her by Marie Doran and Millie Revel. The most stirring feature of the play was the bull fight scene, in which an eidoloscope was employed at the Grand for the first time. By its means, the panarama of a bull fight was projected upon a white curtain suspended from the proscenium. Miss Morrison was reputed to electrify the audience by her abandoned Spanish dance in the second act. Edward Eisner was regarded as handsome and dignified as Don Jose: while Harold Hartsell, as Escamillo, gave a creditable performance and sang with great spirit the Toreador song. (Picayune, Monday, November 30, 1896.)

A new team of hypnotists, the Lees, made their debut at the theatre on Sunday, December 6. Billed as "the world's leading hypnotists," the Lees were composed of Sylvian Lee and his niece, Alberta Lee. In an era when the unlimited possibilities and resources of the human mind were becoming more and more significant because of Freud's experiments, the Lees found themselves a sensation wherever they were.
presented. At the Grand, the Picayune regarded the hypnotic demonstrations as "remarkable" and "amazing." (Picayune, Monday, December 7, 1896.)

On December 16, 1896, theatregoers of New Orleans, glancing through their morning newspapers, were shocked to read of the premature and tragic death of Alexander Salvini. The actor son of the great Tomasso Salvini, was regarded to be at the threshold of manifesting mature genius, when tuberculosis snuffed out his young life at the age of thirty-five. Salvini died on December 15, 1896 near Florence, Italy at the home of his illustrious father. For months, the fine young actor had been seriously ill at Monte Catania, the estate of the elder Salvini. To heighten the tragic situation, Alexander had only recently been married to Maud Dixon, a young actress who had appeared in his company. (Picayune, Wednesday, December 16, 1896.) His tragic and untimely passing calls to mind the sudden passing of Adelaide Neilson at the height of her career more than a decade before.

Minnie Maddern Fiske returned to the Grand on Sunday, December 13, for a week. As Greenwall's fight with the Theatrical Syndicate became heightened, Mrs. Fiske and her husband, Harrison Gray Fiske, would figure more and more prominently as champions of free, unrestrained theatrical
enterprise. Indeed, Mrs. Fiske remained as a heroine leading the fight against the Syndicate from the receding ranks of a small nucleus of actors who rebelled against the Trust's tyranny. In Mrs. Fiske's latest engagement, she presented *The Right to Happiness*, a comedy adapted from the German by Marguerite Merington. The play was presented with this cast: Dr. Lee..James M. Colville, Raymond Winfield..Barton Hill, Douglas Colbert..Alfred Hickman, Edgar..Charles Stevens, Simon..Byron Ongley, Lily..Belle Stokes, Helen..Rebecca Warren, Mrs. Bessell..Mary Maddern, Madeline..Mrs. Fiske. The Picayune praised the New Orleans native as "...a wonderfully clever actress...with a nervous high-strung temperament, sensitive and quick...with the quality of genius...that makes an actor great." (Picayune, Monday, December 14, 1896.) As Madeline Winfield, a cripple who overcomes her deformity by will power, Mrs. Fiske was brilliant, according to the latter newspaper. From the moment she appeared as an acid girl, at war with the world, and then underwent change until she became a ray of sunshine, the star created a beautiful, sensitive character. Barton Hill, the fine character actor, headed an excellent supporting cast. (Picayune, Monday, December 14, 1896.) For just one night, on Saturday, December 19, Mrs. Fiske changed her bill and
presented *Cesarine*, an adaptation by Alice Kauser of Alexander Dumas' *La Femme de Claude*. The tragedy allowed Mrs. Fiske an opportunity for fine acting, and she took advantage of her every opportunity. Barton Hill proved again to be outstanding in support to the star. Mrs. Fiske appeared as Cesarine and Hill was seen as Cantagnac. (*Picayune*, Sunday, December 20, 1896.) Louise Guyel witnessed a performance of Mrs. Fiske that season. Concerning the star, she said that "... We adored her." The informant remembers that the star was red-haired and gave a beautiful performance.

For Christmas week 1896, Charles H. Hoyt's comedy, *A Midnight Bell* received an airing for the first time in the city at the Grand. The play began on Sunday, December 20 and played all week. Digby Bell and Laura Joyce Bell headed the large cast that appeared for the 900th performance of the long-running play on Monday, December 21. Silver book marks were given to commemorate the occasion. The company, under the direction of Duncan B. Harrison, included: Deacon Tiddasso, the sheriff.. Digby Bell, Rev. John Bradbury.. Frank Monroe, Lawyer Keene.. Herman Herschberg, Stephen Larabee.. Frank Davis, Ned Olgott.. Gage Clark, Squire Olcott.. William

48 Interview No. 3.
Edward E. Rice's musical extravaganza, *Evangeline* came to the Grand on Sunday, December 27, for a week of fun. The large troupe consisted of sixty people, including a number of clever artists including George K. Fortescue, prominent female impersonator. Fortescue, who was admirable in the role of Catherine, was considered by the *Picayune* to make an attractive woman. The title role was assumed by Maud Courtney, a good looker with a pleasing voice; and, as Gabriel, Mae Baker was impressive. Other standouts were Charles Seagrave as Le Blanc, and Don Mason as Capt. Dietrich. Henry Hoyt's sets were attractive, and the march of the amazons pleased the audience to such an extent that it was repeated for an encore. (*Picayune*, Monday, December 28, 1896.)

Stuart Robson returned for another pleasant week's engagement on Sunday, January 3, 1897, bringing with him the prominent actress, Mme. Janauschek, who had not been seen at
the Grand Opera House in many years. The stars appeared in a double bill: Buckstone's farce *Mr. Gilman's Wedding*, and F. C. Burnard's comedy adaptation from the French, *Mrs. Ponderbury's Past*. In the latter play, Robson appeared as a timid little man, married to a strong, domineering woman. The co-stars proved a priceless combination in the farce, with Robson shuddering while Mme. Janauschek approached him like Lady Macbeth. Cast: Mr. Ponderbury..Stuart Robson, Melvin Thorpe..Benjamin Howard, Capt. Runford..Joseph Keefe, Peter..Augustus Halbach, Capt. Aversnack..John Webster, Jr., Hyacinthe..David Myles, Mayor of Twiggerham..Frank Marlowe, Mrs. Ponderbury..Mme. Janauschek, Mme. di Lowinskie..Katheryn Osterman, Ethel..Olive Porter, Lady Mayoress..Julia Hanchett, Mrs. Poppet..Mrs. Samuel Charles. *Mr. Gilman's Wedding* served to show Robson as a young, perplexed married man and he caused the audience to howl. (*Picayune*, Monday, January 4, 1897.)

Donnelly's *Darkest Russia* appeared next on the Grand horizon. Manager-director Sidney R. Ellis was applauded for his strongly realistic production. Robert T. Haines, called a capable actor, with an appealing manner, sustained the role of Alexis Nazimoff, and M. J. Jordan was strong as Count Nazimoff. Other leading roles were handled by Sidney Ellis as
Col. Septimus Cobb, George Morton as Ivan Barosky, Selma Herman as Hilda Barosky, and Eva Byron as Countess Karsichoff,—each of which was described as excellent. (Picayune, Monday, January 11, 1897.)

Another death to startle and disappoint the playgoers of the Grand Opera House was that of Alexander Herrmann, the prominent magician and mystic billed as Herrmann, the Great. A note in the Picayune of January 17, 1897, spoke of Herrmann's death and of the efforts of Mrs. Adelaide Herrmann, the widow, to train Leon Herrmann, nephew of the late entertainer, in the secrets and methods of Herrmann. Mme. Herrmann's success in instructing Herrmann's successor was to succeed beyond all expectations, and both performers would be booked at the Grand in the near future.

On Sunday, January 17, and for the following two weeks, a quaint and novel production debuted. This was Robert Breitenback's musical extravaganza, The Merry Tramps, which featured the Lilliputians, and had special music created by Carl Pleininger. The Lilliputians were described as a fascinating group of tiny, jolly midgets from Germany, ranging in age from fifteen to forty years. Each was a talented comedian, and they proved to be so attractive and gifted that they immediately endeared themselves to the theatre.
patrons. Besides the compelling features already mentioned, 
The Merry Tramps possessed other outstanding attributes: the 
production rated a company of seventy actors who supported 
the Lilliputians, including three ballet groups. In addition, 
the extravaganza was a prime example of how completely elec­
trical effects could be inculcated into a production in the 
1890's. In the third act, there was a grand electrical 
ballet, reputed to be one of the most gorgeous stage scenes 
ever presented in the city. In this scene, a large plateau 
before a beautiful castle, all of the dancers were dressed in 
glowing silver lace ribbon, while 1,100 electric lights of 
varicolored hues burned simultaneously from every window of 
the castle. Heading the cast of the clever Lilliputians was 
Franz Ebert, described as droll and legitimate an actor as 
Coquelin; and while never smiling himself, he made everyone 
else laugh. In the finale, the Lilliputians were seated on 
Shetland ponies surrounded by the entire group of ballet 
dancers. The arresting production included comedy, pathos, 
singing and music, the striking electric effects, pantomime, 
elaborate dancing and beautiful sets. Lead roles included: 
Mr. Willard..A. Durand, Mary..Elsie Lau, Pisang..Ludwig 
Merkel, Joe Miller..Mertha Jaegar, Bob..Franz Ebert, Jim.. 
Adolph Zink. The production was such a hit that in addition

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to the usual matinees, a special matinee was given on both Fridays. (Picayune, Monday, January 18; Sunday, January 24, 1897.)

The popular comedian Eddie Foy brought another musical extravaganza to the theatre following the Lilliputians' successful engagement. On Sunday, January 31, Foy came in John D. Gilbert's mammoth production of Off the Earth. Gilbert wrote the book and the music for the show. Foy was already the most popular comedian in the western states, although he was only now making his local debut at the Grand. The comedian made a most favorable impression, and was described as "... a very funny man." Mary Marble headed the feminine end of the cast. Principals and their roles included: Cluster..Eddie Foy, Wilfred Willie..Oscar Hall, Gavotte Tripplie..Louise Archer, Luna, Queen of the Moon..Adyin Estee, Dimples..Mary Marble, Prince Charley..Marie di Campi. (Picayune, Monday, February 1, 1897.) Major George T. Sheehan, working backstage at the time of this engagement, not only saw Eddie Foy and Mary Marble perform, but remembers with pleasure meeting Eddie Foy behind stage.49

Thomas Q. Seabrooke, another popular comedian, followed

49 interview No. 20.
on Sunday, February 7, to appear in George H. Broadhurst's comedy success, *The Speculator*, directed by Duncan B. Harri-
son. Seabrooke took the principal role of John Fullerton. Jeanette Lowrie, Horace Mitchell and Lorraine Drew were charming as Fullerton's children. Cast: John Fullerton.. Thomas Q. Seabrooke, Robert Fullerton..Horace Mitchell, Henry Duncan..A. H. Stewart, Charles Florence..Roy Fairchild, Count de Varneau..Fred Peters, Sir Frederick..C. W. MacDonald, Richard..Wallace Bruce, Thomas..Charles Lee, Andrews..Edwin James, Frank..George Denison, Kate Duncan..Lorraine Dreux, Mrs. Florence..Marie Bingham, Lillian Fullerton..Laura Almos-
nino, Marian Fullerton..Jeanette Lowrie. *(Picayune*, Monday, February 8, 1897.)

A pair of new faces were greeted at the Grand on Sun-
day, February 14, when Russ Whytal and his wife, Marie Knowles Whytal, made their New Orleans debut in Whytal's own play, *For Fair Virginia*. Whytal was a graduate of Harvard's Law School, and had been a prominent lawyer in Boston before the lure of the stage called him. As Marie Knowles, before her marriage to Whytal, Mrs. Whytal had appeared for several sea-
sons in Julia Marlowe's company. *For Fair Virginia* was a melodrama which was Whytal's first effort, but which had already been presented 400 times. Whytal took the role of
Steven Dunbar, and Mrs. Whytal appeared as Nell Esmond, a supporting character. Mabel Bert played the role of Virginia Esmond, the title role, and was described as the only refreshing character in the play. Lottie Briscoe, a child actress, was a favorite with the entire audience. Cast: Stephen Dunbar, Russ Whytal, John Laughlin, Alexander Kearney, Edward Esmond, George Farren, Julian Esmond, Lottie Briscoe, Frank Weslyn, John Gifford, Col. Lester, William Hopper, Major Waring, Arthur Morton, Uncle Zeb, John Woodard, Sgt. Mc Intyre, John Borden, Sentry, West Caldwell, Virginia Esmond, Mabel Bert, Nell Esmond, Mrs. Whytal. (Picayune, Monday, February 15, 1897.)

Otis Skinner returned on Sunday, February 21, bringing with him again as leading lady, his wife, Maud Durbin, and presenting his new play, A Soldier of Fortune. The piece was a melodrama, and was presented for the first time in the city. The setting was 16th century Italy, and Skinner appeared as Fabian Torelli, a soldier of fortune. The production was elaborate, and the action exciting. Frank Sylvester was rated as excellent as Danbigny, the villain; Maud Durbin was said to be forceful as Laura, the heroine; Sarah Truax was called spirited as villainous Lucretia Borgia; John Weeks was noted as comical as Pepe; and Naomi Roberts was judged
to be charming as Blanche. (Picayune, Monday, February 22, 1897.) The bill was changed to The Merchant of Venice on Wednesday night, with Skinner in the role of Shylock. The actor was said to give dignity and grandeur to the role, and was received enthusiastically. Sarah Truax was excellent as Portia, and Maud Durbin as Jessica, Frederick Mosley as Bassanio and Guy Post as Antonio were said to do well. David Garrick's short version of Taming of the Shrew was presented as an afterpiece, with Mosley as Petruchio and Miss Durbin as Katherine. For the Wednesday matinee, Bulwer's Lady of Lyons was given. (Picayune, Thursday, February 25, 1897.) On Friday and Saturday nights, Hamlet was presented with Skinner giving a forceful portrayal of the Prince and Maud Durbin being impressive as Ophelia. Others in top roles included Frederick Mosley as The Ghost, Sarah Truax as Gertrude, Wadsworth Harris as Claudius, W. J. Constantine as Polonius, Frank Sylvester as Laertes and Paul Gerson as Horatio. (Picayune, Saturday, February 27, 1897.)

Nat C. Goodwin returned on Sunday, February 28, and brought Maxine Elliott as co-star for her first appearance at the Grand Opera House. Goodwin also brought a new play, a comedy entitled An American Citizen by Madeline Lucette Ryley. As Carew, Goodwin played a man who marries without
love, and afterward, falls in love with his wife. The actor's portrayal was so poignant, delightful and touching that the Picayune found it impossible to adequately describe his exceptional enactment, particularly in reference to a scene in which he did not speak but still held the audience in rapt attention. The Picayune overlooked Maxine Elliott in any mention, and instead singled out for praise Gertrude Elliott's acting as Georgia. Cast: Beresford Cruger alias Carew..Nat C. Goodwin, Peter Barbury..William Ingersoll, Egerton Brown..Frazer Coulter, Sir Humphrey..Clarence Handy-side, Willie Bunn..Louis Payne, Otto..L. E. Woodthorpe, Lucas..Clarence Montaine, Simms..Neil O'Brien, Corola..Estella Mortimer, Lady Bunn..Hattie Russell, Georgia Chapin ..Gertrude Elliott, Annette..Isabel Haskins, Mercury..Master Scott, Beatrice Carew..Maxine Elliott. (Picayune, Monday, March 1, 1897.) In the biography of Maxine Elliott, My Aunt Maxine, by Diana Forbes-Robertson, her niece and daughter of her sister Gertrude Elliott and the famed English actor Johnston Forbes-Robertson, one learns some interesting facts concerning Maxine Elliott.50 Maxine Elliott's real name was

Jessie Dermot. She fled her home town of Rockland, Maryland to go on the stage, taking along her younger sister, Gertrude. The latter became an actress of note in her own right, and later married the brilliant star Johnston Forbes-Robertson, with whom she had four children. Both of Maxine Elliott's marriages—to a small-time New York politician and to Nat Goodwin (with whom she appeared during the above-mentioned engagement at the Grand Opera House), were failures. There were always men bedazzled by her beauty and she was always surrounded by admirers. Among these, according to Miss Forbes-Robertson, were Lord Rosebery, Lord Curzon, and Winston Churchill. Miss Elliott's niece states that the star was a business woman who was not a great actress but who had the ability to make her public think that she was.\textsuperscript{51}

Primrose and West's Minstrels brought their colossal double company again to the Grand on Sunday, March 7, featuring forty performers as white actors and thirty more in black-face. Heading the cast were William H. West and George Wilson, and featured were George Robinson, Ed Dickens, John H. Davis, Jimmy Wall, Charles Kent, Alex Cameron and the Miller Brothers.

\textsuperscript{51}Ibid.
On Sunday, March 14, for one day, the Wainwright and Rock Company brought an innovation for curiosity seekers to enjoy, by presenting Edison's latest discovery, the Vitascope. A variety of pictures were shown during continuous two-hour performances at 4 and 8 p.m. Admission was 25 cents for adults and 15 cents for children.

Francis Wilson made his bow at the theatre on Monday, March 15, at which time the producer-artist brought his Wilson Metropolitan Opera Company for a week of comic opera. The offering was Half a King, adapted by Harry B. Smith from the French, with music by Ludwig Erlanger. The production was managed by A. H. Canby, with musical direction by W. H. Batchelor. Francis Wilson starred as Tireschappe, and featured in the cast were Lulu Glazer, Peter Lang, Christie Mac Donald, John Brand, J. C. Miron, Agnes Paul, Clinton Elder, Agnes Martyne, Edward Temple, Blanche Plunkett, H. J. West, William Laverty, Samual Chadwick and Joseph Chailee. The cast was well trained and made a favorable impression.

(Picayune, Sunday, March 14, 1897.)

A new policy in theatrical activity was introduced with the next engagement at the Grand Opera House, that of the Baldwin-Melville Company. To counteract the difficulty of securing adequate bookings that began to be manifest this
season with the formation of the Theatrical Syndicate, independent theatre managers now turned again to the stock company as a solution. Industrious company directors who refused to join the Theatrical Syndicate began to recruit supporting actors into companies to tour the independent circuit. The most prominent of these stock organizations was the Baldwin-Melville Company, directed by Walter S. Baldwin. The Melville of the firm was Baldwin's wife, a sister of Rose Melville, the well-known "Sis" Hopkins.\textsuperscript{52} This significant company also introduced another policy adopted in a desperate effort to fight the theatrical Trust,—the slashing of admission prices. Tickets were reduced at this engagement to the rock-bottom sums of 30 cents—orchestra, 20 cents—balcony and 10 cents—gallery; while 20 cents was the top price for matinees. Never before had admission to the elite Grand Opera House been so nominal. (\textit{Picayune}, Sunday, March 21, 1897.) The Baldwin-Melville Company proved to be such a brilliantly successful venture that it was held over for four weeks. Moreover, besides the night performances, daily matinees were given. Commencing on Sunday, March 21, the company remained

through Saturday, April 16, 1897. The first week's schedule was as follows: Sunday, The Devil's Web; Monday, Hazel Kirke; Tuesday, The Phoenix; Wednesday, Two Orphans; Thursday, The Black Flag; Friday, Monte Cristo; Saturday, Ten Nights in a Barroom. The fine company which had been touring the South all season made such a positive impression in their initial effort, Wilson Day's comedy-drama The Devil's Web, that the Picayune pondered how the company could play to such cheap prices. The company boasted fine acting, plays that were handsomely staged--mounted with special impressive scenery, with appropriate costumes, and constantly changing bills. The cast of the initial play was as follows: Pierre Roussell...W. H. Murdoch, Victor Laurent..Wilson Day (author of the play), Andre..Harry E. Davis, Duke De Baudessir..Thomas B. Findlay, Jacques Caucade..George Klimt, Sgt. Case..L. O. Hart, Officer..John J. Kenny, Margaret Laurent..Laura Alberta, Bridget Doyle..Marie Day, Florette, Alma Hearne, Marie..Ruth Day. (Picayune, Monday, March 22, 1897.) The theatre was packed all week. W. H. Murdoch and Laura Alberta were leading man and woman of the company. The Two Orphans was particularly well done with this cast: Louise..Laura Alberta, Pierre..W. H. Murdoch, Jacques..George Klimt, Chevalier..Wilson Day, Lafleur..Thomas B. Findlay, Marquis and Doctor..
The second week's schedule of the Baldwin-Melville Company, beginning on Sunday, March 28, with daily matinee and night performances, was as follows: Sunday and Monday, Clay M. Greene's melodrama, The Golden Giant Mine; Tuesday and Wednesday, East Lynne; Thursday through Saturday, Dion Boucicault's drama, The Octoroon. Audiences continued to swell the walls of the theatre during the second week's performances. Applause for The Golden Giant Mine was deafening, and the cast was regarded as being uniformly meritorious. Murdoch was convincing as the hero, Fairfax, and Miss Alberta was good as Ethel, the heroine. Cast: Alexander Fairfax..W. H. Murdoch, Jack Mason..Wilson Day, Tom Flynn..Harry E. Davis, Duncan..George Klimt, Jim Bixby..L. O. Hart, Max Wayne..Thomas B. Findlay, Jack..Ruth Day, Ethel Wayne..Laura Alberta, Bessie Fairfax..Alma Hearn, Mrs. Boggs..Marie Day. (Picayune, Monday, March 29, 1897.) The Octoroon was another hit, given with this cast: Jacob Mc Closkey..W. H. Murdoch, Salem Schudder..Wilson Day, Wahno-tee..Thomas B. Findlay, Peyton..George Klimt, Col. Poindexter..L. O. Hart, Uncle Pete.
In the third week of the Baldwin-Melville Company, beginning on Sunday, April 4, the schedule was as follows for each day's matinee and night performances: Sunday, The Two Orphans; Monday, East Lynne; Tuesday, Ten Nights in a Barroom; Wednesday, Devil's Web; Thursday, Black Flag; Friday, Hazel Kirke; Saturday, Monte Cristo. The Winston Company, a group of magicians, were to be booked in for the week of Saturday, April 10, but their cancellation prompted the holding over of the Baldwin-Melville Company for a fourth week. The last week's schedule was played accordingly: Sunday, April 11, East Lynne and The Phoenix; Monday, The Octo­ro­on; Tuesday, Two Orphans; Wednesday, Hazel Kirke; Thursday and Friday, Michael Strogoff; Saturday, The Galley Slave. The matinee and night's performances on Thursday, April 15 and Friday, April 16 were auspicious, in that Jules Verne's drama, Michael Strogoff was seen for the first time at the theatre. The Picayune noted, regarding the event: "...This company seems to be able to play anything!" (Picayune, Friday, April 17, 1897.) Cast: Michael Strogoff..W. H. Murdoch, Ivan Ogareff..George Klimt, Benjamin Blunt..Wilson Day,
Sangaree...Laura Alberta, Marie Strogoff...Marie Day, Mme.
Gogel...Alma Hearn, Nadia...Cora Ernest, Ezar...L. O. Hart,
Laidlaw...Harry E. Davis, Grank Duke...Thomas Findlay, Sgt.
Kissoff...John J. Keeny, Feofar...L. O. Hart, Telegraph
operator...Robert McKee. Major George T. Sheehan\textsuperscript{53} recalls vividly the plays performed by the Baldwin-Melville Company, and its first leading man, Murdoch, whom Sheehan met back-stage. Among the plays that Sheehan remembers as performed by that company were \textit{The Two Orphans}, \textit{The Lady of Lyons}, \textit{Ten Nights in a Barroom} and \textit{Cyrano de Berberac}. The plays were seen by the informant in this and subsequent engagements of the company.

Prior to inaugurating a short season of summer opera, Harry Greenwall had installed in the Grand Opera House a large exhaust fan in the dome and flues to air-cool the theatre. (\textit{Picayune}, Sunday, April 4, 1897.) On Easter Sunday, April 18, activity resumed at the theatre when the Grau Opera Company began a four-week engagement of opera at popular prices. The operas were performed with well-known names in the casts and with artistic staging, for the small admission prices of only 10 cents, 25 cents and 50 cents, with 25 cents being the

\textsuperscript{53}Interview No. 20.
top price for matinees. Heading the company were Alice Johnson—prima donna, and Gertrude Lodge, Alice Carle, Miro Delamotte, Fanny De Costa, Robert Lett, Sylvan Langlois, Gilbert Clayton and Stanley Felch. Jules Grau was manager-director of the company. The initial production was The Black Hussars, which played Sunday through Wednesday noon and night. From Thursday through Saturday's performances, Olivette was offered. For the second week, beginning on Sunday, April 25, The Beggar Student was produced, with Ship Ahoy following on Thursday for the balance of the week. During the third week, beginning on Sunday, May 2, Tar and Tar-tar was presented on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday noon and night, with Paul Jones offered on Monday, Thursday and Saturday matinee, and Fra Diavolo on Friday and Saturday. On Monday, May 3, the Variété Association tendered Greenwall a benefit of Paul Jones. By the fourth and final week of the Grau Opera Company's engagement, the Grand Opera House was the only major theatre in New Orleans that remained open. The Grau Company had done so well, that they could have played profitably for many more weeks, but they had commitments elsewhere and had to leave. During the final week, which began on Sunday, May 9, Olivette was given on Sunday, The Mikado on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday noon, Beggar
Prince on Wednesday night, H.M.S. Pinafore on Thursday, Bohemian Girl on Friday, Fra Diavolo on Saturday matinee, and on Saturday night, a mixed bill of scenes of several popular operas was offered and called The Merry War. Major Sheehan has particularly poignant and significant memories concerning the Grau Opera Company. He recalls:

... When the Syndicate opposed Greenwall, it was hard for him to get good companies any more. ... Mr. Henry got the Grau Opera Company when he could not get a continuity of bookings. Mr. Grau weighed about 115 pounds, and was about five feet four inches. Grau and his company came for a limited engagement and were so popular, they stayed on. ... 54

Sheehan especially recalls two members of the company:

"... Langlois was a principal singer with the company, and Stanley Felch was the comedian."

The 1896-1897 season was the first season to function after the formal organization of the Theatrical Syndicate. Symptoms of the "squeeze tactics" of the Syndicate were already being manifest. It was already more difficult to book stars, and the result of this difficulty was seen in the number of new names that appeared at the theatre that season. The Baldwin-Melville Company was indirectly a significant product of the Syndicate, in that it was a result

54 Interview No. 20.
of efforts to fight the Syndicate on the part of independent theatre managers. Such stock companies would grow and multiply to keep independent theatres open when bookings became increasingly difficult to obtain.

In an effort to fight the Theatrical Syndicate, Greenwall slashed prices at his beautiful Grand Opera House to only 10 cents to 50 cents top price. Moreover, he met the issue squarely by both attending and conducting meetings in an effort to counteract the opposition. According to M. B. Leavitt, the Syndicate leaders did approach Greenwall to join their ranks, but he refused to go into the combination.\(^{55}\) His reaction was to call a meeting of the stars and managers at the New Orleans Grand Opera House shortly after the Trust was formed. Then on February 20, 1897, the *New York Dramatic Mirror* announced that a meeting of important independent managers had been held the previous day at the offices of A. M. Palmer in New York at which were represented Abbey, Schoeffel and Grau; W. J. Gilmore, Henry Greenwall, J. H. Ford, A. H. Rapley, C. L. Davis, C. J. Whitney, Harry Hamlin and others. The subject of the meeting was how to deal with the Theatrical Trust. Some of those present were in favor of asking the

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courts to dissolve the trust under the Anti-Trust law. But the majority were opposed to legal proceedings, and decided in favor of fighting the combination with its own weapons. It was stated that four large firms in the Trust had forced weaker managers into an agreement to pay 33-1/3 per cent of their profits as the price for being taken into the Trust. Ironically, all of these men, with four exceptions, went over shortly to the Syndicate. Only Greenwall and Hamlin dared to remain independent; while A. M. Palmer decided to withdraw from active management, and the important firm of Abbey, Schoeffel and Grau—who had brought such stars as Bernhardt, Henry Irving, Mme. Rejane and Ellen Terry to the United States—failed because of Syndicate pressure.56

To sway newspaper critics to their favor, the Syndicate spent large sums on gifts and "bribes." The "Green Room Gossip" columnist of the Picayune of October 11, 1896, announced that he had received from Julius Cahn, the agent in charge of Charles Frohman's Agency, a handsome book of 600 pages, containing information concerning the Syndicate theatres and attractions, entitled Julius Cahn's Official Theatre Guide. Later this columnist received a deluxe gold-covered

56 Harrison Grey Fiske, New York Dramatic Mirror, Supplement, Saturday, November 13, 1897.
Maud Adams edition of The Little Minister. (Miss Adams was a major star of the Syndicate.)

To show their appreciation for Greenwall's loyalty after ten years of outstanding service as manager-lessee of the Grand Opera House, the Variété Association sent Greenwall a directive voicing their appreciation of his devotion to the theatre. The directive, as reprinted in the Picayune, thanked Greenwall for his efforts in behalf of drama in New Orleans, and praised him for overcoming "... difficulties in the theatrical line, which at times seemed almost insurmountable."

The Association also assured Greenwall of their support and cooperation with him at all times, and asked permission to tender him a benefit to show their appreciation. Greenwall accepted the benefit with thanks, and it was held on May 4, the day before the official closing of the long season. The Variété Association directive is important, not only in ascertaining the group's backing of Greenwall in the fight against the Theatrical Syndicate, but in the Picayune article, for the first time in many years, the names of all current members of the club were printed in 1897. These names, which were affixed to the testimonial sent to Greenwall, included: William Blake, Thomas Sully, Charles R. Richardson, H. Maspero, W. C. H. Robinson, James G. Clark, Edward Toby, A. Baldwin,
school for youths of the city, the Isaac Delgado Trade School. M. E. Hansell, bookseller, was proprietor of a large commercial establishment which is still in operation in the city, and among the remainder of the names of the members of La Variété Association were found prominent doctors, lawyers and educators of the day.

The 1896-1897 season was, in summary, the first season to function after the formation of the Theatrical Syndicate. Joe Hart began the season on September 6, 1896 in *A Gay Old Boy* and found business bad. Poor business remained for Frederick Bryton in *Forgiven*, beginning on September 13. On September 20, D. A. Bonta's Company came in *Jim, the Penman* and business stayed bad. More bad business greeted Conte and Long on September 27 for a week of *The Other Man's Wife* and *A Soldier of France*. Business picked up when *Eight Bells* sounded on October 4, but slowed down again the next week for the Whitney Opera Company's production of *Rob Roy* on October 11. Bancroft, the Magician, proved no successor to Herrmann the Great, who had recently died, and business was light that week, beginning on October 18. Louis James came on October 25 for a week of varied repertoire, but even this big name found business only fair. Things brightened on November 1 when Hoyt's *A Milk White Flag* appeared, proved to be a great
hit, and had a week of big business. Rhea came on November 8 with a bad company and did poor business in a week of varied repertoire. Robert E. Graham followed on November 15 in *The American Girl* and attracted only fair business. Lewis Morrison appeared on November 22 for a week of varied repertoire with a company less good than usual, and found business only fair. Morrison's daughter Rosabel Morrison made her debut next in *Carmen* on November 29, and was disappointed with only slight business all week. On December 6, the Lees, hypnotists, appeared and business picked up somewhat that week. On December 13, Minnie Maddern Fiske returned in *The Right to Happiness* and *Caesarine*, and found business only fair. Digby Bell and Laura Joyce Bell opened in Hoyt's *A Midnight Bell*, starting on December 20. They gave an admirable performance and business was very big. December 27 brought *Evangeline* to be greeted with only fair business. Stuart Robson's week of comedy repertoire beginning on January 3, 1897, was rewarded with big, happy houses. But the bright houses darkened for *Darkest Russia* starting on January 10, and business became again only fair. The Lilliputians proved to be the greatest attraction of the season. The clever little German midgets came on January 17 in a lavish extravaganza, *The Merry Tramps*, and played for two weeks to
mammoth houses. Eddy Foy appeared on January 31 in Off the Earth, and played to poor business. February 7 brought Thomas Q. Seabrook in a fine production of The Spectator that brought good business. But business was not even fair for For Fair Virginia, which brought Mr. and Mrs. Russ Whytall on February 14; business was downright bad. On February 21, Otis Skinner returned in an exciting varied repertoire and played a week to big business. And business stayed big for Nat C. Goodwin who appeared on February 28 in An American Citizen and The Rivals. Edison's vitascope had one day's fruitful airing on March 6. Business was very good for Primrose and West beginning on March 7. They came in a lavish production with some minstrels in white-face and some in black-face. The vitascope returned for another day on March 14. Francis Wilson proved to be a stellar catch. He debuted on March 15 in Half a King, and found business wholly good. The Baldwin-Melville Company was formed in an effort to keep independent business going when Syndicate boycotting became difficult. The important company made their debut on March 22 and stayed for four weeks, playing twice a day in varied repertoire to the cheapest prices ever offered at the elite theatre. Business was good. The final billing of the season was that of the Jules Grau Opera Company, which came on
April 25 and remained for four weeks. They played in varied repertoire of comic operas, offered at very inexpensive prices, and found business large. (Picayune, Sunday, May 16, 1897.) The season closed on May 15, and was the longest season, if not the most lucrative, ever offered at the theatre up until that time.

The strain of fighting Klaw and Erlanger for several years, followed by the formation of the Theatrical Syndicate during the previous summer was too much for Greenwall's health. Tired, strained and depleted, Greenwall left immediately after the completion of the season at the Grand Opera House for a prolonged rest on the Pacific Coast. The Picayune commented: "... It is hoped the grand climate of California will fill him with new life." (Picayune, Sunday, May 16, 1897.)

After only one year's operation, by the summer of 1897, the Theatrical Syndicate was already a big, controlling power. The Trust realized that it must become entrenched quickly before stars realized their plight. Consequently, actors were not aware of the controlling power of the Syndicate until too late.57 The first star to be intimidated by the Trust

57Lippman, op. cit., pp. 56-57.
and to rebel from this tyranny was Minnie Maddern Fiske and her husband Harrison Fiske. The fight between the Fiskes and the Syndicate began during this first year of the Trust's operation, when Al Hayman attempted to change, alter and manipulate bookings of Mrs. Fiske without the star's consent. Harrison Fiske resented Hayman's tactics and threatened to reveal the dangers of the Trust to actors in a series of articles in his *New York Dramatic Mirror*, a powerful theatrical trade publication which was read by all major actors, producers and managers, much in the way that *Billboard* and *Variety* are read today. The significant articles, aimed at revealing publicly the dangers of the Theatrical Syndicate, appeared in special supplements of the *Dramatic Mirror* during the subsequent season of 1897-1898. Consequently, the *Dramatic Mirror Supplements*, as they were called, will be discussed at the termination of the subsequent season, at which time, because of increased and heightened activity of the Trust in New Orleans, a discussion of the accusations in the supplements will have added meaning. It should be noted at this time, however, that the fight between the Fiskes and the Theatrical Syndicate reached a crisis when Al Hayman visited Fiske in the latter's offices and threatened Fiske, ordering him to join forces with the Syndicate or to suffer
the consequences.\(^5\)

The informants interviewed, who attended performances at the Grand Opera House, fall into three categories: (1) those who remember the "star" days at the theatre, prior to the era of the Theatrical Syndicate; (2) those who attended the "star" engagements at the theatre and also attended the stock performances after the Theatrical Syndicate's destructive restrictions prevented stars' bookings at the Grand Opera House; and (3) those who attended the theatre only after the destructive transition, in the last years at the theatre when only stock companies played.

In review, the informants who fall into the first category have already been considered. Mrs. Ray Aschaffenburg, now deceased, remembered attending the theatre during the days of starring performances. Her greatest recollections are associated with the appearances of the illustrious Drew family in 1894, and of Sarah Bernhardt. Mrs. Aschaffenburg saw the farewell engagement of the Drew family, shortly before the death of Mrs. John Drew. The informant also recalled the appearance of Sarah Bernhardt in *Camille*.\(^6\)

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\(^6\)Interview No. 22, Sunday, August 5, 1962.
Mendes Meyer saw Sarah Bernhardt perform, also, during the season of 1895-1896. During that brilliant season, Miss Meyer witnessed, in addition, stellar performances of Sir Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, Fanny Davenport and Otis Skinner. This informant also remembers the later days of stock companies at the Grand. 60 Louise Guyol is another informant who witnessed the acting of Sarah Bernhardt. Miss Guyol saw Bernhardt perform many times, alone as star and also co-starring with Coquelin. Miss Guyol asserts that Bernhardt was the most electrifying star she ever saw. She tells an amusing incident relating to Bernhardt to show the impact of that star's personality upon her audiences. Miss Guyol relates that because Bernhardt had a cold during an engagement in the '90's, she carried a small handkerchief surrounded by lace upon the stage with her. The vogue was picked up immediately by the ladies of New Orleans. Miss Guyol saw James O'Neill perform as the Count of Monte Cristo. This was the first American drama she was allowed to see, and she was seventeen years at the time. Until that time, the young girl was allowed only to see entertainments in French at the French Opera House. Joseph Jefferson, Richard Mansfield, Henry

60Interview No. 28, July 4, 1964.
Irving, Ellen Terry, Minnie Maddern Fiske and Maxine Elliott are other stars whom Miss Guyol saw perform at the Grand. She considers that Irving and Terry’s performance in Richard III is the most memorable performance she saw at the theatre, and that Maxine Elliott was the most beautiful star she saw there. Mrs. Julius Cahn declares that Marie Wainwright’s acting was the most brilliant that she recalls at the Grand Opera House.

Two informants of this study knew Greenwell, worked with him as employees and deeply respected him. James Dempsey, current President of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, New Orleans Chapter, is the first of these two gentlemen. Mr. Dempsey was a man of 71 years when interviewed. He had been an officer and leader of the I.A.T.S.E. since 1917. Dempsey’s only daughter, Mildred Dempsey Rosenberg, is married to Malcolm Rosenberg, Assistant Superintendent of the New Orleans Public School System. Although Mr. Dempsey was too young to work at the Grand Opera House for Greenwall, he attended many "blood and thunder"

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61 Interview No. 5, July 4, 1962.
62 Interview No. 2, July 1, 1962.
63 Interview No. 7, July 4, 1962.
dramas at the theatre in its later days of resident stock companies. This discussion is included later in the study. Mr. Dempsey recalls that the stage of the Grand was "tremen­dous." He relates: "... There was so much storage space for costumes and props. Everything was kept, not as today, when you just wire to New York for costumes for a play."64 For the interview, Mr. Dempsey gathered information that revealed that the theatre had a large property room, scene-dock --where scenery was built and stored, and two paint frames for the painting of scenery and drops.65 Dempsey states that he knew Henry Greenwall well, and worked for the latter at the Greenwall Theatre, which Greenwall built and operated just after leaving the Grand Opera House.

No informant for this study has served to be of more value than Major George Tate Sheehan. Major Sheehan not only knew Henry Greenwall well, and worked for him at the Grand Opera House, but has revealed pertinent and significant information regarding Greenwall, the Grand Opera House and the Theatrical Syndicate, that was not found to be available through any other source.66 Major Sheehan is a retired major

64Ibid.  
65Ibid.  
66Interview No. 20, July 22, 1962.
in the Army Reserve and a former railroad executive. He was born in 1881, and was therefore 81 years old at the time of the interview in July, 1962. Major Sheehan is a dynamic conversationalist with an alert mind and a remarkable memory. He and his wife had been married 51 years at the time of the interview. The highly significant information which Major Sheehan imparted includes these facts: Major Sheehan knew and was associated with Greenwall when the informant was a boy, from the years 1895 to 1898. From this association, Sheehan was able to experience a warm, friendly relationship with Greenwall, and he remembers vividly Greenwall's warm, generous personality. He recalls Greenwall's concern over the Theatrical Syndicate. He knew well the many co-workers of Greenwall and also many of the stars who appeared at the Grand Opera House. Sheehan gives an arresting account of the Cosmos Club which had rooms above the Grand Opera House, and describes many of the customs and patterns of behavior relating to the era and to theatre of the day in general, and to the Grand Opera House in particular. He states in part:

... My first association with the administrators of the Grand Opera House was from the years 1895-98, beginning when I was a boy about fourteen years old. It was then that I met Ed Levy, the Stuard of the Cosmos Club which was above the Grand Opera House. The Greenwalls lived above the Grand Opera House in an apartment, also. . . .
According to Major Sheehan, the Cosmos Club was an elite society organization, whose activities included social gambling, such as poker and whist. At the time, young Sheehan was a stage-struck youth whose ambition it was to become a clown-pantomimist, a calling much in demand in the era. When invited by the Cosmos official in 1895 to the club, the boy met many of its members and also members of the Variété Club and people affiliated with the Grand Opera House. The Cosmos Club members had a block of tickets to the Grand as did the Variété Club and could get in to see all of the plays: Sheehan recalls:

. . . One day there, I met Mr. Greenwall, and he quizzed me, showing great interest in me,—a boy completely unknown to him. He was a kindly, warm-hearted man, who always showed interest in others. We boys in those days were not like the boys of today who try to act independent of elders. We sought the advice of older men and I was very happy over Mr. Greenwall's interest in me. He was like a father to me, and I became like a protegé of his. I helped backstage as a hobby, helping with scenery and props and in any way I could be of help. I met all the people who worked at the theatre. I met Eddie Norris, the scenic artist, and Mc Gee and Swift, who were the stage manager and the carpenter. William Evans, known to us all as Billy Evans, was the press agent, and, I think, Mr. Greenwall's assistant. . . . I always called Mr. Greenwall, "Mr. Henry." Morris Marks, Mr. Henry's nephew, was the Treasurer. He was Jewish; both of them were. Mr. Henry was a great man; not only a good man, but an artist. . . . He was not interested in anything commercial—If you had asked him to put something commercial in the plays, he'd want to have killed you.
He loved to tell jokes on the Jews, good humor jokes. He always smoked a big cigar. Wills, a ticket taker, was also a relative of Mr. Henry. Bud Morrison was the lithograph man. The lithographs were advertisements put up around town advertising the plays. They were put up in drug stores and in groceries, and in other kinds of stores. I remember when I was a little boy, my father had a chain of cigar stores, and we got passes to the Grand Opera House for putting up the lithographs. They were generally scenes of the plays in very brilliant colors.67

Major Sheehan described the physical appearance of the theatre, and mentioned that next to the Grand was the Schwartz Company that, in order to expand, later bought the Grand Opera House and built the Maison Blanche Building and Department Store on the site of the theatre. Major Sheehan remembers that an alley about eight feet wide separated the theatre from the Schwartz property. He said: "... In that alley was a little candy stand where 'Candy Benny' sold candy to the patrons of the theatre. It was home made in his aunt's candy kitchen." Sheehan recalls that all the actors and stage hands used the stage entrance on Customhouse Street.

... I used to help take scenery in there, through very big doors. ... Policeman Tom Griffin stayed outside the theatre before the performance for general supervision until it was time to let the children go up to the pit; and then he went in to keep them quiet.68

67Ibid., Interview No. 20. 68Ibid.
In the last great days of the Grand Opera House, before the boycott of the Theatrical Syndicate became effective, Major Sheehan saw many memorable stars and combinations perform at the theatre. What is more, he met and became friends with a number of them. Among the celebrities whom Sheehan enjoyed knowing were Eddie Foy, Richard Mansfield, the famous minstrels George Primrose and Billy West, the Hanlon Brothers, and George Adams whom he saw in the extravaganza Fantasma. Adams was a pantomime-clown, and a particular idol of the youth who hoped at the time to become a like actor. Sheehan saw Fanny Davenport perform in La Tosca and Fedora, enjoyed Joe Hamilton in Puddin Head Wilson, becoming friends with Hamilton, and recalls such other plays as The Eight Bells, Hoyt's The Milk White Flag and The Devil's Auction. This informant gave significant information regarding the orchestra at the theatre. Professor Kirst and Professor Sprecht led the Grand Opera House orchestra at different times during the 1895-1898 period in which Sheehan was associated at the theatre. He relates that one or two overtures were usually performed before the play of the evening began. "Poet and Peasant" was, according to Sheehan, played more often than any other selection. If the train was late getting in with the players prior to the opening of a new engagement, the orchestra would play
three or four selections. The orchestra entered through a small door under the stage, according to Sheehan, and then played in the orchestra pit. Major Sheehan contributes valuable data concerning audience reception of plays in New Orleans and of New Orleans drama critics:

... Mr. Greenwall did the billing as early as January for the next September, or even as much as two years ahead of time. There was an old saying: "If they can make New Orleans, they'll make the road." New Orleans was a very difficult place to play. The audiences were very critical. So to be a success in New Orleans meant you had to be a hit. 69

Sheehan avows that there were several drama critics and play reviewers working on the Picayune at any one given time. Moreover, the newspaper used part-time critics, who were regularly employed elsewhere, in their time-off. This information accounts for the fact that the same newspaper could have such diametrically opposed viewpoints on two succeeding days concerning one star, as was evidenced, for example, in comments concerning Sarah Bernhardt's appearance at the Grand Opera House in that era. Sheehan states:

... John Galbreath was a critic for the Picayune who wrote play reviews. He was a very particular man, hard to please. I knew him well. He was a telegraph operator, the way chief, by day, at Western Union, and at night he was a critic. I was a

69 Interview No. 20.
check boy at Western Union in 1895 when I met him. They called the *Picayune* "the old lady." Everyone read the reviews in the *Picayune*. Galbreath was very fair.70

Sheehan's comments concerning the Theatrical Syndicate and Greenwall's dilemma over the Trust are particularly significant:

... Mr. Greenwall wanted good shows. I would listen to him talk. He wanted to make a "snow ball" of talent. He got the idea if he could get theatres organized from Atlanta, Mobile and New Orleans to take shows every night, with a guarantee every night with a continuity of dates, he would get better shows; some that would never leave the East otherwise. He planned, and then went out to get them all in this agreement. It was a wonderful idea. In this way, the troupes would have a guarantee, and no fear of ever getting stranded. New groups would come to the deep South that had never been here before. Just as he was about to sign all the theatres in the plan to his agreement, he was defeated by the New York Syndicate, who bought out the other theatres. Greenwall would not join. He was a great man, a fair man, and he would not be pressured. I was about fifteen in the '90's when I heard him talk to Dan Rose and Bob Davey—a congressman in New Orleans, about his dream of uniting the theatres and getting better theatre in New Orleans. When the Syndicate opposed Greenwall, it was hard for him to get good companies any more...71

This informant also related facts concerning the decline of the theatre that will be mentioned in a later section.

By the autumn of 1897, at the time that the 1897-1898 season at the Grand Opera House was about to begin, the

70Interview No. 20. 71Ibid.
Syndicate had already gone so far in its drive to control the theatrical business of the nation that it waged open warfare on those who would not come to terms with it. And as the Trust gained control of nearly all of the first-class houses in America, its promise to the United States, that it would provide healthy competition to benefit actors, managers and the public alike, became more and more a broken promise and a colossal untruth. The ironic consequences of this unprecedented untruth would multiply and become more traumatic in each year of the next decade.

The new policy of low admission prices to fight rival Syndicate houses continued when the 1897-1898 season opened. Prices remained at 15 cents, 25 cents and 50 cents. The theatre had an earlier opening than ever before, when the season began on Monday, August 30, 1897. At this time, Sidney R. Ellis returned and appeared in Darkest Russia as Colonel Cobb, which played through Wednesday's performances. On Thursday, September 2, and for the remainder of the week, Ellis was presented in the melodrama, Bonnie Scotland, as Lochburn McCale, the minstrel. The picturesque play had the advantage of a stirring plot, colorful Highland costumes, and songs and

^2Binns, op. cit., pp. 77-78.
dancing. The cast won favorable notices, particularly Ellis and Albert Davenport, a handsome young juvenile actor who rose to heights of dramatic intensity. Henry Clifton won praise also, as a convincing villain. Cast: Lochburn Mc Cale, Sidney R. Ellis, Walter Mc Farlane, Allen Davenport, Humphrey Colquhoun, Louis Brean, Murdoch Buchanan, Henry Clifton, Heubane Mc Wharry, Walter Wilson, Tom Fas, John Brennan, Wallace Dugold, Alfred Moore, Landlord, Hubert Shawles, Mary Colquhon, Charlotte Dean, Katherine Ensworth, Louise Marcelli, Nannie Dugold, Eva Wescott, Jean Mc Farlane, Meta Brittain. (Picayune, Thursday, September 2, 1897.)

The passing of another beloved theatrical personality was noted when the Picayune commented that Mrs. John Drew died on August 31, 1897. The popular veteran actress had only recently appeared at the Grand, a few seasons before. (Picayune, Tuesday, August 31, 1897.)

Jules Grau, vigilant in his fight against the Theatrical Syndicate, joined forces with Greenwall at this time, sending the Grau Opera Company to the Grand Opera House for seven weeks of opera bouffé. The Grau Company opened on Sunday, September 5, 1897, and began their engagement by presenting Von Suppe's Russian opera, Fatinitza. Low prices prevailed again—from 10 cents to 50 cents. Artists heading
the company included Camille Mouri, Fred Marston, Eloise
Mortimer, Mary Carrington, Gertrude Lodge, Martin Pache,
Frank Woodman, Harry Keady, Gilbert Clayton, the popular
comedian Stanley Felch, and the famous boy tenor, Willie
Kirst. On Thursday, and for the remainder of the week, the
Grau Company presented *Olivette*. Beginning on Sunday, Sept­
ember 12, through the Wednesday matinee of their second week,
*Chimes of Normandy* was presented. From Wednesday night
through Saturday's performances, *Martha* was offered. The
remaining schedule was as follows: third week, beginning on
Sunday, September 19, through Wednesday, *Boccaccio*; Thursday
through Saturday, *Bohemian Girl*. Fourth week: Sunday,
September 26 through Wednesday, *Fra Diavolo*; Thursday through
Saturday, *Mascot*. Fifth week: Sunday, October 3 and for the
entire week, *Ship Ahoy*. Sixth week: Sunday, October 10,
Monday and Wednesday noon, *Mascotte*; Tuesday, Wednesday,
Thursday, Saturday matinee, Offenbach's *Grand Duchess*. Fri­
day and Saturday, *The Chimes of Normandy*, introducing two new,
prominent additions to the company, Fanny Myers, prima donna,
and Sylvian Langlois, baritone. Langlois had been a member
of the company the previous season. Sixth week: Sunday,
October 17 through Wednesday, *Giroflé-Girofla*; Thursday
through Saturday performances, first time in city of Audran's
opera, Indiana. Seventh week: Sunday, October 24, final week, Olivette, through Thursday, October 28. On the latter date, the season was interrupted abruptly when a yellow fever epidemic that had been threatening the city worsened. It was reported that all the New Orleans theatres remained closed this week, since frightened managers of road companies cancelled bookings rather than to plunge into the midst of the terrible fever epidemic. (Picayune, Sunday, October 24, 1897.)

After the Grau Company terminated their engagement, the Audubon Minstrels, a troupe composed of local amateur talent, played for four days at the end of the week, on Thursday, Friday, Saturday noon and night and Sunday, October 31. Appearing were Messrs. Queen, Flores, Laurence, Costello, John Petty, Bond, Herzberger, Guinio Socola, Lynch, Germain, Ed Mc Carthy, the Fulton brothers, and Misses Lottie Bourne and Virginia May Karman. (Picayune, Thursday, October 28, 1897.)

The billing for the week of October 31 was to have been the comedy, A Puritan Romance, but the offering was cancelled due to the epidemic. A new theatre opened that week, amid the gloom of sickness. It was the Olympic Theatre, which even had a company billed, the Metropolitan Company in The
Fortunes of a Waif. (Picayune, Sunday, October 31, 1897.)

The Grand Opera House reopened on Sunday, November 14, when Beryl Hope and the entire original production of A Southern Romance came direct from the Fifth Avenue Theatre in New York. The drama was an adaptation by B. B. Vallentine of Dolly Higbee's In God's Country, and dealt with the blue grass region of Kentucky. Beryl Hope and Cora Tinnie, described as two pretty and talented ingenues, were instant hits amid the impressive company. Cast: Colonel Wyckoff Ransome..J. W. Thompson, Beverly Johnson..Franklyn Hill, Claude Groves..Edward Wade, Rourdin..Edwin A. White, André.. Emmett Corrigan, Alec..Thomas Ince, Lydia Ransome..Beryl Hope, Emily Wyckoff..Cora Tinnie, Meriky..Emma Brennan.

(Picayune, Monday, November 15, 1897.)

On Sunday, November 21, Edwin Travers began a week's engagement, appearing for the first time in the city in the bright farce, A Jolly Night. The play, adapted from the French, had had a long run in New York as The Three Hats. Travers played well the lead role of Selwyn, a married man, who has had a night out with the boys. Cast: Sam Selywn.. Edwin Travers, Fred Bellamy..Dean Raymond, Capt. Katskill.. Revel Germaine, Blithers..F. K. Wallace, Dibbs..Charles Barrington, Mrs. Selywn..Maud Colling, Grace..Norma Hyatt, Tilly
Hal Reid was featured next as playwright and star when, on Sunday, November 28, Reid's melodrama, *Human Hearts*, had a week's run with Reid in the lead role of Tom Logan, the hero. The author-actor and some of the cast were in the original production during its long New York run at Miner's People's Theatre. It was unfortunate that when the play opened that Sunday, Reid was stricken with a severe cold, and spoke with difficulty. He did as well as he could under the circumstances, and was aided by these cast members: Father Rujuero, Ruth Larkins, Grace Logan, Baby Julia Davenport, Samantha Logan, Constance Davenport, Melville, John Cuff, Samuel Logan, Harry Mortimer, Jim Mason, Ed McHugh, Mose, E. E. McCaleb, Herbert, George C. Raymond, Jeanette, Eulalia Bennett, Limpy Morgan, Chrissie Waltham, Frederick Armsdale, Severin DeDyne, Jimmie Lagan, Harry Dunkinson. *(Picayune, Monday, November 29, 1897.)*

A new advertising approach was used with the next billing, that of Tim Murphy in the dramatic comedy, *Old Innocence*. The *Picayune* announced this guarantee to the public: "If you don't like 'Old Innocence,' you can get your money back between the second and third acts..." *(Picayune, Sunday,
December 5, 1897.) Greenwall found it necessary to use any special devices at his command in order to attract the public. As he began to lean on new names like that of Murphy, who had never been seen in the city before, the Theatrical Syndicate began to send bigger and bigger stars to its New Orleans theatres. That week, Julia Marlowe appeared at the St. Charles. (Picayune, Sunday, December 5, 1897.) Old Innocence was an English adaptation of the French play, Les Petits Oiseaux. Tim Murphy took the role of Jason Green, a man whose kindness makes him the victim of every beggar. The Picayune hailed the new actor as a delightful performer. He was described as dignified, yet easy, able to suggest humor without neglecting the pathos of the role, and he made the character wholly consistent. His performance so enchanted the opening audience that repeated curtain calls ended only when he consented to make a speech. As if the effect of the main bout was not admirable enough, Murphy presented an after-play entitled Sir Harry Hypnotized. In the latter vehicle, Murphy gave a series of impersonations of leading stars in scenes from plays. He was seen as Joseph Jefferson, Henry Irving, Stuart Robson, John T. Raymond and other stars. In each part, Murphy revealed rare talent as a mimic: "... each of the impersonations being strikingly lifelike, both
in form and voice." (Picayune, Monday, December 6, 1897.)

The last impression was that of William J. Bryan delivering the "Cross of Gold" speech, which brought down the house. Murphy was supported by a capable cast, each of whom was impressive in his role. Cast of Old Innocence: Jason Green.. Tim Murphy, Stuart Flint Green..Richard Lyle, Frank Goodfriend ..Thomas David, Ben Green..Frank Coltman. (Picayune, Monday, December 6, 1897.)

Otis Skinner returned, still free of the clutches of the Syndicate, on Sunday, December 12, and appeared that week in Prince Randolph, an adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's Prince Otto. The plot concerned Prince Rudolph Wilhelm of Germany, who married Eldora, a noblewoman under the influence of a Svengali prime minister. Skinner in the lead role was called tender, gently humorous and yet pathetic with deft touches. The Picayune applauded and called the performance "exquisite art." Fred Mosley was exceptionally splendid in the Iago-type part of Baron Von Kanderberg. Maud Durbin proved strong support as Eldora; and Ethel Winthrop, a new addition to Skinner's company, proved herself a fine actress in her role of Countess Von Malton. The drama was sumptuously mounted and richly costumed. (Picayune, Monday, December 13, 1897.)
Miss Francis of Yale, a comedy sensation, arrived next on Sunday, December 19, to play Christmas week. The play was produced with the original New York cast, starring Etienne Girardot, and arrived directly from the Manhattan Theatre, New York, where it had a long run. Girardot, a well-known female impersonator and comedian, was the original lead in Charley's Aunt, and became famous in that role. The comedy dealt with a comedy-of-errors situation at Yale, somewhat like the plot of Charley's Aunt. Girardot was regarded as hilarious, causing a large house to be convulsed with laughter all evening on opening night. The cast was an unusually excellent one. Lavinia Shannon was called elegant as leading lady, and everyone else was impressive in supporting roles. Cast: Frank Staynor. Etienne Girardot, Fred Anderson. Raymond Capp, Byron Mc Stuff. George F. Farren, James Fitz Allen. Owen Westford, Soapner. Louis Grisel, Vesta. Monte Douleo, Edna Fitz Allen. Gertrude Homan, Miss Mann. Fanny Young, Mrs. Chetwynd. Lavinia Shannon, Cosette. Idalene Cotton. (Picayune, Monday, December 20, 1897.)

The long awaited arrival of Leon Herrmann, nephew and successor of Alexander Herrmann, Herrmann the Great, took place on Sunday, December 26, 1897. Adelaide Herrmann, the widow of the late magician, now headed the world-famous...
organization. In deference to the wishes of her husband, Mrs.
Herrmann had kept his company of twenty together; and had
coached Leon, his nephew in the secrets of the late master's
art. Leon had been an actor and variety artist in Europe for
years, and had all the necessary personality requirements to
fill the shoes of the uncle. But the public hardly dared to
find the nephew the success he now was. He had not only
learned deftly Herrmann's incomparable magic secrets, but he
looked startlingly like his uncle. The Picayune said in
amazement:

The king is dead! The king lives! When Alexander
Herrmann died a year ago, . . . it was feared by mil­
ions . . . that his great art would die with him.
But Leon Herrmann fits the bill. He must have been
born by magic. He looks like his uncle and has the
hands for palming which made the uncle famous.
(Picayune, Monday, December 27, 1897.)

Mme. Herrmann continued to delight with her daring dance of
colors. (Picayune, Monday, December 27, 1897.)

The new year began for the theatre with James H. Wal­
llick's mammoth, scenic production of When London Sleeps. The
cast was the original company from the New York production at
the Fourteenth Street Theatre. Even the original scenery was
used. The melodrama, which was written by Charles Darrell,
began a week's engagement on Sunday, January 2, 1898. Fea­
tured in the capable company were Elma Gillette as Maud De
Frere, Vera De Nole as Queenie, Annie Barclay as Hilda, C. H. Truesdell as Capt. Haynes, Lillie Havre as Heila and Mr. Farnum as David. (Picayune, Monday, January 3, 1898.)

On Sunday, January 9, 1898, the first production in New Orleans of Pudd'nhead Wilson opened at the Grand. The comedy was an adaptation by Frank Mayo of Mark Twain's famous story. Theodore Hamilton was said to play the title role in superior fashion. His deep rich voice peeled forth with electrifying sonorousness, and his expressive face and fine acting elicited loud applause. Another important name in the cast was that of Joseph Jefferson, Jr., son of the famous actor. Young Jefferson was outstanding in the role of Chambers, a quadroon. He played with skill and put much fire into his acting. Other principles were: Aunt Paley..Lillian Schovelin, York Driscoll..Augustus Halbach, Tom Driscoll..John Tucker, Rowey..Belle Stokes. (Picayune, Monday, January 10, 1898.) Sheehan recalls both the play and Hamilton with nostalgia.73

Hoyt's A Milk White Flag returned on Sunday, January 16, 1898, and proved again to be a hit. The versatile cast featured John W. Dunne as the Colonel, George Tallman as the

73Interview No. 20.
Major, Frank Camp as the bandmaster, Richard Jarnella as the Private and John Marble as the undertaker: all of whom did their parts well. Ethella Levy was a hit with her Negro songs, and was regarded as a pretty young woman who played the role of Vivandiere. Others doing well were Mary Marble, Joseph Prendegast, Maud Mac Donald and A. T. Bell. (Picayune, Monday, January 17, 1898.)

Louis James returned on Sunday, January 23, and brought three popular plays in his repertoire. Cavalier of France by Espy Williams played all week with the exception of Wednesday matinee when Othello was performed and Saturday evening when Spartacus was offered. James gave a delightful performance as Rene de Froisac and was received enthusiastically. Emily Grey, James' leading lady, played Gabrielle in a charming manner. The supporting company was considered to be excellent. (Picayune, Monday, January 24, 1898.)

Robert Ingersoll, the celebrated orator, was heard on Sunday, January 30, 1898, in a lecture at the Grand, the title of which was "The Liberty of Man, Woman and Child."

On Monday, January 31, Francis Wilson returned with his comic opera company for a week's engagement in Half a King. Wilson was supported in principal roles by Lulu Glaser, Peter Lang, John Brand, Clinton Elder and J. C. Miron.
On Sunday, January 30, 1898, the *Picayune* imparted the significant news that the Theatrical Syndicate planned to build two theatres of its own in New Orleans, and would relinquish the leases of the Academy of Music and the St. Charles Theatre when these leases expired at the end of the current 1897-1898 season. Circumstances leading to this important announcement are treated at length at the end of this season, along with comments concerning additional developments of the Syndicate at this time.

Frank Lane was star of the Grand Opera House's next attraction, that of Charles H. Hoyt's *A Trip to Chinatown*. The comedy began a week's engagement on Sunday, February 6, 1898, after a run of 656 nights at Hoyt's Theatre, New York. Frank Lane was the son of the eminent Shakespearean actor, John A. Lane, and himself was one of Hoyt's most talented comedians. As Welland Strong, Lane was called an instant hit and kept his audiences amused throughout each performance. Strongest support came from J. Aldrich Libbey as Rasbleigh Gay, Gus P. Thomas as Mormon Blood, Mattie Lockette as the Flirt—a French maid, Jane Stotson as Mrs. Guyer and James Mc Duff as Slavin Payne. (*Picayune*, Monday, February 7, 1898.)

Koster and Bial's spectacular extravaganza, *Gayest*
Manhattan, came next, direct from Koster and Bial's Music Hall, New York, where it had just completed 167 performances. The booking at the Grand Opera House of the lavish production was the first experiment to be attempted in the way of a road organization by the famous music hall purveyors, Koster and Bial. The show had not only been a hit at the New York theatre all the past winter season, but during the entire previous summer, it had played as a success at a beach resort in New York. (Picayune, Sunday, February 13, 1898.) The "standing room only" sign was up early on the evening of the opening of the lavish musical comedy, and the capacity house experienced three hours of wonderful fun. The plot concerned the amusing adventures of Hiram Prindle and his two daughters, Tess and Mélinda. Richard German played Hiram and was judged to be hilariously effective as the sportive old character. Eleanor Falk was clever as Mélinda and Jennie Lewis was pretty and pleasing as Tess. Other excellent cast members included James Kiernan as Knott Chapman, Gus Pixley as Nathaniel Mansfield Belgraff, Kate Michalena as Miss Waldorf and Alta De Kerwen as Countess De Blaine. (Picayune, Monday, February 14, 1898.)

By the latter period of the 1890's decade, the Picayune's ever improving editorial policies allowed the
featuring of weekly photographs of the stars at the major theatres in the city. Thus, when Blanche Bates and Frank Worthing made their debuts at the Grand Opera House on Sunday, February 20, 1898, both rated large photos in the newspaper, announcing their opening. (Picayune, Sunday, February 20, 1898.) The two were co-stars of the Frawley Company, that came to New Orleans direct from the Columbia Theatre, San Francisco. The group presented in their first week at the theatre three popular plays of the day: Madeline Lucette Ryley's comedy, Christopher, Jr., played on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday matinee; Belasco and De Mille's society comedy-drama, The Charity Ball on Wednesday and Thursday; and Mary T. Stone's drama, A Social Highwayman, on Friday, Saturday and Saturday matinee. The two stars of this important company were appearing for the first time in the city. Blanche Bates was already well-known in western cities, but had never played the South before. Frank Worthing was an Englishman who had played leading man to many stars. His big "break" came when he assumed the leading place in Daly's famous New York Stock Company after John Drew resigned. When the quadruple debut of the Frawley Company, Miss Bates, Mr. Worthing and the play Christopher, Jr., all happened simultaneously, an immense crowd packed the theatre to the doors.
The exotic scenes were laid in London, Devonshire and Bombay. Frank Worthing was hailed by the *Picayune*, in the title role, as a handsome, clever British artist, who was natural, had wit and winning refinement and was beautifully trained. Blanche Bates was said to be pretty, unaffected and refreshing. (*Picayune*, Monday, February 21, 1898.)

**Cast:**
- Christopher Colt, Jr...
- Frank Worthing, Whimper...
- George Mc Quallis, Job...
- Frank Thompson, Christopher Colt, Sr...
- Frederick Perry, Mrs. Colt...
- Phosa Mc Allister, Major Hedway...
- Wilson Enos, Mr. Glibb...
- H. D. Blakemore, Mrs. Gill...
- Selena Johnson, Nelly Colt...
- Eleanor Robson, Bert Bellaby...
- William Lewers, Simpson...
- George Bosworth, Dora Hedway...
- Blanche Bates.

The house remained filled to capacity for the excellent Frawley Company's production of Belasco and De Mille's *The Charity Ball*. Frank Worthing was regarded as noteworthy as the handsome, aesthetic young clergyman, John Van Buren. In impressive support were Blanche Bates as Ann Cruger; H. D. Blakemore, strikingly funny as Judge Peter Gurney Knox; William Lewers, also comical as Alec Robinson; Selena Johnson as Phyllis Lee and Eleanor Robinson as Bess Van Buren. (*Picayune*, Thursday, February 24, 1898.)

*A Social Highwayman*, produced also for the first time in the city was a dramatization by Mary T. Stone of a novel by Elizabeth P. Train. The absorbing plot
concerned Courtice Jaffrey, a man who lived a double life, mixing in high society while simultaneously committing robberies that baffled the police. Handsome Worthing was said to be electrifying as the thief. He played with skill, force and delicacy; while Miss Bates was winsome as Eleanor Burnham. The rest of the cast was as follows: Senora Caprices..Selena Johnson, Mrs. Deane..Phosa Mc Allister, Livingston Remsen..T. Daniel Frawley, Merton Harley..Herbert Carr, Gordon Key.. Wilson Enos, George Bartlett..George Bosworth, Duchess of Clay-Borough..Eleanor Robson, Jenkins Hanby..Frederick Perry, Mrs. Pyl..Madge Cook. (Picayune, Saturday, February 26, 1898.)

The brilliant Frawley Company was held over a second week to continue their varied repertoire. The Picayune described the company's repertoire as remarkable and their talent as flexible, finished and undeniable. (Picayune, Monday, February 28, 1898.) During their second week, beginning on Sunday, February 27, the offerings were as follows: Sunday and Monday, Bret Harte's Sue; Tuesday, Wednesday matinee and night, Day's comedy, An International Match; Thursday, Friday, Belasco and De Mille's Men and Women; Saturday matinee and night, The Wife. Sue was described as a comedy-drama which was adapted for the stage by Bret Harte and T. Edgar
Pemberton from Harte's story, Bolinas Plaius. Sue, the heroine, was a beautiful girl, married to an unfeeling brute; and in the plot, the girl protects a circus performer wanted for murder. Although the play had been produced in New York for a year as a major hit, the Picayune avowed that the New York cast could not have been better than the superior Frawley Company. Blanche Bates rated rave reviews as Sue. The actress was called fair, soft-spoken and sensitive. Worthing played an unsympathetic role for the first time, as the loutish husband, Beasley, and gave an artistic performance. Frawley was regarded as excellent in his important role of Jim, and the rest of the cast was impressive. Cast: Ira Beasley..Frank Worthing, Silas Prescott..Frederick Perry, Parson Davies..William Lewers, Jim Wynd..T. Daniel Frawley, John Scott..Wilson Enos, Jeff Bragg..George Bosworth, Will Oliver..George McQuarrie, Judge..Herbert Carr, Number 22--Frank Thompson, Bill..Walter Melville, Softy..H. D. Blackmore, Jack Miller..H. S. Northrup, Hopkins..Thomas Phillips, Patrolman..Fred Colbrun, Anne Oliver..Madge Carr Cook, Sue..Blanche Bates. (Picayune, Monday, February 28, 1898.) An International Match was an adaptation by Augustin Daly of a German comedy of Frantz Shoenthan. It was judged as a bright amusing play, admirably performed by the fine company.
Worthing was, again, superior as Lord Ravenstock, while H. D. Blakemore was hilarious as stammering Quincy Caramel, Blanche Bates proved additional versatility as Doris, Phosa McAllister was strong as Millicent Merriday, and Eleanor Robson was a vibrant Jenny. (Picayune, Wednesday, March 2, 1898.) Men and Women revealed the full strength of the company. In the excellent cast were: Israel Cohen..Herbert Carr, William Prescott..Frank Worthing, Edward Seabury..T. Daniel Frawley, Pendleton..George Bosworth, Calvin Steadman..Wilson Enos, Stephen Rodman..Frederick Perry, Col. Kip..H. D. Blakemore, Sam Delafield..William Lowers, Mr. Drew..Frank Thompson, Arnold Kirk..George Mc Quarrie, William..Walter Melville, Dora Prescott..Lily Wren, Kate Delafield..Selena Johnson, Margery Knox..Eleanor Robson, Jane Prescott..Phosa McAllister, Mrs. Kirke..Madge Cook, Agnes Rodman..Blanche Bates. Miss Bates was touchingly effective in the lead role, and Worthing was strong, again, in an unsympathetic role. (Picayune, Friday, March 4, 1898.)

Margaret Mather returned after a long absence on Sunday, March 6, 1898, and appeared in her $40,000 production of Cymbeline. This production revealed eighteen elaborate sets, intricate electric lighting effects and 260 expensive costumes. The effect was regarded as an historically
accurate dramatic spectacle of England and Rome in the first
century A.D. Miss Mather's role of Imogen was said to be
charming and very well done. In her earlier scenes, she was
ardent and impetuous. But as the tragedy deepened, her por-
trayal became more earnest; and as the wronged wife, she
revealed poignant pangs of unmerited anguish. Frederick
Hantley's Posthumus was spirited and intelligent, and the
lavish production was immensely effective. Cast: Cymbeline
..O'Kane Hillis, Cloten..B. T. Ringgold, Posthumus..Frederick
Hartley, Belerius..E. B. Eberle, Guiberius..Conrad Cuntzen,
Cornelius..P. B. Murray, Pisania..W. V. Suonar, Aviragus..
H. L. White, Queen..Augusta De Forrest, Helen..Elsie Sturkow,
Imogen..Margaret Mather, Iachimo..Mark Price, Philario..C. E.
Larned, Caius Lucius..W. V. Ranous, Captain..Walter Munroe.
(Picayune, Monday, March 7, 1898.) The important production
was the most auspicious and ironically the most tragic of the
season, and in fact the most tragic in many seasons. Only
three weeks after completing her artistically brilliant engage-
ment at the Grand Opera House, the talented star was dead at
the age of thirty-eight years. A dispatch was received by
the Picayune on Thursday, April 7, 1898 from Charleston, West
Virginia, that informed the Crescent City of Miss Mather's
tragic, sudden death. The shocked city of New Orleans
learned of the sad news on Friday, April 8, in these words:

... A dispatch from Charleston, W. Virginia, April 7, says: "Margaret Mather died here at 5 p.m."
Just three weeks ago, the distinguished actress gave New Orleans the finest production of "Cymbeline" ever seen here, and it was her ambition to do still finer things in classic productions. ... The wife of Colonel Pabst, son of the millionaire brewer of Milwaukee, ... she collapsed last evening in the fourth act of "Cymbeline" and was carried off the stage in an unconscious condition, and never regained consciousness. She died of convulsions caused by acute Bright's disease. ... Born in 1860, she was only thirty-eight years old. (Picayune, Friday, April 8, 1898.)

The announcement was accompanied by a large photo of the beautiful actress. The tragic death, at the height of the career of the major star, recalled the death of Alexander Salvini only one year before, at the height of his career, and the death, also, of beauteous Adelaide Neilson almost two decades before.

The significant season continued with the engagement of Maude Granger and Sheridan Block in the first New Orleans run of Frank Harvey's melodrama, Brother for Brother. The stars and the adequate company were managed by Arthur B. Miller and Francis R. Stewart. Miss Granger, a pretty woman, gave a warm portrayal of Cora Dane. Sheridan Block gave a spirited interpretation of Allen Foster, the central figure of the play. Margaret Raven gave a touching performance as a blind girl. Cast: Allen Foster..Sheridan Block, Eric
Ralford..Lloyd Bingham, Anthony Radford..L. R. Willard, Mat Craven..E. T. Stetson, Tom Windle..John Hines, Jasper Crane ..George Marlowe, Frisby..Frederick Delmont, Robbins..Fred Richter, Ella Craven..Margaret Raven, Brenda..Elizabeth Hunt, Mrs. Radford..Kathryn Weston, Cora Dane..Maude Granger.

(Picayune, Monday, March 14, 1898.)

Nat C. Goodwin's engagement, beginning on Sunday, March 20, 1898 is a significant one in the history of the Grand Opera House. It was during this engagement that the actor immortalized himself by his erratic inconstancy. For, on March 26, 1898, while professing openly his dislike for the Theatrical Syndicate, he gladly accepted an invitation to lay the cornerstone for the Syndicate's two proposed New Orleans theatres: the Tulane and the Crescent. While appearing at the Grand Opera House, the main opposition theatre to the Syndicate in the South, and in fact while attending a meeting at the Grand Opera House called to voice opposition to the Syndicate, Goodwin left the meeting early to lay the cornerstone for the Trust's theatres, gave a glowing speech in which he applauded the forthcoming opening, and then he rushed back to the opposition meeting at the Grand, arriving before the end of the meeting.74 (Picayune, Sunday, __________

74Leavitt, op. cit., p. 565.
March 27, 1898.) Goodwin added to his hypocritical action by promising the Trust to open the Tulane Theatre the following October with a lavish production of Nathan Hale. In fact, he held the play in reserve for the following season, so that he could present it then for the first time in the city. Thus, a star of the Grand Opera House, who had been appearing at the theatre season after season, while professing loyalty to the "open door policy," became a turn-coat while appearing at the Grand, and, according to the Picayune, became sponsor for the new playhouses. (Picayune, Sunday, March 27, 1898.) The controversial situation is discussed further at the conclusion of the season's activity.

In Goodwin's "memorable" engagement, he appeared with Maxine Elliott as co-star in three offerings during the week: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Friday, Saturday matinee, An American Citizen; Wednesday and Thursday, A Gilded Fool; Saturday, The Rivals. No Wednesday matinee was offered. Goodwin had played in Madeline L. Riley's An American Citizen during his previous season. Miss Elliott appeared as Beatrice. In Carleton's comedy, The Gilded Fool, Goodwin was said to play the lead role of Chauncey Short with fine touches of humor and pathos, and Miss Elliott was noteworthy as Margaret. Gertrude Elliott, young sister of Maxine, was rated as clever
and charming as Nell. Other standouts in the cast were Thomas Oberle as Bannister Strange, the villain, and Clarence Handyside as Mathew Rutven. (Picayune, Thursday, March 24, 1898.) In Sheridan's The Rivals, Goodwin's Bob Acres was called consistent and delightful, while Maxine Elliott was regarded as capable as Lydia Languish and Gertrude Elliott was excellent as Lucy. Cast: Sir Anthony Absolute..Clarence Handyside, Capt. Absolute..William Ingersoll, Sir Lucius O'Trigger..Thomas Oberle, Bob Acres..Nat C. Goodwin, Faulkland..Richard Sterling, David..Neil O'Brien, Fag..Louis Payne, Mrs. Malaprop..Estelle Mortimer, Lydia Languish..Maxine Elliott, Lucy..Gertrude Elliott. (Picayune, Sunday, March 27, 1898.)

For a week beginning Sunday, March 27, veriscope pictures were shown at the Grand. The early "movies" showed the Corbett-Fitzsimmons prize fight, with daily showings at matinee and night. Dan A. Stuart directed the taking of the pictures, which were described as being so life-like that: ". . . they move and do all but speak." (Picayune, Monday, March 28, 1898.)

Augustin Daly's comedy, A Night Off, came on Sunday, April 3 for a week. The plot concerned a university professor who wrote a hit play without the knowledge of his wife. The play had been a success at Daly's Theatre, New York,
playing there for over 100 performances. John Murphy took
the role of the professor, and was judged to give a delight­ful portrayal. Marie Haynes was considered good as the wife.
Cast: Justinian Babbitt, John Daly Murphy, Harry Damask,
Donald Bowles, Jack Mulberry, James K. MacCurdy, Lord Mul­berry, George Sprague, Marcus Snap, Thomas McGrath, Prowl,
Charles Middleton, Mrs. Zantippe Babbitt, Marie Haynes,
Angelica Damask, Helen Baird, Susan, Jessie Lansing, Nishe
.. Grace Vaughn. (Picayune, Monday, April 4, 1898.)

The Grau Opera Company concluded the season as it had
done the previous year. The fine opera company came to the
Grand on Sunday, April 10, and remained for six weeks, con­cluding the season on Saturday, May 21, 1898. Leading players
were Eloise Mortimer, Gilbert Clayton, Marry Carrington,
Fanny Myers, Sylvian Langlois, Stanley Felch, Martin Pache
and Robert Lett. The company played nightly and at the usual
Wednesday and Saturday matinees, with this schedule: first
week: Sunday, April 10 through Wednesday night, Bocaccio;
Thursday through Saturday, Mascotte. Second week: Sunday,
April 17 through Wednesday, Said Pasha; Thursday through
Saturday, Fra Diavolo. Third week: Sunday, April 24, Mon­day, Wednesday matinee, Olivette; Tuesday, Wednesday, Girofle-
Girofla; Thursday, Saturday, Grand Duchess; Friday, Saturday

As the 1897-1898 season closed, the *Picayune* hailed Greenwall as "... the oldest and most experienced manager in the South ..." and the Grand Opera House as "... the finest first-class theatre here." (Picayune, Sunday, May 22, 1898.) The prolific season was a profitable one. The Theatrical Syndicate had not yet mustered the strength to cause a black-listing of the Grand Opera House, and the season saw both the return of familiar faces and the debut of new ones. The best company that came that season was the excellent Frawley Stock Company. The most notable event was Margaret Mather's beautiful production of *Cymbeline*, which served also to be the most tragic event of the year: the lovely star
died only a few weeks later, while performing in this same play. Nat C. Goodwin’s engagement was the most perplexing: while appearing at the Grand Opera House, and while speaking out against the Syndicate, Goodwin laid the cornerstone for the two new Syndicate theatres, the Tulane and the Crescent.

The season began on August 30, 1897, when Sidney R. Ellis appeared to appreciative audiences in Darkest Russia and Bonnie Scotland for a week. The Jules Grau Opera Company followed on September 5 and stayed seven weeks. The engagement terminated abruptly during the last week because of a fever epidemic. On October 28, the Audubon Minstrels, a local group, played for four days. Then the Grand closed its doors again for two weeks because of cancellations due to the epidemic. On November 14, A Southern Romance came for a week with the entire original New York Fifth Avenue Theatre Company. Beryl Hope headed the cast that filled the house. November 21 brought Edwin Travers in A Jolly Night and average business. Hal Reid’s Human Hearts followed on November 28, with Reid heading his company, and finding receptive houses. Tim Murphy debuted on December 5 in Old Innocence, and did well, money-wise. December 12 saw the return of Otis Skinner in Prince Rudolph, which fared well financially. For Christmas week, starting on December 19, Miss Francis of Yale and
Etienne Girardot brought appreciative audiences to the theatre. Leon Herrmann debuted on December 26, proving to be startlingly like his late uncle Alexander, and drawing large crowds. On January 2, 1898, *When London Sleeps* came and did average business. Theodore Hamilton headed the cast of *Pudd'nhead Wilson* when it came on January 9. Joseph Jefferson, Jr. was in the capable company, that did well financially.

January 16 brought Hoyt's *A Milk White Flag* and good business. Louis James returned on January 25 in a varied repertoire and was received enthusiastically. Robert Ingersoll appeared for one night on January 30 in a lecture. On January 31, Francis Wilson came for a week in *Half a King* and drew good business. On February 6, Hoyt's *A Trip to Chinatown* came and did fairly. Koster and Bial's *Gayest Manhattan* premiered in the city on February 13, was excellent entertainment, and played to "S.R.O." audiences, doing mammoth business. The excellent Frawley Company debuted on February 20, and stayed for two weeks, playing in varied repertoire to very big business. On May 6, Margaret Mather came for the last week that she was destined to play at the theatre. Her beautiful, costly production of *Cymbeline* brought capacity business; and only three weeks later, the lovely star was dead of Bright's disease. Maud Granger followed on March 13, and did well for a
week in *Brother for Brother*. Nat C. Goodwin made two appearances during the week of March 20; one was as the star of *An American Cousin* at the Grand, and the other was an appearance at the Syndicate's ceremonies to star in laying the cornerstone of the Tulane and Crescent theatres. The veriscope of the Corbett-Fitzsimmons fight was shown for the week of March 27. *A Night Off* did average business for the week of April 3. The season ended with a six-weeks engagement of the Grau Opera Company, which opened on April 10 and ended on May 21, 1898. The company did well in varied operatic repertoire.

The Theatrical Syndicate had made so much headway in its opposition to Henry Greenwall and its other enemies like the Harrison Grey Fiskes, that the Trust's foes united in their collective stands against the Combine. Since an understanding of how the Theatrical Syndicate came to build its own two theatres is heightened by referring to Fiske's *New York Dramatic Mirror Supplements*, it is pertinent to review first the background of, purpose of, and accusations held by this publication: after Harrison Fiske, publisher-editor of the *Dramatic Mirror*, and Mrs. Fiske refused to accept the demands of the Syndicate, Al Hayman visited Fiske in the latter's offices on Broadway in New York, as was earlier pointed out, and threatened to close down Fiske's newspaper
and to run Mrs. Fiske out of the theatrical profession by black-listing her if Fiske refused still to cooperate with the Syndicate. Hayman's attempt to "scare" and to "quiet" Fiske failed utterly. The courageous newspaper publisher countered by publishing the Mirror Supplements. These were special sections of the Dramatic Mirror which warned stars, managers and theatre owners of the dangers of the Theatrical Syndicate. The special issues, called "The Theatrical Trust Supplements," began on November 13, 1897 and continued for fourteen issues at intervals of one to several weeks. The documented facts printed in the Supplements caused newspapers throughout the country to take up the fight against the dangerous combine. Foremost of the important newspapers to take up the anti-Trust cry was the New York World. In New Orleans, the Daily Item was the only newspaper to join in the fight wholeheartedly. The Mirror's Supplements "... devoted entirely to exposing and condemning the growth and intentions of the Syndicate ..." revealed the following facts: (1) the Syndicate coerced newspapers to give favorable reviews to Trust clients. (2) The Trust employed a "skinning" policy;

75 Binns, op. cit., pp. 79-80.
76 Lippman, op. cit., p. 57.
that is, inferior casts were sent on the road. (3) The Syndicate used swarms of useless middlemen. (4) Prices were upped in Syndicate theatres. (5) The Trust brow-beat stars and managers to join their ranks or be black-listed. (6) The Syndicate forced stars to play when and where the Trust sent them. (7) The Trust used fake advertising of "original casts" on the road, but sent instead none of the original actors. (8) The Trust faked the advertised time of original runs of plays sent on the road. (9) The Trust faked the advertised length of tours on the road. (10) The Trust used the "shifting" system; that is, it advertised one show and sent another that was not advertised--one of an inferior nature. (11) Stars and managers were kept "in fear," and were threatened and harassed. (12) Trust personnel were forbidden to read the Dramatic Mirror. (13) The Trust faked the advertising of names not appearing in the actual cast of a given play as presented. (14) The Trust faked the billing of many inferior companies of a show, each one being billed as the original company, and then a number of these casts were sent on the road simultaneously--each claiming to be the original. (15) The Syndicate practiced salary slavery: it reduced salaries at will, regardless of contracts. Examples of this policy were those of the fine actresses Mme. Modjeska and Fanny
Davenport, whose contracts were broken and salaries reduced with the excuse that they were getting old and were no longer drawing at the box-office as they once did. (16) The Syndicate practiced actor "peddling": it loaned actors without their consent to any Trust association. (17) If an actor rebelled, he was black-listed. (18) The Trust cancelled without notice many "hit" plays marked for the road, after the road tickets were already sold. Money was not refunded, and patrons had to be content with viewing an inferior show. (19) The Trust cornered the market on chorus girls. (20) Charles Frohman demoralized the theatre with indecent, lascivious plays, examples of which were the following: The Foundling—dealt with illegitimacy; The Gay Parisians—dealt with nocturnal irregularity; Never Again—dealt with wholesale assignation; The Proper Caper—dealt with lechery and lewdness; A Night Session—was so ribald that public demands caused its recall from the stage; The Conquerers—dealt with criminal assault, degenerates, perverts and prostitutes. New York dramatist-critic Sydney Rosenfeld and major critics all over the country were up in arms, and demanded the censorship of Syndicate productions. (21) The Syndicate forced managers out of business when it served its purpose: when the Trust found a city over-stocked with Syndicate houses, it forced
certain theatres to close their doors. A prime example mentioned was that of Manager Metzerott of the Columbia Theatre, Washington, D. C., who was forced out of business and broken by the Syndicate. (22) The Trust encouraged plagiarism. For example, Paul Potter, leading Syndicate writer, was accused of and admitted to stealing Sardou's *La Heine* in the plot of *The Conquerers.*

The Theatrical Syndicate realized Fiske to be their number one foe when the *Mirror* Supplements were printed. They countered with a $100,000 libel suit against Fiske, and in direct, hostile methods against the Fiskes themselves. For example, Erlanger attacked Fiske from behind one evening when Harrison and Minnie Fiske were strolling in New York, and the fight that ensued was only stopped when the two men were taken off by the police to a police station. Unethical tactics were used against Mrs. Fiske by the Syndicate's newspaper critics who were "bought out" to rig bad reviews.

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77 "A Combination Scheme," *New York Dramatic Mirror*, ed. Harrison Grey Fiske, New York, Vol. 35, February 22, 1896; "Theatrical Trust Supplement," November 13, 1897; November 20, 1897; November 27, 1897; December 4, 1897; December 11, 1897; December 25, 1897; January 1, 1898; January 8, 1898; January 15, 1898; January 23, 1898; January 29, 1898; February 5, 1898; February 12, 1898; February 16, 1898.

78 Binns, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
for the star. As an example, when she played in *Becky Sharp* at the Montreal Academy of Music on September 4, 1899, the critic, in the interests of the Trust, said that Mrs. Fiske was working in degenerate art. Moreover, Mrs. Fiske's costumes were burned on the way to fill an engagement, after her railway car was derailed. Also, the fragile star was not permitted to appear in most cities and in most theatres in the country, since most houses were now Syndicate houses, and most cities were under the Trust's control—as far as entertainment was concerned. Mrs. Fiske could not even any longer appear in New York city, until Fiske leased the Manhattan Theatre for his wife several years later.79 Except for Mrs. Fiske, the Syndicate had achieved a virtual monopoly by 1900 on all popular actors. And except for Greenwall and his interests, the Trust had tied up almost all first-class houses in America by that date.80

As stated, the New Orleans *Daily Item* was the one New Orleans newspaper to speak out vociferously against the Theatrical Syndicate. Unfortunately, it is not possible to find extant copies of this newspaper for the years during which it

79 Ibid., pp. 84-121; 143; Lippman, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-81.

80 Ibid., pp. 69-81.
waged its war against the Trust. However, the New York
Dramatic Mirror's Supplements applauded the Daily Item's
fight with the Syndicate, and the former newspaper devoted
much space to the Item's stand. The Dramatic Mirror reprinted
much of the Item's coverage of Syndicate activity in New
Orleans and of the stand of prominent New Orleans citizens
against the Syndicate. The Daily Item's reprints in the
Dramatic Mirror are important for two reasons: (1) since the
Daily Item is not extant during the time specified, the Mir­
ror preserves valuable information regarding the Syndicate-
Anti-Syndicate fight in New Orleans that is not otherwise
available in any other source; and (2) the Dramatic Mirror
spread knowledge of the activity of the Syndicate and the
fight against this combine to all of its readers throughout
the country. From this source, then, the important stand of
the Variété Club against the Syndicate is learned: on Decem­
ber 28, 1897, Colonel George Soulé, President of the Variété
Association at that time condemned the Trust as being "...a
dangerous and demoralizing influence in theatrical adminis­
tration." The prominent New Orleans citizen was upheld in
his views by all other members of the organization. Former
United States Senator, B. F. Jonas was among the leading
Variété members who voiced his views to the Item:
... Colonel George Soule of the Variété Club has the satisfaction of knowing that all he said has been unqualifiedly [sic] endorsed by members and friends of the organization of which he is president. ... I approve and appreciate very highly the position taken by the Item of this question, and regret that the press generally is not more outspoken in disapproval of the Theatrical Trust. ... "The New York World" and "The Dramatic Mirror" are leading in this fight, and they should be supported by all lovers of the drama, and those who desire its artistic advancement and improvement, as well as all persons who are opposed to combinations, the object of which is to destroy competition, to bridle and control energy, genius and talent, and to make of our intellectual amusements (as they have all the necessaries of life) a mere commodity to be controlled by brokers and speculators, men wholly ignorant of and unmindful of the requirements of art and cultivated taste. (Reprint from New Orleans Daily Item, December 28, 1897; New York Dramatic Mirror Supplement, January 1, 1898, p. 4.)

James G. Clark, former president of the New Orleans City Council, and a member of the Variété Club, declared that the governing committee of the Association had voted to voice the Club's censure of and opposition to the Trust. He added:

... For some reason or other the great morning dailies have failed to discuss the Trust, and were it not for the Item's persistent attack on the octopus, the great mass of the people would remain in utter ignorance of the methods and work of the monopoly. ... Any association which has for its purpose the cornering of artists is a detriment to the profession and to the public. The Theatrical Trust ensalves the actor; it places him in a servile bondage, as that to which the antebellum Negro was forced to submit. ... The Trust is a monopoly, and measures should be taken for its suppression. (Reprinted from New Orleans Daily Item, December 20, 1897; New York Dramatic Mirror, January 8, 1898.)
C. A. Farwell of the Variété Association added:

... The actors who have had the courage to speak out ere the Trust had muzzled them know what waits them if they fall into the power of the octopus. ... If the actors ... of this country allow this monster to live, it is their own fault if they are devoured by it. ... Speaking as a member of the Variété Association, I would rather see the Grand Opera House installed with a good stock company, like Mr. Frawley's in San Francisco, than to be controlled by the Trust. ... We all join in congratulating Manager Greenwall on the stand he has taken in fighting this octopus. (Reprinted from New Orleans Daily Item, December 30, 1897; New York Dramatic Mirror, January 8, 1898.)

It is necessary at this point to refer to the conditions that surrounded the Trust's move to build the Tulane and Crescent Theatres. It has been pointed out that the Syndicate was formed originally to drive Greenwall out of business.\(^{81}\) When first attempts to ruin Greenwall did not succeed, Klaw and Erlanger made overtures to the manager of the Grand Opera House to join the combine, but he refused.\(^{82}\) In the season of 1897-1898, Greenwall continued to engage an astonishingly brilliant group of independent artists.\(^{83}\) This fact and the situation that involved the Syndicate's losing the leases of the St. Charles and Academy of Music theatres served to add impetus and fury to the Trust's opposition to

\(^{81}\)Leavitt, op. cit., p. 565.
\(^{82}\)Kendall, op. cit., p. 590.
\(^{83}\)Ibid.
Greenwall. The Theatrical Syndicate's loss of their two New Orleans theatres happened in this way: Mrs. David Bidwell died two years prior to this 1897-1898 season, and after her death, Dr. George K. Pratt, a well-known New Orleans physician, purchased the St. Charles Theatre from her estate. At the same time, Dr. Pratt acquired the Academy of Music from the Lawrasen heirs who owned that theatre. The new owner leased both theatres to Klaw and Erlanger, and the latter two selected William H. Rowles to manage the theatres for them. Rowles was a native of Ohio, trained for the bar, but he forsook law for the stage and became a manager. He had accepted an offer to join Klaw and Erlanger four years prior to this time, and had done well for the firm by managing Clara Morris' company on the road. Rowles was then sent to manage both of the combine's New Orleans houses. In 1898, the Theatrical Syndicate lost its leases to the Academy and the St. Charles when Dr. Pratt refused to renew the leases. Since neither the Picayune nor Kendall reveal the true circumstances that led up to the building of the Tulane and Crescent theatres, an examination of the facts that caused the erecting of these theatres, as revealed in the New York

84 Ibid., pp. 573-75.
Dramatic Mirror, is significant. The Syndicate did not relinquish the leases of the two New Orleans theatres, as indicated by the Picayune and Kendall. Actual local feeling against the Syndicate as inspired by the Item was a causal factor in Dr. Pratt's refusal to renew the leases of the Syndicate to his two houses. Instead, Pratt offered the houses to Colonel J. D. Hopkins of Chicago, an independent theatre manager who was a close friend of Harry Greenwall. During the week of January 15, 1898, Hopkins visited New Orleans, and completed successful negotiations with Dr. Pratt to take over both theatres at the end of the 1897-1898 season. To infuriate the Syndicate even further, in the negotiations for the theatres, Hopkins secured the assistance of D. C. O'Malley, proprietor of the Daily Item, the sole New Orleans newspaper that had carried on the aggressive fight against the Trust in the city. O'Malley not only represented Hopkins in negotiations for the theatres, but, in addition, he supplied bondsmen for the very large bond which Dr. Pratt required Hopkins to furnish. Jefferson, Klaw and Erlanger were unable to secure local surities in the amount required to

85Tbid., p. 575.
guarantee renewal of their leases. (New York Dramatic Mirror, Supplement No. 11, January 22, 1898.) The Dramatic Mirror applauded the victory for "free theatre," underestimating the craft of the Syndicate in building its own theatres in New Orleans to replace the two it lost. The Mirror reported that:

... there is general rejoicing in New Orleans over the change, which is attributed to a popular feeling against the obnoxious combination which, practically controlling amusements, has charged exorbitant prices for inferior attractions in these theatres. (New York Dramatic Mirror, January 22, 1898.)

Hopkins enlisted the aid of Greenwall and of "Parson" Davies, as well as O'Malley, in management of the Academy and St. Charles. (New York Dramatic Mirror, January 29, 1898.) An editorial in the Item of January 20, 1898 reported meanwhile that the Syndicate was sullen and revengeful over being denied renewal of the leases of the two theatres: "... It maunders threats of revenge and retaliation... It hints at costly reprisals, and the building of rival theatres..." (Reprinted from the New Orleans Item, January 20, 1898, New York Dramatic Mirror, February 12, 1898.) The St. Charles was burned to the ground mysteriously on June 4, 1899, at the end of the same season in which the Syndicate's new houses were opened. Twice before during that year, the St. Charles
Theatre had been discovered to be on fire, the last time in the previous April. On both prior occasions, the flames were located in time to be extinguished before serious damage was caused. But on June 4, the work was done more carefully, according to Kendall, and despite efforts of firemen, the historic theatre burned to the ground, with a lost estimated at $30,000.86

Only too coincidently (to be mere coincidence), the Academy of Music was set on fire on the same night on which the St. Charles burned to the ground. The fire was discovered in time when firemen working to save the St. Charles noticed the incipient blaze in the windows of the Academy and rushed to the scene. The firemen asserted that the blaze could not have spread from the St. Charles, and evidence was found that the fire was deliberately set.87 The enemies of Dr. Pratt did not rest here, however. Charles Fourton took over Hopkins' lease of the Academy after the St. Charles was destroyed. Then at the Academy, which Fourton renamed the Audubon Theatre, the successful new manager had two uninterrupted seasons of outstanding success, playing his Fourton Stock Company to capacity houses. His theatre was, undoubtedly, competition to the new

86 Ibid., pp. 575-76. 87 Ibid., p. 576.
Syndicate theatres. Then disaster hit. On February 11, 1903, with the active Mardi Gras season at hand and when the theatre was enjoying particular prosperity, the theatre was found to be on fire again. This time, the fire was set at 6:30 p.m., just minutes before the cast would arrive, and only less than an hour before the audience would arrive for the night's performance. If the fire had not been discovered by a stage hand happening into the theatre early, a terrible disaster would surely have occurred. According to Kendall, the theatre was a veritable firetrap. The Academy was consumed in a surprisingly short time, at a loss of $20,000. Unlike the St. Charles, the Academy was not insured, and Dr. Pratt was hard hit by the disaster which injured six people and cost the owner a fortune. Pratt's fight with the Theatrical Syndicate earned for the upright physician a bitter defeat.88 The St. Charles, which was insured for part of its cost, was rebuilt on a reduced scale in 1901, and Pratt leased that theatre to the Orpheum Circuit. The Academy was never rebuilt.89

Meanwhile, when the Syndicate lost its leases to the Academy and the St. Charles, it planned immediately to build two theatres to take the place of those it lost. The new

88Ibid., pp. 577-78. 89Ibid., p. 578.
houses were erected in the 1897-1898 season and opened in the Fall of 1898 in time for the 1898-1899 season.

As the Syndicate's activities became more overtly unscrupulous, actors as well as theatre managers spoke out individually or organized in efforts to curb the restrictive, ever expanding influence of the Trust. Francis Wilson was one of the most vociferous voices to speak against the combine. From the stage of the Tremont Theatre in Boston, on December 20, 1897, Wilson told a large audience, assembled to see the actor perform, of the threats and dangers of the Trust. Wilson asserted that the Syndicate demanded that the chief actors of the country either bend to their wishes or to do one of two things as alternatives--play in second-class houses or abandon their profession. Wilson revealed then the names of other stars who were currently standing up against the Trust, including Mrs. Fiske, Robert Mantell, James O'Neill, Richard Mansfield, Joseph Jefferson and James A. Herne. (New York Dramatic Mirror Supplement, Saturday, November 13, 1897.) Most of these actors would eventually go over to the Trust. Other actors who opposed the Syndicate at that time included Mme. Modjeska, Edwin Knowles, Augustin Daly, Wilton Lackane, F. F. Mackaye, H. C. Miner, Nat Goodwin (although vacillating hypocritically), Fanny Davenport and William H. Crane. A. M.
Palmer opposed the Trust overtly; as did a number of significant dramatists, including William Dean Howells, Brander Mathews, James A. Herne, David Belasco and Thomas Baldrich. 90 (New York Dramatic Mirror, Supplement No. 15, February 26, 1898.)

Concerted opposition produced several organized efforts against Trust tyranny. In December 1898, a group of leading actors formed the Association for the Promotion and Protection of an Independent Stage. Richard Mansfield was elected president of the new organization. As Wilson had, Mansfield spoke out vociferously against the Trust. He even dared to condemn the Syndicate before a large audience while appearing at a Syndicate theatre, that of Nirdlinger and Zimmerman's Chestnut Theatre in Philadelphia. Syndicate officials dropped the asbestos curtain while the star spoke and then caused his arrest. The audience almost started a riot, and public indignation was aroused. 91 The Independent Stage Association was scheduled to be launched at Mansfield's office in New York at a meeting of leading actors and producers. Present at the meeting were such prominent names as Henry Greenwall, the

90 Lippman, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

91 Binns, op. cit., pp. 81-83.
Fiskes, A. E. Palmer and Judge Dittenhaefer—a prominent New York judge engaged as legal consultant of the new group. Those assembled waited for Mansfield for over half an hour, when finally a messenger arrived with a terse note: Mansfield had sold out to the Syndicate! The man who dared speak from the stage of Syndicate theatres against the Trust was too cowardly to face his colleagues in person to tell of his "treason." Mansfield's behavior in this instance can be compared with that of Nat C. Goodwin in regard to the latter's action in laying the cornerstone for the new Trust theatres while attending an anti-Trust meeting at the Grand Opera House. On the same day as the laying of the cornerstones of the Tulane and Crescent theatres, on March 26, 1898, Greenwall had called a meeting of stars and managers opposed to the Trust, in an effort to begin an anti-Trust theatrical organization. Present at that meeting were Francis Wilson, Richard Mansfield, James O'Neill, Fanny Davenport, Harrison Grey Fiske, A. M. Palmer and other prominent theatrical names. This was the meeting which Nat Goodwin attended and disrupted by first attending, leaving in the midst of the meeting to lay the cornerstones of the Tulane and Crescent theatres, and returning

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92Ibid., pp. 83-84.
after the ceremony, as stated, in order to be present for the conclusion of the meeting.\textsuperscript{93}

Rowles, Klaw and Erlander had planned deliberately the disruptive move of using Goodwin. Realizing that Nat Goodwin would be the star at the Grand Opera House during the week in which the cornerstones of the Tulane and Crescent theatres were to be laid, they chose this star as sponsor in an effort to perturb Greenwall. Gambling on the actor's vanity in not wanting to miss a chance for national publicity, they foresaw that Goodwin would accept. He did, of course, and later "sold out" to the Trust. One by one, other actors followed suit. With the single exception of Minnie Maddern Fiske, each star who opposed the Syndicate eventually joined its ranks. Jefferson and Herne played in both Syndicate and independent theatres, and were the only stars who succeeded in getting the Syndicate to agree to such terms. Francis Wilson was the last opposing star to join the Trust. Beaten down by spasmodic bookings in second class and vaudeville houses, he was finally forced to join.\textsuperscript{94} Belittled and humiliated by the Trust, Mme. Modjeska was forced to retire.\textsuperscript{95} Modjeska's last

\textsuperscript{93}Leavitt, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 565-66.
\textsuperscript{94}Lippman, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 62-66.
\textsuperscript{95}Binns, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 84.
appearance was in December 1898. Fanny Davenport, also humiliated and scorned by the Trust, found escape in death. The celebrated star died in September 1898. (Picayune, Sunday, September 25, 1898.)

With Richard Mansfield's treason by "selling out" to the Trust while at the same time accepting the presidency of the Independent Stage Association, John Norris of the New York World became thoroughly disillusioned. He stopped his attacks on the Trust in sheer disgust, loss of faith and the spirit of defeat. The Syndicate met every enemy and emerged victorious. It confronted opposition cleverly and won. The Trust's officials were shrewd and cunning enough to offer opposition actors greater advantages than they could find outside of the Syndicate's sanction. It was to be difficult, down-hill, humiliating going from now on for valiant Henry Greenwall.

In the summer of 1898, Greenwall realized that with mounting opposition from the Theatrical Syndicate and with the constant wholesale exodus of more and more actors from an independent position and into the ranks of the Trust, there was only one way to survive. The solution was to reactivate the

\[96\text{Ibid.}\]
resident stock company. The engagement of the excellent
Frawley Company during the previous season had proved that
theatre patrons were still eager to see good stock companies
perform. Moreover, the Dramatic Mirror urged independent
managers to fight the Syndicate with this weapon: the Mirror
vowed that good stock companies would be the means of "... checking the plans of the schemers who seek to rule the theatre," and "... will bring freedom to the stage." The Mirror reasoned:

... Only an exceptionally strong visiting company
is superior to the average stock company ..., and
only an exceptionally weak company is inferior to
the average visiting company. ... The theatre ...
with a stock company ... is better off, dramatic-
ally, than if obliged to depend for its theatrical
entertainment on the theatrical speculators. Most
of which ... are musical and spectacular produc-
tions, none of which are of any dramatic value ... whatever. ... Of plays that rely upon their dramat-
ic value for their success, the city obliged to
depend upon stock companies will get more in ... a season and get them ... better acted, than will
the city obliged to depend on the ... speculators.
... The stock companies have come to stay and it
is a mighty good thing for the American stage that
they have. They furnish a check on the theatrical
speculators, efficient enough to make it impossible
for them to gain absolute control ..., and to
force them ... to show some respect for the rights
of the drama of the ... public. (New York Dramatic
Mirror, Supplement No. 4, December 25, 1897.)

During the summer of 1898, Greenwall made the decision to form
a stock company and he engaged George Holland, Jr. to serve
as director of the new group. The Greenwall Stock Company

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did not make its appearance at the theatre until Sunday, October 2, 1898, and unfortunately was not financially successful, folding before the season was over. It was to be a disheartening season for Greenwall. The 1898-1899 season began many weeks prior to the debut of Greenwall's Stock Company. The initial entertainment of the season was *The Military Maid*, a musical comedy by Richtor and Blake, presented as a pre-opener of the fall season. The event revealed several improvements to the theatre. The entrance was newly painted and decorated, and illuminated with electric lights. Talented amateurs combined to present the pre-opener. Mrs. Claus Bogel took the title role and sang well; while other noteworthy performances were given by Edward J. Faure as Sammy and Gilbert Clayton as Private Glooper. Admission prices were the same as for the professional bookings to follow: 50 cents, 25 cents and 15 cents. (*Picayune*, Monday, September 5, 1898.)

The season began officially on Sunday, September 11, 1898, when Thomas H. Davis and William T. Keogh's production of *Down in Dixie* arrived directly from New York where it had been playing at the Star Theatre. The theatre was filled to its utmost capacity for the opening. The play depicted Negro life on a Southern plantation, and featured the Picaninny
Band and a cotton compressing scene with arresting mechanical effects. Cast: Jack Calhoun, Charles N. Haight, Squire Lounds, Maurice Pike, Judge Calhoun, Mills Hall, Abe Lampton, George Barr, Alvin Curtis, William H. Davis, Henry Deland, Henry Brinsleu, Bacon Green, Charles Webster, Gloria Hale, Laura Dean, Anna Calhoun, Jennie Darragh, Clara Kent, Nellie Lindroth, Mannie Green, Mrs. Milton Barlow. Many of the cast, all of whom were Caucasians, impersonated Negroes, in blackface. Mrs. Barlow was described as "... the best woman minstrel on the stage." (Picayune, Monday, September 12, 1898.)

The Cleveland-Wilson Minstrels, headed by George Wilson and W. S. Cleveland, arrived for the week beginning Sunday, September 18, and commanded capacity houses. George Wilson, E. M. Hall, John Queen—a New Orleans native, and Thomas Welch headed the excellent troupe. Meanwhile, the Crescent Theatre was nearing completion, and Marc Klaw had arrived in the city to make arrangements for the opening on September 26, 1898. (Picayune, Sunday, September 18, 1898.)

The Grand Opera House was dark for the week of Sunday, September 25 while George Holland, Jr. rehearsed the new Greenwall Stock Company which prepared to open on October 2. Meanwhile, the Syndicate's first New Orleans theatre to be
completed, the Crescent, was opened on Monday, September 26, 1898. Even New Orleans Mayor Walter C. Flower attended the occasion, which presented Andrew Mack in *The Ragged Earl*. *(Picayune, Tuesday, September 27, 1898.)* The Grand Opera House would now never again find itself free from Syndicate competition.

The Greenwall Stock Company made its debut at the Grand Opera House on Sunday, October 2, 1898. On the same day, it was announced that Fanny Davenport had died. The star who had played so many brilliant engagements at the Grand died on September 26 at her summer home in Duxbury, Massachusetts. For the first time since the season of 1877-1878 when Thomas A. Hall abandoned the stock company, at the time when the Grand was still called the Varieties, the Grand Opera House now had again a resident company. The new company's players included Adele Block, leading woman; Al S. Lipman, leading man; Louise Closser, second woman; Carlton Macy, lead comedian; Walter Creighton, juvenile; Edward McWade, comedian; Charles D. Pitt, character man; Eugene Eberle, chief character man; George Holland, Jr., stage director; Herman Sheldon, young character man; Frank Crane, second man; May Tyrrell, lead character woman; John Germon, assistant stage manager and character man; Alice Pixley,
second woman; Blanche Alexander, ingenue; Margaret May, ingenue and soubrette; and Alma Weil, supporting child. Holland was the son of the well-known comedian of the same name, and had had, himself, considerable experience acting and managing. (Picayune, Sunday, October 2, 1898.) The initial offering was Augustin Daly's Pique, and the event brought forth a full house. The Picayune asserted that the play had never been so handsomely produced before in the city. Al Lipman was praised highly for outstanding acting as the self-willed father, Adele Block for her capable handling of Mabel, and each member of the cast received special laudatory comments for fine acting. (Picayune, Monday, October 3, 1898.)

Cast: Matthew Standish..Al Lipman, Capt. Standish..Carleton Macy, Dr. Gossett..E. A. Eberle, Raymond Lesing..Walter Creighton, Sammy Dymple..Edward Mc Wade, Thorsby Gill..Charles D. Pitt, Jim..Herman A. Sheldon, Padder..John Germon, Picker Bob..Frank Crane, Mabel Renfrew..Adele Block, Lucille ..Alice Pixley, Mary Standish..Louise Closser, Aunt Dorothy..Mary Tyrrel, Raith..Margaret May, Mother Thames and Sylvia..Blanche Alexander, Little Arthur..Alma Weil.

Beginning their second week on Sunday, October 9, the Greenwall Stock Company presented Dion Boucicault's comedy, The Jilt. Greenwall dared to raise his prices for this play
to 75 cents top for orchestra, while other seats ranged down to 15 cents. During this week, the St. Charles Theatre, now managed by Hopkins, opened also with a stock company, after finding bookings impossible to make because of the Syndicate boycott. The St. Charles Company was named after lessee Hopkins, as the Hopkins Stock Company. Prices of that first-class house were set at an all-time low in order to compete with the Crescent, at only 30 cents, 20 cents and 10 cents. The Jilt established the Greenwall Company as a first-rate troupe. Their performances in the comedy were smooth, crisp and utterly well done. George Holland, Jr. was applauded as a most competent and fine director. Edward McWade and Louise Closser were cast in the lead roles of Miles O'Hara and Keth Woodstock. Both were noted for spirited, delightful performances; and again, every member of the company was singled out for praise. The Picayune assured the public that the fine performance warranted the utmost admiration of the best class of theatre goers. Cast: Miles O'Hara, Edward McWade, Sir Burleigh Woodstock, Al S. Lipman, Col. Tudor, E. A. Eberle, Geoffry Tudor, Charles D. Pitt, Sir Marcus Wylie, Carleton Macy, James Dolsey, Walter Creighton, Rev. Spooner, Herman A. Sheldon, Wilcox, Frank Crane, Lady Millicent Woodstock, Adele Block, Kitty Woodstock, Louise Closser, Mrs. Welter, May
During the following week, the Syndicate's entire system of monopoly competition for independent theatres in New Orleans became complete with the opening on Monday, October 17 of the Tulane Theatre. As expected, Nat C. Goodwin opened that house, with Maxine Elliott in *Nathan Hale*. Tulane prices ranged from $1.50 to 25 cents. Greenwall countered by lowering his prices at the Grand to 10 cents minimum for gallery, and only 25 cents for all parts of the theatre on matinees. (Picayune, Sunday, October 16, 1898.) The Greenwall Company began their third week on Sunday, October 16 by presenting Dion Boucicault's comedy, *Led Astray*. The performance was hailed as captivating by the Picayune, and the house was filled to capacity on opening night. The Picayune insisted: "... Never before has 'Led Astray' been so well played in New Orleans as last night." Lipman gave a spirited performance as the exacting brutish husband. The role of Armande was Adele Block's most perfect performance to date, and gained for her many curtain calls. The supporting cast performed excellently and again earned special mentions.

*Cast:* Rudolph Chandoce, Al S. Lipman, Hector Plaucide, Edward McWade, Baron Gosline, Charles D. Pitt, George
Augustin Daly's comedy, *The Great Unknown* was the bill for the fourth week of the Greenwall Stock Company. The company was by now cemented in the affections of theatre goers. The plays were performed excellently and were received, up until this time, with great fervor by capacity houses. The newest offering was no exception. The play was adapted by Daly from the German of Schoenthal and Kadelburg. It had been acted at Daly's Theatre in New York in 1889, but was only now receiving its first New Orleans airing. The plot concerned a handsome widow who neglects her family to write poetry, and falls in love with an Irishman. Miss Block and Lipman were outstanding in the lead roles. The *Picayune* particularly hailed Lipman by saying: "... In every new character he assumes, he gives new evidence of his ability as an actor." (Picayune, Sunday, October 23, 1898.) The play marked the first appearance that season of George Holland, Jr., the much praised director of the group. He was
described as "... a finished actor of the old school, although ... a young man yet." (Picayune, Sunday, October 23, 1898.) His acting as a neglected husband was deemed a treat. Cast: O'Donnell Don..Al S. Lipman, Ned Dreemer..Carleton Macy, Jeremiah Jarraway..George Holland, Tom Prowde..Charles D. Pitt, Twitters..Walter Creighton, Patrick..Frank Crane, Arabella Jarraway..Alice Pixley, Etna..Margaret May, Pansy..Louise Crosser, Aunt Penelope..May Tyrrel, Shirley Munkittrick..Adele Block, Mlle. Agathe..Blanche Alexander. The success was held over an extra day, playing through Sunday, October 30. (Picayune, Monday, October 24, 1898.)

On Monday, October 31, the Greenwall Company gave additional evidence of its ability and resourcefulness by presenting for their fifth week an outstanding performance of Henry Guy Carleton's A Gilded Pool. Although the role of Chauncey Short was written for Nat C. Goodwin, the Picayune swore that Al S. Lipman was equally if not more effective in the role. Margaret May and Adele Block headed the long list of special mentions for fine support. Cast: Chauncey Short..Al S. Lipman, Mr. Ruthven..E. A. Eberle, Bannister Strange..Carleton Macy, De Puyster Ruthven..Charles D. Pitt, Jack..Edward Mc Wade, "Rev." Howell..Sherman Sheldon, Perkins..Frank Crane, Morgan..Walter Creighton, Janitor..John Germon,
Sophia..May Tyrrel, Jessica Bond..Alice Pixley, Nell Ruthven
..Margaret May, Margaret Ruthven..Adele Block. (Picayune,
Tuesday, November 1, 1898.)

For their sixth stellar week, the Greenwall Stock Com-
pany chose The Little Detective which had been a starring
vehicle for Lotta. It was an elaborate production with
special scenery created especially for the comedy. Margaret
May took the lead role and showed great versatility in her
part. In disguise, in pursuit of her investigations, she
appeared as the indulged daughter of an aristocratic family,
a dull German servant, a garrulous old nurse, a young man
about town and as an Irish singing lad. In each disguise,
Miss May was bright and clever, winning unstinted praise from
her audience. Carleton Macy as the villain, and Louise
Closser as the invalid wife won laurels and headed the sup-
porting cast. Cast: Sir Gervase Langton..E. A. Eberle,
Barry Mallingson..Carleton Macy, Herr Stuyversant..Edward Mc
Wade, Rockaway..Charles D. Pitt, Dr. Stasfeldt..John Germon,
Tracy..Herman Sheldon, Hardcliffe..Walter Creighton, Mme.
Ritzdorf..May Tyrrel, Stella..Louise Closser, Una Langton..
Blanche Alexander, Florence Langton..Margaret May. (Picayune,
Monday, November 7, 1898.) The Academy of Music opened
finally on November 6, and featured the Murray-Lane Opera Com-
pany.
For the seventh successful week of the Greenwall Stock Company, *Divorce* was the offering. For the first time in his many engagements in the city, Stuart Robson did not appear at the Grand. The veteran star who had been a member of the first stock company at the Grand in 1871, and who had always returned to that theatre, was now a Syndicate actor, and appeared that week at the Tulane. The Greenwall Company was hailed as giving a brilliant performance of the play that Fanny Davenport originated. In the lead role of Fanny Ten Eyck, Adele Block was described as beautiful and sported a stunning wardrobe. Olivia Lane, a New Orleans girl, made her theatrical debut in this play as Molly. Cast: Alfred Adrience, Al S. Lipman, Capt. Lynke, Carleton Macy, Rev. Duncan, Herman Sheldon, De Witt, E. A. Eberle, Templeton Jitt, Edward McWade, Burrett, Walter Creighton, Judge Kemp, John Germon, Jim, Charles D. Pitt, Dr. Lang, John Germon, Mrs. Ten Eyck, May Tyrrel, Lou, Louise Closser, Fanny Ten Eyck, Adele Block, Mrs. Kemp, Alice Pixley, Grace, Margaret May, Flora, Blanche Alexander, Molly, Olivia Lane, Alfred, Alma Weil. (*Picayune*, Monday, November 14, 1898.)

The eighth week of the Greenwall Company was marked by a double bill, starting on Sunday, November 20. *Two Can Play that Game*, an adaptation from a French farce, began the
performance, followed by the three-act farce, Turned Up. The first comedy centered about a triangle situation, a husband, wife and the husband's friend. These roles were taken expertly by Al S. Lipman as Howard Leslie, the friend; Carleton Macy as Charles Arundel, the husband; and Adele Block as Lucy Arundel, the wife. Turned Up was a sparkling comedy which kept the large audience laughing and applauding. The entire cast was judged as excellent. Cast: Sabina..Louise Closser, Mrs. Medway..May Tyrrel, Ada Baltie..Blanche Alexander, Gen. Baltie..E. A. Eberle, George Medway..Carleton Macy, Capt. Medway..Herman Sheldon, Nod..Charles D. Pitt, Carraway Bones..Edward McWade, Tom Lobb..Walter Creighton, Ada..Blanche Alexander, Mrs. Pannell..Alice Pixley, Cleopatra..Margaret May. (Picayune, Monday, November 21, 1898.)

Saratoga was the ninth week's offering of the Greenwall Company. Again, this fine troupe was up to its excellent standard. The comedy was said to be exceptionally well acted and the sets were beautiful. Al Lipman, who had acquitted himself admirably in every varied role, did equally well as Bob Sackett. George Holland was a standout as a deaf old character, Vanderpool, and each cast member was applauded. Cast: Robert Sackett..Al S. Lipman, Jack Benedict..Carleton Macy, Papa Vanderpool..George Holland, Jr., Hon. Carter..
Despite the exceptionally fine acting of the brilliant Greenwall Stock Company, the group's tenth week was their final week at the theatre! The competition of two Syndicate theatres booking a constant succession of stars, while the Grand Opera House, Academy of Music and St. Charles had to rely solely upon stock companies, proved too much for the Greenwall Company and the Grand Opera House. This fine company was paid handsomely by Greenwall, and the productions were staged in a costly manner. At first, the public responded wholeheartedly in support of the excellent stock company. But when the Tulane and Crescent theatres opened and offered constant variety in bookings of one star after another, the inconstant public no longer rushed to attend the Grand Opera House performances. Opening night was usually crowded, but the rest of the week, attendance was very slim. The company's final week began on Sunday, December 4, 1898, when
Daly's comedy adaptation, *The Lottery of Love*, was performed. The *Picayune* acclaimed the production as an artistic success, and especially applauded the delightful performance of Al Lipman as Alphonsus Doubledot. In his final effort, the fine actor played with a finesse and delicacy that was termed "exquisite." Each other actor proved his sincerity by giving an inspired performance. Cast: Adolphus Doubledot..A1 S. Lipman, Benjamin Buttercorn..Edward McWade, Capt. Sam Merri-mac..Eugene Eberle, Tom Dangerous..Charles D. Pitt, David..Walter Creighton, Rye..Thomas Love, Grass..Frank Crane, Mrs. Shermany..May Tyrrel, Diane..Adele Block, Ann Eliza..Alice Pixley, Jo..Louise Glosser. (*Picayune*, Monday, December 5, 1898.) To mark the closing of the excellent company on Saturday, December 10, 1898, the *Picayune* dedicated an entire column as a lament: this "eulogy" said in part:

The disbanding of the Greenwall Stock Company is much regretted in New Orleans. An honest effort, in the face of strong opposition, was made by Manager Greenwall to return the stage of the Grand Opera House to its original condition, as it was in the palmy days, when stock companies furnished all the amusement then desired. Under the conditions of today, the present stock company Manager Greenwall organized and gave his name, has been an unfortunate failure. This is the fault of the fickle public. . . . Stage Manager Holland has labored faithfully and given fine productions of the best plays. The actors have been as faithful, and it has been hard work to study every week a new part, rehearse every day, and give nine performances each week. Some of
the ladies have stood, nervous and worn, studying a new part, while the dress-maker was actually fitting them with new costumes, thus spending their salaries, and exhausting their nervous force.

The article went on to praise each member of the company. Margaret May and Louise Closser were especially applauded as actresses who were outstanding hits in each role they played. E. A. Eberle and Herman Sheldon were cited as actors who made every part a gem. But Al S. Lipman was hailed as a superior actor who would not soon be forgotten:

. . . The burden of the fine performances given by the company has . . . fallen upon him. He has studied many long parts, and always knew his lines. He has taken parts in which Charles R. Thorne, Charles Wyndham and Nat C. Goodwin have starred in and has failed in none. This could not be done by many actors now before . . . the public as leading men. He is one of the best. . . . (Picayune, Sunday, December 11, 1898.)

The unfortunate theatre remained dark for the week starting Sunday, December 11, 1898 while Greenwall struggled to find last minute bookings to fill the season. While the theatre was thus unoccupied, ironically, Julia Marlowe, under the wraps of the Syndicate, made her debut at the Tulane Theatre. The Tulane was built by the Trust to replace the Academy of Music. It was smaller than the Crescent, with a

97Actors and actresses paid for their own wardrobes at that time.
seating capacity of 1400, and was a higher priced house than
its sister theatre. Both houses claimed the appearances of
important stars, the majority of whom had appeared at the
Grand Opera House, Academy or St. Charles before the quaran-
tine set by the Syndicate. The Crescent seated 1800, and
was designed as a popular-price house, designed to continue
the bookings that Klaw and Erlanger had been presenting at
the St. Charles. The idea was to eliminate all need for the
Grand Opera House, Academy and St. Charles. Kendall asserts:
"The Tulane and Crescent theatres were built as part of the
strategy by which Greenwall and his supporters were to be
eliminated from the amusement field." 98

The week before Christmas, beginning on Sunday, Decem-
ber 18, the Grand Opera House was reopened, while the Academy
closed, unable to secure any adequate bookings. Sylvanus Lee
and his company of hypnotists reappeared at the Grand, billed
as Lee's Company of Hypnotists. It was during this week that
the drama columnist of the Picayune told of his latest gift
from the Trust: the critic received from Charles Frohman a
de-luxe play edition of The Little Minister, starring Maude
Adams. The book was bound in white and gold, printed on

98 Kendall, op. cit., p. 580.
On Christmas Day, 1898, the Academy of Music reopened exclusively as a vaudeville house, still under Hopkins' management. Unable to secure any bookings other than variety, the historic theatre was forced to resort to mere vaudeville. (Picayune, Sunday, December 25, 1898.) Meanwhile, also on Sunday, December 25, the Grand brought back Etienne Girardot in his comedy, Miss Francis of Yale. The comedian was ably assisted by his proficient original cast, including Fanny Young, Agnes Rose Lane, Raymond Capp, George Farran, Brenton Thorpe, Louis Grisel, Freda Michel, Marjorie Carie and Anna B. Layug. Girardot recreated his comic role of Frank Staynor, creating laughter with every line and situation. (Picayune, Monday, December 26, 1898.)

The New Year's offering, beginning on Sunday, January 1, 1899, was a musical melodrama called Uncle Josh Spruceby. The production was elaborate, with a company of thirty-five, an operatic orchestra and two large bands. A big city parade on New Year's Day advertised the opening of the play. The Picayune regarded the melodrama as being thrilling fare, but did not like the way in which musical numbers were introduced unmindful of action, just after gripping, blood-curdling
situations. Although the singing and dancing were well done, the audience was in no mood for clever specialties immediately after the villain had killed an innocent boy. The sawmill scene was said to be thrilling, and the plot itself was gripping, but each high point was ruined by subsequent unrelated specialties. Cast: Uncle Josh Spruceby..Edwin Gardner, Luke..Marc Robbins, Hans..Eddie P. Bowers, Major Wellington.. Ralph Dinsmore, Hank..Arthur Borrelly, Buttons..James Bowen, Nancy..Virginia Douglas, Sally..Edith Bowers, Jerusha..Mrs. Edwin Gardner, Mrs. Simpkins..May North, Becky..Alice Holly, Sawmill foreman..Joseph O'Hara, Sheriff..W. C. Sanders, Policeman..P. A. Lanigan. The production played for a week. (Picayune, Monday, January 2, 1899.)

Offerings became more and more difficult for Greenwall to procure. Starting on Monday, January 9, 1899, an insignificant troupe called the Travers-Vale Company appeared in After the War, described as a southern romantic drama. The Picayune neither listed the cast nor reviewed the play. Meanwhile, Marie Wainwright, now in the Syndicate ranks, appeared that week at the Crescent. When After the War ended its week's run on Sunday, January 15, the Grand remained dark all the following week. Greenwall could find no independent attraction to book that week. The situation became more and more
crucial, as Greenwall watched every star, one by one, who played formerly at the Grand, now going over to the Trust, and appearing only at the Syndicate's two new houses. For example, during the current dark week at Greenwall's theatre, James O'Neill—who had always appeared in New Orleans at the Grand--was billed at the Crescent. (*Picayune*, Monday, January 16, 1899.)

Greenwall's luck changed momentarily during the week of Sunday, January 22, when a good independent company attracted large audiences to the Grand. The offering was, for the first part of the week, Punch Robertson's Repertoire Company, appearing in the musical comedy, *Under False Colors*. Prices were reduced further, to only 10 cents, 20 cents and 30 cents for night performances, while daily matinees were offered at only 10 cents and 20 cents for the entire house. The cast was capable and the play was regarded as a hit. Frank Fahey and Carrie Louis headed the cast. Fahey was judged as a splendid comedian and Miss Louis was bright and pretty and sang well. Cast: Lord Alfred Leighton..Walter Woods, Lady Blanche Leighton..Minnie Milne, Lord Burwood..M. T. Bohannon, Zenoibin Banks..Mrs. Ellis, Denman..Frank Morehouse, James..Yeatman Alley, Sammy Wild..Frank Fahey, Willow-Wild..Mrs. Punch Robertson, Bill Pitts..Jack Weber,
final week, starting on Sunday, February 5, the Punch Robertson troupe presented J. Z. Little's melodrama, *The World*. The scenic production was staged artistically with spectacular sets and effects including a storm, a ship sinking that went down in full view of the audience, a raft afloat on the water, and a sail appearing in sight. For this play, Punch Robertson took the lead role, proved himself a clever actor and scored a great success. Frank Fahey was again a stand-out. 


(*Picayune*, Monday, February 6, 1899.)

Tim Murphy returned on Monday, February 13, to appear for a week in the romantic comedy, *The Carpetbaggers* by Opie Read and Frank S. Pixley. The production was scheduled to start on Sunday, February 12, but the company was delayed and did not arrive until late that night without their costumes which had not yet arrived. Murphy offered to give the patrons their money back, but they refused in favor of having Murphy present a one man show. He rewarded the audience with comic stories and imitations of actors. (*Picayune*, Monday, February 13, 1899.) On Monday, Murphy assumed the chief role in the
comedy, which was written especially for him. Murphy and his company were said to be thoroughly effective, and the opening audience enjoyed the play immensely. Chief supporting roles were assumed by Charlotte Lambert, Nellie Nelson and J. R. Armstrong. Cast: Melville Crance..Tim Murphy, Bob Willette..Ogden Stevens, Major Reynolds..J. R. Armstrong, Guy Limmers..Olney Grillin, Roy Fairburn..James Manley, Jim..Ralph Thomas, Old John..John Hampton, Police Chief..James Evans, Capt. Pointer..Robert Gage, Fairburn..Nellie Nelson, Lucy Linford..Charlotte Lambert, Mrs. Reynolds..Audrey Powell, Nellie..Dorothy Sherrod. The successful play stayed through Monday, February 20. (Picayune, Tuesday, February 14, 1899.)

The Grand Opera House remained dark from Tuesday, February 19 through Wednesday, March 1. In that time, Otis Skinner, now a Syndicate actor, appeared at the Tulane. On Thursday, March 2, Mme. Sofia Scalchi, described as the world's greatest contralto at that period, made her local debut at the Grand Opera House, playing in scenes from grand opera and in concert. Mme. Scalchi and her operatic company came for three appearances. On Thursday, under the auspices of the Daughters of the Confederacy, Il Trovatore, was performed. On Friday, March 3, Martha and Semiramide were featured, and on Saturday, March 4, Semiramide was billed. In
Mme. Scalchi's company, featured players were Mme. Moldi, soprano; Signor Canzio, tenor; Signor Alberti, baritone; and Walter A. Pick as musical director. Tickets were sold at $1.50 to 50 cents, and large audiences greeted the world-famed Mme. Scalchi, whose best support was Alberti. (Picayune, Friday, March 3, 1899.)

Again, the Grand was dark during the week of Sunday, March 5 except for Wednesday, March 8 when Maud Ballington Booth, daughter of General Booth of the Salvation Army, delivered a lecture at the theatre. Only about fifty people gathered to hear the social worker and prison reformer discuss the subject, "The Life while in Prison of those whom the Law has Justly or Unjustly Condemned, How Best to Reform Them, and Their After Chances of Gaining a Foothold in Life." (Picayune, Thursday, March 9, 1899.)

The Grand Opera House remained unoccupied again during the week of Sunday, March 12, while Greenwall negotiated desperately to book the Baldwin-Melville Stock Company, which remained a non-Trust company. (Picayune, Sunday, March 12, 1899.) Even though Greenwall's excellent Greenwall Stock Company had folded so unfortunately, it was a phenomenon that the Hopkins Stock Company at the St. Charles Theatre had been going well all season and was financially successful. There
is no apparent explanation for this company's greater success than Greenwall's Company which was a much better company!

(Picayune, Monday, March 27, 1899.) Nevertheless, the success of the Hopkins Company gave Greenwall renewed hope that a stock company might still succeed financially at the Grand.

The Baldwin-Melville Company returned to the Grand on Sunday, March 19, and presented a varied repertoire during the week, with daily matinee and evening performances: Sunday matinee, The Devil's Web; Sunday night, Bulls and Bears; Monday matinee and night, Humbug; Tuesday, Frank Lindon's drama, Prisoner of Algiers; Wednesday matinee, Hazel Kirke; Wednesday night, The Octoroon; Thursday matinee, Master and Man; Thursday night, East Lynne; Friday matinee, The Runaway Wife; Friday night, Over the Sea; Saturday matinee, Monte Cristo; Saturday night, Ten Nights in a Barroom. Much of this repertoire had been presented during the company's prior engagement. Prices were trimmed further, to the unbelievable prices of matinees--10 cents for entire house, nights--10 cents, 20 cents and 30 cents. The company was headed that season by Edna Lindon and W. H. Murdoch. Murdoch had been the troupe's leading man during the appearances of the company during the 1896-1897 season, while the company was almost the same as seen previously. Bulls and Bears
Devil's Web, the two opening plays, were so well received that the theatre was packed to the doors for both performances. The matinee play, The Devil's Web, was a stirring drama which thrilled the house; while in the evening, Bulls and Bears produced laughter and tears from the large audience. Murdoch was described as being natural and admirable, and his support was good. It is almost inconceivable that the company changed bills, not only nightly, but usually offered two different plays each day. Bulls and Bears, a comedy, was played with this cast: James Errol..W. H. Murdoch, Harry Hawton..Bert Gagnon, Andrew Burk..Hugh McKaye, Simon Deans..L. O. Hart, Ferris..Wilson Day, Lawton..Thomas R. Findley, Reed..George Mahare, Merle Lawton..Edna E. Lindon, Jessie Deans..Edith Pollock, Mrs. Deans..Marie Day. (Picayune, Monday, March 20, 1899.) In Humbug, a farce, Murdoch was seen as Jack Liester, while Miss Lindon played as Mrs. Ponsby. Prisoner of Algiers was the work of Miss Lindon's father, Frank Lindon. It was an adaptation of The Son of Monte Cristo. Murdoch played as Edmund Dantes while Edna E. Lindon appeared as Eugenia Danglars. The company was held over for one day, on Sunday, March 26. Two Orphans was played at the matinee, while The Black Flag was given that night.

The Grand was dark again on Monday, March 27 and for
the entire week. During the week of Sunday, April 2, the house was still unoccupied, except for the evening of Tuesday, April 4, when amateurs tendered a benefit to Fred N. Thayer, the veteran New Orleans actor. The theatre was crowded to the doors for the benefit, which featured several sketches, and began with an address by Mayor Walter Flower. *Bride and Groom* revealed the talents of Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Shields, G. F. Socola and the Shields' three years old twins. A military sketch, *Wounded*, featured Fred N. Thayer, Mr. and Mrs. Claus Bogel and G. F. Socola. Mr. and Mrs. Bogel were then seen in the comedy, *The Mouse Trap*; and the program ended with the farce, *Box and Cox*, with Mr. Thayer and Robert Abbott. (*Picayune*, Wednesday, April 5, 1899.)

The house remained dark the week of Sunday, April 9, Greenwall was utterly unsuccessful in his constant efforts to attract bookings, and he urged the Baldwin-Melville Company to return. Finally, the group reappeared on Sunday, April 16, for a return engagement of another week. The playing schedule was as follows: Sunday matinee, *Bulls and Bears*; Sunday night, *The Devil's Web*; Monday matinee, *East Lynne*; Monday night, *The Octoroon*; Tuesday matinee, *Ten Nights in a Barroom*; Tuesday night, *The Runaway Wife*; Wednesday matinee, *Camille*; Wednesday night, *Monte Cristo*; Thursday matinee, *Over the Sea*;
Thursday night, The Plunger; Friday matinee, Humbug; Friday night, Master and Man; Saturday matinee, Prisoner of Algiers; Saturday night, Rip Van Winkle. The company appeared to good advantage in every play, and attracted large crowds, with fine acting at very low prices. The Runaway Wife was particularly well done. Miss Lindon maintained her fine reputation for never ending versatility by her pleasing portrayal of Lady Alice. Cast: Arthur Eastman..W. H. Murdoch, Arthur Eastman, Jr..Baby Beatrice, Talbot..Wilson Day, Mc Vere..Hugh McKaye, Dr. Prescott..L. O. Hart, Sir Launcelot..Bert Gagnon, David..Thos. B. Findlay, Johnson..George Mahare, Greyson..C. A. Double, Bob..William Delman, Lady Alice..Edna Lindon, Lillah..Edith Pollock, Hester and Lady Yawn..Marie Day.

(Picayune, Wednesday, April 19, 1899.) The company was held over for one day, on Sunday, April 23, on which day the traumatic 1898-1899 season came to an end. On that day, The Signal of Liberty was produced at both performances for the first time in the city. The play was the work of William J. Josey, and was called a lurid, spectacular drama filled with arresting scenes including a bull fight, a guardhouse—with switchboard, arrival of the U. S. battleship Maine, and the home of the Governor General in Havana. Hundreds of people were turned away at both performances. Greenwall would have
liked to keep the company longer, but it was obligated to play other independent road engagements already booked. Cast:
Lt. Ralph Dunbar..W. H. Murdoch, Mario..Wilson Day, Martinez de Coucha..Thomas B. Findlay, Henry B. Jones..L. O. Hart, Captain Mantelle..Hugh Mc Kaye, Jose Servillos..Bert Cagnon, Williams..George Mahare, Agnes Cartwright..Edna Lindon, Gracia..Hazel Carleton, Paquita..Marie Day. (Picayune, Monday, April 24, 1899.)

For the first time since the first decade of the Grand Opera House, the Picayune did not even mention the closing of the season at the theatre, while prominent space was devoted to the closing of the Crescent and Tulane theatres. (Picayune, Sunday, April 30, 1899.) The Theatrical Syndicate had produced such a blockade against independent theatres by the season of 1898-1899, that Greenwall found it impossible to find more than a handful of independent companies to book into the Grand Opera House. It was heartbreaking for Greenwall to watch inferior outfits playing the Grand, or for this most beautiful theatre in the entire South to remain closed while stars like Marie Wainwright, Otis Skinner, Stuart Robson, William Crane, Nat C. Goodwin and even Herrmann, the Second--who had always appeared at the Grand Opera House before--now went to the Syndicate houses only.
The 1898-1899 season began on Sunday, September 4, 1898, when a local amateur cast produced *Military Maid* all week to good houses. There was yet no competition from other houses, and early Fall productions at the Grand drew good business. On Sunday, September 11, *Down in Dixie* began the regular professional season. The production was a good one and business was big. On Sunday, September 18, the Cleveland-Wilson Minstrels appeared, starring George Wilson and a fine company, and packed the theatre all week. The Grand remained dark the week of Sunday, September 25 as an ill omen: for the first Syndicate theatre in New Orleans, the Crescent, opened on Monday, September 26. On Sunday, October 2, the excellent Greenwall Stock Company opened in *Pique* and attracted large houses for its first week. The troupe was headed by Al S. Lipman, a fine actor, and each player proved his versatility and capability in weeks of varied repertoire. The plays presented were well rehearsed by George Holland, Jr., a capable director, and the scenery and costumes were artistic and costly, although the plays were presented for the infinitesimal sum of 10 cents to 30 cents. The excellent company played for ten weeks to constantly declining business. When the Tulane Theatre opened, the Syndicate competition was now complete, and a virtual road-block was put into effect.
against independent bookings. The Greenwall Stock Company was to remain all season, but Greenwall had to admit defeat at the end of the ninth week. The farewell tenth week of the company ended on Saturday, December 10, 1898. What a bleak Christmas season it was for Greenwall and the Grand Opera House that year! The Picayune drama critic, while acknowledging receipt of a costly gift book from the Trust, yet found the time to lament the undue passing of the Greenwall Stock Company and blamed "the fickle public." (Picayune, Sunday, December 11, 1898.) It is a paradox that the Hopkins Stock Company survived and did well while the better Greenwall Company failed. The Hopkins Company remained all season at the St. Charles. The fact remains an enigma. The Grand was dark for the week of Sunday, December 11. Lee's Company of Hypnotists came on Sunday, December 18, and did fair business. On Sunday, December 25, for Christmas week, Greenwall secured a return of Miss Francis of Yale, starring Etienne Girardot to fair business, while the Academy of Music opened that week as a vaudeville house. Sunday, January 1, 1899 brought a melodrama with music, Uncle Josh Spruceby, which did not fare well financially, but the play ushered in a new fad, that of making melodrama into a musical production. Several such plays, with better construction, were to
follow that season. On Monday, January 9, *After the War* appeared with a mediocre company, and did not do well. Then, for the week of January 16, the Grand was dark again. Luck changed momentarily for Greenwall when on Sunday, January 22 Punch Robertson's competent company began a three weeks' successful engagement which drew good business. During this time, *False Colors*, *Captain Dan*, *The French Cavalier* and *The World* were performed. Tim Murphy appeared on Sunday, February 12 in *The Carpetbaggers* and did fairly well. The theatre was dark again during the week of February 19, and the first part of the week of February 26 until Thursday, March 2 through Saturday, March 4, when Mme. Scalchi, world famed contralto, headed an operatic troupe that appeared for three days. The unfortunate theatre closed again during the week of March 5, except for the night of March 8 when Maud B. Booth gave a lecture on prison reform. Then darkness was the Grand's lot again during the week of March 12. The Baldwin-Melville Company came on March 19 and remained through March 26, giving a varied repertoire with two performances a day, and did well. On March 27, the house was dark again for three weeks, except for the night of Tuesday, April 4 when Fred N. Thayer was given a benefit of sketches by amateur players. The Baldwin-Melville Company returned for another
week on Sunday, April 16 and played in varied repertoire. They remained through Monday, April 24, 1899, the last day of the season. This was the most disappointing and most frustrating season which the Grand Opera House had ever experienced up to this time. Now, the Trust flourished while choking the theatrical life from the independent theatres.

By 1899, the Syndicate could bargain with great advantages to offer. It offered its actors the advantage of full bookings all season. Managers who "signed up" would no longer have to make expensive trips to New York to secure bookings. Moreover, there were almost no bookings to be had outside the "claws" of the "octopus," as the Trust was called by its opponents. Most managers seized eagerly on the opportunity to fill their theatres all season with Syndicate bookings. Theoretically, the Trust charged a booking fee of 5 per cent of the manager's gross share of receipts: the company was supposed to get 70 per cent of the receipts and the theatre was to get 30 per cent. However, a grand jury investigating the Theatrical Syndicate in 1907 reported that according to its findings, the Trust charged the theatre managers as much as 50 per cent of their profits for bookings,
according to Lippman. However, the *Dramatic Mirror*, reporting on the grand jury findings of 1907, declared that "... the Trust gets over 70 per cent of the gross profits of their 547 houses and 10 per cent more for bookings." (*New York Dramatic Mirror*, February 9, 1907.)

If the unfortunate theatre managers and actors who got into the Syndicate's web were the losers, even much more devastating were the financial reverses of those who opposed the Trust. When Greenwall went into the fight against the Syndicate, according to Kendall, the theatre magnate was a very wealthy man. As late as 1895, his theatrical investments represented over $1,500,000, "... an immense sum for that period, when the epoch of vast theatrical fortunes had not yet begun." But, only one decade later, practically all of Greenwall's fortune had been swept away, and he was all but reduced to poverty as a result of his conflict with Klaw and Erlanger. This struggle constituted Greenwall's "... finest and saddest episode in his long, eventful history." The courageous man regarded the Trust's influence

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99 Lippman, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-75.

100 Kendall, *op. cit.*, p. 592.

101 Ibid.

102 Ibid., p. 589.
as iniquitous, and as one by one other managers went over to the combine, the forces of opposition consolidated around and against Greenwall. "... For almost a quarter of a century, he was one of a gradually diminishing band of managers who fought the Syndicate and, as they believed, tried to save the American stage from destruction."103

By the summer of 1899, the Trust announced plans to branch into production. Their first effort was announced as The Roger Brothers in Wall Street by John J. McNally. But the most sumptuous effort announced for the forthcoming season was to be that of Ben Hur from the book of General Lew Wallace, to be produced at a cost of $100,000. (Picayune, Sunday, August 13, 1899.)

A review of the summer activity during the year of 1899 shows a change from the habits of summer theatrical activity of earlier decades. It is remembered that during the 1870's, excellent organized amateur theatrical organizations had a busy summer season, presenting a series of plays all summer long. During the '80's, the summer acting organizations had disappeared, and almost no summer entertainment of any kind was noted. In 1899, summer activity in New

103 Ibid., p. 590.
Orleans was not only again on the upgrade, but in fact, it had increased to an astounding degree. At the Grand Opera House, there were a number of summer entertainments, which included plays by amateur groups given mostly as charity benefits. The Press Club and individuals sponsored several of these benefits, but no organized dramatic organizations seemed to be functioning. As an example, on Friday, August 18, 1899, Max Frankel headed an amateur company that presented *A Modern Ananias*, as a benefit for the Convalescent Home. In the company were a number of leading New Orleans amateurs, including Robert Pitkin, J. H. Wooster, Dr. A. J. Victor, Juste Fontaine, Jr., Gabrielle Rendre, Mamie Warren, Nellie Dahlberg, E. H. Levy, Mamie Donnelly, Minnie Dirmeyer and Henry Boudre. (*Picayune*, Sunday, August 13, 1899.) Besides the amateur theatrical entertainments, bands, variety shows and other entertainments took place all summer at several new summer outdoor places of amusement and parks. Much of the outdoor summer entertainment stemmed from Athletic Park where band concerts and summer musicals were offered free of charge. Sigilzonyl and his well-known Hungarian Boys' Band was the most popular band to appear at Athletic Park that season. West End, recreation area at Pontchartrain lakefront, was another popular area of summer
entertainment. On the West End stage, all that summer of 1899, many musicals, variety shows and other entertainments took place. Concerning the summer activity at the latter place, the Picayune said on Sunday, August 13, 1899:

There seems to be no let up in the style of entertainment: . . . splendid attractions and good music, cake walks, colored bands, . . . watermelon contests, . . . the Grayson sisters in white-face and black-face in songs, dance and comedy . . ., sketches, . . . Mr. Paoletti and his band, . . . Prof. Reed and his band. . . .

Other summer areas of recreation were noted:

. . . Band concerts are popular too at the City Park . . ., Louisiana Field Artillery Band, under Joseph Sporer. . . . At Audubon Park, concerts are almost nightly, under the baton of J. B. Wunsch's Military Band. (Picayune, Sunday, August 13, 1899.)
CHAPTER VII

THE SIXTH PERIOD: THE LAST FIVE YEARS OF THE GREENWALL ERA, FALL, 1889 THROUGH SPRING, 1904

By the beginning of the 1899-1900 season, the full catastrophic effects of the Theatrical Syndicate upon the theatre in New Orleans were overtly manifested. By this time, the St. Charles Theatre had been burned to the ground; the Academy, undergoing booking and managerial difficulties, had not reopened; and the Grand Opera House was left to fight alone the downhill battle against the Syndicate and its New Orleans theatres. The Picayune announced on August 20, 1899 that the forthcoming New Orleans theatrical season would be dominated by the new Tulane and Crescent theatres and by the Grand Opera House and the French Opera House. It was stated that the Academy of Music would not reopen, and that the Baldwin-Melville Stock Company would play all season at the Grand at popular prices, with the exception of a few weeks of other bookings prior to October 1.

The regular dramatic season began on Sunday, September 3, 1899, with the initial opening of the Crescent Theatre. The season at the Grand Opera House began on Sunday, September 17, when a new farce, How Smith Met Jones was presented. The
XIII. CANAL STREET SHOWING GRAND OPERA HOUSE AND ORIGINAL MAISON BLANCHE DEPARTMENT STORE
play was an English adaptation from a German play of Von Moser. A capable company under the direction of Manager Hemple played to capacity audiences. Greenwall had rested all summer while planning strategy to meet the Trust forces, and now returned to New Orleans with renewed health and energy. (Picayune, Sunday, August 27, 1899.) A "standing room only" audience greeted the opening performance on Sunday night. (Picayune, Monday, September 18, 1899.) Leslie Morosco played the lead role of Smith, a college graduate who inherited a fortune under the condition that he must marry within a prescribed time limit. He was said to act with earnestness and naturalness. Agnes Carlton, described as a pretty young actress, was leading lady. The entire cast acted well and were applauded generously. Cast: Walter Smith ..Leslie Morosco, Prof. Jones ..James A. Ward, Dr. Knobs ..Harry A. Fisher, Arthur Jones ..Bert Dorris, Tim O'Grady ..Phil Mack, Eva Jones ..Agnes Carlton, Ella ..Helen Warren, Mrs. Jones ..Magda Carlisle, Penpoja ..Amy Carlisle. (Picayune, Monday, September 18, 1899.) Hemple's Company remained a second week, beginning on Sunday, September 24, when The Captain's Mate, a melodrama, was presented. More large audiences attended the opus, to applaud the hero and hiss the villain. Agnes Carlton appeared as the heroine and was
credited with clever and versatile acting. Leslie Morosco was dashing as the hero, a ship captain. Mrs. Bernard Shields, New Orleans actress, scored a hit as an Irish maid.


Beginning on Sunday, October 1, 1899, Walter S. Baldwin introduced at the Grand his newly reorganized Baldwin-Melville Company, booked to play all season. The engagement ushered in a new policy of having four matinees a week on Sunday, Monday, Friday and Saturday beginning at 2:30 p.m., a policy which persisted until the end of the last season of the Baldwin-Melville Company in the Spring of 1904. Matinee admission was set at 10 cents for gallery and balcony, 20 cents for orchestra circle, and 30 cents top price for the orchestra. Night admission was set at gallery--10 cents, first balcony--20 cents, orchestra circle--30 cents and orchestra--50 cents. Instead of constant changing of programs daily, the new policy announced that there would be a
weekly change of program, with assurance of the production of the latest and best comedy, drama and melodrama successes. Moreover, new and elaborate scenery and striking effects had been prepared; and new, authentic costumes had been secured. The newly reorganized company boasted an impressive group of actors, headed by William Farnum as leading man and Esther Lyon as leading lady. Farnum was noted to be young, talented and handsome, and had already earned a national reputation, playing leads with such stars as Margaret Mather and Olga Nethersole. Miss Lyon had appeared in support of stars like William H. Crane and Nat C. Goodwin. H. Percy Meldon returned as stage director and actor. Held by the Enemy was selected as the first week's play. William Gillette's war drama made its debut at the matinee on Sunday, and according to the Picayune, the company "... opened in a blaze of glory." The matinee audience was packed to the doors; and Sunday night, standing room only was the norm while countless people were turned away. Gillette's drama was played with this cast: Major Gen. H. B. Stanburg, Walter S. Baldwin, Col. Charles Prescott, William Farnum, Lt. Gordon Hayne, Richard Sherman, Uncle Rufus, Frank Lindon, Thomas Bean, Thomas J. Keogh, Brigade Sgn. Fielding, Robert Lowe, Asst. Surgeon Hathaway, Albert Veazie, Lt. Col. McPherson.
Percy Meldon, Capt. Woodford..Harold Mordaunt, Capt. Benton
.R. V. Albert, Lt. Massen..J. C. Roberts, Col. Springer..
M. J. Harold, Orderly Sgt...W. S. Smith, Sentries..Messrs.
Mordaunt and Roberts, Euphemia Mac Creery..Anna Mac Gregor,
Rachel Mac Creery..Esther Lyon, Susan Mac Creery..Blanche
Seymour. The Picayune applauded the performance, saying:
"... The play has been acted here before by New York com­
panies, but never so well as last night." Esther Lyon was
described as young, intelligent and graceful, and as ideal
in her lead role of Rachel. Her acting of the part was no
coincidence, however, since Miss Lyon had been selected for
the original role by Gillette himself, and she had played it
a whole season with the star-playwright. Farnum was hailed
as a dashing, dynamic man with a pleasing voice, who played
the northern officer in superior style. Thomas J. Keogh,
already a favorite with the audience from prior seasons with
the company, was a great hit as the lively correspondent.
Frank Lindon, fine character actor, and distinguished Walter
Baldwin, producer of the company, were acknowledged as other
standouts in the cast. (Picayune, Monday, October 2, 1899.)

For its second week, beginning on Sunday, October 8,
the company chose Hoodman Blind, a British melodrama from
the pens of Henry Arthur Jones and Wilson Barrett. The play
was given for the first time in the city by the Baldwin-Melville troupe with this cast: Jack Yeulett, William Farnum, Lendon, Richard Sherman, Mark Lezzard, Robert Lowe, Ben Chibbles, Thos. J. Keogh, Kridge, Frank Lindon, Tom Rattiker, H. Percy Meldon, Joe Swirrup, Harold Mordaunt, Noah, Albert Veazie, Jim Daigle, Giunio Socola, Tomtit, Sydney Shields, Kat, Blanche Shields, Abe, W. S. Logan, Inspector, Richard Sherman, Jelks, J. C. Roberts, Footman, Harold Mordaunt, Policeman, W. R. Smith, Nance Yeulett and Jess, Esther Lyon, Granny Quadling, Anna Mac Gregor, Polly Chibbles, Blanche Seymour, Liz, Virginia Johnson, Kitty, Georgia Annan, Mrs. Chawner, R. Virginia. Several New Orleans amateurs had been selected to join the ranks of the Baldwin-Melville Company, including little Blanche and Sydney Shields, the talented children of Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Shields, Albert Veazie, and Giunio Socola who became a valued member of the company as well as its assistant director. The play was exceptionally well acted by the large cast. Esther Lyon, who played a dual role as two sisters, made a sterling impression; while Farnum gave a spirited role as an impulsive, jealous husband. Robert Lowe and Thomas J. Keogh were noteworthy as the villain and the blacksmith, respectively. (Picayune, Monday, October 9, 1899.)
In the company's third week, beginning on Sunday, October 15, Belasco and De Mille's comedy, *The Charity Ball*, was the fare. Again, the whole cast was said to perform well, with especially noteworthy acting by Farnum as the rector, Lindon as the Judge, Keogh as a boyish lover, Esther Lyon as a charming heroine and Sydney Shields as a waif. Principals: John Van Buren, William Farnum, Dick, Robert Lowe, Judge Knox, Frank Lindon, Krugh, H. Percy Meldon, Alex Robinson, Thos. J. Keogh, Cain, Sydney Shields, Ann Cruger, Esther Lyons, Mrs. Peyster, Anna Mac Gregor. (*Picayune*, Monday, October 16, 1899.)

For the week of Sunday, October 22, a dramatization of Jules Verne's novel, *Around the World in Eighty Days* was offered. The Grand's scenic artists, Dressel and Nippert, prepared stunning sets for the spectacular production; and a lavish amazon march was featured in the second act. This amazon march was said to reveal shapely young ladies in gorgeous costumes that were scintillating under calcium lights. The bright cast shone in the comedy, particularly William Farnum as Fogg, W. H. Murdoch as the daring American, Thomas Keogh in the humorous role of Passepartout and Esther Lyon as Aouda. Principals: Phineas Fogg, William Farnum, John Archibald, W. H. Murdoch, John Fix, Robert Lowe, Jean Passepartout.
George Du Maurier's *Trilby* was the next offering of the company during the week of Sunday, October 29. The strong plot revolved about the diabolic power of hypnotism of Svengali, and pathetic Trilby who was made by the weird hypnotist to sing as no mortal ever had. As Svengali, Farnum had the opportunity to reveal a new facet to his acting, and showed startling versatility. He was reputed to invest his role with hideous facial grimaces, cruel character, suggestion of the uncanny and sardonic humor. The Trilby of Miss Lyon was sweet, touching and tender. Heading the supporting cast, all applauded for exceptional performances, were: Taffy ..Robert Lowe, Little Billie..Richard Sherman, Laird..H. Percy Meldon, Gecke..W. H. Murdoch, Zouzon..Thos. J. Keogh, Rev. Bagot..Frank Lindon, Col. Kaw..L. Franks, Mrs. Bagot..Anna MacGregor, Mme. Vinard..Virginia Johnson, Angele..Blanche Seymour, Honorine..Eleanor Mason. (*Picayune*, Monday, October 30, 1899.)

The *Wife*, melodrama by David Belasco and Henry De Mille, was the next offering, produced the week of Sunday,
November 5. The opening audiences were capacity ones, with the "S.R.O." sign out long before curtain time. Farnum gave another splendid performance as the Senator. Murdoch was excellent support as the friend with whom the Senator's wife falls in love; Miss Lyon was compelling in a dual role; and Lowe was exceptionally sinister as the villain. Cast: Senator Rutherford..William Farnum, Culver..Robert Lowe, Robert Gray..W. H. Murdoch, Dexter..Thos. J. Keogh, Truman..H. Percy Meldon, Putnam..Frank Lindon, Helen Truman and Mrs. Rutherford..Esther Lyon, Lucille..Virginia Johnson, Mrs. Ives..Anna Mac Gregor, Kitty..Blanche Seymour, Mrs. Amory..Eleanor Mason. (Picayune, Monday, November 6, 1899.)

More melodrama was the fare for the week of Sunday, November 12, when Leander Richardson's Under the City Lamps was produced. Hundreds of patrons were turned away from both Sunday performances. Elaborate scenery was prepared especially for the play by Dressel and Nippert, including the Casino Roof Garden, Fulton ferry landing, and other striking scenes. William Farnum was dashing as Inspector Buckley, the hero, while Robert Lowe was superior as the villain. Esther Lyon was pathetic as a blind girl, and little Sydney Shields was clever as a ragged child. Principals: Inspector Buckley..William Farnum, Arthur Burton..W. H. Murdoch, Bill Rochester
..Robert Lowe, Solomon Einstein..Thos. Keogh, Bob..Blanche Seymour, Henry Lynck..H. Percy Meldon, Spefford..Giunio Socola, Mary Jasper..Esther Lyon, Mother Bergman..Anna Mac Gregor, Ragged Meg..Sydney Shields. (Picayune, Monday, November 13, 1899.)

Men and Women followed next, the week of Sunday, November 19. Two capacity opening houses witnessed the Belasco and De Mille comedy. Farnum, Miss Lyon, Murdoch and Keogh headed the cast all of whom received excellent notices and won much applause. Cast: Israel Cohen..Frank Lindon, William Prescott..William Farnum, Seabury..W. H. Murdoch, Calvin Steadman..Robert Lowe, Kirke..Giunio Socola, Agnes Rodman..Esther Lyon, John..Thos. Keogh, Dora..Virginia Johnson, Mrs. Delafield..Anna MacGregor, Margery..Blanche Seymour, Mrs. Prescott..Eleanor Mason, Mrs. Kirke..Bessie Shields. (Picayune, Monday, November 20, 1899.)

Robert Stevens' romantic drama, An Enemy to the King was greeted by full houses the week of Sunday, November 26. The production was the most elaborate yet presented by the sterling troupe. Farnum was described as a dashing hero in this romantic story of France of the sixteenth century that concerned the persecution of the Hugenots at the hands of the French king. Beautiful sets enhanced the four-act production.


Frances H. Burnet's Little Lord Fauntleroy was the fare beginning Sunday, December 10. The play was presented in a charming manner by the talented company. A child called Baby Vavene gave a remarkable and winning performance in the title role. Esther Lyon as the mother and Farnum as Lord Gorincourt were praiseworthy. Cast: Cedric Erroll-Lord
The Two Orphans was staged beautifully and performed remarkably well the week of Sunday, December 17. Heading the large cast were: Chevalier Maurice de Vaudrey..William Farnum, Pierre Frochard..W. H. Murdoch, Henriette..Esther Lyon, Louise..Blanche Seymour, Mother Frochard..Anna Mac Gregor, Picard..Thos. J. Keogh, Marquis DePresles..H. Percy Meldon, Countess..Bessie Bernard. (Picayune, Monday, December 18, 1899.)

For Christmas week, beginning on Sunday, December 24, 1899, George R. Simms' English melodrama, Lights o' London was produced. The Picayune declared that although the play had been seen locally several times before, the current production was the best ever presented. Leading roles were capably handled by the following: Harold Armytage..William Farnum, Bess Marks..Esther Lyon, Joseph Jarvis..Thos. J. Keogh, Shakespeare Jarvis..Blanche Seymour, Clifford Armytage..Robert Lowe, Detective Waters..W. H. Murdoch, Joey..
Bessie Shields, Mrs. Jarvis..Anna MacGregor, Jack..Giunio Socola. (Picayune, Monday, December 25, 1899.)

A mammoth production of the melodrama, Shadows of a Great City appeared next on Sunday, December 31, 1899.

Esther Lyon played well as the missing heiress, while William Farnum was strong as the sailor hero. Frank Lindon gave an excellent character study as a pawn broker, and Thomas J. Keogh was amusing as a sneak thief. Principals: Tom Cooper..William Farnum, George Benson..Robert Lowe, Arkwright..W. H. Murdoch, Abe Nathans..Frank Lindon, Jim Farren..Thos. J. Keogh, Helen Standish..Esther Lyon, Biddy..Anna MacGregor, Liz..Blanche Seymour. (Picayune, Monday, January 1, 1900.)

An interesting human interest story is associated with the next play performed by the Baldwin-Melville Company, that of Davy Crockett. The author of the play was Frank Murdoch, brother of William H. Murdoch, who was chosen to play the title role. The Picayune related this story: years before, James E. Murdoch was one of the most popular actors on the American stage. At his death, the star left three talented actor nephews, all brothers: Larry—a fine young actor who lost his life during a fire that burned down the Brooklyn Theatre; Frank—a prominent young actor who was brought to New Orleans by Lawrence Barrett to be a member of the
excellent stock company in the first year of the third Varieties (Grand Opera House), and who created the dramatization of the story of Davy Crockett; and William H.--the versatile actor in the Baldwin-Melville Company. (Picayune, Sunday, January 7, 1900.) Murdoch was said to give the role of Davy touches that were delicate, light, tender and emotional. He made the role human, warm and heroic. Miss Lyon was winning in the lead feminine role of Eleanor Vaughn, and the rest of the cast were applauded for fine work. Cast: Davy Crockett..Wm. H. Murdoch, Royston..Frank Lindon, Oscar..Robert Lowe, Neil..Giunio Socola, Bob Crockett..Blanche Seymour, Bid Dan..Harold Mordaunt, Yunkers..H. Percy Meldon, Briggs..Albert Veazie, Parson Calidwood..Thos. J. Keogh, Eleanor Vaughn..Esther Lyon, Dame Crockett..Anna MacGregor. (Picayune, Monday, January 8, 1900.)

The "tear jerker" East Lynne was next on the agenda, the week of Sunday, January 14. Miss Lyon appeared in the dual role of Lady Isabel and Mme. Vine and rose to heights of emotional intensity and pathos. Lowe was at his best as the polished villain, and Miss MacGregor was applauded for fine character acting as Cornelia. Principals: Archibald Carlyle..W. H. Murdoch, Sir Francis Levison..Robert Lowe, Lord Severn..Frank Lindon, Richard Hare..H. Percy Meldon,
Little Willie...Bessie Shields, Lady Isabel...Esther Lyon, Barbara Hare...Virginia Johnson, Cornelia Carlyle...Anna MacGregor. (Picayune, Monday, January 15, 1900.)

Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac* was the next exciting fare, starting on Sunday, January 21. Hundreds of patrons jammed the theatre for its two opening performances. William Farnum gave Cyrano a wealth of strength, refreshing quality, poetic beauty and understanding that warmed the hearts of critics and audiences. Esther Lyon's Roxanne was pert, and Murdoch was impressive as Christian. Dressel was cited for his beautiful stage settings, and the costumes were rich and authentic. Principals: Cyrano de Bergerac...William Farnum, Count de Guiche...Robert Lowe, Christian...W. H. Murdoch, de Valvert...H. Percy Meldon, Ragnereau...Thos. J. Keogh, Le Bret...Giunio Socola, Montfleury...Frank Lindon, Roxanne...Esther Lyon, The Duenna...Anna Mac Gregor, Lise...Virginia Johnson. (Picayune, Monday, January 22, 1900.)

Melodrama ruled the week of Sunday, January 28, when *The Romany Rye* gained favor at the Grand. Each strong situation met with whistling and stamping of feet of the "gallery gods"—as the Picayune termed the vociferous gallery spectators, and generous applause came from other parts of the house. Farnum was fascinating as Jack Hearne, a wandering
gypsy artist. Blanche Seymour made much of the heroine, a role intended for Miss Lyon but whose illness prevented her appearance. Bessie Shields, in turn, enacted the role intended for Miss Seymour. Both actresses received plaudits for doing excellently parts learned at short notice. The Shields children were applauded warmly, also. Principals: Jack Hearne..William Farnum, Philip Roysten..Robert Lowe, Ted Marsden..W. H. Murdoch, Goliah Lee..Harold Mordaunt, Jabes Dick..Giunio Socola, Dimity Lee..Blanche Shields, Ger-tie Heckett..Blanche Seymour, Ruth Adrian..Bessie Shields, Sol Lee..Santos Shields. (Picayune, Monday, January 29, 1900.)

The comedy, Lost--Twenty Four Hours, was given its initial airing in the city by the Baldwin-Melville Compy during the week of Sunday, February 4. The cast made a smashing, laughable hit of the play, which was regarded as a difficult vehicle to produce. Within the New York setting, Farnum had his first opportunity to act locally in high comedy, and the effect was deemed "... a glad surprise." Sparkling portrayals were contributed by the whole cast: Smiley..W. H. Murdoch, Dick Swift..William Farnum, David Swift..Thos. J. Keogh, Solomon Goldstein..Robert Lowe, Thomas..Frank Lindon, Tuff..Giunio Socola, Officer..Harold Mordaunt, Bertha..Esther
Lyon, Milly..Virginia Johnson, Susan..Blanche Seymour, Mrs. Churchill..Anna MacGregor, Mary..Belle Fairchild. (Picayune, Monday, February 5, 1900.)

The pace changed again for the week of Sunday, February 11, when Dion Boucicault's Irish melodrama, The Shaughraun, was enacted. The popular company warranted again two overflowing opening day houses. Farnum was called handsome and dashing as the hero, an English officer. The rich comedy part of Conn fell to Keogh, while Lowe was excellent as the villain. Miss Lyon was a sweet heroine. Cast: Capt. Molineaux..William Farnum, Robert Ffolliott..W. H. Murdoch, Corry Kinchela..Robert Lowe, Fr. Delan..H. Percy Meldon, Duff..Frank Lindon, Conn..Thos. J. Keogh, Sgt. Jones..Harold Mordaunt, Reilly..Giunio Socola, Claire..Esther Lyon, Mrs. O'Kelly..Anna MacGregor, Moya..Blanche Seymour, Bridget.. Eleanor Mason. (Picayune, Monday, February 12, 1900.)

The tragedy of Camille was the next offering of the Baldwin-Melville Company, starting Sunday, February 18. The title role of Marguerite was well taken by Esther Lyon, while Farnum was cited as being ideal as Armand. Other principals were: Duval..Frank Lindon, de Varville..Robert Lowe, Gustave..W. H. Murdoch, Arthur..Giunio Socola, Nichelle.. Virginia Johnson, Nanine..Blanche Seymour. (Picayune,
Monday, February 19, 1900.)

The Russian melodrama, Michael Strogoff, packed in capacity audiences beginning on Sunday, February 25. Farnum took the title role and was applauded in every act. Lowe was the usual villain and Miss Lyon, the heroine. Principals: Michael Strogoff..William Farnum, Ivan Ogareff..Robert Lowe, Czar of Russia..Frank Lindon, Bonaparte Laidlaw..Thos. J. Keogh, Blunt..W. H. Murdoch, Nada..Esther Lyon, Mme. Gogol..Blanche Seymour, Marfa..Anna MacGregor, Sangaree..Virginia Johnson. (Picayune, Monday, February 26, 1900.)

Rosedale, Lester Wallack's military melodrama, was the bill the week of Sunday, March 4. Farnum appeared as the officer hero, Elliot Grey, with dashing effectiveness, while Lindon and Lowe were impressive as the villains, Col. May and Miles Mc Kenna; and Esther Lyon was gay and charming as the heroine, Rose Leigh. Other top roles were as follows: Matthew Leigh..W. H. Murdoch, Bunberry Kobb..Thos. J. Keogh, Arthur May..Bessie Shields, Lady Florence..Virginia Johnson, Tabitha..Anna MacGregor, Sarah Sykes..Blanche Seymour. (Picayune, Monday, March 5, 1900.)

Ten Nights in a Barroom, temperance melodrama by W. W. Pratt, derived from Timothy Shay Arthur's novel of that name, had been seen during the prior season, and now was
performed by the reorganized company for the first time during the week of Sunday, March 11. William Farnum was cited as capable as Joe Morgan, the drunkard; and Sydney Shields touched all patrons' hearts with her pathetic portrayal of Morgan's child, Mary, who went to the barroom singing sweetly to lure away her father. Other principal roles were as follows: Sample Swichel..Thos. J. Keogh, Simon Slade..Frank Lindon, Frank Slade..W. H. Murdoch, Harvey Green..Robert Lowe, Mrs. Morgan..Esther Lyon, Mrs. Slade..Virginia Johnson, Mehitable Cartwright..Blanche Seymour. (Picayune, Monday, March 12, 1900.)

More melodrama packed in capacity houses the week of Sunday, March 18, when Edwin Barbour's Northern Lights was the fare. Giunio Socola, given his biggest role to date, was very creditable as a young army deserter; while Farnum was excellent as the Indian army surgeon. It was a new kind of role for the versatile lead actor. Lowe had another heavy role as the villainous surgeon. Principals: John Swiftwind ..William Farnum, Sidney Sherwood..Robert Lowe, Lt. Sherwood..T. J. Keogh, Colonel Grey..Frank Lindon, Wallace Grey..Giunio Socola, Dan Horton..H. Percy Meldon, Hugo Dare..Harold Morndaunt, Helen Dare..Esther Lyon, Florence Sherwood..Virginia Johnson, Dorothy Dunbar..Blanche Seymour, Starlight..Anna
The Great Diamond Robbery, exciting melodrama with a different twist, featured a woman as the heartless and cruel villain. The new production was seen the week of Sunday, March 25, and filled the theatre again to capacity. This production was said to be one of the most elaborate of the season, and one of the most pronounced successes. Anna MacGregor played the role of the cruel villainous woman, Mother Rosenbaum, who accuses the hero wrongly. William Farnum and Esther Lyon played respectively as the hero, Brummage and the heroine, Miss Lavelot. Other noteworthy portrayals included: Bulford, Frank Lindon, Marino, Robert Lowe, McSorker, Thos. J. Keogh, Livingstone, Harold Mordaunt, Mike, H. Percy Meldon, Garbfadoff, Giunio Socola, Maria, Virginia Johnson. The Picayune praised the company, saying: "... They have been uniformly successful in all their presentations, though some have been very difficult." (Picayune, Monday, March 26, 1900.)

Never repeating a play in the vast repertoire, Moths, a melodrama based on Ouida's celebrated novel of that name, was given the week of Sunday, April 1. The difficult roles were all admirably taken, especially those of William Farnum as heroic Lord Jura; Albert Brown, admirable as Raphael de
Correze; Thomas J. Keogh as the English Duke of Mull; Robert Lowe as the brutal Prince Zouroff; and Esther Lyon, winning as Vera Herbert. Others doing fine acting included: Lady Dolly Vanderdecker..Anna MacGregor, Duchess de Sonnax.. Virginia Johnson, Fuschia..Blanche Seymour, Ivan..Harold Mordaunt. (Picayune, Monday, April 2, 1900.)

Sunday, April 8, marked the start of a week's run of Monte Cristo, Dumas' melodrama. William Farnum was described as "magnificent" as Edmond Dantes, while Lowe was said to be masterful as the villain, Danglars, and Esther Lyon was clever as Mercedes. Other cast members aiding the successful production that warranted standing room only, included: Fernand..H. Percy Meldon, De Villefort..Frank Lindon, Albert..Albert Brown, Caderousse..Thos. J. Keogh, Abbe..Giunio Socola, Carconte..Anna MacGregor. (Picayune, Monday, April 9, 1900.)

An ambitious production of a dramatization of Quo Vadis was the next choice of the company, during the week of Sunday, April 15. The historic drama was seen then for the first time in the city. The superior cast all distinguished themselves in difficult roles, and Harry Dressel's beautiful sets were described by the Picayune as being "... of a caliber to go on the road with the most elaborate production." Such
ornate scenes were shown as "The Palace of Nero," "Rome by fire," "The Amphitheatre by night" and "Home of Linius."
H. Percy Meldon, Glaucus. Giunio Socola. (Picayune, Monday, April 16, 1900.)

Sapho, a dramatization of Alphonse Daudet's work, was the fare the week of Sunday, April 22. The version of the story was classed as weak, being too "talky" and with insufficient action. The players did all they could, however, with the poor script, the biggest impression being made by Keogh. Principals: Jean Goussin. William Farnum, Dechilette. Robert Lowe, Uncle Cessairo. Thos. J. Keogh, Flamant.

Quo Vadis was revived during the week of Sunday, April 29, and continued to attract large houses. (Picayune, Monday,
April 30, 1900.) **Hoodman Blind** was chosen to close the long season of the Baldwin-Melville Company, the week of Sunday, May 6. The formal close of the season was on Wednesday, May 9, 1900, with the last performance of **Hoodman Blind** on that date being given as a benefit for Grand Opera House treasurer Morris Marks. However, performances of benefits for William Farnum, Esther Lyon and stage director Meldon were given during the rest of the week, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, respectively, with company members and other talented volunteers comprising the casts. **Hoodman Blind** was reputed to contribute "inspired performances" during that final week, when all cast members performed remarkably well. The cast was the same as seen during the second week of the season.

*(Picayune, Monday, May 7, 1900.)* On Thursday afternoon and night, May 10, William Farnum's benefit offered **Damon and Pythias**. Farnum appeared as Pythias, while the actor's close friend, the fine classic actor, Edwin Ferry, volunteered to play Damon. Both actors were regarded as being strong in their roles and won great applause from the two capacity houses. Esther Lyon appeared as the lovely Calanthe. *(Picayune, Friday, May 11, 1900.)* Miss Lyon's benefit performances on Friday afternoon and night, March 11, included the balcony scene from **Romeo and Juliet**, two acts of **Camille** and some
specialties. Miss Lyon appeared as Juliet, with Farnum as Romeo, and she was also seen as Camille. A group of variety specialties and a sketch, Rock of Ages, concluded the performance. Seen in the sketch were Giunio Socola and Bernard and Bessie Shields. (Picayune, Saturday, May 12, 1900.) On Saturday, May 12, two performances marked the benefit for H. Percy Meldon, the gifted stage director. Seen in this production were a scene from Julius Caesar featuring William Farnum and Robert Lowe; and several skits and one-acts including The Happy Pair and A Matrimonial Cyclone with Meldon and Anna MacGregor; Creole Cigarette with Virginia Johnson, Meldon and Socola; Metaphysics with Blanche Seymour and Thomas Keogh; and The Chinese and the Coon with the Shields family—Bernard, Blanche, Santos, Bessie and Sydney Shields. (Picayune, Saturday, May 12, 1900.)

Although the Theatrical Syndicate had prevented any stars coming to the Grand Opera House during the season of 1899-1900, Greenwall's engagement of the Baldwin-Melville Stock Company for the season assured the manager-lessee of one of the longest and most successful seasons he had had. Under the management of Walter S. Baldwin and directed by H. Percy Meldon, the fine company came on October 1, 1899 and remained for thirty-two weeks, accomplishing the astounding
record of producing 30 different and varied plays, and giving
eleven performances per week. Only Quo Vadis and Hoodman
Blind were returned for a second week. Although Greenwall's
excellent Greenwall Stock Company had failed as an experiment
during the previous season, the Baldwin-Melville Company was
sheer magic at the box office, and packed in capacity houses
all season. So successful was the season for both Greenwall
and Baldwin that the pair agreed to remain together another
year for the forthcoming season of the Grand Opera House.
Both men left for New York at the conclusion of the season
to make preparations for the next season. (Picayune, Sunday,
May 13, 1900.)

Not satisfied with the monopoly of stars enforced and
secured, the greedy Syndicate bosses were most unhappy over
William Farnum's great popularity and success as leading man
at the Grand Opera House all season. Consequently, Klaw and
Erlanger lost no time in contacting Farnum behind the backs
of Baldwin and Greenwall, and offered the promising actor a
bait too tempting to turn down in order to assure the pirating
of Farnum from the fold of Greenwall and the Grand. Klaw and
Erlanger offered Farnum the title role in their lavish pro-
duction of Ben Hur, scheduled to open the following Fall in
New York City, and Farnum accepted gladly. (Picayune, Sunday,
July 29, 1900.) Almost every star and combination that had played the Grand in recent years acted during the season at the Tulane and Crescent. These included Otis Skinner, Lewis Morrison, Louis James, Stuart Robson, William Collier, the William H. West Minstrels, James O'Neill, De Wolf Hopper and others. But it was William Farnum who secured the lead in the Trust's most lavish New York production; because it was that actor who was assuring prosperity and packed houses at the Grand Opera House. This was only partly true, for even without Farnum as star, the Baldwin-Melville Company continued to draw full houses.

When the Baldwin-Melville troupe left the Grand Opera House in May, 1900, it was in demand to fill summer engagements all over the North. The group went to Her Majesty's Theatre in Montreal, and were held over week after week, being a great hit in Canada. Farnum's place in the troupe was filled temporarily by Arthur Elliott. (Picayune, Sunday, July 29, 1900.)

Many informants for this study remember with pleasure seeing performances of the Baldwin-Melville Company. Major George T. Sheehan¹ was no longer a back-stage worker at this

¹Interview No. 20.
time, but Greenwall gave the boy passes to see the stock company whenever he wanted to come. He states:

... He (Greenwall) would say to his nephew Morris in the box office: "Morris, give him passes." I would say: "Mr. Henry, I just came to see you. I don't need passes." And he would smile and say: "To see me and to get passes, so have the passes."

Sheehan saw W. H. Murdoch as a featured actor in the company and as leading man of the company. In the 1899-1900 season, he saw William Farnum perform, and met the actor. Sheehan considers that Farnum was very egotistical, and the actor did not make the favorable impression that many other actors made upon the youth. Among the many plays that Sheehan saw this company perform were *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *The Lady of Lyons*, *The Two Orphans* and *Ten Nights in a Barroom*. Flo Field recalls seeing Bessie Shields play child parts at the Grand, and declares that Miss Shields is still living in New York where she makes her home today. Miss Field remembers William Farnum with great vividness and affection. She states:

... He came to our house every Sunday for dinner when he was in New Orleans. Catherine Cole, my mother, was the first woman reporter on a newspaper in the entire South. She was reporter on the *Daily Picayune* in 1872. ... Then her health broke down

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2Interview No. 6.
... and she died at forty-four, in 1898. I took over as reporter in her place. ... I went to New York on vacation, and William Farnum asked my aunt to allow me to become his leading lady in Ben Hur. He had seen me act at home as a girl when I put on plays in our home when Farnum was there. My aunt refused. I did not know at the time. She did not tell me until later. I feel that she ruined my life! I will never forget that! He was like one of the family. And I was an excellent actress. ...

Miss Field feels that if her aunt, who became her guardian at her mother's death, had allowed her to become Farnum's leading lady, she would have become a celebrated actress. Miss Field was already a leading New Orleans amateur actress at that time. Albert L. Voss recalled seeing Farnum play at the Grand. He told of seeing the first performance of Cyrano de Bergerac performed in English which occurred at the Grand Opera House. Mrs. Amelia Goldenberg Joseph recalls the days of the return of stock companies to the Grand, when she went to see the plays with her schoolmates in a special school group, when they would pay ten cents each and sit in the gallery. She recalls seeing The Two Orphans. She states:

... Many times actors would come out between acts and talk to people in the front rows, particularly to the 'bald heads'--elderly men in the front rows. Sometimes there would be a

3Interview No. 11. 4Interview No. 12.
... runway extending into the audience, and the actors would come out and talk way out on the plank. ...

Mrs. Lucy Rogillio\(^5\) verifies Mrs. Joseph's memory of the "bald headed" section of the theatre. She recalls, as a young child, attending the theatre with an older sister, and, seeing the bald headed men below in the orchestra, she yelled out: "Sally, look at all those bald headed men down there!"

She states:

Facing the acoustics as I was, my voice sounded throughout the theatre and everyone laughed. You can imagine how embarrassed my sister Sally was! You see, bald headed men habitually sat in the first section of the orchestra . . . , right behind the musicians in the section nearest the stage. They called that the "bald headed section". . . .

Zillah Mendes Meyer\(^6\) saw *East Lynne* performed by the company.

And Julius Friend\(^7\) saw *Fabio Romani* by Ouida performed.

Greenwall spent all summer in New York City where he formed stock companies to play all season at each of him many independent theatres. Among these was the American Theatre Company, formed to play at his newest playhouse, the American Theatre in New York. (*Picayune*, Sunday, August 5, 1900.)

Greenwall returned to New Orleans on September 8, to prepare

\(^{5}\) Interview No. 17.  \(^{6}\) Interview No. 28.  \(^{7}\) Interview No. 3.
for the reopening of the Grand Opera House. Upon his return, a large photograph of Greenwall and an accompanying feature story concerning the veteran theatre magnate appeared in the Picayune on Sunday, September 9, 1900. The article praised Greenwall for his untiring theatrical efforts for more than thirty years. All other leading managers like Lester Wallack, Augustin Daly and Ben De Bar had now passed away, leaving Greenwall the oldest, most outstanding manager in active service, the Picayune avowed. The article spoke of Greenwall's vast circuit that extended from Texas to New York. Greenwall was interviewed at the Gruenwald Hotel on the day of his arrival home. He said, concerning the forthcoming season,

"... The New York house (American Theatre), under capable men I have placed in charge there, will run itself. I have come back to New Orleans where I had rather live than any place in the world—to stay for the winter. . . ."

Greenwall then announced that Walter S. Baldwin would manage the Grand Opera House again all season, and that he (Greenwall) had personally chosen the stock company that would be at the Grand all season. Leighton Leigh, an English actor who had been doing lead parts at the Davidson Theatre in Milwaukee, was announced as new leading man. Lavinia Shannon, who had been seen in support of several stars appearing
previously at the Grand, was the new leading lady. Miss Shannon was a New Orleans native; daughter of steamboat Captain Joseph Shannon. Three other important company members were New Orleans natives. These included Giunio Socola, re-engaged as actor and assistant stage manager; Jane Holly, chief ingenue, who was born in the city but who moved years before to California with her poet father, Harry L. Flash; and John M. Sainpolis, heavy character man, born and educated in New Orleans. Returning were several favorites of the previous season, including Blanche Seymour, soubrette and ingenue; Anna MacGregor, character woman; Harry Percy Meldon, stage director and character man; and Albert Veazie, another New Orleans native, utility man and general business roles. New cast members, not already mentioned, included Eleanor MacGregor, ingenue and general business, daughter of Anna MacGregor; Chauncey Irving, juvenile; Thomas J. Grady, comedian; L. O. Hart, comedian and character; Hugh Gibson, character man; Thomas B. Findlay, the fine veteran character man; and Charles Westal, utility man. Several other actors took minor parts with the company from time to time, but were not regular company members. These were New Orleans amateurs, like the Shields family, who were always overjoyed to be called to work with professional companies and who enhanced
their local reputations considerably in this way. In these
days prior to Equity's ruling concerning professional actors
working along with amateurs, there was no rule to forbid such
policy; and it was common practice for local amateurs to sup­
plement the ranks of a given professional company.

The 1900-1901 season began on Sunday, September 16,
1900 with two performances of the melodrama, *The Prodigal
Daughter* by Sir Henry Pettit and Augustus Harris. The play
had had long runs in England and New York and was being seen
for the first time in New Orleans. The *Picayune's* verdict
on the newly reorganized Baldwin-Melville Company was over­
whelmingly favorable. Lavinia Shannon, as the heroine, was
called "a treasure." She was described as a beautiful woman
and experienced actress who dressed handsomely. She had
made most favorable impressions previously at the Grand in
support of Clara Morris and Thomas Keene. Leighton Leigh,
seen as a chivalrous Englishman, was described as "made for
the role." The young actor had been in the United States
from his native England for less than two years. The opening
play was said to be staged beautifully by Louis F. Fett, new
scenic artist signed by Baldwin to work exclusively with the
Baldwin-Melville Company. The press noted two improvements
in the theatre: a new drop curtain and numerous new electric
fans all over the theatre to make the audience comfortable in the still warm Fall weather. Cast: Capt. Harry Vernon, Leighton Leigh, Sir John Woodmere, Thos. B. Findlay, Maurice Deepwater, John Sainpolis, Julian Bedford, H. Percy Meldon, Lord Banbury, Thomas Grady, Dudley Roper, L. O. Hart, Tom, Giunio Socola, Joseph Gunn, Hugh Gibson, Jim, Albert Veazie, Wood, James Patterson, Rose, Lavinia Shannon, Violet, Jane Holly, Dorcas, Blanche Seymour, Mme. Delmard, Anna MacGregor, Gabrielle, Nellie Temple. (Picayune, Monday, September 17, 1900.) The same low prices as established for the previous season were maintained, as were the same four matinee days per week.

For the week of Sunday, September 23, Mr. Barnes of New York, a dramatization of Archibald C. Gauter's novel of that name, was produced. Miss Shannon gave a strong portrayal of the adventurous Corsican girl, acting with dramatic fire. Leighton Leigh won praise for his portrayal of the title role. Principals: Burton Barnes, Leighton Leigh, Count Danella, John M. Sainpolis, Edwin Anstruther, Tileston Bryce, de Telloc, Thos. B. Findlay, Marina Paoli, Lavinia Shannon, Enid Jane Holly, Lady Chartris, Anna MacGregor, Maud, Blanche Seymour. (Picayune, Monday, September 24, 1900.)

J. K. Tillotson's melodrama, A Young Wife, made its
New Orleans debut at the Grand the week of Sunday, September 30. Both opening performances played to packed houses. Lavinia Shannon made much of the title role, but Thomas Grady, as a lad from the country, scored the real hit of the production. Principals: Clarence Douglas..Leighton Leigh, Robert Douglas..John Sainpolis, Judson Douglas..Thos. B. Findlay, Horace Dobbins..Thos. J. Grady, James..Giunio Socola, Ethel Douglas..Lavinia Shannon, Louis..Hugh Gibson, Grace..Jane Holly, Stella..Blanche Seymour, Mrs. Marks..Anna MacGregor. (Picayune, Monday, October 1, 1900.)

After only three weeks, the Baldwin-Melville Company had a new leading man, when the troupe's fourth bill of the new season was announced. On Sunday, October 7, it was made known that Maurice Freeman would be new leading man of the company when The Three Musketeers opened on that date. Leighton Leigh was retained in the company and demoted to the place of supporting actor. Freeman made a hit as D'Artagnan. He was described as a handsome man of pleasing presence and gracefulness. Miss Shannon played the role of the Queen, with majesty and fire. Leighton Leigh did well as Athos, and most of the cast received glowing notices. Principals: D'Artagnan..Maurice Freeman, Louis XIII..G. Socola, Richelieu ..J. M. Sanipolis, Villers..H. P. Meldon, De Rochefort..Hugh
The reason for the acquisition of a new leading man in the Baldwin-Melville Company was given by the Picayune on Sunday, October 14. It seems that the lady patrons of the theatre were grieving over and lamenting the loss of matinee idol William Farnum as though he were dead! Freeman, who was more like Farnum in physique and stage presence than was Leigh, was brought to the troupe in an effort to fill the void. Freeman was a native of Boston with ten years of stage experience. The Lost Paradise, Henry C. De Mille's labor satire was selected for the fourth week of the company, starting on October 14. Beautiful sets were supplied by Louis Fett. Freeman, Leigh and Miss Shannon won plaudits for fine acting. Freeman was seen as the superintendent of an iron works. Principals: Reuben Warner..Maurice Freeman, Andrew Knowlton..Thos. B. Findlay, Ralph Standish..J. M. Sainpolis, Bob Appleton..Leighton Leigh, Billy Hopkins..T. J. Grady, Schwartz..H. P. Meldon, Margaret Knowlton..Lavinia Shannon, Polly..Jane Holly, Nell..Anna MacGregor, Cinders..Blanche Seymour. (Picayune, Monday, October 15, 1900.)
On Sunday, October 21, Henry Arthur Jones' tragedy, *The Dancing Girl*, was the choice of the company for that week. Lavinia Shannon received glowing reviews for her portrayal of the lead role. She unfolded the character step by step with deftness, reaching tragic heights when she is cursed by her father and falls down the grand stairway. Freeman showed new facets of his ability in the wicked role of Guiseberry.


A lavish production of Sardou and Moreau's drama, *Madame Sans-Gene*, was offered for the week of Sunday, October 28. At the customary low prices, patrons viewed entirely new sets by Louis Fett and costly costumes by Miller of Philadelphia. Miss Shannon put aside her usual graciousness, and became harsh and crude in the title role. Freeman showed versatility also in the difficult role of Napoleon. Cast: Napoleon..Maurice Freeman, Lefebvre..John Sainpolis, De Neippera..Leighton Leigh, Savary..Hugh Gibson, Fouché..L. O.
The melodrama, The Fatal Card, appeared next, the week of Sunday, November 4. The "gallery gods" shrieked and stamped their feet for this thrilling opus. Maurice Freeman played the hero with dash, while John M. Sainpolis shone as the crafty villain, and Lavinia Shannon was properly demure as the heroine. Special mention was given to all of the following cast: Frank Mason, Maurice Freeman, Bud Mitchell, Leighton Leigh, Jose, Hugh Gibson, Abner, Thos B. Findlay, Abbott, G. Socola, Murphy, L. O. Hart, Ethel Leslie, Lavinia Shannon, Vera, Jane Holly, Minerva, Anna MacGregor, Dorothy, Blanche Seymour. (Picayune, Monday, November 5, 1900.)

Another change in the ranks of the company was announced on Sunday, November 11, when it was stated that Jane Holly, ingenue of the troupe, had quit the Baldwin-Melville Company, and was joining the Hopkins Stock Company at Memphis. (Picayune, Sunday, November 11, 1900.) On that same date, The Silver King began a week's run at the Grand. Capacity houses greeted the melodrama. Again, Freeman was heroic in
the title role, Miss Shannon was sweet as the faithful wife, and Sainpolis was properly sinister as the villain. Principals: Wilfred Denver, Maurice Freeman, Capt. Skinner, John M. Sainpolis, Daniel, Hugh Gibson, Coombe, T. J. Grady, Baxter, Harry P. Meldon, Geoffrey Ware, Leighton Leigh, Parkyn, Thos. Findlay, Nellie Denver, Lavinia Shannon, Olive, Blanche Seymour, Susey, Anna MacGregor, Harry, G. Socola, Cripps, L. O. Hart. (Picayune, Monday, November 12, 1900.)

A new British melodrama made its debut on Sunday, November 18, when Henry Pettit's Hands Across the Sea began a week's run. The elaborate production had had a run of 200 nights at Wallack's Theatre in New York, and had been a major success in London. With five acts and nine scenes, from England to France to Australia, Pettit provided lavish sets including a farm, hotel apartment, prison, gambling den and docks. Maurice Freeman was applauded loudly as the hero, Jack Dudley. Others shining were: J. M. Sainpolis as Jean De Lussac, the villain; Lavinia Shannon as the heroine; Blanche Seymour, and Messrs. Grady, Hart, Leigh, Socola and Meldon. (Picayune, Monday, November 19, 1900.)

Lucia Moore was the new ingenue selected to take the place of Jane Holly. The new addition to the Baldwin-Melville Company made her local debut on Sunday, November 25,
the first day of that week's production, D'Ennery and Cor-
mon's A Celebrated Case. Miss Moore, as Valentine, was said
to make a hit with her fair face, striking figure and excep-
tional acting ability. Miss Shannon was equally appealing
as Adrienne. Baby Helene Hart, child actress and daughter
of L. O. Hart, and Maurice Freeman also won booming applause.
Cast: Jean Renaud..Maurice Freeman, Count D'auberterre..L.
O. Hart, O'Rouke..T. J. Grady, Madeline..Lavinia Shannon,
Adrienne..Baby Helene Hart, Martha..Anna MacGregor, Louise..
Blanche Seymour, Capt.. T. B. Findlay. (Picayune, Monday,
November 26, 1900.)

Cumberland '61, a Civil War melodrama by Franklin
Fyles, appeared next, on Sunday, December 2. The playwright
wrote from the Union viewpoint, his villain being a Confed-
erate soldier while his hero was a Union officer. Thomas
Findlay and Maurice Freeman filled these respective roles
ably, and the rest of the cast was applauded for excellent
enactment of their roles. Cast: Gordon Crayne..Maurice Free-
man, Dirk Mansett..J. M. Sainpolis, Benner Ainsley..Hugh Gib-
son, Leslie Murdoch..Thos. B. Findlay, John Lenox..L. O. Hart,
Adolphus..Thos J. Grady, Rance..H. Percy Meldon, Alice Ains-
ley..Lavinia Shannon, Mrs. Victor..Lucia Moore, Pink..Blanche
Seymour, Mammy Han..Anna MacGregor, Zeb..Al Veazie, Manning
Upheaval in the ranks of the company mounted. On Sunday, December 9, the Picayune announced that Lavinia Shannon, leading lady of the company, who was Mrs. Giles Shine in private life, had severed her connection with the Baldwin-Melville troupe, and had left for Kansas City to join the Woodward Stock Company. Moreover, Leighton Leigh, who had been humiliated and upset ever since being replaced with Maurice Freeman as leading man, had also quit the company. On December 9, Henry Guy Carleton's drama, Victor Durand, began a week's run. Lucia Moore was cast in the leading role of Ruth Favart, and was showered with plaudits for fine acting. Allen Demond made his debut with the company, replacing Leighton Leigh. The new actor received great praise in the role of Antonio Sforza, an Italian. Other plaudits went to these cast members: Henri Favart, Maurice Freeman, Baron de Mersac, John Sainpolis, John Vaughn, Hugh Gibson, Septimus Tubb, Thos. J. Grady, Paul Dean, G. Socola, Jacques, Thos. B. Findlay, Le Febre, H. P. Meldon, Violet, Blanche Seymour, Mrs. Dudley, Anna MacGregor. (Picayune, Monday, December 10, 1900.)

Bronson Howard's melodrama, The Banker's Daughter held the stage of the Grand the week of Sunday, December 17. Lucia Moore won more praise for her superior portrayal of the
emotional role of Lillian Westbrook. Blanche Seymour shared plaudits for her vivacious portrayal of Florence St. Vincent. Other special mentions were as follows: John Strebelow.
Maurice Freeman, Count de Carojac..John Sainpolis, Phipps..
Thos. Grady, de Montvillian..Giuonio Socola, Mrs. Holcomb..
Anna MacGregor, Dr. Watson..H. Percy Meldon. (Picayune, Monday, December 17, 1900.)

The choice for Christmas week 1900 was the melodrama, Pawn Ticket 210. The play was highly successful and crowded for both opening performances. Maurice Freeman was seen as Harris Levy, the heroic pawnbroker, and received great applause in the role. Allen Demond was strong as the man who wronged Levy and fathered the child, and John Sainpolis was smooth and finished as the villain. Cast: Harris Levy..
Maurice Freeman, John Sternhold..Allen Demond, Josiah Gregg..
J. M. Sainpolis, Flash..Thos. J. Grady, Charley Saxe..Giunio Socola, Burglar..Thos. Findlay, Mag..Blanche Seymour, Alice ..Lucia Moore, Ruth..Anna Mac Gregor. (Picayune, Monday, December 24, 1900.)

Another of Henry Pettit's English melodramas debuted in the city, when In the Ranks was presented the week of Sunday, December 30. An elaborate production of the play sported beautiful new scenery by Louis Fett, picturesque costumes,
and a host of auxiliaries. A new leading lady, Maude Odell, was engaged to replace Lavinia Shannon and arrived that week in the city to begin rehearsals prior to making her local debut two weeks later. The beautiful actress had played as James O'Neill's leading lady during the previous season. Maurice Freeman and Lucia Moore took the leading roles with aplomb. Cast: Ned Drayton..Maurice Freeman, Gideon Blake..J. M. Sainpolis, Col. Wynter..L. O. Hart, Richard Belton..Hugh Gibson, Joe Buzzard..Thos. J. Grady, Herrick..Thos. B. Findlay, Bloxam..H. Percy Meldon, Timmons..Giunio Socola, Ruth Herrick..Lucia Moore, Barbara..Blanche Seymour, Mrs. Buzzard..Anna MacGregor, Polly..Baby Helene Hart. (Picayune, Monday, December 31, 1900.)

The first bill announced in 1901 was William Haworth's five-act melodrama, The Ensign, which packed the Grand to its doors. Freeman appeared as a heroic ensign in the play, and Lucia Moore was his pretty sweetheart. Cast: Ensign Ben Baird..Maurice Freeman, Abraham Lincoln..Thos. B. Findlay, Gideon Welles..L. O. Hart, Admiral Farragut..Hugh Gibson, Lt. Blythe..Percy Meldon, Lt. Allen..Giunio Socola, Capt. Wilkes ..Hugh Gibson, Watson..Tom Grady, Dudley..John Sainpolis, Alice Greer..Lucia Moore, Mrs. Baird..Anna MacGregor, Dot..Blanche Seymour, Mary..Baby Helene Hart. (Picayune, Monday,
January 7, 1901.)

Both the new leading lady, Maude Odell, and a new juvenile man, Harry Shumer, debuted on Sunday, January 13, when Carmen was produced for a week. Miss Odell made her debut by appearing in the title role. An experienced actress, she had a bold type of beauty, and large, flashing eyes. These attributes fitted her well to portray Prosper Merimée's heroine. Henry Shumer made a favorable impression. He replaced Allen Demond, who had remained with the company only a few weeks. Miss Odell was a native of South Carolina, who had made her debut with Daniel Frohman's Lyceum Theatre Company in New York. Besides her recent season as leading lady to James O'Neill, she had appeared in 800 parts all over the country. (Picayune, Sunday, January 13, 1901.) Shumer was a twenty-five year old native of Detroit who had first appeared with Lewis Morrison, and went on to play 300 roles in stock in the previous five years. (Picayune, Sunday, January 20, 1901.) J. M. Sainpolis distinguished himself as the matador, and Maurice Freeman was dashing as Don Jose. Principals: Don Jose..Maurice Freeman, Mendez..John Sainpolis, Don Manuel ..Henry Shumer, Carmen..Maud Odell, Delores..Lucia Moore, Teresa..Blanche Seymour, Anita..Anna MacGregor. (Picayune, Monday, January 14, 1901.)
Another new offering appeared the week of Sunday, January 20, when Franklyn Files' melodrama, *A Ward of France*, made its debut in the city. Maude Odell changed characters completely to create the role of an innocent girl, proving her versatility. Freeman was dynamic in the role of a young soldier, and Sainpolis was strong as Jean Lafitte. Cast: Victor Laussat..Maurice Freeman, Jean Lafitte..J. M. Sainpolis, Calvo..L. O. Hart, Felix Laussat..Hugh Gibson, Haled ..Henry Shumer, George Villars..Giunio Socola, Louis Belford ..Tom B. Findlay, Henri..Thos. J. Grady, Flower Moyne..Maude Odell, Zabot Caroza..Anna MacGregor, Sister Agnes..Lucia Moore, Estrella..Blanche Seymour, Mme. Calvo..Louise Plunkett. (*Picayune*, Monday, January 21, 1901.)

For the first time that season, comedy was the fare, the week of Sunday, January 27, when William Gillette's *All the Comforts of Home* was produced. Maude Odell was charming in the role of an opera singer. Already the young actress was so popular that when she appeared in the second act, the applause was so vociferous that the curtain had to be raised three times. Sainpolis was the male hit of the play, while Freeman was good as a spendthrift. Principals: Alfred Hastings..Maurice Freeman, Theodore Bender..John Sainpolis, Tom McDew..Thos. J. Grady, Dabney..L. O. Hart, Victor..Henry
Shumer, Fin Oritanski..Maude Odell, Josephine Bender..Anna MacGregor, Rosabelle..Lucia Moore, Evangeline..Blanche Seymour. (Picayune, Monday, January 28, 1901.)

Sir Charles Young's Jim, the Penman was the successful presentation the week of Sunday, February 3. Freeman did well in the title role, while Misses Odell, Seymour and Moore, and Messrs. Grady and Sainpolis also received rave notices. Principals: James Ralston..Maurice Freeman, Baron Hartfeld..J. M. Sainpolis, Capt. Redwood..T. J. Grady, Nina Ralston..Maude Odell, Agnes..Blanche Seymour, Mrs. Chapstone..Lucia Moore. (Picayune, Monday, February 4, 1901.)

East Lynne was the feature for the week of Sunday, February 10. Miss Odell surpassed herself in the emotional lead role of Mme. Vine, and Baby Helene Hart warmed hearts as Little Willie. Freeman was excellent as Carlisle, and John Sainpolis was finished as Sir Francis Levison. Other standouts included: Lord Severann..L. O. Hart, Richard Hare..Henry Shumer, Dill..Hugh Gibson, Wilson..T. B. Findlay, Lady Isabel..Maude Odell, Barbare Hare..Lucia Moore, Cornelia..Anna MacGregor, Joyce..Blanche Seymour. (Picayune, Monday, February 11, 1901.)

Frank Harvey's melodrama, Shall We Forget Her? was the fare the week of Sunday, February 17. Maurice Freeman proved
his versatility by enacting the role of a missionary. Tom Findlay was found to be outstanding as a vagabond, and Miss Odell shone as the fair heroine. Cast: Paul Eslworth.

Maurice Freeman, James Stapleton..J. M. Sainpolis, Olive West..Henry Shumer, Neil..Thos. B. Findlay, Dr. Kerrow..L. O. Hart, Jerry Blake..Hugh Gibson, Grace..Maude Odell, Joanne ..Lucia Moore, Nellie West..Blanche Seymour, Aunt Martha.. Anna MacGregor. (Picayune, Monday, February 18, 1901.)

The Charity Ball, David Belasco's comedy, held the boards for the week of Sunday, February 24. During that same week, Greenwall flinched in the knowledge that Sarah Bernhardt and Coquelin who had only played before in New Orleans at the Grand Opera House, were appearing at the Tulane Theatre under the wraps of the Syndicate. Greenwall, in a heroic gesture, gave a lavish and handsome production of the Belasco play. Maude Odell, Maurice Freeman and John Sainpolis won warm praise for convincing playing. Cast: Ann Cruger.

Maude Odell, Rector John Van Buren..Maurice Freeman, Dick Van Buren..J. M. Sainpolis, Judge Knox..L. O. Hart, Cruger.. Thomas Findlay, Creighton..Henry Shumer, Robinson..Thos. J. Grady, Phyllis..Lucia Moore, Bess..Blanche Seymour, Mrs. De Peyser..Anna MacGregor. (Picayune, Monday, February 25, 1901.)
Harbor Lights, English melodrama, was set the week of Sunday, March 3. The entire cast was praised for fine acting. Cast: Lt. Kingsley..Maurice Freeman, Mark Helstone..J. M. Sainpolis, Nicholas..T. B. Findlay, Frank..Henry Shumer, Capt. Nelson..L. O. Hart, Jack..Giunio Socola, Tom..T. J. Grady, Dora Vane..Maude Odell, Lina Nelson..Lucia Moore, Mrs. Helstone..Anna MacGregor, Peggy..Blanche Seymour. (Picayune, Monday, March 4, 1901.)

Hazel Kirke, Steele Mackaye's drama, played the week of Sunday, March 19, and provided an outlet for the fine talents of L. O. Hart that made that actor the hit of the play. He gave a superior portrayal of the role of Dunstan Kirke. In other top roles were: Hazel Kirke..Maude Odell, Arthur Carringbord..Maurice Freeman, Aaron Rodney..J. M. Sainpolis, Pittacum Green..T. J. Grady, Joe..T. B. Findlay, Mercy..Anna MacGregor, Dolly..Blanche Seymour, Lady Travers ..Lucia Moore. (Picayune, Monday, March 11, 1901.)

Joseph Arthur's melodrama, The Cherry Pickers, provided the entertainment for the week of Sunday, March 17. The play took its title from a British regiment stationed in India, on account of their famous red trousers. The production was staged elaborately, costumed beautifully, and brought forth packed houses. Maude Odell was attractive as
Mourmallee, while Maurice Freeman was dashing as John Nazare, and John Sainpolis gave a superb portrayal of the rascally Colonel Brough. Others giving splendid performances included: Lt. York..Henry Shumer, Viceroy of India..T. B. Findlay, Aycebe..H. P. Meldon, Brown..T. J. Grady, Widow Duleep..Anna MacGregor, Rada..Blanche Seymour. (Picayune, Monday, March 18, 1901.)

With unending versatility, the Baldwin-Melville troupe found still another new vehicle the week of Sunday, March 25, in Frank Harvey's melodrama, The World Against Her. Misses Odell and Moore, and Freeman and Sainpolis, shared honors for artistic, finished portrayals. Principals: James Carlton..Maurice Freeman, Gilbert Blair..John M. Sainpolis, Simon Clegg..L. O. Hart, Harold Vernon..Henry Shumer, Dick Markland ..T. B. Findlay, Madge Carlton..Maude Odell, Jenny Clegg..Lucia Moore, Lucy Danvers..Blanche Seymour, Sally..Anna MacGregor, Annie..Baby Helene Hart. (Picayune, Monday, March 25, 1901.)

Top production of the season was The Black Crook, staged the week of Sunday, March 31. The spectacular production was judged to be "magnificent" by the Picayune. It was replete with elaborate scenery and costumes and lighting effects, and contained an amazon march, a fairy dance, and
specialties including contortionists. The closing transformation scenes: "Cupid's Valentine" and "The Garden of Love" were marvels of beauty and splendor. Main roles were filled as follows: Rudolph..Maurice Freeman, Count Steinhold..J. M. Sainpolis, Karl..T. J. Grady, Capt. of Guard..J. F. Duval, Lady Agnes..Lucia Moore, Bartalda..Blanche Seymour, Titania ..Maude Odell, Guilda..Anna MacGregor, Dragonfire..Henry Shumer, Zamiel..T. B. Findlay, Phantomface..Hugh Gibson. (Picayune, Monday, April 1, 1901.)

Easter week, starting on Sunday, April 7, featured Owen Meech's historical romantic drama, Ellen Gwyn. Maude Odell was said to captivate opening houses in the title role, and Freeman appeared to excellent advantage as King Charles II. The love interest centered about Harry Percy Meldon as the Duke of Richmond and Lucia Moore as Frances Stewart, both of whom won fresh favor with the mammoth houses. Other standouts included: Maj. Wildman..J. M. Sainpolis, Charles Sackville..Henry Shumer, Samuel Pepys..L. O. Hart, John Pepys..Hugh Gibson, Mistress Jennings..Blanche Seymour, Mrs. Samuel Pepys..Anna MacGregor. (Picayune, Monday, April 8, 1901.)

Uncle Tom's Cabin, a dramatization of Harriet Beecher Stowe's famous work, rated capacity audiences the week of Sunday, April 14. In a truly integrated production, stage
director Meldon collected an aggregation of Negroes to act in the levee scene, which scene in the fifth act was called by the Picayune "... one of the brightest, cleverest peeps into Negro life ever given from the stage." Sad, plaintive Negro tunes sounding in the distance gave a delightful authentic touch to the anti-bellum plantation setting. Freeman gave striking originality to the role of Uncle Tom, and Lucia Moore was strong and excellent as Eliza Harris. Little Helene Hart as Little Eva and Thomas Grady as Marks were others rating foremost mentions. Other principals included: Simon Legree..J. M. Sainpolis, Phineas Fletcher..T. B. Findlay, George Harris..H. P. Meldon, St. Clair..Henry Shumer, Mr. Shelby..L. O. Hart, George..Giunio Socola, Peter Haley..Hugh Gibson, Cassy..Maude Odell, Aunt Ophelia..Anna Mac Gregor, Topsy..Blanche Seymour, Aunt Chloe..Dora Evans. (Picayune, Monday, April 15, 1901.)

The Two Orphans changed the pace the week of Sunday, April 21, and packed in full houses. Maurice Freeman shone as Chevalier de Vaudrey, with Blanche Seymour doing a poignant interpretation of Louise. Excellent work was done by Sainpolis and Socola as the outlaw Jacques and the hunchback --the brothers Frochard. Miss Odell stirred emotions as Henrietta, and the "gallery gods" cheered also the following:
Count de Linieres..L. O. Hart, Picard..T. J. Grady, Mother Frochard..Anna Mac Gregor, Doctor..T. B. Findlay, Captain..
Hugh Gibson, Sister Genevieve..Louise Plunkett. (Picayune,
Monday, April 22, 1901.)

Camille was repeated for the final week of the season on Sunday, April 28 and Monday, April 29, with Maude Odell again in the title role. The last week served a round of benefits, with daily matinee and night performances. Monday performances were benefits for Lucia Moore, while Tuesday's were tendered Treasurer Morris Marks, with Rip Van Winkle offered. Wednesday's performances were benefits for Harry Percy Mel­don, the company's director, with Rosedale as the bill. Thursday benefits were tendered Maurice Freeman, with this varied program: Maurice Freeman and Nadine Winston (Mrs. Freeman) in the comedy sketches, An Afternoon Call and The Silent System, and the one-act drama, The Snow Storm; Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Shields and Claus Bogel in the comedy sketch, Bride and Groom and Mr. and Mrs. Shields in the balcony scene of Romeo and Juliet. (Picayune, Monday, April 29, 1901.) Friday's benefits were tendered John M. Sainpolis when the English farce, The Late Mr. Jones was offered. (Picayune, Friday, May 3, 1901.) The final day of the season, Saturday, May 4, was given over to a benefit for Arthur L. Lewis.
However, no mention was made of Lewis' connection with the company or theatre or of the entertainment presented. (Picayune, Saturday, May 4, 1901.)

The Baldwin-Melville Company survived another popular, active and profitable season, despite many company changes, additions and subtractions during the course of the season. The Grand remained crowded all season at each performance, despite the array of stars at the Syndicate theatres. Meldon did a splendid job of directing a constantly changing repertoire of plays, and Louis Fett's sets were striking and artistic. Blanche Seymour proved to be the most popular member of the Baldwin-Melville company that season. An indication of the esteem in which the actress was held is shown in an article in the Picayune on Sunday, July 28, 1901:

There is a great demand for the return of Miss Blanche Seymour as soubrette of the Grand Opera House Stock Company this winter. Manager Walter S. Baldwin, now in Montreal with the Baldwin-Melville Company, has received three petitions signed by several hundred patrons of the Grand Opera House, asking for the return of Miss Seymour for a third season.

Greenwall spent the summer in New York, during which time he expanded his theatre interests, gaining control of still another theatre—the Columbia Theatre, Brooklyn, New York. Greenwall engaged himself busily in finding resident
stock companies for his many independent theatres, and found also a cast for *The Gay Mr. Goldstein*, a new play which he was producing. This play was scheduled to tour the country and London, and to open later in New York. (*Picayune*, Sunday, August 11, 1901.)

The Baldwin-Melville Company returned for another full season at the Grand Opera House for the season of 1901-1902. Many familiar faces returned to the theatre plus some new ones. William Specht returned as leader of the orchestra. (*Picayune*, Saturday, September 7, 1901.) Both lead players were changed. Lotta Linthicum was engaged as new leading lady, and Vaughan Glazer was the new leading man. The latter would prove to be a short-lived choice. Blanche Seymour was returned by popular demand, and other familiar faces who returned for another season included Giunio Socola, Anna MacGregor, L. O. Hart, H. Percy Meldon—named again as stage director, John M. Sainpolis, Lucia Moore, Elaine MacGregor, and Hugh Gibson, constituting the majority of the previous company. W. J. Deming was named as comedy lead. (*Picayune*, Sunday, August 18, 1901.)

The 1901-1902 season did not begin at the Grand until Sunday, September 15. Consequently, the greatest paradox concerning Greenwall and his controversy with the Syndicate
occurred at this time and remains unexplained: Greenwall chose to present his new comedy production of George A. Herd's *The Gay Mr. Goldstein* as the opening engagement the week of Sunday, September 8, 1901, not at the Grand Opera House, but at the Tulane, the Theatrical Syndicate's rival theatre! The Grand was still dark, its season not yet having started, and Greenwall was still at "sword's point" with the Trust officials. At this same time he was in litigation as defendant in a New York court suit with the Trust who tried to keep him from opening at the Grand Opera House and at his New York house, the American Theatre, with *Under Two Flags*, Elsner's melodrama, to which Frohman claimed the exclusive rights. Consequently, this move remains the biggest surprise and contradiction of Greenwall's career! No explanation for the action was given. Thomas J. Keogh, a former member of the resident Baldwin-Melville Company at the Grand, starred in the Greenwall production, along with George C. Boniface, Jr. and Mary Hampton. (*Picayune*, Sunday, September 8; Sunday, September 29, 1901.)

Opening the 1901-1902 season, the Baldwin-Melville company presented Bronson Howard's military comedy, *Shenan-dooah*. The biggest effort ever attempted by the company, the play boasted a cast of one hundred. The old members of the
company were welcomed warmly, and the new additions rated warm applause. Vaughan Glaser was described as dashing physically and a fine actor. Miss Linthicum had charm and talent, and the new comedian W. J. Deming was polished and humorous. Principals: Col. Kerchival West..Vaughan Glaser, George Haverhill..H. Percy Meldon, Capt. Heartsease..W. J. Deming, Gen. Buckhorn..Hugh Gibson, Sgt. Barket..L. O. Hart, Capt. Thornton..J. M. Sainpolis, Gertrude Ellingham..Lotta Linthicum, Mrs. Haverhill..Lucia Moore, Jenny..Blanche Seymour, Margery..Anna MacGregor, Madeline..Elaine MacGregor. (Picayune, Monday, September 16, 1901.)

Under Two Flags, Edward Elsner's dramatization of Ouida's novel, was the second offering of the season, opening on Sunday, September 22. Messrs. Glaser and Sainpolis and Misses Moore and Linthicum shared honors for fine acting in top roles. The sets and staging were noted to be artistic and elaborate. Cast: Bertie Royelliue..Vaughan Glaser, Berkeley..Giunio Socola, Sol Chauteauroy..J. M. Sainpolis, Rake..W. J. Deming, Cigarette..Lotta Linthicum, Princess Vinetia Corona..Lucia Moore, Lady Guinevere..Blanche Seymour. It has already been stated that Charles Frohman went to court in an effort to prevent the performance of Elsner's version of the play at Greenwall theatres. His efforts proved a

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failure, however, and Greenwall went ahead with simultaneous productions of the melodrama at the Grand and at the American Theatre in New York. (Picayune, Monday, September 23; Sunday, September 29, 1901.) Rene Le Gardeur, Jr.\(^8\) an author and executive of an export business in New Orleans and an informant for this study saw the production of Under Two Flags, and contributes the following interesting information:

\[
\ldots \text{This was a dramatization of Ouida's novel. Ouida was the pen name of Louise de la Ramée. The name is a combination of two words that mean "yes" in French and Russian, respectively, "oui" which is French for "yes" and "da" which is the Russian. She was a major novelist of the period. } \ldots
\]

Le Gardeur also saw the company perform in The Great White Diamond Mystery.

A new actor joined the company the week of Sunday, September 29, when the melodrama, A Legal Wrong was the fare. He was James Fulton, a versatile young man who had much experience as playwright, author, lessee and theatre manager as well as actor. In the latter category, he had been leading support to Thomas Keene. Lotta Linthicum, J. M. Sainpolis and Vaughan Glaser shared top honors for splendid playing. Sainpolis, as the usual villain, had already won himself eternal hatred from the "gallery gods" who were quite

\(^8\)Interview No. 21.


Now a major change occurred in the company. Patrons had become very attached to Maurice Freeman, finding him the only worthy replacement for William Farnum as matinee-idol leading man of the company. As with Leighton Leigh in the previous season, Vaughan Glaser did not make the grade despite good notices. Consequently, beginning with the week
of Sunday, October 13, Maurice Freeman rejoined the company as leading man. Immediately, Vaughan Glaser resigned and left to join Eugenie Blair as her leading man in Peg Woffington. (Picayune, Sunday, October 13, 1901.) Immense audiences flooded the Grand to welcome back Freeman in Tennessee's Pardner, an adaptation of Bret Harte's work. In the comedy-drama of the western frontier, Freeman gave a polished performance as the protagonist, Caleb Swan. John Sainpolis shared applause for his surprise portrayal. Usually the heavy, the actor played well the role of Asa Bice, the pardner, whose generous-hearted nature was set forth admirably. Miss Linthicum's portrayal of Tennessee Kent was hailed as "superb." Other principals receiving special mention included: Gewilliker Hay..W. J. Deming, Nettie Bice..Lucia Moore, Amos Barlow..Giunio Socola, Mrs. Hay..Anna MacGregor, Tom Romaine..Hugh Bigson. (Picayune, Monday, October 14, 1901.)

Bartley Campbell's melodrama, Siberia, packed the Grand the week of Sunday, October 20. Freeman appeared as Nicholas Maigoff, making the most of the part; while Miss Linthicum was excellent as Sara. Sainpolis played as the villain, Jaracoff, in a polished, easy manner. Other special mentions went to these cast members: Marie..Lucia Moore,
Trolsky...W. J. Deming, Michael Sparta...Hugh Gibson, Governor General...H. P. Meldon, Vera...Blanche Seymour, David...L. O. Hart. (Picayune, Monday, October 21, 1901.)

A new type play caused excitement and capacity crowds during the week of Sunday, October 27. This was the comedy-drama Blue Jeans, laid in Indiana, that pictured rural life, with elements of comedy and tragedy. Maurice Freeman was seen to good advantage as Perry Bascom, a young lawyer. Lotta Linthicum played well as Sue Eudaly, an adventuress, and she was thought to be stunning in elegant gowns. Blanche Seymour, a mischievous June, the heroine, was the biggest hit of the play, and J. M. Sainpolis gave a fine performance as Ben Boone, a jealous lover, although not a villain this time. Other plaudits went as follows: Colonel Risener...L. O. Hart, Jacob Tutewiler...Hugh Gibson, Jim...J. W. Deming, Isaac...Giunio Socola, Cindy...Louise Plunkett, Neil...Lucia Moore, Samantha...Anna MacGregor, Belecna...Elaine MacGregor. A novelty of the opening of the play was a new addition found in the lobby of the theatre, a unique automatic wax figure which sprayed forth fragrant perfume. The costly innovation had been donated to the Grand by H. A. Ottman, press agent of the theatre, so that lady patrons could have their handkerchiefs saturated with exotic perfumes as they entered the theatre.
The military melodrama, *Northern Lights*, played the week of Sunday, November 3. The play had been presented by the company several seasons before. Maurice Freeman played well as John Swiftwood, the Indian surgeon hero. Sainpolis was seen as Sidney Sherwood, surgeon villain and was quite effective, and Lotta Linthicum appeared sympathetically as Helen Dare, Sherwood's deserted wife. The supporting cast won applause for excellent portrayals. These included Blanche Seymour and Messrs. Deming, Hart, Meldon, Socola, Findlay and Gibson. A feature of the play was a military exhibition presented by volunteers of the Second Louisiana Military Regiment. *(Picayune, Monday, November 4, 1901.)*

A really great compliment was paid the Baldwin-Melville Company in regard to their next play, *Faust*, Goethe's celebrated drama, produced the week of Sunday, November 10. Meldon and Socola, director and assistant director of the company, were praised highly by the *Picayune* for their production, termed as "truly magnificent." The newspaper stated: "... The presentation naturally suggests comparison with Lewis Morrison's production of 'Faust.' The present production fully equaled, if not surpassed, anything attempted by Morrison." Louis Fett's beautiful scenery was praised highly.
Moreover, the acting of the company was superior. Freeman's conception of Mephisto was original, subtle and artistic. As Marguerite, Miss Linthicum surpassed all prior efforts. The *Picayune* found it difficult to find words for the charm of her acting, her lovely appearance and her sensitive emotion. Sainpolis, as Faust, achieved a triumph—with grace, dignity, fine acting and handsome bearing. Socola was pleasing as Valentine and Anna MacGregor was amusing as Martha. Other featured parts were as follows: Sycorax—Newton Patterson, Zendoe—L. O. Hart, Siebel—Hugh Gibson, Wagner—W. J. Deming, Lisa—Lucia Moore, Elsie—Blanche Seymour. (*Picayune*, Monday, November 11, 1901.)

The *Octoroon*, Dion Boucicault's melodrama, appeared next during the week of Sunday, November 17. A feature of the play was the Tulane Quartette, a group of Negro singers, who brought down the house. Excellent reviews were given to all of the players, who acted expertly. Cast: Zoe—Lotta Lenthicum, Salem Scudder—Maurice Freeman, Wah-ne-tee—Thomas B. Findlay, Jacob McCloskey—John Sainpolis, George Peyton—Giunio Socola, Sunnyside—Hugh Gibson, Paul—Blanche Seymour, Dora—Lucia Moore, Mrs. Peyton—Anna MacGregor. (*Picayune*, Monday, November 18, 1901.)

*Madame Sans-Gene* was presented the week of Sunday,
November 24. A lavish revival of the French play brought forth capacity audiences. Miss Linthicum took the title role with great skill. She made the part of the laundress glow with feeling, and was judged as much more effective in the role than was a previous leading lady when the company did the play before. Freeman's Napoleon was regarded as a superior portrayal. John Sainpolis as Lefebre acted with great artistry, and the support was all excellent. (Picayune, Monday, November 25, 1901.)

The Black Flag, another British melodrama, held the Grand stage the week of Sunday, December 1. The Picayune critic lamented concerning this choice:

The gallery gods seemed highly pleased, . . . but most of the audience was disappointed, in that . . . English melodrama is inferior to American melodrama . . . , and Manager Baldwin would be wise to present only American melodrama in the future. (Picayune, Monday, December 2, 1901.)

Compensations for the production, however, according to the critic, were the beautiful appearance and elegant costumes of Lotta Linthicum and the clever acting of W. J. Deming. The rest of the cast did all they could with the weak play, the critic asserted. Miss Seymour, the pet of the Grand patrons, was particularly fetching in the role of a cabin-boy. The lass was often cast in young male roles, and was inimitable in that type part. Principals: Harry Glyndon..Maurice Freeman,
The greatest challenge of the Baldwin-Melville Company was their next presentation, that of a gala Shakespearean production. The week of Sunday, December 8, 1901, the group appeared in *Romeo and Juliet*. The *Picayune* declared the result to be a magnificent presentation:

... Neither time, nor money, nor labor have been spared in getting up this truly grand production. The managers, the stage artists and the actors themselves entered into the scheme of things with a spirit to surpass anything of the kind ever attempted in New Orleans. (*Picayune*, Monday, December 9, 1901.)

Lotta Linthicum appeared as Juliet and gave an exquisite portrayal: "... She threw her whole heart and soul into the part." (*Picayune*, Monday, December 9, 1901.) Her sweet voice, sympathetic acting and lovely appearance thrilled her auditors. The *Picayune* held that the actress fascinated her audience as completely as Juliet fascinated Romeo. Great praise was given her artistic work in the balcony, potion and tomb scenes. Unexpectedly, it was not leading man Maurice Freeman who filled the role of Romeo, but John Sainpolis. That actor's Romeo was held to be a revelation of his great
dramatic ability. It was the most pretentious effort that the actor had ever essayed. Sainpolis was strikingly handsome in the part, giving Juliet a Romeo of the heart-throb type. His excellent development of the character, furthermore, and of the many facets of the role had an electrifying effect upon his auditors. Freeman appeared in the role of Mercutio, made the part witty and mirth provoking, and created one of his most striking parts. In fact, all cast members rated rave notices. Major cast: Romeo...J. M. Sainpolis, Mercutio...Maurice Freeman, Paris...J. J. Flynn, Escalus...H. P. Meldon, Montague...Arthur Charbonnet, Capulet...Hugh Gibson, Benvolio...Giunio Socola, Tybalt...T. B. Findlay, Friar Lawrence...L. O. Hart, Balthazar...Blanche Seymour, Peter...W. J. Deming, Juliet...Lotta Linthicum, Nurse...Anna MacGregor, Lady Capulet...Lucia Moore. (Picayune, Monday, December 9, 1901.)

A melodrama, Peaceful Valley, followed during the week of Sunday, December 15. Sainpolis stepped back into the role of a villain, Ward Andrews. For the second week in a row, Maurice Freeman sacrificed the lead role to another. This time, the hero, Hosea Howe, was played ably by W. J. Deming, and that gentleman was given his greatest opportunity to date for fine acting. Lotta Linthicum was pretty and capable as
the heroine, Virgie Rand. Freeman took the minor role of Jack Farquhar. He and Misses Moore, MacGregor, Seymour and Messrs. Findlay and Socola received favorable mentions. (Picayune, Monday, December 16, 1901.)

A delightful change of pace occurred for Christmas week, beginning Sunday, December 22, when the troupe presented Cinderella. In addition to the usual matinees on Sunday, Monday, Friday and Saturday, a special Wednesday matinee was held on Christmas Day. For the extravaganza, a wealth of beautiful scenery was prepared by Louis F. Fett. A feature of the play was a delightful dance of children, under the direction of Mae Price. Moreover, the extravaganza featured dazzling electrical effects, catchy music, clever specialties and beautiful costumes, all which combined to make a bewitching impression. The Picayune critic said that he imagined that he was in Fairyland. Hit of the show was the surprise trio combination of Socola, Sainpolis and Deming, the former two appearing in parts entirely different from anything they had ever done. Their side-splitting dialect and comical make-up were said to brand them as first-rate comedians. Freeman as the Prince and Miss Moore as the Fairy Queen had the leading roles. Freeman was dashing, while pretty Miss Moore, in her fairy costume of tights and delicate
transparent draperies, revealed a very shapely figure.
Blanche Seymour was ideal in the title role, playing with
grace and deftness. Gibson was an added delightful surprise.
He played as Clorinda, one of the mean step-sisters, and was
called "... too amusing for anything." All were allotted
generous applause. Principal cast: Felix..Maurice Freeman,
Baron Pumpernickel..J. M. Sainpolis, Pedro..W. J. Deming,
Dandini..Giuino Socola, Alidoro..L. O. Hart, Cinderella..
Blanche Seymour, Clorinda..Hugh Gibson, Thisbe..Anna Mac-Gregor, Fairy Queen..Lucia Moore. (Picayune, Monday, December 23, 1901.)

Credit Lorraine loomed next, starting on December 29,
1901. Miss Linthicum gave one of her finest portrayals as
Lenora di Castiglioni, showing exceptional emotional power.
Freeman was not well cast, and was outshone by Sainpolis and
Gibson. Principals: Phillipe..Maurice Freeman, Count Lu-
signan..J. M. Sainpolis, Lustig..Hugh Gibson, Beaumont, L. O.
Hart, Lenora..Lotta Linthicum, Bonbon..Anna MacGregor, Mme.
Vouloir..Lucia Moore. (Picayune, Monday, December 30, 1901.)

A new play by Joaquin Miller, The Danites, broke all
attendance records for the Baldwin-Melville Company the week
of Sunday, January 5, 1902. In the strong drama, Lotta
Linthicum played a unique dual role, that of Nancy Williams
and later as Billy Piper, a male disguise which the heroine assumed to escape the vengeance of the Danites who were hunting her down. Lucia Moore, Freeman and Sainpolis headed the strong supporting cast. Cast: Alexander McGee..Maurice Freeman, Charles Godfrey..J. M. Sainpolis, William Wise..L. O. Hart, Hezekiah..Hugh Gibson, Bickman..H. P. Meldon, Wun Lung..W. J. Deming, Limber Tim..T. B. Findlay, Stubbs..G. Socola, George..Baby Helene Hart, Nancy Williams and Billy Piper..Lotta Linthicum, Bunker Hill..Blanche Seymour, Hunla Brown..Lucia Moore, Capt. Tommy..Anna MacGregor.

(Picayune, Monday, January 6, 1902.)

Cumberland '61, melodrama of the Civil War, which the group had presented in a previous season, packed the Grand the week of Sunday, January 12. Strongest part in the play fell to Thomas B. Findlay. He played the villainous Confederate Colonel, Lester Murdoch, in a superior way. Maurice Freeman, as hero Union officer Jordan Grayne, paled next to Findlay's strong portrayal. Lotta Linthicum brought beautiful and sympathetic understanding to the role of heroine Alice Ainsley, and excellent support came from Lucia Moore as Mrs. Victor, the widow, and Blanche Seymour as Pink, the widow's daughter. (Picayune, Monday, January 13, 1902.)

Greenwall chose another Shakespeare play for the week
of Sunday, January 19, 1902. *As You Like It* was produced in an effort to compete with Ethel Barrymore's debut in New Orleans at the Tulane in Clyde Fitch's *Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines*. The Shakespearean comedy proved to be just as successful as the Baldwin-Melville company's prior effort at Shakespearean tragedy in *Romeo and Juliet*. Interest was centered upon Lotta Linthicum as Rosalind, in which role she gave a warm, bright, tender and delightful portrayal. Maurice Freeman as Orlando was well up to the standard of vigor and attractiveness set by his co-star. J. M. Sainpolis as melancholy Jacques and W. J. Deming as Touchstone received much praise for excellent acting. Other main roles were cast as follows: Banished Duke..L. O. Hart, Duke Frederick..Arthur Charbonnet, Oliver..H. Percy Meldon, Le Beau..Giunio Socola, Adam..Hugh Gibson, Andrew..C. R. Nickel, Celia..Lucia Moore, Phoebe..Blanche Seymour, Audrey..Anna MacGregor. (*Picayune*, Monday, January 20, 1902.)

The sensational drama, *The Mormon Wife*, a strong indictment against polygamy in Mormonism drew crowded houses the week of Sunday, January 26, 1902. The handsomely staged production was said to be exceptionally acted. John Sainpolis played the leading role of John Turner, and breathed artistic understanding into the unpleasant part. Lotta
Linthicum played with depth and poise the sympathetic role of Mary Turner, the wronged wife. Plaudits went to the entire supporting cast which included: Dr. Joe Macon, Maurice Freeman, Doph Mason, W. J. Deming, Deacon Mason, L. O. Hart, Zeb, Thos. B. Findlay, Danny, Giunio Socola, Georgie, Baby Helene Hart, Tilly, Blanche Seymour, Samantha, Louise Plunkett, Sam Slick, Hugh Gibson, Hank, H. P. Meldon, Johathan, Arthur Charbonnet, Sally, Lucia Moore, Mrs. Young, Anna MacGregor. (Picayune, Monday, January 27, 1902.)

Don Caesar de Bazan, the drama made famous by Alexander Salvini, was the attraction for the week of Sunday, February 2. Maurice Freeman made a decided hit in the lead role, playing the part of the reckless, adventurous Spanish nobleman with the spirit of daredeviltry. This impersonation along with his role as Mercutio were judged as Freeman's finest parts by the Picayune. Miss Linthicum played as Maritana with much sympathy and feeling. Sainpolis handled the villainous role of de Santarem in his usual artistic manner, and Socola brought out boldly the detestable character of Charles II of Spain. Others cited for fine acting included: Marquis de la Rotunda, W. J. Deming, Pacolo, Hugh Gibson, Marchioness de la Rotunda, Anna MacGregor, Lazarillo, Blanche Seymour. (Picayune, Monday, February 3, 1902.)
By now the St. Charles Theatre had been rebuilt and leased to the Orpheum Circuit, and was called the St. Charles-Orpheum. The house now played vaudeville and variety bookings. The Academy, now called the Audubon, and also blacklisted by the Syndicate, featured the Aubrey Stock Company. At the Grand, *A Rough Rider's Romance* was the Mardi Gras week attraction, starting Sunday, February 9 and seen for the first time in the city at that time. The thrilling melodrama concerned the Rough Riders of the Spanish-American War. Freeman played the dashing officer hero and won vociferous applause. Miss Linthicum played a proud Spanish beauty who loses her heart to the hero. Sainpolis was at his best as a villainous Spanish officer. Principals: Lt. Jack Ford..Maurice Freeman, Col. Ramon Valquez..J. M. Sainpolis, Frank Williams..W. J. Deming, Jose Mendoza..G. Socola, Maj. Gen. Goodrich..L. O. Hart, Lt. Rollston..Hugh Gibson, Sgt. Rodriguez..Thos. B. Findlay, Sanchez..Hugh Gibson, Anita Morez..Lotta Linthicum, Concheta..Blanche Seymour, Senora Morez..Lucia Moore. (*Picyune*, Monday, February 10, 1902.)

Dion Bocicault's melodrama, *The Streets of New York*, assured standing room only audiences the week of Sunday, February 16. The play was staged artistically, and the well-balanced cast was thoroughly at home in their roles. Maurice
Freeman was ideal as the handsome hero, and Miss Linthicum was sweet and natural as the heroine. Principals: Tom Badger..Maurice Freeman, Gideon Bloodgood..T. B. Findlay, Mark Livingstone..J. M. Sainpolis, Capt. Fairweather..Hugh Gibson, Alida Bloodgood..Lotta Linthicum, Mrs. Fairweather..Lucia Moore, Lucy..Blanche Seymour, Mrs. Puffy..Anna MacGregor. (Picayune, Monday, February 17, 1902.)

Louis F. Fett's spectacular sets were a feature of Sea of Ice which was produced the week of Sunday, March 2. For a switch, Maurice Freeman played the villain of the melodrama, and his portrayal of cool, calculating Carlos proved to be a new revelation of his ability. Lotta Linthicum demonstrated her versatility, as a Mexican heroine. Principals: Carlos..Maurice Freeman, de Lascours..J. M. Sainpolis, Barabas..W. J. Deming, de Laval..Thos. B. Findlay, Pascome..Hugh Gibson, Ogartia..Lotta Linthicum, Marie..Baby Helene Hart, Diane..Lucia Moore. (Picayune, Monday, March 3, 1902.)

A double-header marked the offering of the week of Sunday, March 9, when the risqué comedy, Pink Dominoes, adapted from the French, was preceded by a one-act of Dion Boucicault, Night and Morning. Pink Dominoes proved to be a laughable hit. Misses Linthicum and Moore appeared cleverly as two wives, with Messrs. Sainpolis and Freeman as their respective
husbands; and the four displayed superior talent as comedians.
Principal casting: Charles Graythorne..Maurice Freeman, Sir
Percy..J. M. Sainpolis, Lady Maggie..Lotta Linthicum, Sophie
Graythorne..Lucia Moore, Henry..Giunio Socola, Joskin Tubbs
..W. J. Deming. 'Night and Morning was played successfully by
Misses Moore and Seymour and Messrs. Meldon, Hart, Gibson and
Socola. (Picayune, Monday, March 10, 1902.)

A beautiful production of James A. Herne's Sag Harbor
filled the theatre during the week of Sunday, March 16. Each
cast member won comments for sensitive performances from the
press, but Freeman and Sainpolis commanded top attention for
their brilliant portrayals of two brothers. Misses Linthicum,
Moore and Seymour shared feminine honors for fine acting.
Principals: Ben Turner..Maurice Freeman, Frank Turner..J. M.
Sainpolis, Capt. Marble..Hugh Gibson, Hosea..Thos. B. Find-
lay, Martha Reese..Lotta Linthicum, Jane..Blanche Seymour,
Elizabeth..Lucia Moore, William Turner..L. O. Hart, Whitmarsh
..W. J. Deming. (Picayune, Monday, March 17, 1902.)

The Two Orphans was repeated on Sunday, March 23
through Wednesday, March 26. Miss Seymour repeated her fine
portrayal of Louise, the blind girl. On Thursday, March 27
through Saturday, March 29, East Lynne was played. Repeating
the lead roles were Maurice Freeman and Lotta Linthicum.
The melodrama, *The Christian* debuted at the Grand the week of Sunday, March 30. The play was a dramatization of a popular novel of that name. The *Picayune* avowed that Maurice Freeman found his best acting vehicle to date in the role of John Storm. Sainpolis scored another success as the contemptible Lord Ure, while Lotta Linthicum excelled as the heroine, Glory Quayle. Other top roles were as follows: Lord Storm..H. Percy Meldon, Horatio Drake..Giunio Socola, Arch-deacon Wealthy..L. O. Hart, Mrs. Callandar..Anna MacGregor, Parson Quayle..W. J. Deming, Lamplugh..Hugh Gibson, Bettie..Blanche Seymour, Letty..Aggie Hart, Polly..Lucia Moore.

Another new play, *Reaping the Whirlwind*, was offered beginning Sunday, April 6. The melodrama, by Owen Davis, played all week with the exception of Wednesday and Friday nights. The action was set in France and was played with this cast: Lucian de Polonaise..Maurice Freeman, Lisie Martel..Lucia Moore, Madeline..Blanche Seymour, Max Von Loon..J. M. Sainpolis, Docia..Anna MacGregor, Gilbert..W. J. Deming, Valot..T. B. Findlay, Rene..Giunio Socola, Jean..Hugh Gibson, Lt. Gotthold..H. P. Meldon. Fett painted arresting new scenery for the production. On Wednesday night, April 9,
Meldon, director of the company, was offered a benefit, when *A Happy Pair* was given, while that afternoon, he was given a special benefit matinee of *Reaping the Whirlwind*. Special photographs of Meldon were presented to all ladies attending the benefits. (*Picayune*, Sunday, April 6, 1902; Monday, April 7, 1902.) On Friday night, a benefit was given for the United Daughters of the Confederacy Fund, when *The Charity Ball* was offered on that sole occasion. Local actors played along with volunteer members of the Grand Opera House Company. (*Picayune*, Saturday, April 12, 1902.)

*The Golden Giant Mine* received ardent applause during the week of Sunday, April 13. The melodrama was performed ably with most noteworthy performances being turned in by Lotta Linthicum as the heroine, Ethel Wayne; Blanche Seymour as a fascinating little ingenue, Bessie Fairfax; Maurice Freeman as the hero, Jack Mason; and John Sainpolis, excellent as villainous Alexander Fairfax. Other roles were allotted accordingly: Le Moyne..T. B. Findlay, Max Wayne..Hugh Gibson, Bixby..L. O. Hart, Flynn..W. J. Deming, Jack..Baby Helene Hart, Mrs. Boggs..Anna MacGregor. (*Picayune*, Monday, April 14, 1902.)

*All the Comforts of Home*, a farce, was played the week of Sunday, April 20. Freeman increased his reputation as a
fine comedian in the role of Alfred Hastings, a zany character who turns his uncle's home into a boarding house.

Sainpolis was clever in the character role of Theodore Bender, the uncle; Miss Linthicum was attractive as Fin Oritanski, an opera singer; Miss MacGregor was meaty as jealous, watchful Mrs. Bender; and Miss Seymour was enchanting as Evangeline. Others aiding the script were Lucia Moore as Rosabelle, Percy Meldon as Smythe, T. B. Findlay as Mc Snath, Giunio Socols as Daughorne, Hugh Gibson as Pettibone and W. J. Deming as Mc Dow. *(Picayune, Monday, April 21, 1902.)*

The week of Sunday, April 27 was given over to benefits for the Baldwin-Melville Company, commencing with the Sunday matinee and continuing each day and night through Thursday night. Sunday's two benefits were donated to John M. Sainpolis, when Augustin Daly's comedy, *A Night Off*, was offered. Sainpolis appeared as the Professor. On Monday matinee and night, Maurice Freeman had his benefit, for which he presented *Fanchon, the Cricket*. Mrs. Freeman (Nadine Winston) appeared as Fanchon, with Freeman as Landry; and they were assisted by the company including Messrs. Hart, Sainpolis, Gibson, Socols and Findlay, and Misses MacGregor and Seymour. A photograph of Freeman was given to each patron at both performances. On Tuesday matinee and night,
Blanche Seymour and Anna MacGregor were tendered benefits, sharing the occasion. A mixed bill was presented, including Maurice Freeman and his wife, Nadine Winston in the comedy sketch, *An Afternoon Caller*; Misses Seymour and MacGregor featured in a vaudeville sketch *More than Seven*, and supported by Socola, Sainpolis and Gibson; Bessie Shields featured in one act of Bill Lewis' *Editha's Burglar*, supported by Bernard Shields and C. H. Shields; Lotta Linthicum in the potion scene from *Romeo and Juliet*; and Alcyone Lowenstein, a clever little girl, in musical comedy sketches. On Wednesday, April 30, Lotta Linthicum rated two benefits, for which *Pink Dominoes* was presented by the Company cast as before.

On Thursday matinee and night, Giunio Socola had his benefits, when *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was presented by the company. The play was preceded by a one-act comedy, *The Silent System*, featuring Messrs. Meldon and Socola and Miss Annette Moore.

On Friday and Saturday, the Grand was dark while the company prepared for its final week of the season. (*Picayune*, Sunday, April 20; Monday, April 21; Tuesday, April 22; Sunday, April 27; Monday, April 28; Wednesday, April 30, 1902.)

For the final week of the season, beginning on Sunday, May 4, 1902, Manager Baldwin announced happily that he had secured the services of William Farnum, the prime favorite of
Grand patrons. Farnum, who had been seen last with the company several seasons before, had been engaged by Baldwin as his leading man to appear with the Baldwin-Melville Company in Buffalo during the summer of 1902. At the same time, it was announced that Maurice Freeman left immediately after his appearance at the Seymour-MacGregor benefit on Tuesday, April 29, to accept a summer engagement in Chicago. (Picayune, Sunday, April 27, 1902; Monday, April 21, 1902.) Farnum's triumphant return was anticipated with great enthusiasm. The young actor had, since his season at the Grand, won an enviable reputation in the East as star of Ben Hur. Farnum chose to recreate a role in which he had acquitted himself admirably during his former season at the Grand, that of Jack Yeulett in the English melodrama, Hoodman Blind by Henry Arthur Jones and Wilson Barrett. Mammoth houses greeted the return of the popular actor. The Picayune noted that since playing the role last at the Grand, Farnum had strengthened and broadened his art, had a more thoughtful demeanor and a greater air of authority. He was given such an overwhelming reception, with curtain calls after each act so prolonged that at the end of the fourth act, he was forced to make a speech. Farnum received good support from Lotta Linthicum in the dual role of Nancy and Jess, and from the entire
company. Principals: Jack Yeulet..William Farnum, Nancy Yeulet and Jess..Lotta Linthicum, Mark Lizzard..J. M. Sain-
polis, Ben Chibbles..Giunio Scola, Kit..Baby Helene Hart,
Kridge..L. O. Hart, Tomtit..Bessie Shields, Inspector Jermin
..Percy Meldon, Swirrup..Hugh Gibson, Lendon..Thomas B. Find-
lay. (Picayune, Monday, May 5, 1902.) The play was offered
all week, with the exception of a special matinee on Tuesday,
May 6, when Camille was offered. The special matinee was
scheduled in place of a performance on Tuesday night, when
there was no play scheduled because of commencement exercises
of the New Orleans College of Dentistry. (Picayune, Sunday,
May 4, 1902.) Camille was beautifully played, with William
Farnum as Armand Duval and Lotta Linthicum as Marguerite
Gauthier. Farnum was a handsome lover, and Miss Linthicum
did some of her best work in the intense lead role. Best
support came from Lucia Moore as Olympe, Hugh Gibson as Gas-
ton and Anna .MacGregor as Mme. Prudence. (Picayune, Wednes-
day, May 7, 1902.)

At the end of the 1901-1902 season, which had its last
performance of Hoodman Blind on Saturday, May 10, 1902, the
Picayune praised the Baldwin-Melville Company as an "... un-
usually good, all-around organization, comparing with the best
organization of its kind outside of New York City." The
Picayune congratulated the New Orleans populace for realizing their good fortune in having such a superior company on hand, by the city's response in patronizing the performances liberally and in responding so nobly to the series of benefits for the company's actors. (Picayune, Monday, May 5, 1902.) The Daily States noted that crowded houses had been the rule at every performance of the company, and that William Farnum had repeated his first season's sensational success. (Daily States, Saturday, May 10, 1902.) The Times-Democrat praised Greenwall and Baldwin for the outstanding season of stock at the Grand Opera House:

... Messrs. Greenwall and Baldwin are to be congratulated upon the success they have achieved since the inauguration of regular stock company work here, and it is doubtful if the Grand Opera House ever had a larger clientele in its long history than that with which it has just closed the season. The company has been a good one, and as a rule, the plays presented have been of a high class. In fact, some of the productions of the past season have been altogether noteworthy. (Times-Democrat, Sunday, May 11, 1902.)

Morris Marks, young nephew of Henry Greenwall and treasurer of the Grand Opera House, became director of a summer season of opera at the Grand. Marks contracted for a season of ten weeks to be presented by the Boston Lyric Opera Company. Two popular operas were scheduled to be given each week, starting on Sunday, May 11. The fine company featured
Bertha Davis, Mabel Day--sopranos; Maude Leekley, Della
Niven--contraltos; Joseph Fredericks, Martin Pache--tenors;
John J. Raffael, P. Vernon, David Cantori--baritones; S. P.
Vernon, Frank Maslin--bassos. For the first week, on Sunday,
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday nights and Saturday
matinee, Verdi's *Il Trovatore* was aired. The singing was
said to be excellent, and beautiful sets were designed by
Harry Dressel. (Picayune, Sunday, May 11, 1902.) However,
the Boston Lyric Opera Company was to survive only two more
weeks of its ten-week contract at the theatre. The week of
Sunday, May 18, the schedule was as follows: first part of
week, through Wednesday, *The Two Vagabonds*; Thursday through
Saturday, Balfe's *The Bohemian Girl*. The week of Sunday,
May 25, the first part of the week, through Wednesday, Flo-
tow's *Martha* was played; Thursday through Saturday, Gilbert
and Sullivan's *The Mikado* was aired. Without explanation,
the Boston Lyric Opera Company ended its engagement at the
Grand on Saturday, May 31. The troupe transferred over to
the Orpheum Athletic Park, opening there on Sunday, June 8
in *The Hermit*; and the Grand Opera House dimmed its lights
for the summer.

Despite the overwhelmingly prosperous union of Henry
Greenwall and Walter Baldwin, the latter decided not to
return to the Grand Opera House with the Baldwin-Melville Company for the season of 1902-1903. No reason was given for the sudden decision: it was merely announced in the *Picayune* on Sunday, August 24, 1902 that Baldwin, his company and his personal designer, Louis F. Fett, would move to the Audubon Theatre (formerly the Academy of Music) the following Fall. The change would last only for a year: Baldwin's season at the Audubon would be cut short by the fire during Mardi Gras season that reduced that theatre to ashes. The Baldwin-Melville Company would return to the Grand for Greenwall's last season at the theatre, during 1902-1904. The 1902-1903 season would prove to be the second to last season at the Grand Opera House for Henry Greenwall, and it was an exciting season, one in which guest stars were featured with the resident stock company at the theatre, much in the manner of the days when the Grand was the third Varieties, in the theatre's infancy. Ralph Stuart was named as top star of the new resident Grand Opera House Company, and in honor of Stuart, the company was called at first the Ralph Stuart Company. When Stuart left the company, in the height of the season, the troupe was renamed the Grand Opera House Company. The company proved to be no less brilliant and not an iota less popular than the Baldwin-Melville troupe had been.
Greenwall cut short a summer trip to Europe in the summer of 1902 to return to New Orleans on August 28 in order to supervise personally the new company. It was to prove an arresting season, with Greenwall's successful experiment of booking guest stars to play with the Grand Opera House Company serving as a guarantee for full houses all season. (Picayune, Sunday, August 24, 1902.)

Harry H. Dressel, the scenic artist who had been associated with the Grand Opera House, off and on through the years, returned as chief scenic artist and set designer at the theatre. Dressel had become set designer at the Grand Opera House during its first decade, and he endured at the theatre longer than any other scenic artist. Dressel was a native of Hanover, Germany, where he was born in 1850. He received artistic training in Germany, and came to America as a youth. His first job was to design the sets for the Kelley and Leon Minstrels, after which he was connected with the Royal Opera House in Toronto for three years. While there, he was persuaded by Henrietta Chanfrau to come to New Orleans when she leased the third Varieties Theatre. Later, Chicago claimed him, but Bidwell brought him back to New Orleans, where he remained ever since. Dressel was one of the foremost scenic artists in the country; and his scenic
studio was, according to the *Picayune*, the largest in the United States. He was celebrated for his Mardi Gras artistry. Dressel decorated floats for the Mardi Gras parades, and painted innumerable Carnival scenes for the lavish, exclusive Mardi Gras balls. He had been temporarily replaced as scenic artist at the Grand when Walter Baldwin hired Louis F. Fett. Thereafter Fett's name was inseparable from that of the Baldwin-Melville Company. A native of Detroit, Fett had been with that company for three years when he moved over to the Audubon Theatre with Walter Baldwin's company. The move allowed the return to the Grand of veteran artist Harry Dressel. (*Picayune*, Sunday, October 26, 1902.) The rest of the staff at the Grand Opera House that season was as follows: Henry Greenwall--lessee and manager, Morris Marks--treasurer, Fred Perry--assistant treasurer, H. A. Ottman--press agent, William Evans--chief doorkeeper, James Keegan--stage carpenter, Dick Jordan--electrician, Frank Percy--property man, J. Winters--chief flyman, J. Thomas--assistant carpenter, Logan Quick--stage doorkeeper, Martin Will--balcony doorkeeper, Touro Glucksman--gallery doorkeeper. In the new company at the Grand, Lansing Rowan was the leading lady. She had appeared in support of Ralph Stuart and had played leads in a number of stock companies including the T. D. Frawley Company.
Ralph Stuart, leading man of the new company, was considered to be one of the best leading men of the day. He had appeared in support of many stars, and had been leading man of Greenwall's New York theatre, the American, two seasons before. The previous season, he had starred on the West Coast in *By Right of Sword*, chosen to be the opening bill at the Grand this season. The play was a dramatization of Marchmont's book of that name, and it was in this vehicle that Stuart made his debut at the Grand. (*Picayune*, Sunday, August 31; Sunday, September 7, 1902.) Meanwhile, Maurice Freeman opened that season as leading man of Greenwall's New York American Theatre Stock Company. Chief supporting players in the new Grand Opera House Company were: Frank Sheridan—chief heavy, who had wide experience in stock and in support of stars; Adora Andrews—soubrette and ingenue, formerly with Frawley and Erohman companies; Thomas J. Keogh—chief comedian, formerly of the Baldwin-Melville Company and star of Greenwall's *The Gay Mr. Goldstein*; Helen Aubrey—second woman, with wide experience in stock; Lorimer Johnstone—heavy and character, formerly lead man in stock for nine years, and nephew of Colonel William P. Johnstone, former President of Tulane University. Other members of the company included Wilson Deal, Harry Preston Coffin, Raymond Whittaker, William Short,
Pietro Sasso, George McDowell, Lizzie Montgomery, Sue Vanduser and Isabel Maddigan. (Picayune, Sunday, August 31; Sunday, September 7; Sunday, September 14; Sunday, September 21; Sunday, September 28; Sunday, October 12, 1902.) Before long, there would be several major changes in the personnel of the company.

Sunday, September 7 was the opening of the season, when By Right of Sword premiered at the Grand. Members of the new company were shown to splendid advantage in the melodrama. Ralph Stuart was suave and convincing in the lead role of Hamilton. He was described as being tall, with easy stage presence and possessing a pleasing voice. Lansing Rowan had little opportunity in this opener to display her talent. But, nonetheless, she showed off her charms and was described as a gorgeous woman with a superb figure and a sweet, rich voice. Dressel's sets won glowing mention and the company did well. Cast: Richard Hamilton..Ralph Stuart, Hon. Rupert Ballester..Wilson Deal, Prince Bilbassoff..Lorimer Johnstone, Christian Tulske..Harry P. Coffin, Major Devin-ski..Frank Sheridan, Lt. Essaleff..Raymond Whittaker, Lt. Gradinski..George MacDowall, Lt. Welsswich..William Short, Lt. Trackso..Wayman Bridges, Bennett..Thomas J. Keogh, Dr. Weber..Pietro Sasso, Paul..Victor Wright, Olga Petrovitch..
Adora Andrews, Paula Tueski..Lansing Rowan, Princess Welets-
sky..Sue Van Duser. (*Picayune*, Monday, September 8, 1902.)

The Baldwin-Melville Company opened at the Audubon
Theatre on Sunday, September 14, in *In Mizzoura*, with many of
the same actors of the company that were at the Grand during
the previous season. Lester Lonergan and Amelia Gardner were
the new leads, while former Grand players still with the com-
pany included Hugh Gibson, H. Percy Meldon, Giunio Socola,
L. O. Hart, Baby Helene Hart and Thomas B. Findlay. Mean-
while, on Sunday, September 15, *Secret Service* was offered
by Greenwall's new company. The troupe was applauded warmly
by the *Picayune* which said: "... Their superiors have not
been seen in New Orleans stock for many years." Moreover,
hundreds of people were turned away from both the matinee and
night performances on Sunday, while the theatre was filled
to capacity. Ralph Stuart, Frank Sheridan, Thomas Keogh,
Lansing Rowan, Adora Andrews and Helen Aubrey shared honors
with excellent notices. Principals played as follows: Gen.
Randolph..Lorimer Johnstone, Mrs. Varney..Helen Aubrey, Edith
Varney..Lansing Rowan, Wilfred Varney..Thomas Keogh, Carolyn
Mitford..Adora Andrews, Lewis Dumont..Ralph Stuart, Benton
Arrelsford..Frank Sheridan, Martha..Sue Van Duser, Jonas..
Pietro Sasso. (*Picayune*, Monday, September 15, 1902.)
Sunday, September 21, for the first time in New Orleans, *The District Attorney*, a new play by Harrison Grey Fiske and Charles Klein, debuted at the Grand. The drama dealt with the Lexow Committee investigation of municipal corruption in New York City in that day. Lorimer Johnstone played the lead role of the District Attorney, John Stralton, with power and fire. Grace Brainard was played beautifully by Lansing Rowan. Other important roles were filled as follows: Matthew Brainard, Frank Sheridan, Gen. Ruggles, Wilson Deal, Gridley, Thomas Keogh, Frank Pierson, Raymond Whittaker, Williams, Pietro Sasso, Madge, Adora Andrews, Helen Knight, Helen Aubrey, Elise, Sue Van Duser. *(Picayune, Monday, September 22, 1902.)*

*The Senator* proved a great vehicle for Ralph Stuart in the title role, the week of Sunday, September 28. Miss Rowan showed versatility as a magnetic widow, Mrs. Hillary. The fine cast was as follows: Senator Hannibal Rivers, Ralph Stuart, Alexander Armstrong, Raymond Whittaker, Count Ernest Von Strahl, Frank Sheridan, Richard Vance, Thomas Keogh, Lt. Gen. Schuyler, Lorimer Johnstone, Sharpless, William Deal, Denman, Sue Van Duser, Mrs. Armstrong, Helen Aubrey, Josie, Laura Pearson, Mrs. Hillary, Lansing Rowan. *(Picayune, Monday, September 29, 1902.)* Full houses were maintained all...
week and the next despite a city-wide street car strike.

The next bill was Tennessee's Pardner, starting on Sunday, October 5. For this play, a pretty new ingenue was engaged to star with the company, as the first guest star of that season. She was Georgia Welles, a society girl who was a product of Emerson College, Boston; and who had appeared previously at Greenwall's American Theatre in New York. Miss Welles appeared in the role of Tennessee Kent, which role she had created in the original production in New York. She was brought especially to New Orleans to recreate the role. The clever and refreshing miss was the hit of the Grand production, and she was well supported by Ralph Stuart and the Grand company. Principals: Tennessee Kent, Georgia Welles, Caleb Swan, Ralph Stuart, Gewilliker Hay, Thomas Keogh, Asa Rice, Lorimer Johnstone, Tom Romaine, Frank Sheridan, Nettie Bice, Lansing Rowan, Mrs. Hay, Lizzie Montgomery. (Picayune, Monday, October 6, 1902.)

The melodrama, The Silver King, was performed next during the week of Sunday, October 12, with Ralph Stuart in the title role. Frank Sheridan was an ideal villain and Lansing Rowan scored a triumph as the heroine. Principals: Wilfred Denver, Ralph Stuart, Capt. Skinner, Frank Sheridan, Daniel Jelkes, Pietro Sasso, Coombes, Lorimer Johnstone, Ned
The beginning of several major changes in the personnel of the Grand company came with the next attraction, that of Woman Against Woman, the week of Sunday, October 19. At that time it was announced that Alice Trent Hunt had joined the company as its newest important company member. She was introduced as leading lady of the Frank Harvey melodrama in the role of Bessie Barton. The actress had appeared in New Orleans as a child; and since, she had played important parts in the East. Lansing Rowan did not appear in this play, while her new rival for leading lady won glowing comments. Miss Hunt was described as being intelligent, charming, and in the bloom of youth. Sue Van Duser was noteworthy as the villainess. Lorimer Johnstone was seen in the lead role of Tressider, while Stuart was also noticeably absent from the cast. Principals: John Tressider..Lorimer Johnstone, Phil Tressider..Thos. J. Keogh, Sir Henry..Frank Sheridan, Peter Crank..Pietro Sasso, Rachael Westwood..Sue Van Duser, Mirian ..Adora Andrews, Bessie Barton..Alice Trent Hunt. (Picayune, Monday, October 20, 1902.)

On Sunday, October 26, it was announced that Ralph...
Stuart had left the company and had been replaced by Ernest Hastings as leading man at the Grand Opera House. At Stuart's departure, Greenwall officially changed the name of the company from the Stuart Company to the Grand Opera House Company. Hastings was a graduate lawyer of Toronto, Canada, who forsook law for the stage. He had appeared in New York in Frohman's company and had played in support of Robert Mantell and Stuart Robson. Hastings made his debut at the Grand on October 26, playing the lead role of John Storm in *The Christian*. Hundreds of patrons were turned away at both initial performances. The new star player was described as manly, robust, sincere, polished and dignified. Lansing Rowan reappeared in the important role of Glory, while Alice Trent Hunt was seen as Polly Love. Assisting with fine performances were Sue Van Duser as Bettie, Frank Sheridan as Lord Robert Ure, Lorimer Johnstone as Horatio Drake, William Short as Lord Storm, Thos. J. Keogh as the Manager and Helen Aubrey as Liza. *(Picayune, Monday, October 27, 1902.)*

*The City of New York*, a strong, exciting mystery melodrama was presented during the week of Sunday, November 2. Frank Sheridan was cited as electrifying in the role of Mark Leighton, the strangler. Alice Trent Hunt was given the important role of Daisey Saunders, while Lansing Rowan was
demoted to the small role of Nellie Gray. A train wreck was the most compelling moment of the play. Other principals: Jack Morgan..Ernest Hastings, Danny Nolan..Thos. J. Keogh, Widow Nolan..Lizzie Montgomery, Victoria..Helen Aubrey. (Picayune, Monday, November 3, 1902.)

When The Little Minister played during the week of Sunday, November 9, the dramatization of J. M. Barrie's novel scored one of the biggest hits of the season; and the theatre remained packed from pit to dome. Lady Babbie's role was the center of the play, and Alice Trent Hunt was picked for the plum role. Hastings was excellent in the title role, showing splendidly the stoic indifference to all things worldly characteristic of the part. Lansing Rowan, engaged as lead woman of the company, was not cast at all. Supporting principal roles were played as follows: Micah Dow..Bessie Shields, Nannie Webster..Lizzie Montgomery, Lord Rinstoul..Pietro Sasso, Felice..Sue Van Duser, Rob Dow..Frank Sheridan, Snecky Hobart..Thos. J. Keogh. (Picayune, Monday, November 10, 1902.)

By the week of Sunday, November 16, Lansing Rowan had left the Grand Opera House Company, having been overshadowed by the casting of Miss Hunt in principal roles. By that week it was announced that the visiting star policy would continue, and that a series of stars would be imported from time to
time to act with the resident company. The first such en-
gagement occurred that very week, when Melbourne Mac Dowell
and Florence Stone appeared on Sunday, November 16 as stars
of Victorine Sardou's *Antony and Cleopatra*. Meanwhile, it
was announced that Ralph Stuart had returned to New York, and
was now appearing at the Murray Hill Theatre in *The Romance
of a Poor Young Man*. (*Picayune*, Sunday, November 16, 1902.)
The production at the Grand of Sardou's drama was called
superior in every instance. There were lavish sets prepared
by Harry Dressel that were called artistic triumphs, and the
costumes were costly and historically correct. Mac Dowell's
Marc Antony was virile and bold; while Miss Stone, as Cleo-
patra, challenged comparison with anyone who had ever done
the role, the *Picayune* stated. She was described as alluring,
emotional and striking to such a degree that she walked away
with all honors. Miss Hunt was an excellent Octavia and
Ernest Hastings was good as Kephron. More space was given
to Dressel's sets than to the acting. The sets were consid-
ered to be masterpieces of art, particularly Act One—"the
bank of the Venus Tarus," Act Five—"the Temple of Isis," and
the storm scene which was called one of the most wonderous art
triumphs ever seen in the city. Principals: Marc Antony..
Melbourne Mac Dowell, Cleopatra.. Florence Stone, Octavia..
Alice Trent Hunt, Kephren..Earnest Hastings, Demeterius..
Frank Sheridan, Octavius..Raymond Whittaker, Dellius..Thos.
J. Keogh, Charmion..Lizzie Montgomery. (Picayune, Monday,
November 17, 1902.) Florence Stone caused such a sensation
as Cleopatra, that she warranted a feature story in the Pica-
yune on Sunday, November 23. The actress was a native of
Cincinnati, and was the daughter of Attorney William E.
Boone. She was said to be one of the prettiest women on the
stage in that day. Miss Stone had been appearing with Mc-
Dowell as leading lady, and had appeared in stock, chosing
to remain an independent, non-Trust star. (Picayune, Sunday,
November 23, 1902.)

McDowell and Miss Stone were held over to star the
week of Sunday, November 23, in the lead roles in La Tosca.
Concerning the gala production, the Picayune noted: "...The
production is by far the best that has been on the boards at
this popular playhouse since the days when the leading at-
tractions touring the country appeared under Greenwall's
management." Miss Stone, as Flora Tosca, was again the hit
of the drama, winning her audience from the moment that she
stepped on the stage. MacDowell, as Baron Scarpia, recreated
the same excitement as he had when he played the same role
at the Grand in support of Fanny Davenport. The fine
Greenwall company gave excellent support to the co-stars. Major casting: Scarpia..Melbourne McDowell, Mario..Ernest Hastings, Cesare..Raymond Whittaker, Schcarone..Frank Sheridan, Marquis..Thos. J. Keogh, Capriola..George McDowell, Queen Marie Caroline..Sue Van Duser, Princess Orlonie..Lizzie Montgomery, Gemerino..Alice Trent Hunt, Flora Tosca..Florence Stone. (Picayune, Monday, November 30, 1902.)

The stars remained in triumph for a third week, starting Sunday, November 30, to appear in Gismonda. So great was the demand to see the production that, according to the Picayune: "... They stood five or six deep back of the orchestra circle chairs." MacDowell and Miss Stone gave masterly performances. They were both strong and emotionally matched. Miss Hunt and Messrs. Keogh and Willard won also a lion's share of praise. Principals: Marcello Almerio..Melbourne MacDowell, Laccaria Acciaroti..Frank Sheridan, Gismonda..Florence Stone, Abess Donate..Lizzie Montgomery, Stradelia..Thos. J. Keogh, Cypriella..Alice Trent Hunt, Thisbe..Sue Van Duser. (Picayune, Monday, December 1, 1902.)

MacDowell and Florence Stone remained a fourth week to create the lead roles in a sparkling production of Fedora, the week of Sunday, December 7. The play was such a polished effort that the Picayune regarded it as "a gem of art." It
possessed such perfection of detail that it seemed that the
cast had been in rehearsal for months. Miss Stone in the
title role had a vehicle which carried her emotions from
tenderness to fiercest intensity, and MacDowell carried the
sympathies of the house. Principals: Loris Ipanoff..Melbourne MacDowell, Jean de Sirieux..Frank Sheridan, Desiree..
Frank Willard, Rouvel..Thos. J. Keogh, Countess Olga..Alice
Trent Hunt, Princess Fedora..Florence Stone. (Picayune,
Monday, December 8, 1902.)

Again, the guest stars were held over for the week of
Sunday, December 14. For the fifth and final week of their
engagement, McDowell and Stone were seen in Sardou's Empress Theodora, played to capacity audiences. It proved to be
another spectacular production, featuring gorgeous costumes,
beautiful sets and superior acting. In the title role, Miss Stone surpassed herself. With a thoroughly realistic style,
she injected refreshing abandon. Matching his co-star, Mac-
Dowell loomed above her in strength, voice and action as an
ardent lover and a savage. Raymond Whittaker and Frank Sheri-
dan shared applause for electrifying playing. Principals:
Andreas..Melbourne MacDowell, Justinian..Frank Sheridan,
Marcelius..Raymond Whittaker, Belisarina..Harry P. Coffin,
Styrax..Thos. J. Keogh, Theodora..Florence Stone, Antonia..
Lizzie Montgomery, Nicephorus..Alice Trent Hunt, Tamvris..
Sue Van Duser. (Picayune, Monday, December 15, 1902.)

For Christmas week, starting on Sunday, December 21, the Grand Opera House presented for the first time in the city Bronson Howard and David Belasco's Rudolph. Thos. J. Keogh took the title role in the production, and handled admirably the role that called for both considerable comedy and pathos. His excellent handling of his serious lines was duly appreciated by huge houses, and he received many curtain calls. Alice Trent Hunt played Rudolph's wife in fine detail. Principals: Rudolph Wiegand..Thos. J. Keogh, Whitworth Lawrence..Frank Sheridan, Gen. Metcalfe..Harry P. Coffin, Judge Merrybone..Harry Lewellyn, Rhoda..Alice Trent Hunt, Ernestine..Sue Van Duser, Nellie..Lizzie Montgomery. (Picayune, Monday, December 22, 1902.)

Another surprise was in store for the Grand patrons the week of Sunday, December 28 when it was announced that Esther Lyon had been engaged as new leading lady of the Grand Opera House Company. The accomplished actress had been leading lady at the Grand several seasons before with the Baldwin-Melville Company. She had had much experience in stock in Denver, Detroit and Louisville since leaving the Grand, and had also appeared previously with W. H. Crane, Nat Goodwin
and in Charles Frohman's Company. (Picayune, Sunday, December 28, 1902.) The popular actress rated a warm reception when she reappeared initially on December 28 in the melodrama, *For Home and Honor*. Her acting was called delightful, but it was Frank Sheridan who won top honors as the villain. His playing was so superior, that instead of hissing, the audience burst into wild applause—something almost unheard of for a villain in melodrama! Alice Trent Hunt also outshone Miss Lyon. The Picayune noted concerning the latter:

"... She could have not [sic] rehearsed for a year and given a more perfect interpretation." Principals: Margaret Mordaunt..Esther Lyon, Nancette Leduc..Alice Trent Hunt, Capt. Tempest..Raymond Whittaker, Stanton Mordaunt..Frank Sheridan, Gussy..Harry P. Coffin, Capt. Weber..Thos. J. Keogh. (Picayune, Monday, December 29, 1902.)

The stock-star system was again in full evidence at the Grand with the beginning of the New Year, 1903, when M. B. Curtis and Albena de Mer came as co-stars the week of Sunday, January 4, 1903. They appeared in *Sam'l of Posen* in which title role Curtis had appeared at the Grand several seasons before. Curtis played to standing room audiences at both Sunday performances, and the lively houses signified their enjoyment by constant applause and laughter. His work
as the Jewish merchant was called masterly by the Picayune, which also said that Curtis had lost none of his old ginger. Esther Lyon and Albena de Mer gave main support, with the latter outdoing the former. Principals: Sam'l Plastrick.. M. B. Curtis, Frank Bronson..Harry P. Coffin, Jack..Raymond Whittaker, Quinn..Thos. J. Keogh, Footlight..Frank Sheridan, Celeste..Albena de Mer, Rebecca Dreyfus..Esther Lyon, Eilen Winslow..Sue Van Duser, Mrs. Mulcaby..Lizzie Montgomery.

(Picayune, Monday, January 5, 1903.)

On Sunday, January 11, 1903, the Picayune announced that the stock-star system which had been resumed at the Grand would continue for the rest of the season. M. B. Curtis was seen on that date in his new play, The Greenhorn, a farce. It gave Curtis more opportunity to burlesque a Jewish immigrant, using Hebrew dialect. Albena de Mer played the role of a French adventuress. Principals: Mosche Petschke..M. B. Curtis, Henry Hardman..Harry P. Coffin, Downey Hooker..Raymond Whittaker, John Trawl..Frank Sheridan, Gottlieb Block..Thos. J. Keogh, Leonie Croizette..Albena de Mer, Yendel Rosenbaum..Sue Van Duser, Nell Hardman..Esther Lyon, Sophie Svenson..Lizzie Montgomery. (Picayune, Monday, January 12, 1903.)

Creston Clarke, the nephew of Edwin Booth, was the
next guest star that season. Clarke had been seen several times before at the Grand. Starting on Sunday, January 18, Clarke was seen as Hamlet. The actor's father, John S. Clarke, had been a star in his own right, a well-known comedian. Since his heyday of playing classical roles with Edwin Booth and Lawrence Barrett, Clarke had gone on to Augustin Daly's New York Company, and was now a thorough and finished dramatic actor. (Picayune, Sunday, January 18, 1903.)

Clarke was not well on opening night, and was unfortunately so hoarse that he could hardly be heard. The company did not help, according to the Picayune, lacking animation, with the exception of Wilson Deal, Clarke's only good support. Principals: Hamlet..Creston Clarke, Claudius..Harry P. Coffin, Polonius..Pietro Sasso, Laertes..Frank Sheridan, Horatio..Raymond Whittaker, Ghost..Wilson Deal, Queen..Lizzie Montgomery, Ophelia..Esther Lyon. (Picayune, Monday, January 19, 1903.)

By Sunday, January 26, when The Wolf premiered, Clarke had fully regained his voice, and made a memorable impression in the melodrama. Having gained in stature, poise and assurance over the years, he gave, according to the Picayune, a magnificent portrayal of the protagonist, Bernard. He revealed fire, tenderness, ardent love, fierce jealousy and put
his very soul into his part, with electrifying result. He won vociferous applause with each climax, and the Picayune predicted: "... The Wolf will leave a memory here that will long live." Clarke's support was much improved in this play, with Esther Lyon and H. P. Coffin receiving warm praise.

Principals: Bernard De Landenac..Creston Clarke, Martin De Landenac..H. Preston Coffin, Jacques..William Deal, Chevalier de Landenac..R. Whittaker, de Vairien..Frank Sheridan, Cachet..T. J. Keogh, Edmee de Landenac..Esther Lyon, Adrienne..Sue Van Dusen, Mme. Justine..Lizzie Montgomery. (Picayune, Monday, January 26, 1903.)

Marie Wainwright's return was the next exciting news for the patrons of the Grand. The still lovely star was the next guest celebrity to appear with the Grand Stock Company. On Sunday, February 1, she began a week's engagement in Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, in which she had starred at the theatre years before as Viola. The Picayune critic said that it was the same Viola of old who appeared in 1903. As if by magic, the comely actress retained the same beauty, youthfulness and shapely figure as she had had years before. Moreover, she still had the same elasticity of movement, freshness, sweetness of voice and charm of manner. Again, she captivated all of her auditors. Raymond Whittaker was chief


Amy Robsart was Miss Wainwright's choice for her third week, starting on Sunday, February 15. Coffin was the star's best support as Varney, the heavy. Principals: Leicester. Frank Sheridan, Sussex. J. J. Flynn, Richard Varney. H. Preston Coffin, Lambourne. Thos. J. Keogh, Queen Elizabeth. Esther Lyon, Amy Robsart. Marie Wainwright, Duchess of Rutland. Sue Van Duser, Janet. Lizzie Montgomery, Tony. William Deal. (Picayune, Monday, February 16, 1903.)
Marie Wainwright chose *Shall We Forgive Her?* for her fourth stellar week at the Grand. She was called magnetic as the heroine of the melodrama; but Sue Van Duser was thought so outstanding in portraying the role of Joanna that she even paled the efforts of the star. Miss Van Duser had never appeared to such fine advantage than as the feminine villain.

**Principals:** Paul Ellsworth..Frank Sheridan, Neil Garth..Harry Preston Collin, Stapleton..J. J. Flynn, Reggie..Thos. J. Keogh, Nellie..Esther Lyon, Joanna Lightfoot..Sue Van Duser, Grace..Marie Wainwright. (*Picayune*, Monday, February 23, 1903.)

George Ober, an old-time comedian, and Carrie Lamont, were next to guest star with the stock company, the week of Sunday, March 1. Charles Hoyt's comedy, *A Temperance Town* showed Ober in two roles. But star of the play, according to the *Picayune*, was Frank Sheridan, as a comic example of intemperance. **Principals:** Uncle Joe Viall and Judge Graham..George Ober, Jack Worth..Raymond Whittaker, Launcelot Jones..Frank Sheridan, St. Julian Jones..Thos. J. Keogh, Rev. Hardman..H. P. Coffin, Ruth..Esther Lyon, Roxanna..Carrie Lamont, Arabella..Sue Van Duser, Mary Jane..Lizzie Montgomery. (*Picayune*, Monday, March 2, 1903.)

A better vehicle for Ober was *What Happened to Jones?*,

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starting on Sunday, March 8. The comedy proved the veteran actor to be a true mirth-maker as the Professor. Thos. J. Keogh played the lead role of Jones, and created constant laughter in the farcical part. For two and a half hours, the audience chuckled constantly. Principals: Prof. Ebenezer Goodby, George Ober, Jones, Thos. J. Keogh, Anthony Boodly, Wilson Deal, Thomas Holder, Frank Sheridan, William Bigbee, H. P. Coffin, Cissy, Esther Lyon, Helma, Carrie Lamont, Marjorie, Sue Van Duser, Alvina, Lizzie Montgomery. (Picayune, Monday, March 9, 1903.)

Ober remained a third week, starting Sunday, March 15, to create the role of Deacon Tidd in A Midnight Bell. Finally, Ober was star of the comedy-melodrama, and made the most of his chance. Miss Lamont also had her best part to date in the opus. Lewellyn was a sterling villain, while Keogh as the native and Coffin as the hero added to the merriment. Principals: Deacon Lemuel Tidd, George Ober, Rev. John Bradbury, H. P. Coffin, Keene, Frank Sheridan, Olcott, Wilson Deal, Tripp, Thomas J. Keogh, Nora, Esther Lyon, Dot, Carrie Lamont, Annie, Sue Van Duser. (Picayune, Monday, March 16, 1903.)

During their last three weeks, the Grand Opera House Company presented a medley of melodrama. Slaves of Russia by
Howard Wall opened on Sunday, March 22 and featured Ober and the company. Raymond Whittaker and Harry Preston Coffin were excellent as the hero and villain respectively. Esther Lyon was the heroine. Principals: Ivan Khorvich. Raymond Whittaker, Count Fedor Karstaff. Harry Preston Coffin, Gray. T. J. Keogh, Countess de Mandelson. Esther Lyon, Khor. George Ober, Rosalie. Carrie Lamont. (Picayune, Monday, March 23, 1903.)

Under Sealed Orders, J. W. Harkins' melodrama that dealt with the stealing of the English crown jewels in 1865, played the week of Sunday, March 29. The drama was adapted from Kipling's novel of that name. It was admirably cast with Raymond Whittaker as Lt. Tom Melville, H. P. Coffin as Andre Sanson—a French criminal, Esther Lyon in the lead role of Julie, Carrie Lamont as Kitty Bell, Lizzie Montgomery as Mrs. Melville, and Sue Van Duser, J. J. Flynn, Harry Lewellyn, Wilson Deal, Thomas Keogh, William Short, and C. T. Prescott in other roles. Whittaker, Coffin and Miss Lyon played again the principal roles most admirably, and they had good support from the cast. Ober had left after his stint as guest star, but Miss Lamont remained for the rest of the season. On Saturday, April 4, the annual benefit of Treasurer Morris Marks was given, at which time specialties were offered in
Kidnapped marked the final week of the excellent Grand Opera House Company, starting on Sunday, April 5. H. P. Coffin was cast in a dual role as the villain and was said to perform admirably. Esther Lyon and Whittaker did fine work in the lead roles. Monday's performances served as a benefit to Thos. J. Keogh, with other performances of the play dedicated during the week to other company members. Cast: Rheingold..Thos. J. Keogh, Philip Northcotte..Raymond Whittaker, Antoine Lazette..H. Preston Coffin, Nosey..Wilson Deal, McMooney..Harry Lewellyn, Baybrook..C. H. Prescott, Blacky..William Short, Grace..Esther Lyon, Anne..Sue Van Duser, Mazzie..Lizzie Montgomery, Daisey..Carrie Lamont, Pujol..Sue Van Duser. (Picayune, Monday, April 6, 1903.)

The Picayune applauded the fine Grand Opera House Company at the end of its impressive season, saying that the troupe was a source of delight to Grand patrons all season. The group presented not only comedy, drama and melodrama, but chose challenging plays from Sardou and Shakespeare, and were shown to great advantage. (Picayune, Sunday, March 29, 1903.)

Greenwall's experiment of finding stars to guest-star
with his resident company was a decided success. At the same
unheard of low prices as instituted when the Syndicate be-
came competitive, Greenwall offered beautiful productions
with costly sets and costumes, and very fine acting. It was
not easy to find stars not under the thumb of the Trust. But
Greenwall was able to find enough of such star talent to pro-
vide an exciting season of star-stock offerings, reminiscent
of the third Varieties' first stellar years in the decade of
the 1870's. Some of the independent stars that Greenwall had
found had tired of the Trust's restrictions and parted from
its bondage. Others had been overlooked by the combine as
not being "box-office." In any event, the combination of a
fine company and guest stars kept the Grand packed all sea-
son.

Even though the theatrical season was over for the
Grand Opera House Stock Company, there were three weeks yet
remaining before the 1902-1903 season was officially over.
During the three remaining weeks in April, the Jake Wells
Bijou Musical Comedy Company moved into the Grand Opera House.
The troupe was managed by John W. Dunne, produced by Jake
Wells--a young theatrical magnate, and directed by Otis Har-
lan who was also principal comedian. Max Hoffman was musical
director. The company was described as one of the strongest
combinations in the country, and it boasted some of the best-known independent artists of the day. Jake Wells had organized the company only for a season of summer stock, to play at Wells Summer Park in Richmond, Virginia. The producer at that time had no idea of making his group permanent. However, instead of the scheduled four weeks, the company became such a smash hit that it kept playing for forty-one weeks—in Richmond, Norfolk and Washington, D. C. It remained together yet another year, touring the independent circuit throughout the centraleastern and southeastern coast, and showed no signs of disbanding. The strong organization carried its own wardrobe people, electricians, stage carpenters and maintained its own scenic artists in Richmond. There were thirty-five members of the acting company. The opening play, the week of Sunday, April 12, was Matthew and Bulger's musical comedy, *By the Sea Waves*. Mary Marble, Otis Harlan, Little Chip, Suzanne Bocamore, Frank Johnson, Pearl Tormie and John Early were the featured players of the company. Miss Marble had appeared at the Grand several seasons before. The company performed nightly, with three weekly matinees—on Sunday, Wednesday and Saturday. Prices remained low—from 10 cents to 35 cents for matinees and 10 cents to 50 cents nights. *(Picayune, Sunday, April 12, 1903.)* The opening production
caused gales of laughter from capacity houses. Interest was held from scene to scene, while the show was packed with witty repartee, ludicrous situations and entertaining songs and music. Mary Marble, Otis Harlan, Little Chip and Tony Hart were instant hits, and the whole troupe pleased with each actor being rated as clever and capable. Principals: Palmer Coln..Otis Harlan, Boston Budge..Little Chip, Algernon Campbell..David Andrada, Prof. Flatt..Tony Hart, Prof. Barr..Dan Marble, Sis Hopkins..Mary Marble, Van Winkle.. Frank Johnson, Gen. Smiles..Andrew Bode, Faith..Suzanne Bocamore, Hope..Florence McNeal, Charity..Agnes Scott. (Picayune, Monday, April 13, 1903.)

Lost, Strayed and Stolen, another farcical musical comedy, played the week of Sunday, April 19. Again, capacity houses howled with glee throughout the three acts. The whole troupe proved to be a delightful success, but Little Chip was the biggest hit of all. The zany plot concerned a baby about to be christened who is lost by the nurse and not found until the finale of the third act. Principals: Bidart..Otis Harlan, Gaston..Frank Johnson, Victor..Little Chip, Aubrey..John W. Early, Rose..Suzanne Bocamore, Honarine..Pearl Early. (Picayune, Monday, April 20, 1903.)

The third and last week of the successful Bijou
Musical Comedy Company, and the final week of the season, began on Sunday, April 26. George Broadhurst's farcical play, *The House that Jack Built*, was changed into a musical comedy and given by the company. It introduced catchy songs, dances and choruses, and told the story of a rich doctor building a house, with peculiar friends who offer suggestions. Malda Snyder, Otis Harlan, Little Chip and Mary Marble were the big hits of the show, but the whole cast was excellent.

Cast: Dr. Jack..Andrew Bode, William Slab..Otis Harlan, Sir Edward Singleton..David Andrade, Percy Huntington..Little Chip, Bedored Madison, Sr..Lyndsey Hall, Bedford Madison, Jr. ..Tony Hart, Gen. Hito..Dan Marble, Dobson..Frank Johnson, Mrs. Dooley..Ida Lester, Hester..Agnes Scott, Florence Dooley ..Suzanne Rocamore, Japonica..Eva Burnham, Lily Linton..Mary Marble. (Picayune, Monday, April 27, 1903.)

The 1902-1903 season, despite the loss of the Baldwin-Melville Company, was a profitable one for Greenwall. The theatre was crowded all season, but Greenwall had heavy expenses. At ridiculously low prices, he maintained a fine stock company, furnished new elaborate sets weekly, and brought in visiting stars. Thus, the profits were slimmer than when the Baldwin Melville Company frequented the theatre.
"sans" visiting stars and still packed the playhouse for every performance. Walter Baldwin regretted his move to the Academy (Audubon), since the theatre burned to the ground at the height of the season. Thus, Baldwin jumped at the chance to reassociate with Greenwall and return with the Baldwin-Melville Company for the following season; and Baldwin and Greenwall planned to meet in New York in May to get the company together and make all arrangements. (Picayune, Sunday, May 3, 1903.) The long 1902-1903 season began on September 7, 1902 and lasted through Saturday, May 2, 1903. All but the last three weeks were occupied by the Grand Opera House Company. There were several changes in lead players in the troupe, but the majority of the company stayed throughout the season and proved to be highly capable. A number of guest stars appeared throughout the season, including Georgia Welles, Creston Clarke, M. B. Curtis and Albena de Mer, Florence Stone and Melbourne MacDowell, Marie Wainwright, and George Ober and Carrie Lamont. The excellent Bijou Musical Comedy Company closed the season, with three weeks of musical comedy magic.

When the 1903-1904 season opened at the Grand Opera House, it was to be one of the most active and one of the
most memorable in the history of the theatre, for it was
Greenwall's last season as lessee and manager of the Grand
Opera House. By the end of this season, on May 11, 1904,
Greenwall's lease was to be up. During the season, he decided
to branch out in another direction, and to build his own thea­
tre in New Orleans to bear his name, the Greenwall Theatre.
But, in his final season at the Grand Opera House, Greenwall
put wholehearted interest and efforts to make it a memorable
season. (Picayune, Sunday, April 24, 1903.) The Baldwin-
Melville Stock Company returned to the Grand, after its one-
year absence at the Audubon; and the season was opened on
Saturday, September 12, with matinee and evening performances
of Paul Revere. Lester Lonergan and Mabel Montgomery were
leading man and lady of the company. Lonergan had already
been established as a dashing matinee idol from his artistic
work during the previous season at the Audubon. Mabel Mont­
gomery had been a protégée of A. M. Palmer, had performed
many roles in stock, and was young and pretty. Also in the
company were a number of popular and familiar names formerly
at the Grand with the same company. These included stage
director Harry Percy Meldon, W. J. Deming, Giunio Socola, L.
O. Hart, Baby Helene Hart, Bessie Shields, Hugh Gibson and
Thomas B. Findlay. New actors included John T. Dwyer, W. J.
Brown, William Powell, Edgar Ainslee and Percy Barat. New actresses included Flora Parker—soubrette and ingenue, who had made a great hit on Broadway the previous season in Mr. Bluebeard; Emilie Melville—character woman, and Suzanne Santje—second woman. (Picayune, Sunday, September 6, 1903.)

So crowded were the opening performances of Paul Revere, an historical melodrama, that the Picayune lamented: "... If the Grand Opera House is not enlarged in seating capacity this season, money will have to be turned away often." When Lester Lonergan, in the title role, appeared on-stage, the applause was deafening. He was already the darling of New Orleans, his fame being established the year before, and was considered as the most acceptable substitute for "heart beat" William Farnum, according to the ladies. Each old member of the company was greeted with warm applause, and new members were given cordial welcomes. John T. Dwyer, the new heavy, proved an excellent foil for the protagonist. Mabel Montgomery, rated as a beautiful and clever actress, conquered the audience in her debut appearance. Flora Parker, a petite, fascinating "live wire" also captured the house unreservedly. All the cast was received so warmly, that Walter Baldwin, deeply touched, came before the curtain between acts and thanked the theatre patrons heartily. Cast: Paul Revere..
Lester Lonergan, Andrew Waine..L. O. Hart, Nathan Hurd..Thos.
..Hugh Gibson, Col. Dariton..John Dwyer, Maj. Morris..W. J.
Brown, Capt. Maccart..Jos. Mossmier, William Dawes..Giunio
Socola, Erastus..Percy Barbat, John Revere..Bessie Shields,
Orderly..B. T. Williams, Mary Laine..Mabel Montgomery, Prisc-
cilla Hurd..Flora Parker, Lucy Webb..Suzanne Santje.
(Picayune, Sunday, September 13, 1903.)

The Resurrection played to "S.R.O." houses beginning
on Sunday, September 20. The popular play was a dramatiza-
tion of Tolstoi's famous work. Four cast members shared
honors for brilliant playing: Mabel Montgomery--in the role
of the peasant girl, Lester Lonergan--in the villainous role
of the Prince who wronged the girl, Findlay and Deming.
Principals: Prince Dimitri..Lester Lonergan, Pres. of Court
..T. B. Findlay, Menshoff..W. J. Deming, Bousovkin..Hugh
Gibson, Katusha Maslova..Mabel Montgomery, Vera Karitz..
Suzanne Santje, Anna..Helene Hart. (Picayune, Monday, Septem-
ber 21, 1903.)

A new independent theatre, the Elysian, opened the week
of Sunday, September 27, on Elysian Fields and Burgundy
streets, hoping to fill the void left by the burning of the
Academy. It was designed to present stock all season, and
was managed by William R. Wilson. (Picayune, Sunday, September 27, 1903.) That same week, the melodrama, The Great Northwest, played to standing room houses at the Grand. The "gallery gods" went wild with this opus, with yells, shrieks, whistles and near pandemonium. Lonergan, Dwyer and Miss Montgomery shared honors as hero, villain and heroine, respectively. Principals: Cap Sheaf..Lester Lonergan, Jack Andrews..W. J. Deming, Bart Foxwell..John Dwyer, Nunch..T. B. Findlay, Grace Harding..Mabel Montgomery, Stella Cross.. Suzanne Santje, Nubbins..Flora Parker. (Picayune, Monday, September 28, 1903.)

Cecil Raleigh and Henry Hamilton's melodrama, The Great Ruby, premiered at the Grand on Sunday, October 4. The play, which had been a great success at the Drury Lane in London and at Daly's Theatre, New York, was also a hit at the Grand. It was a scenic production, the main feature of which was a lavish ballroom scene. Principals: Prince Kassim Wadia..Lester Lonergan, Sir John Jarnett..L. O. Hart, Lord Hartopp..W. J. Deming, Sir Simon Beauclere..H. Percy Meldon, Lady Garnett..Mabel Montgomery, Countess Mirtza Chircoff.. Suzanne Santje, Louise..Flora Parker. (Picayune, Monday, October 5, 1903.)

Another melodrama, Man's Enemy, by Charles A. Langdon

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and Eric Hudson, held the stage of the Grand the week of Sunday, October 11. The popular English play had run in London for four years. The opening audience was yet the largest of the season, with $500 in ticket money turned away. The *Picayune* noted: "... It has got to be so that ... hours before curtain up ..., there is nothing but standing room to offer." Lonergan was so thrilling as the hero, that patrons gripped their seats. Miss Montgomery was strong in the role of an adventuress, and Deming provided comedy relief. Cast: Harry Stanton..Lester Lonergan, Tom Drake..John Dwyer, Isaac Barnett..W. J. Deming, Count Lanski..T. B. Findlay, Dembon-point..Giunio Socola, Sally Banks..Mabel Montgomery, Grace..Suzanne Santje, Polly..Flora Parker, Nelly..Helene Hart. (*Picayune*, Monday, October 12, 1903.)

*Pudd'nhead Wilson* was a complete sell-out the whole week of Sunday, October 18. In fact, the Baldwin-Melville Company had become such a "must see" at the Grand, that the *Picayune* admonished speculators who were buying up seats and selling them at double the price. According to the newspaper, opening performances on Sunday were the most popular performances of the week. Some speculators would buy up Sunday seats during the week at 50 cents each, and would resell them at $1 each. Baldwin heard of the unscrupulous venture and
drove the "scalpers" away, but they returned and worked close by nevertheless. Lonergan showed much versatility in the title role of Wilson. It was a role unlike anything he had done before. Miss Montgomery, as Roxy, gave a vigorous portrayal, and Dwyer, as the villainous Tom Driscoll, received loud condemnation from the gallery. Other good parts were contributed by Socola as Chambers, Flo Parker as Rowy, Deming as Sheriff Blake, Findlay as Pembroke, Hart as Driscoll and Gibson as Cappelo. (Picayune, Monday, October 19, 1903.)

On Sunday, October 25, 1903, it was first announced publicly that Greenwall would not renew his lease at Grand Opera House at the end of that season. The Picayune announced on that date that the Variété Association was seeking bids for the lease of the theatre, as of May 1904. Inquirees were directed to Colonel Joseph H. De Grange, Secretary of the association. On that same date, Under Two Flags, the melodrama based on Ouida's novel, opened at the theatre. All seats for the Sunday performances were sold days in advance, and many disappointed patrons were turned away. Miss Montgomery was effective as Cigarette, and rendered her lines with fire. Lester Lonergan was in his element as princely Bertie, man of might and daring; and Tom Findlay performed as Col. Chateauroy, the villain. Other
principals included: Princess Venetia Corona,.Suzanne Santje,  
Lady Guinevere,.Flora Parker, Lord Buckingham,.John T. Dwyer,  
Rake,.W. J. Deming. (Picayune, Monday, October 26, 1903.)

I. N. Morris' picturesque drama, Jim Bludso, debuted  
at the Grand Opera House during the week of Sunday, November  
1. The play was woven from poetic ballads of John Hay.  
Lonergan took the major share of honors in the dashing title  
role. Second share of honors went to Santos Shields as  
"Little Breeches." Suzanne Santje took the lead role of Kate  
Taggert in the place of Miss Montgomery who was ill. Other  
principals included: Joe Bowers,.W. J. Deming, Tom Taggert  
,.Thomas Findlay, Parson John,.Hugh Gibson, Ben,.John Dwyer,  
Skeeters,.Baby Helene Hart, Moll Taggert,.Flora Parker.  
(Picayune, Monday, November 2, 1903.)

Nobody's Claim, another new melodrama, debuted the  
week of Sunday, November 8; and played to capacity houses.  
Flora Parker, as Madge, had her best opportunity to date for  
histrionic display, and the house was hers. Lonergan, as the  
hero, and John Dwyer, as the heavy, both had meaty roles in  
which they shone. Principals: Ward Devereaux,.Lester Lonergan, Robert McWade,.John Dwyer, Jagon,.Thomas Findlay,  
Calademus Popp,.Hugh Gibson, Joe Galt,.H. P. Meldon, Madge,.  
Flora Parker, Lillian,.Suzanne Santje. (Picayune, Monday,  

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November 9, 1903.)

The Sporting Duchess, still another new melodrama debuted the week of Sunday, November 15. Mabel Montgomery, recovered from her illness, reappeared in the leading role of Muriel, but the honors of the cast fell to Emilie Melville, who easily out-acted all the others, as Duchess Marie. She was said to play with such fervor and mastery that she paled the other portrayals. Lester Lonergan had another swashbuckling hero role as Douglas; Suzanne Santje was compelling as the adventuress, Vivian—the kind of role in which she shone; and John Dwyer was his usual forceful self as the villain. Other standouts included Guinio Socola as Dick Hammond, Flora Parker as Annette, Hugh Gibson as Col. Donelly and Tom Findlay as Rupert Leigh. (Picayune, Monday, November 16, 1903.)

At Valley Forge, which proved to be another new melodrama, was the offering of the week of Sunday, November 22, at which time it was seen for the first time in the city. Lonergan was polished in the exacting lead role of Captain Fairfax. John Dwyer gave a masterly portrayal of the villain, Lord Henry Carlton; while Mabel Montgomery did well as Virginia Preston, the heroine. Good support was provided by Hugh Gibson as Hessian Colonel Von Voltz, W. J. Deming as Dr.
Willard, Thomas Findlay as Hanby and Emilie Melville as Tabitha. (Picayune, Monday, November 23, 1903.)

Again, standing room was at a premium, and many patrons were turned away on Sunday, November 29, when the Baldwin-Melville Company began a week's run of The Parish Priest. The new play was called one of the most beautiful stories ever presented at the theatre. Lonergan enacted the role of the priest, and in the enactment he was judged as excelling any role he had ever performed. Equaling her co-star, Miss Montgomery was credited with acting "...in a splendor that will ever linger a happy memory..." in the role of an Irish lass with a thick brogue. The happy story was aided with this noteworthy casting in top parts: Rev. John Whelan..Lester Lonergan, Dr. Thomas Cassidy..L. O. Hart, Helen Dur-kin..Flora Parker, Katherine Corrigan..Mabel Montgomery, Edward Welsh..Giunio Socola, Frank Dougher..John Dwyer, Agnes..Suzanne Santje. (Picayune, Monday, November 30, 1903.)

Another brand-new play was selected for production the week of Sunday, December 6, namely Arthur J. Lamb's melodrama, Queen of the White Slaves. The sensational play was seen for the first time on any stage at that time, and was found to concern a detective who tries to rescue a white slave from the Chinese, with the aid of the United States Navy! Lonergan was
the detective, and Miss Montgomery, the slave. Commenting upon the hero's many rescues, the Picayune noted:

... In the last act, ... he is confined to a living tomb to be crushed between walls. No sooner is he yanked out, than the walls come together ... biff! Left on a raft on midocean, he gets away from that. He is saved each time, and better still, will be saved all week.

Principals: James Wendel..Lester Lonergan, Ralph Grinstone ..John Dwyer, Wung Fo Low..Thomas Findlay, Capt. Carter..Hugh Gibson, Maitland..Giunio Socola, Laura Rivers..Mabel Montgomery, Mamie..Flora Parker. (Picayune, Monday, December 7, 1903.)

The Newcomb Theatre, a new independent house that featured variety shows, sprang up as the latest playhouse in the city, opening on Sunday, December 13. Also, on that date the Grand began playing another melodrama, Under City Lamps. The Picayune reacted with the comment: "... The madder the melodrama, the more money the patronage turns out." Cast: Inspector Buckley..Lester Lonergan, Arthur Burton..Giunio Socola, Rochester..John T. Dwyer, Jasper..L. O. Hart, Hungry Joe..Hugh Gibson, Solomon Einstein..W. J. Deming, Bob Ricketts..Flora Parker, O'Rouke..Thos. B. Findlay, Mary Jasper..Mabel Montgomery, Mother Bergman..Emilie Melville, Ragged Mag ..Baby Helene Hart. (Picayune, Monday, December 14, 1903.)
Corn Hollow, a melodrama with an interracial cast was the next new Grand offering, the week of Sunday, December 20, 1903. Hugh Gibson enacted the role of Remus, a Negro servant. But, the Picayune said: "... There are some genuine darkies in the play, but none made up or looked the part as Gibson did." Suzanne Santje shone in the poignant role of a mountain girl who wrongs a man and then dies of remorse. The Negro cast members appeared in a picturesque scene at a steamboat landing to witness a race between the Lee and the Natchez. They provided much merriment with songs and dances. Principals: Lem Stockwell, Lester Lonergan, Jared Fuller, John T. Dwyer, Philip Maury, L. O. Hart, Ralph, Giunio Socola, Sharp W. J. Deming, Remus, Hugh Gibson, Clyde, Suzanne Santje, Georgia, Flora Parker. (Picayune, Monday, December 21, 1903.)

During the holiday week of Sunday, December 27, 1903, Little Red Riding Hood was the unique offering. In the spectacular, fanciful production, Lester Lonergan received the most satirical panning from the press of his entire career while in the Crescent City. The Picayune chuckled:

... It is worth while to see Lester Lonergan, as the cutest little peasant in the world, in love with Little Red Riding Hood, Flo Parker. Our Lester, a dream of loveliness in a baby face clustered with curls, looking more maid than man, done in brown silk trunks and a smart jacket, and who, but for the old familiar voice, would be mistaken for the leader of the amazon march,
even to the angel face, the shapely limbs and lovely curls. Oh, Lonergan is simply beautiful to look upon! (Picayune, Monday, December 28, 1903.)

Dwyer, still a villain, posed as Count Rudolph De Wolf, while Socola and Deming were the hits of the play as comedy devils: in the opus, the wolf does missionary work for the devils. Hart was ribbed, as well as Lonergan, for appearing feminine. He was decked out as the Spirit of Truth, gowned in a flowing garment. Principals: Anton..Lester Lonergan, Count Rudolph De Wolf..John Dwyer, Balsamer Bluff..W. J. Deming, Diavola.. Thos. B. Findlay, Furio..Giunio Socola, Tempestus..Hugh Gibson, Veritatus..L. O. Hart, Justitus..Mabel Montgomery, Gretchen..Flora Parker, Granny Von Rooy..Emilie Melville, Marguerite..Suzanne Santje. (Picayune, Monday, December 28, 1903.)

When the year 1904 loomed upon the horizon, the theatrical situation in New Orleans was as follows: the theatrical Syndicate had all stars who appeared in the city tied up to perform only at the Tulane and Crescent, while the independent theatres were all forced to present stock companies or variety. Stock companies were in residence at the Grand Opera House, the Elysian and Newcomb theatres, while variety and vaudeville played at the St. Charles-Orpheum. In the Palace of the King, a dramatization of F. Marion
Crawford's historical romance, played to standing room at the Grand, the week of Sunday, January 3, 1904. Lester Lonergan, John Dwyer, Mabel Montgomery and Flo Parker shared top honors as Don John, Cardinel de Torres, Delores—the heroine, and Inez—Delores' blind sister, respectively. In other important roles were: Queen Anne—Pearl Stutson, Philip II—Thos. B. Findlay, Dowager Duchess—Emilie Melville. (Picayune, Monday, January 4, 1904.)

A disaster occurred at this time which affected the attendance capacity rules of theatres all over the country, and served to reduce the number of patrons who could attend the Grand Opera House at any given performance. On Wednesday, December 30, 1903, at a crowded Wednesday matinee performance at the Iroquois Theatre in Chicago, a terrible fire erupted. In this Syndicate theatre, Mr. Bluebeard was being presented to a capacity house with many patrons standing. Some electric light wires became crossed, and in the holocaust that resulted, over 600 people died including many who were trampled to death, some who jumped from the building and were killed and others who perished from escaping gas fumes. Two hundred more people were seriously injured. By far, the greatest number of deaths were due to the terrible panic which occurred on the stairways and in the passages to the exits where
hundreds of people were crushed under the feet of the escaping throng. Unable to get through the exits, people perished in the bottleneck, mauled into unrecognizable masses, and piled up six deep. Many of the victims were children and young mothers. In the tragic days that followed, the Theatrical Syndicate faced hundreds of law suits from bereaved families of the victims who blamed the deaths upon the lack of safety in the theatre. Newspapers throughout the country took up the cry of the necessity for greater safety rules in theatres and stricter fire laws. Newspaper articles hinted at negligence, pointed fingers at the Theatrical Syndicate and demanded a full investigation of the causes of the holocaust. The Iroquois was owned and chartered by Klaw, Erlanger, Nirdlinger, Zimmerman, and Chicago associates Dailey, Davis and Powers. Keeping mum on the tragedy, Klaw and Erlanger remained in New York, and allowed Dailey, Davis and Powers to face the consequences. Results of the fire were swift in coming, because of pressure throughout the country. Strict fire laws were instituted all over the United States, beginning in New York City. There, Mayor McClellan notified managers of nineteen theatres that they would be closed down if they did not fulfill immediately minimum fire safety stipulations. Then the crack-down spread to every major city, New
Orleans being among the foremost. Among the stipulations handed the theatres were: more exits in theatres, steel or asbestos curtains for all theatres, a policeman on duty at each theatre assigned to enforce safety regulations, an independent lighting system for stairways and exits, and stipulated maximum seating capacity in all theatres. The latter rule served completely to erase or limit severely the number of standees at any given performance. In New Orleans, it became illegal to allow standees. At the Grand Opera House, which had been enjoying the luxury of maximum standing-room audiences at many performances for several seasons, this meant severe curtailment of patrons allowed in the theatre, and a decided reduction of revenue at the box-office for each performance. (Picayune, Friday, January 1; Saturday, January 2; Sunday, January 3; Monday, February 8, 1904.) The fire regulations were instituted within a month after the fire, and were well in effect at the Grand by the week of January 17, 1904, when no standing room was allowed any longer.

Sergeant James was the newest melodrama to fill the Grand the week of Sunday, January 10. The plot dealt with a United States Cavalry sergeant and the girl he loves--parts played respectively by Lonergan and Miss Montgomery. It had not one, but three villains, played with glee by Messrs.
Dwyer, Findley and Mossmeler. Principals: Sgt. John James
..Lester Lonergan, Roland Ferris..John Dwyer, Pierre Cavour
..Thomas Findlay, Trooper Harris..Joseph Mossmeler, Cpl.
Fowler..H. P. Meldon, Mrs. Lucy Ferris..Mabel Montgomery,
Bill Briscoe..W. J. Deming, Helen Briscoe..Suzanne Santje.
(Picayune, Monday, January 11, 1904.)

When Davy Crockett played at the Grand the week of
Sunday, January 17, the box-office had to quit selling tick­
ets hours ahead "... to prevent standing them up." In the
popular melodrama, Lonergan took the title role, showing fire,
humor and touching pathos. Miss Montgomery was the usual
heroine and Dwyer the usual villain, with assist from Hart
as sub-villain. Principals: Davy Crockett..Lester Lonergan,
Major Royston..L. O. Hart, Oscar Crampton..John T. Dwyer,
Big Dan..Tom Findlay, Bob Crockett..Flora Parker, Eleanor
Vaughan..Mabel Montgomery. (Picayune, Monday, January 18,
1904.)

Escaped from Sing Sing was the ominous title of the
next melodrama to appear, debuting the week of Sunday, Janu­
ary 24. In this opus, Lonergan took seven parts, and was
noteworthy for his versatility, being convincing in each
part he played. The plot also sported double villains, male
and female, in the guises of Dwyer and Miss Santje. Will
Deming provided comedy relief as a burglar. Principals:

A king-sized melodrama, The Evil Men Do, debuted the week of Sunday, January 31. This plot ran for five acts, until midnight, and the audience had a field day in watching villain John Dwyer separate a man and his wife, attempt to kill their son by fire, poison and then strangling; murder his brother and attempt to murder his mistress. The play belonged to Dwyer in the wonderfully wicked role, and to Miss Santje, excellent as the adventuress mistress of the villain. Principals: Gilbert Bingham. Lester Lonergan, Rev. George Crane. John Dwyer, Dr. Zold. Giunio Socola, Clifford. Bessie Shields, Walter. Flora Parker, Ruth. Mabel Montgomery, Lillian Abingdon. Suzanne Santje, Maggie. Emilie Melville. (Picayune, Monday, February 1, 1904.)

Resurrection was seen for the second time that season at the Grand, the week of Sunday, February 7. Crowds were turned away from opening performances, lamenting the
cessation of standing room allowance. Strong again in major roles were Lester Lonergan as Prince Dimitri and Mabel Montgomery as Katusha, with praise going also to Misses Melville, Santje and Parker and Messrs. Socola, Findlay, Deming and Meldon for recreating roles for which they had won praise in September that season. (Picayune, Monday, February 8, 1904.)

Dion Boucicault's Irish drama, Arrah Na Pogue, brought delighted capacity audiences all the week of Sunday, February 14, 1904. Lester Lonergan as Shaun added new laurels to his already brilliant local reputation, and Mabel Montgomery played beautifully the role of Arrah. The play was staged elaborately, and Fett's picturesque scenery of the Emerald Isle added much to the production. Cast: Shaun..Lester Lonergan, Col. O'Grady..Thos. B. Findlay, Beamish Mc Cowl ..Giunio Socola, Maj. Collin..John Dwyer, Michael Feeney..W. J. Deming, Sergeant..L. O. Hart, Oiny Farrell..Flo Parker, Patsey..Hugh Gibson, Arrah Meelish..Mabel Montgomery, Fanny Power..Suzannie Santje, Katty Walsh..Emilie Melville. (Picayune, Monday, February 15, 1904.)

"The best melodrama of the season..." was the verdict of the Picayune for For Her Sake, a play with Russian theme, seen the week of Sunday, February 21. Lonergan was never more thrilling than he was as the Prince, with sword
play, hand-to-hand encounters and thrilling love scenes. Miss Montgomery appeared as a serf, with Findlay and Dwyer cast as the two villains. Just about everyone stood out in this cast, and each was commended for fine acting. Cast: Prince Viadimir Walanoff..Lester Lonergan, Gen. Gruffoff..L. O. Hart, Lt. Rostow..John Dwyer, Grigroveich..T. B. Findlay, Lord Hargrave..W. J. Deming, Nicholof..Hugh Gibson, Ivan.. Giunio Socola, Steuber..W. J. Brown, Olga Petoski..Mabel Montgomery, Phyllis Gray..Flo Parker, Princess Natocha.. Emilie Melville. (Picayune, Monday, February 22, 1904.)

One of the memorable productions of the season was presented next, when a dramatization of Marie Corelli’s beautiful novel, Thelma, opened on Sunday, February 28, playing for the first time in the city. The action of Thelma was set in Norway, where the Northern lights were captured in scenic and lighting effects arresting to see. The play had deep esoteric meaning, since Miss Corelli was a mystic who had profound occult symbolism within the framework of her works; and this drama was a challenge in perception for the members of the company. The cast met the challenge and were said to contribute sterling portrayals. Cast: Sir Philip Errington ..Lester Lonergan, George Lortimer..W. J. Deming, Olaf Guidmar ..Thos. B. Findlay, Lord Winsleigh..Hugh Gibson, Sir Francis
Lennox..John Dwyer, Sigurd..Giunio Socola, Briggs..L. O. Hart, Vadlemar..W. J. Brown, Thelma..Mabel Montgomery, Britta .Flora Parker, Lady Winsleigh..Suzanne Santje, Violet.. Emilie Melville. (Picayune, Monday, February 29, 1904.)

The Baldwin-Melville Company had performed in such a noteworthy manner all season, that a group photograph of the entire troupe was carried in the Picayune of Sunday, March 6, 1904. Beginning on that date, in this season of continuous debuts of new plays, Hal Reid's Knobs of Tennessee appeared next. The story dealt with Moonshiners. Lonergan, Hart, Findlay and Miss Melville gave lively performances of rural characters, but other cast members seemed not to get into the spirit of the play. The critic lamented that lovely Flo Parker was disguised in make-up that called for missing teeth and a putty nose. Principals: Joe Preston..Lester Lonergan, Lige Preston..Thomas Findlay, Col. Bailey..John Dwyer, George Germaine..Percy Meldon, President McKinley..L. O. Hart, Henry Preston..Guinio Socola, Madeline Bailey..Mabel Montgomery, Ol' Miss Preston..Emilie Melville, Hennie..Flora Parker. (Picayune, Monday, March 7, 1904.)

Always secure in melodrama, the company returned to that familiar medium the week of Sunday, March 13, when Fitzgerald Murphy's Beware of Men was presented. Lonergan
donned the cloth of a minister to enact the hero, and was superior in the role, playing "... with the fervor of the man of God." Dwyer was again the consummate villain, and Miss Montgomery won plaudits as a maiden "... sinning and sinned against." Principals: Rev. Oliver Churchill..Lester Lonergan, Lewis Holcomb..John Dwyer, Silas Field..T. B. Findlay, Michael Kerrigan..W. J. Deming, Grace Field..Mabel Montgomery, Winnie Stone..Flora Parker, Belinda Stebbins..Emilie Melville, Mrs. Fletcher..Suzanne Santje, Dickey Byrd ..H. P. Meldon.  ([Picayune, Monday, March 14, 1904.]

Changing the pace, the company performed the week of Sunday, March 20 in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Although seen before at the theatre performed by actors of star standing, no one played the lead role more intensely or more successfully than Lester Lonergan. His effect in the dual role was so electrifying, that the audience sat crouched in terror-stricken tension. Cast: Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde..Lester Lonergan, Gabriel Utterson..Thomas Findlay, Dr. Lanyon..John Dwyer, Sir Danvers Carew..L. O. Hart, Inspector..Giunio Socola, Kit..W. J. Deming, Jarvis..Hugh Gibson, Gladys Carew..Mabel Montgomery, Nellie..Flora Parker, Martha..Emilie Melville, Poole..W. J. Brown.  ([Picayune, Monday, March 21, 1904.]

When [Jesse James] played next, the week of Sunday,
March 27, many youngsters were turned away after capacity was reached. Dozens refused to leave, and chose to stand outside on the street, back of the stage, trying to hear the action and the cracks of the guns. Lester Lonergan in the title role was excellently realistic as the desperado. The gallery loved him, and warned him repeatedly about the villains, Bob Ford, ably played by John Dwyer, and William Younger, played by Tom Findlay. Other principals included: Frank James..Frank Tennyson, Mrs. Samuels..Suzanne Santje, Zelda..Mabel Montgomery, Mrs. Snowball..Emilie Melville. (Picayune, Monday, March 28, 1904.)

In Why Women Sin, produced the week of Sunday, April 3, Suzanne Santje contributed one of the most sensational scenes ever seen on the stage of the Grand Opera House. In the memorable scene in the new melodrama, Miss Santje, cast as a Parisian adventuress, first attempted to kill her lover, then was strangled and fell the full length of a long stairway, rolling to the floor. Lester Lonergan handled capably the role of a man who neglected his wife, played by Miss Montgomery. Principals: Philip Pemberton..Lester Lonergan, Charles Wadsworth..John Dwyer, Capt. Moorelake..Thos. B. Findlay, Dashaway..W. J. Deming, Sol Cohen..L. O. Hart, Dorothy Pemberton..Mabel Montgomery, Fifi Folliette..Suzanne
Santje, Beatrice..Flora Parker, Mazie..Bessie Shields. (Picayune, Monday, April 4, 1904.)

The Two Sisters, another gory melodrama--of the type which the Grand patrons relished, played the week of Sunday, April 10. It was a tale of intrigue, murder and suicide. Misses Montgomery and Santje enacted the title roles of the sisters. The latter served as the foil of the villain, played by Dwyer with customary delicious relish. Findlay had another opportunity to show his versatility, playing the role of a French Canadian. Principals: Hiram Pepper..Lester Lonergan, Harry Horton..John Dwyer, Jean Baptiste La Flamme ..T. B. Findlay, Mary Howard..Mabel Montgomery, Martha Howard ..Suzanne Santje, Johanna..Emilie Melville, Rosie..Flora Parker. (Picayune, Monday, April 11, 1904.)

Fabio Romani, six-act romantic melodrama by Marie Corelli, was the sensational offering the week of Sunday, April 17. The action was set in Naples, and concerned the fickleness of a woman and the terrible vengeance of a man. In lead roles, both Lonergan and Miss Montgomery were seen in roles unlike those in which they were usually seen. Dwyer reveled again as the villain. Principals: Conte Fabio Romani and Conte Caesare Olwa..Lester Lonergan, Guido Ferrari..John Dwyer, Respetti..Thos. B. Findlay, Countess Nina

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Romani..Mabel Montgomery, Lilla..Flora Parker, Mother Bis-cardi..Emilie Melville. (Picayune, Monday, April 18, 1904.) Informant Julius Friend witnessed a performance of this play.9

On Sunday, April 24, the Baldwin-Melville Company began their last week of activity at the Grand Opera House. This was also Greenwall's final week as manager and lessee at the theatre. On the above date, the Picayune announced that when Greenwall's new theatre, the Greenwall Theatre, already being constructed, was completed, the theatre magnate would bring with him the Baldwin-Melville Company. Consequently, the Variété Association was obliged not only to find a new independent lessee and manager but also to find another independent stock company to replace the Baldwin-Melville troupe. For the final week at the Grand, the company was seen in the melodrama, Roanoke, with scene set in Virginia. Lester Lonergan gave a splendid portrayal of a man bereft of his mind, while Miss Montgomery, in the title role, gave a touching interpretation of a blind girl. Individual members of the cast shone in their respective roles. Misses Santje and Parker shared honors as feminine heavies,

9Interview No. 3.
while Tom Findlay displayed his fine ability as the male villain. Deming carried his juvenile role cleverly, and Miss Melville was a comedy hit as an old colored mammy. The voices of the Tulane Quartette were heard in the background of the play's action. Cast: Joe Peyton, Lester Lonergan, Ezekiel Morse, Thos. B. Findlay, Gen. Peyton, John T. Dwyer, Wilfred Forrest, W. J. Deming, Col. Bailey, L. O. Hart, Jim W. J. Brown, Roanoke Peyton, Mabel Montgomery, Aunt Dinah Emilie Melville, Mrs. Peyton, Suzanne Santje, Annabelle Peyton, Flora Parker. (Picayune, Monday, April 25, 1904.)

As the 1903-1904 season closed, the Grand Opera House's most enduring, most important and most colorful lessee-manager terminated his association with the theatre. Greenwall decided to make the change, building his own theatre in New Orleans, for many reasons. The manager needed approval from the Variété Association for every movement at the Grand. At his own theatre, he would have free reign to make his own decisions. Moreover, with the prosperity brought to the house from the Baldwin-Melville company's stellar performances, the Variété Association planned to raise the rental of Greenwall's lease, had he stayed. Yet, with the nominal admission prices, designed to fight competition of the Trust theatres, coupled
with the reduction in intake at the box-office once standees were eliminated with the new fire prevention stipulations, the proposed increase in rent did not warrant Greenwall's remaining at the Grand Opera House. The enduring manager had been much too loyal to the Grand Opera House and to the Variété Association to warrant the proposed raise in rent in the harassing years of fighting the Theatrical Syndicate. Consequently, it was the propitious moment to relinquish his lease. Greenwall always wanted a theatre of his own to bear his name, furthermore, and since New Orleans was his favorite city, it was the logical geographical location of his Greenwall Theatre. Leaving the Grand Opera House on May 1, 1904, Greenwall moved to new offices in the Hackenjoe Piano House building and remained in New Orleans throughout the summer to supervise the building of his handsome new theatre. The modern steel frame, fireproof theatre was located on a site on Dauphine Street, between Bienville and Conti streets, which was not as ideal or prominent a location as the Grand Opera House, but which was only one block away from Canal Street. The new theatre was designed to have a seating capacity larger than that of the Grand, to take care of potential standees turned away from performances because of the new
fire regulations.\textsuperscript{10} \textit{(Picayune, Sunday, April 24, 1904.)} The Greenwall Theatre in later years, after Greenwall's death, became the Lyric Theatre and eventually the Palace Theatre, a segregated moviehouse for Negro patrons. This theatre was only torn down in the early 1960's. Greenwall went on fighting the Theatrical Syndicate for the rest of his life. The fight took its toll upon the theatre magnate's health as well as his finances, but he never lost courage. He was destined to live only one decade more after leaving the Grand Opera House. Although outwardly he never gave up hope that the Syndicate would be defeated, his health declined steadily in the last years of his life, showing the results of the difficult, long struggle with the Trust and its constant vigilance to prevent Greenwall from booking first-rate attractions. In the end, Greenwall's gaunt and sallow features showed the mark of illness, fatigue and despair. The gallant theatrical magnate died on November 27, 1913, at his apartment over the Greenwall Theatre, where he and Mrs. Greenwall moved in the Fall of 1904, after the completion of his new theatre. Shortly before his death, he looked forward with optimism to the promised booking connection with the powerful

\textsuperscript{10}Kendall, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 595.
Shubert Brothers that would have assured the booking of first-class attractions into his theatres. However, just before his death, the Theatrical Syndicate cut the proposed association before it could bud, by convincing the Shuberts to enter an alliance with the Trust. Completely defeated, Greenwall died only a few months later.\textsuperscript{11}

During the final, brilliant season of the Greenwall era at the Grand Opera House, there was a predominance of melodrama, which became the most popular dramatic medium of that decade. The long season lasted for thirty-three weeks, with a new play being given each week. Only *The Resurrection* was repeated a second week. The theatre remained packed to capacity all season at almost every performance, with many patrons being turned away. The "standing room" sign was out all season until January 1904, when it was permanently removed because of new strict fire regulations following the Iroquois Theatre holocaust in Chicago. A number of informants for this study recall witnessing performances of Lester Loner-gan at the Grand Opera House, among the former Grand patrons being the late Albert L. Voss,\textsuperscript{12} Mrs. Lucy Rogillio,\textsuperscript{13} and Rene Le Gardeur.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., p. 593. \textsuperscript{12}Interview No. 11. \textsuperscript{13}Interview No. 17. \textsuperscript{14}Interview No. 21.
CHAPTER VIII

THE FINAL PERIOD OF THE GRAND OPERA HOUSE:

FALL, 1904 THROUGH SPRING, 1906

The final period of the Grand Opera House was a brief one—it spanned the years 1904-1906. It was not easy for the Variété Association to find a worthy successor for Greenwall. Moreover, a new independent manager had to face obstacles of newly raised rent and the task of furnishing the theatre with an independent stock company with the Theatrical Syndicate boycott still in effect to keep Trust actors away from the independent circuits. The Variété Association was fortunate indeed, then, to have Charles Fourton take over the Grand Opera House. Fourton agreed to succeed Greenwall only after the Variété Association promised very liberal terms. The Association agreed moreover that Fourton could have free reign in regard to selecting the personnel of the theatre.¹ Fourton was a well-known New Orleans businessman who had been for years interested in amusement enterprises.

wealthy man, he was a stock broker, had wide investment interests, was active in real-estate handlings and promoted numerous entertainment and athletic enterprises. He had organized the New Orleans Amusement Company with himself as President. He built up a popular resort and amusement area in the suburbs of New Orleans in 1890 called "White City," which contained a large outdoor theatre. It was Fourton who took over the Academy of Music from Hopkins and renamed the house the Audubon Theatre. Fourton had been the manager of that ill-fated theatre in its final season of 1902-1903 when the Baldwin-Melville Company deserted the Grand for that house and played there until it burned to the ground on February 11, 1903.² Colorful, dynamic Fourton was a worthy successor of Greenwall. By the season of 1904-1905 feeling against the Theatrical Syndicate was strong as added newspapers and magazines wrote anti-Theatrical Trust articles. Prominent among these journals was Leslie's Magazine which began with its October, 1904, issue a series of articles upon "The Great Theatrical Syndicate" as an indictment of the Trust. From October through December that year this popular monthly magazine which had wide circulation, gave portraits

²Ibid., pp. 576-78.
of the Trust heads, explained "... the rise of the dic-
tators from obscurity ...," discussed the regrettable way ":... in which the Trust dealt with actors, playwrights,
producers and critics who fought it ...," and lamented ":... the theatrical despotism of the present day." (Pica-
yune, Sunday, September 25, 1904.) By the Spring of 1905
the Picayune revealed that serious opposition to Klaw and
Erlanger's syndicate was ever mounting. Now there was dis-
sensation within the ranks of the Trust: Charles Frohman was
not happy with the treatment he had received recently from
his syndicate associates. The Trust was besieged with more
lawsuits, important among which were from playwright-director
-producer David Belasco. And now the new important firm of
the Shubert Brothers appeared as serious rivals to the Trust.
The Shuberts had gradually built up a strong chain of success-
ful theatres in large cities from London to Chicago and were
at last in a position to cause formidable opposition to the
Trust's interests. The press applauded the efforts of the
Shuberts to form the nucleus of a rival chain of theatres
against the Syndicate. (Picayune, Sunday, May 14, 1905.)
But the Theatrical Trust was to go on flourishing for another
decade after the demise of the Grand Opera House.

The 1904-1905 season began on Saturday, September 3,
1904. Charles Fourton provided a first-rate stock company to take the place of the Baldwin-Melville Company, a company that was judged as being just as fine as Baldwin's troupe. The new Grand Opera House Stock Company was popularly called the Grand Stock Company. The group contained some faces familiar to Grand patrons, and some new bright actors. Handsome Bert Lytell was the new leading man, and petite Minna Phillips was the new leading lady. Others in the large impressive company included Louis F. Morrison, chief character man; Robert E. Homans, chief heavy; Herbert Brennon, juvenile; John Daly Murphy, chief comedian; Frank L. Sylvester, second man and character man; Lorimer Deane, second woman and chief female heavy; Josephine Sherwood, ingenue and soubrette; Carrie Clarke Ward, chief character woman; Louise Kay, second woman; Baby Helen Paul, child actress; and Sidney Irving, David Perkins, John Bertin, Theodore Duval, Hal Donahue, Harold Morse, John Gould, Joel Jenkins, Waldemar Burkhardt, Robert Ely, Guy Farrell, Edward Jaccard, Edric Fessenden, C. T. Myers, Helen Downing, Bessie Shields and Robert Fitz-Maurice. Sedley Brown was named as stage director, with Robert Ely as assistant stage director. Elmer E. Swart was the new scenic artist, and Fourton engaged a new musical director, Emile Tosso. Each of Fourton's newly
appointed personnel would prove to be capable and outstanding in his field. The opening play of the season was a dramatization of Anthony Hope's novel, The Prisoner of Zenda. The Picayune judged that in the play each cast member acquitted himself well and that "... Manager Charles Fourton showed excellent judgment in the selection of his company for the year." Lytell and Miss Phillips, the new leads, pleased the audience exceedingly. It was said of the petite leading lady: "... What Miss Phillips lacks in height is more than compensated for by her grace and her clever work..." But the best performance in the drama was contributed by Louis Morrison, who portrayed an elderly German soldier in superior fashion. Cast: Rudolph Rassendyll...Bert Lytell, Michael...Robert E. Homans, Col. Sept...Louis F. Morrison, Fritz...Waldemar Burkhardt, Capt. Hentzan...Sidney Irving, Bertrand...Herbert Brennon, Strakencz...Jack Bertin, Lorenz Teppich...John D. Murphy, Franz...Theodore Duval, Lord Topham...David Perkins, Ludwig...Hal Donahue, Toni...Edric Fessenden, Josef...Harold Morse, Cardinal...John Gould, Turkish Ambassador...Joel Jenkins, Princess Flavia...Minna Phillips, Antoinette de Mauban...Lorimer Deane, Frau Teppich...Louise Kay, Military Attaché...C. T. Myers, Naval Attaché...Guy Farrell, Usher...Edward Jaccard. (Picayune, Sunday, September 4, 1904.)
Picayune critic noted that the Grand had been renovated and repaired during the summer, and remained among the handsomest playhouses in the South. The lighting of the theatre had been greatly improved and the entire house had been redecorated. The costumes revealed in The Prisoner of Zenda were regarded as "... the finest seen in ... a stock company here in a long time." Only one jarring note disturbed the critic, an interesting situation regarding audience behavior in the Grand Opera House:

... Just a suggestion to the management and to the "little angels who sit up above." It was the subject of comment in the audience last night, and can be easily remedied by the management. The "angels" pay their dimes and have a perfect right to see all that there is to be seen. But the people who sit below have paid their good money and have their rights. And the presence of a yelling, shouting mob directly above them does not prove conducive to the enjoyment of the play ... . The presence of just one policeman in these upper regions, clothed with full power to keep order, would be appreciated by those commoner mortals who sit below. (Picayune, Sunday, September 4, 1904.)

Prices remained reasonably at 50 cents, 30 cents, 20 cents and 10 cents. Performances were set nightly at 8 p.m., with five matinees per week at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday. (Picayune, Sunday, September 11, 1904.)

A number of informants for this study attended performances at the Grand Opera House during the last two years of activity. These include Waldo Pitkin, Mrs. Lillie Sherman
Popkin, Mrs. Rose Sherman Marmelzat, Mrs. Lucy Bing Rogillio, Rene Le Gardeur, Leo Van Os, Louis Burdette Harris, the late Theodore Glucksman and the late Albert L. Voss. The most information concerning attendance of performances in this period was contributed by articulate Mrs. Lil Sherman Popkin (Mrs. Hugo J. Popkin), 3 wife of one of New Orleans' most prominent dentists. As a small child, Mrs. Popkin and her sister Rose (Mrs. Rose Sherman Marmelzat), were allowed to attend performances at the Grand, complimentary, as guests of Touro Glucksman, who was in charge of the gallery. There were six sisters in the Sherman family, but at this time, only Lil and Rose, the middle sisters in age, were selected to go. Mrs. Popkin was about six years old at the time, but she remembers vividly the many excursions with her sister and several little girl friends to matinees at the theatre. Glucksman, who was a personal friend of the Sherman family, gave to the children of Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Sherman a blanket invitation to attend the Grand Opera House and to bring along their little friends with them. He would let the girls in free, they would sit in the back of the theatre until the performances were about to begin, and then they would move

3 Interview No. 10.
down into the best seats left vacant in the balcony. As far as Bert Lytell's performing is concerned, Mrs. Popkin feels that the leading man's acting was "magnificent." She declares that she has never seen acting since to equal the performing of the casts then playing at the Grand Opera House. She says of Lytell:

. . . Bert Lytell was such a matinee idol. The older girls, teen-agers and older, would crowd around the stage entrance after his performance to wait for him. We small children would wait at a distance. We were too small and timid to crowd around close. They were not autograph hunters . . ., we all just wanted to see him. The big girls would get close and "oh and ah," but no tearing of buttons like today. . . .

Mrs. Rose Marmelzat, Mrs. Popkin's elder sister, remembers attending the Grand with Mrs. Popkin and selected little girl friends, and the pleasure of being let in free by Touro Glucksman. Her fondest memories of the Grand are during the subsequent season when Lester Lonergan returned as matinee idol there. Attending the Grand was "an epoch" for the Sherman girls, according to Mrs. Popkin. Mrs. Nathan Sherman, the girls' mother, would dress her children in bouffant party dresses to attend the theatre. Touro Glucksman's parents had a company of carnival costumes near the business establishment of the Sherman family, a men's clothing store

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4Interview No. 10.  5Interview No. 25.
in the central downtown business district of New Orleans only several blocks from the Grand. Touro Glucksman had been dead for a decade prior to this study; but his brother, Theodore "Teddy" Glucksman gave pertinent information concerning Touro's duties. (Theodore Glucksman, now also deceased, died approximately one and one-half years after being interviewed on July 3, 1962.) Theodore Glucksman related that both of his brothers, Touro and Jake, were affiliated with the Grand Opera House. (Jake had been dead for some time.) Jake Glucksman was a back stage technical worker at the theatre, but Touro was an assistant manager as well as being chief ticket taker of the upper balcony. "Teddy" Glucksman commented upon the kindness of Touro, who loved children, and always let children of his friends in to see the plays at the Grand Opera House.

The Cherry Pickers was the second offering of the new company, playing the week of Sunday, September 11. Two capacity houses greeted both performances of the melodrama on Sunday, and there was wild cheering of the hero, Bert Lytell, and hissing of the villain, Robert Homans. Others cast in the play were Minna Phillips, the heroine, and Sidney

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6 Interview No. 4.

Brandon Thomas' comedy, Charley's Aunt, which played the week of Sunday, September 19, proved that the new Grand Company was easily as qualified to play comedy as melodrama. Two capacity opening houses laughed from start to finish. Lytell, Miss Phillips, Miss Ward, Homans, Morrison and Brennon shared honors for delightful portrayals in top roles.


Sutton Vane's Humanity, the next choice of the new company, the week of Sunday, September 25, was called one of the finest melodramas ever seen on the stage. The demanding plot not only called for fine acting from the whole cast, but also utilized the services of numerous supers. Lytell came into his own with a stellar portrayal of the lead role of Lt. Gray, winning both the critical orchestra patrons and the

By the week of Sunday, October 2, 1904, when George H. Broadhurst's light comedy, *Why Smith Left Home* was performed at the Grand, the other major theatres with the exception of the new Greenwall Theatre, had opened their Fall seasons--including the Elysian, Orpheum-St. Charles, Tulane and Crescent. Since the Greenwall Theatre was not ready for opening until Thursday, October 13, 1904, Greenwall put the Baldwin-Melville Company into the French Opera House on Saturday, September 3, the same date as the opening of the Grand; and that troups played at the former theatre until moving into the new Greenwall at its completion. (Picayune, Saturday, September 3, 1904.) The Grand Company had another splendid vehicle in the Broadhurst comedy, and made a glowing success of the laugh-provoking play. Principals, all of whom received plaudits from the Picayune, included: John Smith..Bert Lytell, Gen. Billetdoux..John D. Murphy, Count von
Sedley Brown's melodrama, The Minister, proved to be a major production of the season, the week of Sunday, October 9. The play was written and produced by Brown, the stage director of the company, who gave the production his personal special touches. The melodrama had been a leading success in New York several seasons before when first produced by Frohman. Bert Lytell scored a major hit as the protagonist, Robert Mortimer. Lorimer Deane was given the role of leading lady, Olive Goodwin, and made the most of her opportunity. Minna Phillips shared honors as Miss Wilson, with her best acting performance to date. Homans scored as the villain, Barton Gray, with assistance from Herbert Brennon as Richard Goodwin, the second villain. Other principals were Carrie Clarke Ward as Cynthia Jones, Louis F. Morrison as Mr. Goodwin, and John D. Murphy as Migsy. (Picayune, Monday, October 10, 1904.)

Charles Fourton and Henry Greenwall were on the friendliest of terms. Honoring Greenwall and the Baldwin-Melville Company, slated to open initially on October 20 in The Wife, Fourton invited Greenwall and the members of the Baldwin-
Melville troupe to be special guests at the Grand on Monday, October 17, at which time the melodrama, *Sporting Life*, played. The play by Cecile Raleigh and Seymour Hicks, which had never been seen before in New Orleans, debuted at the Grand the week of Sunday, October 16. Lytell gave a "prize performance" according to the *Picayune*, playing as a sporting man with zest. He portrayed Lord Woodstock, a noble Englishman who depletes his fortune by betting on horses, but who wins it back in the end. Minna Phillips appeared as Norah, the nobleman's heart interest; and other principals were Robert E. Homans, Frank Sylvester, Herbert Brennon, Louis F. Morrison, Lorimer Deane and John Daly Murphy. (*Picayune*, Monday, October 17, 1904.)

During the eighth week of the Grand Company, the week of Sunday, October 23, with competition from the opening of the Greenwall Theatre and from Maud Adams at the Tulane, Joseph Jarrow's melodrama, *The Queen of Chinatown*, played at the Grand Opera House. The production was a lavish one, with magnificent scenic effects being prepared by Swart. The setting was the opium dens of New York's Chinatown, and the plot was so sensational that "... the audience held its breath throughout." It concerned the abduction of Mary Hildreth, the heroine (played by Helen Downing), in an opium den; and
her subsequent rescue by her brother, Lt. Harry Hildreth (Bert Lytell), with the aid of Jack Hogarty, a sailor (Louis Morrison) and Bezzie, the Queen of Chinatown (Minna Phillips). Other principals included: Danny Driscoll, Bezzie's lover, Frank Sylvester, and Hop Lee, the villain. Robert Homans. (Picayune, Monday, October 24, 1904.)

A dramatic adaptation of Hall Caine's The Christian was the next powerful billing, the week of Sunday, October 30. Lytell was admirably adapted to take the lead role of John Storm, having played the part successfully before in the East. In excellent support in other top roles were: Glory Quayle, Minna Phillips, Lord Ure, R. E. Homans, Horatio Drake, Frank Sylvester, Mrs. Callender, Carrie Clarke Ward, Bettie, Lorimer Deane. (Picayune, Monday, October 31, 1904.)

The week of Sunday, November 6, Charles E. Blaney's popular melodrama, The Mormon Wife, was performed by the Grand Stock Company. The leading roles of John and Mary Turner were played by Bert Lytell and Minna Phillips in spirited style. There was good support from the company. (Picayune, Sunday, November 6, 1904.)

William J. McKernan's melodrama, The Gunner's Mate, was performed the week of Sunday, November 13. The stirring play dealt with the crew of the cruiser New Yorker on which
Admiral Sampson sailed into battle in Cuban waters during the Spanish-American War. The villain in the play, Dr. Herbert Quayley (Robert Homans), was a physician who tries to inject poisonous germs, among other ghastly deeds. Lytell and Miss Phillips played the romantic leads of a sailor and the girl above his station whom he loves. Principals: Clement Carroll..Bert Lytell, Philip Farnsworth..Frank Sylvester, Herbert Quayley..Robert Homans, Rev. Dr. Pry..Jack Bertin, Arthur Gladden..Bessie Shields, Commander of U.S.S. New Yorker..Robert Ely, Mildred Emerson..Minna Phillips, Plum Daff..Josephine Sherwood. (Picayune, Monday, November 14, 1904.)

Another independent house opened the week of Sunday, November 20, when the Lyric Theatre, near the Grand, on the corner of Burgundy and Iberville streets, opened its doors and featured the Olympia Opera Company. The Three Musketeers was the Grand's offering that week. The dramatization of Alexander Dumas' famous novel was the most sumptuous production yet attempted by Fourton. It featured eleven lavish and authentically correct scenes. There were many laudatory notices for the superior acting of principals, including Morrison, Homans and Brennon as the three Musketeers, Miss Phillips--beautiful and courtly as the Queen, Miss Deane as
Lady de Winter, Josephine Sherwood as the Queen's faithful maid, Lytell, delightfully dashing as D'Artagnan, and Murphy in a fine comedy role. Principals: D'Artagnan..Bert Lytell, Cardinal Richelieu..Robert Fitz-Maurice, King Louis..Jack Bertin, George Villiers..Frank Sylvester, Anne of Austria..Minna Phillips, Lady de Winter..Lorimer Deane, Constance..Josephine Sherwood.  (Picayune, Monday, November 21, 1904.)

Blue Jeans established the versatility of the Grand Stock Company. The comedy appeared the week of Sunday, November 27. Stepping down from her dignified role of Queen Anne, Miss Phillips was "... ridiculously charming" as the poorhouse orphan waif. Features of the vibrant play included a Virginia Reel danced to the tune of a fiddle, an exciting sawmill scene, and a barbecue. Highlighting the exhilarating performance as principals were the following: Perry Bascom..Bert Lytell, Col. Reisner..Louis Morrison, Ben Boon..Robert Homans, Isaac Hankins..J. D. Murphy, Sue..Lorimer Deane, June ..Minna Phillips, Samantha..Carrie Clarke Ward.  (Picayune, Monday, November 28, 1904.)

Crowds packed the Grand the week of Sunday, December 4, when The Secrets of Notre Dame was the fare. The melodrama was a dramatization by Frederick Paulding of Victor Hugo's The Hunchback of Notre Dame. Louis Morrison gave an
electrifying performance as the hunchback, sharing honors with Lytell, who was daring and dashing as Phoebus. Cast: Phoebus de Chateaupers..Bert Lytell, Claude Frolle..Robert Homans, Quasimodo..Louis F. Morrison, Jehan Frollo..Herbert Brennon, Pierre Gringoire..Frank Sylvester, Trouillefou.. John Daly Murphy, Esmeralda..Minna Phillips, Dame Aloise.. Lorimer Deane, Petit Chat..Josephine Sherwood, Aurore.. Carrie Clarke Ward, Fleur de Lys..Louise Kay. (Picayune, Monday, December 5, 1904.) Mrs. Lil Sherman Popkin claims that as long as she lives she will never forget the exceptional acting in the above play, which she saw as a child and which became etched upon her memory:

... The acting was so magnificent. I was frozen to my seat. Not only the feeling of horror and pity at the misshapen hunchback, but the magnificent acting! I've never wanted to see it again, although it has played again in several productions here and in the movies, as I want to retain the impression of the marvelous performance I saw them. ... I cannot see in New York or anywhere in the world, then or today, that acting could have surpassed this acting! ... The scene of the Hunchback is so graphic to me when the Hunchback goes up the ladder to the belfry to ring the bell.... The pitiful rejection of the beautiful girl whom he loves causes such agony. He rings the bell, and as the bell goes backward and forward, he let [sic] go of the ladder and swung backward and forward, with a look of such utter agony on his face. I never expect in my lifetime to see such acting again.8

7Interview No. 10. 8Ibid.
Conan Doyle's stirring melodrama, *The Sign of the Four*, was performed next, with unusual distinction, the week of Sunday, December 11. Lytell donned the exciting garb of Sherlock Holmes, and acted so well and realistically that the *Picayune* avowed that it was "... as if he had been playing the character all his life." Frank L. Sylvester as Dr. Watson acquitted himself with rare ability. The entire cast was noted for exceptional playing. Bessie Shields surprised everyone by taking the part of a young male sleuth. Cast: Sherlock Holmes..Bert Lytell, Dr. John Watson..Frank L. Sylvester, Johnathan Small..Louis F. Morrison, Major John Sholto ..Robert Homans, Mordecai Smith..Herbert Brennon, Mary Mars-ton..Minna Phillips, Mrs. Sholto..Lorimer Deane, Mrs. Hudson ..Carrie Clarke Ward, Mr. Wiggins..Bessie Shields, Bessie.. Josephine Sherwood. (*Picayune*, Monday, December 12, 1904.)

Immense houses tested the capacity of the theatre the week of Sunday, December 18, when William Gillette's popular comedy, *All the Comforts of Home*, was the dramatic choice of the company. The capable troupe scored another triumph in this vehicle, and was described now as one of the finest and most popular companies ever to play New Orleans. Bert Lytell and Frank Sylvester shared top honors by playing with consummate skill, with capable assistance from Murphy, Homans,
Brennon and Misses Phillips, Ward, Sherwood, Kay and Deane. Principals: Tom McDow..Bert Lytell, Alfred Hastings..Frank Sylvester, Theodore Bender..John Daly Murphy, Egbert Pettibone..Robert E. Homans, Christopher Dabney..Herbert Brennon, Fifi Oritanski..Minna Phillips, Josephine Bender..Carrie Clarke Ward, Evangeline Bender..Josephine Sherwood, Rosabelle Pettibone..Lorimer Deane, Emily Pettibone..Louise Kay. (Picayune, Monday, December 19, 1904.)

On Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25, 1904, Our Cinderella opened a week's happy run. The lead roles of the Prince and Cinderella were sustained delightfully by Lytell and Miss Phillips. A number of clever musical vaudeville specialties were injected into the familiar plot, among the most outstanding of which were hit songs and dances of Alcyone Lowenstein and Nione Segal, two talented and pretty young amateur actresses, and Negro dialect songs by Carrie Clarke Ward and Jack Bertin. Principals: Hyacinthus..R. E. Homans, Bella III..Louis Morrison, Father Christmas..Waldemar Burkhardt, Cinderella..Minna Phillips, Prince Fidelio..Bert Lytell, Wally--Earl of Waffles..John Daly Murphy, Dame Dexter..Carrie Clarke Ward, Baroness..Lorimer Deane. (Picayune, Monday, December 26, 1904.)

Another triumph was scored by the Grand Opera House
Stock Company on Sunday, January 1, 1905, when every seat at both performances was sold for the opening of *Prince Otto*. The melodrama rated first-class interpretations by the fine company, with special recognition accorded to Lytell in the title role. Superior support was contributed by Frank Sylvester as the Doctor. Principals: Prince Otto Frederick, Bert Lytell, Dr. Godfried von Waldenhof, Frank L. Sylvester, Baron von Gundemark, Robert E. Homans, Princess Seraphina, Minna Phillips, Countess von Rosen, Lorimer Deane, Minna, Josephine Sherwood. (*Picayune*, Monday, January 2, 1905.)

A melodrama set in western gold fields of Colorado packed in full houses the week of Sunday, January 8, 1905, when *Nevada* debuted. Sedley Brown was given much credit for his splendid direction of the fast moving thriller, which showed off well the fine talents of Lytell, Sylvester, Morison and Homans. Principals: Jack Hawley, Bert Lytell, Jim Rawlins, Robert E. Homans, Joe Williams, Louis F. Morrison, Jose Alvarez, Frank L. Sylvester, Jennie Williams, Josephine Sherwood, May Walton, Lorimer Deane, Bridget Clayton, Carrie Clarke Ward. (*Picayune*, Monday, January 9, 1905.)

David Belasco's provocative *Zaza* loomed next, the week of Sunday, January 15. Minna Phillips, in the title role, gave an artistic impersonation of the French actress, and
wore exquisite gowns. Robert E. Homans was seen in the male lead role, with Murphy and Sylvester contributing other fine performances. Principals: Bernard Dufrene..Robert E. Homans, Duc de Brissae..John D. Murphy, Rigault..Frank Sylvester, Cascart..Louis F. Morrison, Joly..Herbert Brennon, Zaza.. Minna Phillips, Rosa Bonne..Carrie Clarke Ward, Alice..Josephine Sherwood, Toto..Baby Helen Paul. (Picayune, Monday, January 16, 1905.)

The Plunger was the title of the next exciting melodrama to play the Grand, the week of Sunday, January 22. Special attraction of the action was an elevated locomotive scene in which the hero and Plunger effect a thrilling escape. Bert Lytell was handsome and effective as Dexter and his acting was well matched by the fine company. Principals: Dexter Digit..Bert Lytell, Risqué Lincoln..Robert Homans, Lionel Rexford..Louis F. Morrison, Jim Lincoln..Frank L. Sylvester, Walter Glyndon..Herbert Brennon, Nora..Minna Phillips, Ethel Rexford..Lorimer Deane, Mattie..Josephine Sherwood. (Picayune, Monday, January 23, 1905.)

More excitement was in store the week of Sunday, January 29, when Buffalo Bill rode the stage of the Grand. Lytell, in his first "luke warm" review, was said to give a peculiar impersonation of Cody. Sylvester, as a ruffian,
and Brennon, as a German, received the top notices by the
*Picayune*. Principals: Buffalo Bill..Bertram Lytell, Edward
Elwood..Louis Morrison, Sid Darrell..Robert E. Homans, Sam
Kent..Frank L. Sylvester, Nixey..Herbert Brennon, Carrie
Elwood..Minna Phillips, Ella Cody..Josephine Sherwood, Min­
nahaha..Louise Kay. (*Picayune*, Monday, January 30, 1905.)

More crowds tested the capacity of the Grand all the
week of Sunday, February 5, to see *The Charity Ball*. The
society drama was staged beautifully and was another im­
mediate hit. Bert Lytell and Minna Phillips shared top honors
for outstanding acting as John Van Buren and Ann Cruger.
Other principals, all cited for fine performances, included:
Dick Van Buren..Frank Sylvester, Franklin Cruger..Louis F.
Morrison, Judge Knox..John D. Murphy, Alex Robinson..Herbert
Brennon, Mr. Betts..Waldemar Burkhardt, Phyllis Lee..Lorimer
Deane. (*Picayune*, Monday, February 6, 1905.)

*Sheridan Keene, Detective*, described as a realistic
melodrama and a "distant cousin" of *Sherlock Holmes* was the
bill the week of Sunday, February 12. The play had met with
exceptional success in New York during the previous season;
and now, under the direction of Sedley Brown, it was a local
hit, also. The production had beautiful especially prepared
scenery. Bert Lytell was strong as the detective, and showed

The exciting fare for the week of Sunday, February 20, was the romantic melodrama, An Enemy of the King, set in the days of revolutionary France. Bert Lytell was said to be never better, more heroic or more romantic than as the Huguenot Captain; and Homans was never more sinister than as the villain. A dueling scene between Sylvester and Lytell in the final act kept the audience on the edges of their chairs. Principals who received special mentions included: Eranton de Launy..Bertram Lytell, Claude de la Chatre..Robert E. Homans, Montagnac..Robert Fitz-Maurice, Julie de Varion.. Minna Phillips, Jeannotte..Josephine Sherwood. (Picayune, Monday, February 20, 1905.)
When the Grand Stock Company presented *Sapho*, the week of Sunday, February 26, the superlatives used to describe the production and the cast's performances outdid any reviews for a resident stock company in New Orleans for many years. The *Picayune* said in part:

... Not since Olga Nethersole was there such a rendition of "Sapho" as the Grand Opera House is putting on this week... No trio on the stage has been seen to equal Lytell as Gaussin, Sylvester as Dechelette and Morrison as Caoudal in the second act... When the latter two are telling Jean of the many liaisons of Fanny... The audiences... were hushed,... stilled, the contributors to this scene simply took the breaths out of the people. (*Picayune*, Monday, February 27, 1905.)

Besides the outstanding acting, much was said of the beautiful settings and costumes which were authentically French.

Principals: Jean Gaussin..Bert Lytell, Dechelette..Frank Sylvester, Caoudal..Louis F. Morrison, Cesaire..John Daly Murphy, Hetema..Herbert Brennon, Fanny Le Grand..Minna Phillips, Aunt Divonne..Lorimer Deane, Julie..Josephine Sherwood. (*Picayune*, Monday, February 27, 1905.)

A premiere took place the week of Sunday, March 5, when *The Love that Lives* was presented for the first time on any stage. The play was a melodrama in four acts, written by Paul E. Mortimer, a citizen of New Orleans. Its scene was set on La Belle Plantation, an actual plantation which was
the home of Colonel Chester James, located one mile outside of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The plot concerned a planter who had come under the influence of a man he befriended who was a power for evil. It was judged as a really good play which held the audience expectant until the final curtain. The busy cast had had only four rehearsals prior to opening night, and yet they were excellent in their roles. Morrison, Homans, Sylvester and Miss Sherwood took top honors with Morrison as the planter, Homans as the villain, Sylvester as the doctor, and Miss Sherwood in a hilarious comedy part that made her "... the star performer." Principals: Robert Le Grand..Bert Lytell, John Masters..Robert E. Homans, Col. Chester James..Louis F. Morrison, Dr. White..Frank L. Sylvester, Ruby James..Josephine Sherwood, Alice James..Minna Phillips, Aunt Lucy..Carrie Clarke Ward. (Picayune, Monday, March 6, 1905.)

The Black Flag was the next melodrama to receive a showing, the week of Sunday, March 12. The thrilling five-act story kept the audiences in rapt attention until the final curtain. Bert Lytell played as the vagabond who was persecuted by his half-brother. He and Miss Sherwood shared honors for the most outstanding performances in the play. She played the part of a boy, saved by the vagabond, who
dedicates his life to assist the benefactor. Principals:
Harry Glyndon...Bert Lytell, John Glyndon...Robert E. Homans,
Owen Glyndon...Louis F. Morrison, Sim Lazarus...John Daly
Murphy, Naomi Blandford...Minna Phillips, Topsy Carroll..
Carrie Clarke Ward, Ned...Josephine Sherwood. (Picayune, Monday, March 13, 1905.)

A Fight for Millions was the fare the week of Sunday, March 19. This was a new melodrama with an old theme—the story of a villain who gets into the good graces of a father, hoping to win the daughter. Homans and Lytell did the effective work as the villain and the hero, and the whole cast gave smooth performances. Cast: Tom Murphy...Bert Lytell, Richard Dudley...Robert E. Homans, Hudson Rivers...
Louis F. Morrison, Robert McKenzie...Frank L. Sylvester,
Solomon Moses...John Daly Murphy, Pearl Rivers...Minna Phillips,
Helen Dudley...Lorimer Deane, Mrs. Hudson Rivers...Carrie Clarke Ward, Mag Brady...Josephine Sherwood, Betty...Louise Kay, Little Madge...Bessie Shields. (Picayune, Monday, March 20, 1905.)

A realistic melodrama, The Winning Hand, was the offering the week of Sunday, March 26. The plot dealt with the slums and prisons in New York. Bert Lytell played as a political leader hero, while Homans was his customary foil. Josephine Sherwood gave a surprise performance as a lad who...
even put on boxing gloves with John Murphy, as a Bowery boot-black. Bessie Shields changed sexes, too, to appear as a newsboy. Principals: Paul Clifford..Bert Lytell, Frank Anniston..Robert E. Homans, Detective Archer..Frank Sylvester, Daddy Crompton..Louis F. Morrison, Jimmy Kennedy..John Daly Murphy, Malachi Moran..Herbert Brennon, Lucie Groffon..Minna Phillips, Tommy Anniston..Josephine Sherwood, Gypsy Griffith ..Bessie Shields. (Picayune, Monday, March 26, 1905.)

The Streets of New York, was the next popular melodrama featured during the week of Sunday, April 2, 1905. The production was said to be staged with Fourton's usual care and thoughtfulness. Lytell was seen in a new type role for him, that of Badger, the humorous, good-natured, tough thief who surrenders his rags to don a policeman's uniform. Miss Phillips did well as Alida; and Musical Director Tosso was complimented for the way in which he relieved the interums by bright and catchy music. Principals: Badger..Bert Lytell, Gideon Bloodgood..Robert E. Homans, Mark Livingston..Frank Sylvester, Alida Bloodgood..Minna Phillips, Lucy Fairweather ..Josephine Sherwood, Mrs. Puffy..Carrie Clarke Ward, Mrs. Fairweather..Louise Kay. (Picayune, Monday, April 3, 1905.)

For the final production of the season, the week of Sunday, April 9, 1905, the Grand Opera House Company presented
the popular and sensational melodrama, *The Ticket O' Leave Man*. The role of the Detective, the central character of the play, was handled excellently by Frank Sylvester, and there was able assistance from the fine cast, all of whom rated prolonged applause. Miss Phillips was charming as the heroine; Josephine Sherwood was fetching as a handsome boy; Louise Kay was clever as a lively vaudeville artiste; and Bert Lytell was impressive as the hero. Cast: Bobby Briel-ly..Bert Lytell, Jim Dalton..Robert E. Homans, Hawkshaw.. Frank L. Sylvester, Melter Moss..John Daly Murphy, Green Jones.. Herbert Brennon, Maltby..Hal Donahue, Gibson..Walde-mar Burdhardt, Kahill..Robert Ely, Hayde..Jack Bertin, James..Theodore Duval, May Edwards..Minna Phillips, Mrs. Willoughby..Carrie Clarke Ward, Sam..Josephine Sherwood, Emily St. Evermond..Louise Kay, Murray..Helen Downing. (*Picayune*, Monday, April 10, 1905.)

The Grand Opera House was the first theatre to close for the season, leaving still open the Greenwall Theatre, Tulane, Crescent, St. Charles-Orpheum, Lyric, and the newest New Orleans legitimate theatre, the Faranta, which was for-merly the Elysian. The season ended on Saturday, April 15, 1905. The *Picayune* devoted a full column, on Sunday, April 16, 1905, to the effectiveness and brilliance of the 1904-
1905 season at the Grand Opera House, and congratulated Charles Fourton for the great success he had made at the theatre. Fourton had presented thirty-two weeks of stock, and although by catering to public taste, melodrama predominated, the manager offered many other types of plays including frequent challenging and sumptuous productions. Running the gamut of drama, the company was seen in melodrama, romantic drama, historical drama, military drama, pastoral drama, comedy, mysteries and spectaculars. Individual members of the company were all applauded for the fine work they had done all season, and for the great popularity each had gained with theatre patrons. Elmer E. Swart was congratulated for his many beautiful sets; Emile Tosso for his splendid direction of the orchestra; and Sedley Brown and Robert Ely for their exceptional handling of the directing of the plays, as stage director and assistant. The Picayune commended Fourton, saying:

. . . He demanded and obtained order, decorum, cleanliness, politeness, quiet and everything that . . . would please the patrons. . . . He was on hand day and night throughout the entire season, saw and met and knew the people who came to his house, and convinced them that he was endeavoring to give them the best they had ever obtained for popular prices. (Picayune, Sunday, April 16, 1905.)

Two deaths at this time saddened theatre patrons of
the country. More pertinent to New Orleans theatre enthusiasts was the announcement of the death of Joseph Jefferson on April 24 at his home in West Palm Beach, Florida. (Picayune, Monday, April 24, 1905.) The other was the death of Sam Shubert, most dynamic of the Shubert Brothers, at the age of twenty-nine in a train accident. At the time, the Shuberts were at the height of their fight against the Theatrical Syndicate. (Picayune, Sunday, May 21, 1905.)

Comparing the final summer season with other summer seasons during the different periods at the Grand Opera House, the following conclusions can be made: in the summer of 1905, there was no amateur theatrical activity found at any of the New Orleans theatres. The only summer entertainment regularly scheduled was at West End, where Fischer's Military Band and vaudeville acts that changed weekly were featured all summer. (Picayune, Sunday, June 4, 1905; Monday, July 17, 1905; Sunday, August 27, 1905.) A pattern of descending activity in summer amateur theatre is noted, therefore, from the vibrant "golden age" of amateur theatricals during the summers of the decade of the 1870's, when half a dozen organized theatrical clubs presented a constant succession of plays at the Grand Opera House and other theatres in New Orleans all summer long; to the 1880's when only a few amateur
plays were given, no longer under the auspices of amateur organizations but for charity movements and benefits; to the 1890's when most summer entertainment was centered in new outdoor parks where bands played. By 1905, then, a complete dearth of amateur entertainment is noted, with not one amateur play being recorded in the New Orleans newspapers all summer.

On May 30, 1905, the Times-Democrat became the first newspaper to announce that the Grand Opera House might be about to experience its last season, and that negotiations were underway to sell the theatre. No reason was given for the decision of the Variété Association to sell "the most beautiful theatre in the South" and to allow its demolition. Despite the ban of stars at the Grand Opera House by the Theatrical Syndicate and the necessity to play stock only, the theatre remained crowded all season and was as popular with New Orleans patrons as it had ever been. Yet, the Variété Association could not resist the generous offer made for its Canal Street property from Schwartz and Isaacs Company. The announcement stated:

... Square 94--Canal Street: Schwartz and Isaacs Company ... Department Store, ... proposes to pay $350,000 for the Grand Opera House, and $30,000 is said to be the price for the Mercier Building ... next door, directors of the Varieties
Association which owns the Grand Opera House said. . . . If both purchases are put through . . . they will first demolish the Grand Opera House and erect thereon a modern department store . . . while the present Maison Blanche building is demolished and replaced with a modern building that can be thrown into the structure built on the Grand Opera House site. (Times-Democrat, May 30, 1905.)

Another announcement stated that Greenwall was moving the Baldwin-Melville Company to the Lyric Theatre, which he had leased for the 1905-1906 season. At the new Greenwall Theatre, Greenwall—unable to get a continuity of first-class entertainment because of the Syndicate ban—would present only burlesque. He had signed a contract with the Eastern Burlesque Association, which would supply all attractions at the new theatre. (Picayune, Monday, July 17, 1905.)

Disregarding the possibility of the sale of the Grand Opera House, elaborate plans were made for the opening of the 1905-1906 season at the theatre, and the house was entirely redecorated. (Picayune, Sunday, August 27, 1905.) Charles Fourton returned as manager-lessee of the Grand Opera House for its final season. Although negotiations were underway to sell the theatre, Victor Viosca, representing the Variété Association, formed a new charter designed to supervise more closely the choice of plays at the house for the forthcoming season. The announcement of the new charter, made in
conjunction with Fourton, is significant because it lists members of the Variété Association in 1905, in the final era of the Grand Opera House. These stockholders included:


At the time, the Association had a capital stock of $25,000. (Picayune, Sunday, April 30, 1905.) In 1905, the Choctaw Club, a social organization, moved into quarters on the second floor of the Grand Opera House. (New Orleans Item, Saturday, January 31, 1959.)

The Picayune urged the return for the new season of the nucleus of the company at the Grand that had filled the troupe in its prior season with particular emphasis on Minna Phillips and Messrs. Sylvester and Morrison. Reversing its prior judgment concerning Bert Lytell, that journal on May 21, 1905, urged that the former leading man not be invited
back! The panning declared:

... Mr. Lytell, who filled the position last winter (of leading man), while possessing many requisites for the part, lacked certain others which are essential to success. ... He has too many mannerisms, and is lacking in emotional power. ... A leading man must have magnetism and must be able to carry his audience with him. (Picayune, Sunday, May 21, 1905.)

The condemnation seems paradoxical, after raves and plaudits were given to Lytell by the Picayune all season and in a final tribute only one month before. It might be concluded that a different critic was responsible for the later comments.

But when the new company at the Grand Opera House was selected for the 1905-1906 season, neither Miss Phillips nor Lytell were among the troupe. James J. Farrell was the new leading man, and Laura Nelson Hall was the choice for leading lady. Neither was to remain with the company all season, and Farrell stayed only a few weeks. In fact, in this last season at the Grand Opera House there were more changes recorded in the stock company during the season than in any other prior season. Louis F. Morrison, Frank L. Sylvester, Hal Donahue and John Bertin were the only actors of the prior season to rejoin the Grand Company. Farrell, the new leading man, had been a matinee idol for a number of years in stock companies in Philadelphia and Cincinnati. Laura Nelson Hall
proved to be one of the most exciting leading ladies ever to play at the Grand Opera House. She had appeared in stock all over the country and had been co-star with Vaughan Glaser in Cleveland. Besides playing as support to leading stars, she had appeared professionally in New York, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco and Columbus. Other important new members of the Grand Opera House Company included the following: Francis Whitehouse, ingenue, had played engagements with Henrietta Crossman and Richard Mansfield, and performed with a number of stock companies; Maurice Wilkinson, the heavy, was former leading man of Eugenie Blair and other stars, and had stock experience; Cora Witherspoon, second ingenue, a talented young New Orleans society girl, made her professional acting debut that season with the Grand Opera House Company. Miss Witherspoon was a member of an old New Orleans family, was a former debutante and a Newcomb student, who had been in several amateur theatricals in the city. Julia Booth, second woman and young character woman, was the remaining important new feminine performer engaged for that season. She had been leading lady to Charles Hawtrey and James O'Neill, had been in the original Broadway production of Under Two Flags, and had been in stock all over the country. She was tall, willowy and beautiful. Edward Poland, chief comedian, had
twenty years of experience in the theatre, and was also a
talented musician. Other new members of the company included
George Le Soir, stage director; Lillian Dix, chief character
woman; and Edward Gerlinzer, Charles Scott, Henry Nasa, George
Hill, James C. Spottswood, Leonard Royce, Jane Irving, Grace
Young, Ruth Holle, Lillian Maure, Marie Lavedan, Carl St.
John, Rose Roma, Mortimer Snow, Celina Lambert, Frances
Nordstrom and Dewitt Newing. (Picayune, Sunday, September
17; Sunday, September 24; Monday, September 25; Sunday,
October 1, 1905.)

As the Fall of 1905 arrived, New Orleans found herself
in the clutches of a terrible yellow fever epidemic. The
dreaded disease had spread throughout the South during that
summer, and by Fall, New Orleans was hard hit with the mani­
fold problems of such an epidemic. The Picayune related on
Sunday, September 17, 1905, that the governors of Louisiana,
Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Virginia, the Carolinas, Mis­
souri, Texas, Maryland, Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama and West
Virginia were scheduled to meet for a conference in November
to attempt to protect their respective states from further
spread of the epidemic, by setting up quarantines all over
the South. (Picayune, Sunday, September 17, 1905.) So acute
was the epidemic in September, that many theatres remained
closed; and when the Grand Opera House ventured to open its doors on Saturday, September 16, it was the first theatre in the city to open for the season.

*Rupert of Hentsau* was the romantic drama chosen to open the season, and the play was found to be a proper vehicle to reveal the manifold talents of the new company. John J. Farrell, the new leading man, although a stranger at the Grand, was already popular and well known in the city, having appeared formerly with the Hopkins Stock Company several seasons before. He was cast in the dual role of Rudolf, King of Ruritania and Rudolf Rassendyll, the Englishman who steps into the King's shoes. His portrayal was careful and finished, and he pleased the capacity opening audience.

Sylvester and Morrison, already favorites at the Grand, gave splendid character portrayals, and were given rousing receptions upon their entrances. Other mentions for outstanding performances were accorded Lillian Dix—hailed as a fine character woman, Jane Irving, Grace Young and Frances Whitehouse. Cast: King Rudolf and Rudolf Rassendyll..John J. Farrell, Colonel Sapf..Louis F. Morrison, Fritz von Tarlenheim..Frank L. Sylvester, Rupert..Maurice Wilkinson, Lt. von Bernstein..Edward Poland, Rosbenheim..James C. Spottswood, Bauer..Hal Donahue, James..Leonard Royce, Herbert..Edward
Gerlinzer, Heinrich..Charles Scott, Simon..Henry Nasa, Chancellor..George Hill, Queen Flavin..Jane Irving, Helen von Tarlenheim..Grace Young, Mother Holf..Lillian Dix, Rosa Holf ..Frances Whitehouse. The Picayune commended highly the spirit of this brave company, who dared to come to New Orleans despite the raging epidemic, in order to help the people of New Orleans find a means to forget their troubles. The company's reward was to find the theatre filled to overflowing. (Picayune, Sunday, September 17, 1905.)

Janice Meredith, a comedy adaptation by Edward E. Rose of the book by Paul L. Ford, was the second offering of the season, the week of Sunday, September 24. Frances Whitehouse took the title role, and the success of the ingenue was mammoth. Her voice was described as "the soul of melody," and she was poised, graceful, vibrant and charming. Cora Witherspoon, in her professional debut as Tabatha, was considered to be clever, ambitious and painstaking. Farrell, Sylvester, Morrison, Wilkinson and Donahue shared masculine honors for excellent portrayals. Principals: Janice Meredith..Frances Whitehouse, Charles Fownes..John Farrell, Philemon Hennion..Louis F. Morrison, Lord Clowes..Frank L. Sylvester, Squire Meredith..Maurice Wilkinson, Squire Hennion ..Hal Donahue, Tabatha..Cora Witherspoon. (Picayune, Monday,
September 25, 1905.)

At the Sunday matinee on October 1, 1905, Laura Nelson Hall made her debut as leading lady of the company in the comedy, *The Belle of Richmond*. Julia Booth, the second feminine lead of the troupe also made her local debut on this occasion. Miss Hall was described as possessing discrimination and good taste, and as being a pretty, graceful woman with a beautiful speaking voice. Miss Booth was also an immediate success. She was noted as a lovely girl who was "... a Gibson girl to the finger tips," and who possessed marked dramatic ability. The play was well staged by George Le Soir. Principals: Gerald Gordon..John Farrell, William Osmond..Maurice Wilkinson, Judge Mason..Hal Donahue, Colonel Lee..Louis Morrison, Charley Lee..Frank L. Sylvester, Silas Smart..James Spottswood, Rosalind Mason..Julia Booth, Aunt Betty..Lillian Dix, Winnifred Mason..Frances Whitehouse, Nellie Mason..Laura Nelson Hall. (*Picayune*, Monday, October 2, 1905.)

The challenging drama, *A Modern Magdalen*, was slated for the week of Sunday, October 8. The Danish play had been adapted into English by Hadden Chambers. The production was noteworthy in that the play had never been done in New Orleans by a stock company. Miss Hall gave such a poignant portrayal
in the title role that she was cheered as being completely capable and entirely faultless. Already, she had become endeared to Grand patrons, and two capacity houses attended Sunday's two performances. Poland, Morrison, Spottswood and Sylvester gave other distinctive portrayals, but each member of the cast received commendation. Cast: Katinka..Laura Nelson Hall, Olivia..Frances Whitehouse, Mrs. Jenkins..Lillian Dix, Evelyn Tracy..Julia Booth, Lizzie..Cora Wither­spoon, Susie L'Etrange..Lillian Maure, Jenkins..Edward Poland, Eric Hardgraves..Frank Sylvester, Brinker..Louis F. Morrison, Lindsay..Maurice Wilkinson, John Strong..James Spottswood, Harold Fisher..Leonard Royce, Emile..John Bertin, Messenger..Hal Donahue. (Picayune, Monday, October 9, 1905.)

Another significant drama of the day followed, the week of Sunday, October 15, when Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall was presented. The play was a dramatization by Paul Kester of Charles Major's novel of that name. The lavish piece was a romantic drama of the Elizabethan period. So conscientious and magnetic was Miss Hall in the title role, that the part seemed to be written especially for her. Leading support came from Morrison, Sylvester and Wilkinson and Misses Dix and Booth, all of whom did well in their roles. Principals: Dorothy Vernon..Laura Nelson Hall, Sir John Manners..Frank L.
Sylvester, Sir Malcolm Vernon. Maurice Wilkinson, Queen Elizabeth. Julia Booth, Lady Vernon. Lillian Dix, Sir George Vernon. Louis F. Morrison. For the second week in a row, John Farrell, leading man, was conspicuously absent from the cast, and had already left the cast without notice, although no announcement was given concerning his departure. The leading man's role, that of Manners, was filled creditably by Frank L. Sylvester. (Picayune, Monday, October 16, 1905.) Waldo Pitkin, well-known New Orleans actor and a prominent citizen of that city, recalls attending a performance of this play. He was only about eleven years old at that time, but he remembers the occasion accurately. Part of the reason for the remarkable recall of the performance is that it was the only occasion upon which he ever attended the Grand Opera House. Mr. Pitkin remembers very vividly the dramatic gesture of Laura Nelson Hall, at the end of an act, when she gracefully tossed a key over the garden wall. He states: "... She turned gracefully, back to the wall, and tossed the keys backward over the wall. The gesture was so dramatic, I remember it vividly." Rene Le Gardeur, Jr., also remembers

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9Interview No. 1, June 30, 1962.

10Interview No. 21, July 31, 1962.

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seeing Laura Nelson Hall perform in several plays that season.

The Royal Box, a popular romantic drama of the day by Charles Coghlan, was the next exciting bill, the week of Sunday, October 22. Although there was no formal announcement that John Farrell had left the company, by now it had become apparent that the leading man had disappeared from the troups. Again, Frank Sylvester filled the role of protagonist, James Clarence, an actor who dared to have intrigues with royalty. Sylvester excelled in the role. The staging, costuming and collective acting of the cast were deemed to be so fine by the Picayune that it was asserted that no first-class road company could have done as creditable a job. The most unique feature of the play was the action of the fourth act: a play within a play. The theatre box nearest to the stage right had been unoccupied until this act, when it became occupied by the actors playing the Prince of Wales, Princess Helen and royalty in attendance. The audience in this act saw the actor playing Clarence on stage turn his attention from Juliet in the Romeo and Juliet scene and vent his wrath upon the Prince. As the curtain fell, the audience watched the angry royal party leave the box and dash through the theatre in a great huff. The rare scene evoked much applause,
and the audience showed an intensity of interest and relish that had not been seen in any theatre in New Orleans in many a day. (Picayune, Monday, October 23, 1905.) Cast: James Clarence..Frank L. Sylvester, Prince of Wales..James Spottswood, Count Felsen..Robert Fitz-Maurice, Lord Basset..Maurice Wilkinson, Marmaduke..John Bertin, Tips..Hal Donahue, Montmorency..Carl St. John, Davis..Louis Morrison, Richards..Percy Barbat, Winch..Leonard Royce, Wedgets..Edward Poland, Celia Pripe..Laura Nelson Hall, Countess Helen..Julia Booth, Lady Robert..Lillian Dix, Juliet..Frances Whitehouse, Ebba..Cora Witherspoon.

A dramatization of Charles Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities was the interesting choice, the week of Sunday, October 29. The play was written by Henry Miller, and was considered as a very worthy effort. The production introduced the new leading man of the company, Edgar Baume, who took the place of John Farrell. In his initial appearance, as Sidney Carton, Baume made a unanimously favorable impression. He was described as a consummate performer, and as a handsome man of striking physique, who was graceful and poised and possessed a melodious voice. The play was filled with thrilling and dramatic scenes, and George Le Soir was praised warmly for the exceptional mounting of the play. The revolutionary
scene and trial scene were breathtaking, with one hundred extras on stage at once, and enthusiasm running high to the strains of "La Marseillaise." Laura Nelson Hall was considered as tender and poignant as Carton's sweetheart, and there was fine support from the company. Principals: Mimi...Laura Nelson Hall, Lucie...Julia Booth, The Vengeance...Lillian Dix, the Vixen...Cora Witherspoon, Comte de Fauchet...James Spootswood, Sidney Carton...Edgar Baume, Charles Darnay...Edward Poland, Ernest Defarge...Maurice Wilkinson, Dr. Manette...Louis F. Morrison, St. Evremonde...Frank L. Sylvester. Fourton was congratulated especially by the Picayune "...for presenting the better class plays--departing from the melodramas which already overburden the local stage."

(Picayune, Monday, October 30, 1905.)

Henry Arthur Jones' strong drama, Mrs. Dane's Defense, received its first presentation in New Orleans at the Grand Opera House, the week of Sunday, November 5. The play had had a long and successful run in New York, and told the exciting story of a woman's efforts to live down a compromising past by assuming a dead society woman's name, and moving in London's smart set. The important title role of Mrs. Dane was adapted to Laura Nelson Hall's temperament and ability, and the talented actress gave a superior interpretation,
scoring a solid hit. In the trial scene, she was said to run the gamut of emotions, and received many prolonged curtain calls. There was excellent support from Cora Witherspoon, Mortimer Snow, Frank Sylvester and Louis Morrison, as well as from the rest of the cast. Edgar Baume, the new leading man, was found to be impressive, but in the demanding scenes, he lacked dramatic feeling and conviction. Cast: Sir Daniel Charteret..Edgar Baume, Lionel Carteret..Frank L. Sylvester, Canon Bonsey..Louis F. Morrison, James Risby..Mortimer Snow, Bulsom-Porter..Edward Poland, Fendrick..James Spottswood, Mrs. Dane..Laura Nelson Hall, Mrs. Bulsom-Porter..Cora Witherspoon, Janet..Frances Whitehouse, Lady Eastney..Julia Booth, Wilson..Carl St. John, Adams..Hal Donahue. (Picayune, Monday November 6, 1905.)

Continuing the new policy of shunning melodrama, the Grand Company presented, the week of Sunday, November 12, the romantic comedy, The Adventures of Lady Ursula by Sir Anthony Hope. Immense houses greeted the clever play which was found to be "... interesting, clean and wholesome." The central characters were assumed with unqualified merit and effectiveness by Edgar Baume and Laura Nelson Hall. The latter proved to be as successful in comedy as in strong drama, and she won the audience by her fetching smile and

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hearty laughter. Principals: Sir George Sylvester..Edgar Baume, Earl of Hassenden..Frank L. Sylvester, Rev. Mr. Blimbol..Louis F. Morrison, Mr. Dent..Edward Poland, Mr. Castleton..Mortimer Snow, Dorothy Fenton..Frances Whitehouse, Mrs. Fenton..Julia Booth, Lady Ursula Barrington..Laura Nelson Hall. (Picayune, Monday, November 13, 1905.)

The Climbers, a comedy satire upon New York society, by Clyde Fitch, was the next excellent offering, playing the week of Sunday, November 19. Laura Nelson Hall gave an appealing, painstaking portrayal of Mrs. Sterling, while Mortimer Snow gave a masterly interpretation of pathetically weak Dick Sterling. Julia Booth and Edgar Baume gave meritorious portrayals in other top roles. Principals: Blanche Sterling..Laura Nelson Hall, Miss Godesby..Julia Booth, Clara Hunter..Frances Whitehouse, Mrs. Hunter..Cora Witserspoon, Mr. Mason..Louis F. Morrison, Mr. Trotter..James Spottswood, Miss Sillerton..Frances Nordstrom, Ned Warden..Edgar Baume, Dick Sterling..Mortimer Snow, Dr. Steinart..Frank Sylvester. (Picayune, Monday, November 20, 1905.)

An American Citizen, the bubbling comedy made famous by Nat C. Goodwin, was the offering during the week of Sunday, November 26. Edgar Baume took the prominent part of Gruber, and made a most favorable impression. Julia Booth took the
lead feminine role of Beatrice, and proved to be delightful and charming in the part. It was stated that Miss Hall had declared herself in need of a rest, and she did not act that week. Cora Witherspoon was commended for remarkable work "... in this her first professional season." Two clever children, Ruth Holle and Marie Lavedan, also shared honors for clever playing. Principals: Beresford Crugar..Edgar Baume, Peter Barbery..Frank Sylvester, Edgarton Brown..Mortimer Snow, Willie Bunn..James Spottswood, Sir Humphrey Bunn..Louis F. Morrison, Simms..Edward Poland, Beatrice Carew..Julia Booth, Lady Bunn..Frances Nordstrom, Vender..Marie Lavedan, Carola Chapin..Cora Witherspoon, Mercury..Ruth Holle, Georgia..Frances Whitehouse. (Picayune, Monday, November 27, 1905.)

Sunday, December 3, ushered in another play of Clyde Fitch, the drama, The Girl and the Judge. The plot centered on the kleptomaniac tendencies of a woman of high society who confesses to her daughter. Laura Nelson Hall's performance in the role of the daughter marked her as "... one of the most accomplished actresses ever seen in New Orleans." Her versatility was described as remarkable. Julia Booth played the mother's role with marked dramatic ability. Baume and Miss Witherspoon won other plaudits for fine playing. Cast:
George Buckingham Chartris..Edgar Baume, Stanton..Mortimer Snow, Brown..Ed Poland, Jim..James Spottswood, Ikey..Hal Donahue, Winnifred Stanton..Laura Nelson Hall, Mrs. Stanton ..Julia Booth, Mrs. Chartris..Cora Witherspoon, Mrs. Brown..Rose Roma, Mrs. Ikenstein..Frances Nordstrom, Vender..Carl St. John. (Picayune, Monday, December 4, 1905.) This play proved the "...banner week of the season thus far..." with every performance sold out for the entire week. The management felt itself justified at this point to advance the price scale for tickets. The Picayune applauded the decision as justified, saying:

...The public has responded in a manner which proved that public sentiment in general considered the company to be worth more than the very cheap scale of prices hitherto charged at the theatre. (Picayune, Monday, December 11, 1905.)

The amount of price increase was not disclosed.

Hearts Aflame was the passionate title of the next offering, the week of Sunday, December 10, 1905. The melodrama by Genevieve Haines proved to be another satire on fashionable society. Miss Hall enacted the touching role of Mrs. Harmony, who had, unlike her name, no harmony in her troubled life. The actress performed well and wore exquisite gowns. Julia Booth and Baume shared honors in roles of a modern society girl and a man of the world, while Mortimer
Snow made the role of the villainous, brutal husband so revolting that he antagonized the "gallery gods" to overt manifestations. Snow became regarded more and more highly by the press as he distinguished himself amid the Grand company with his superior portrayals that season. The sets were found to be most noteworthy, particularly the scene of Charteris' apartment, which was called one of the finest ever seen in New Orleans. Principals: Paul Charteris..Edgar Baume, Harry Harmony..Mortimer Snow, Reggie Brown..Frank Sylvester, Johnathan Leigh..Louis F. Morrison, Mrs. Harmony ..Laura Nelson Hall, Allison Deyo..Julia Booth, Mrs. Ashton ..Cora Witherspoon, Marie..Celina Lambert, La Caprice.. Frances Nordstrom. (Picayune, Monday, December 11, 1905.)

Alexander Dumas' comedy, *A Marriage of Convenience*, was next to hit the stage of the Grand, during the week of Sunday, December 17. The production was a beautiful one. The play was set in the era of King Louis XV, and featured costly costumes of the epoch. Laura Nelson Hall and Edgar Baume took the lead parts as a Count and Countess, and both played well the crisp comedy roles. The play was entertaining and provided many hearty laughs. Cast: Comte De Candale ..Edgar Baume, Chevalier De Valclos..Mortimer Snow, General ..Louis F. Morrison, Jasmin..Frank L. Sylvester, Comtesse De
Candale..Laura Nelson Hall, Morton..Julia Booth, Butler..Hal Donahue, Footman..Leonard Royce..Officer..Carl St. John.

(Picayune, Monday, December 18, 1905.)

The climax of the season came with the impressive Christmas offering, a double bill of Scaramouche and Cinderella, during the week of Sunday, December 24, 1905. Cinderella was performed first in two acts and seven scenes. Miss Hall, as Cinderella, Baume as Prince Charming and Miss Booth as the Fairy Queen, took the principal roles, while Poland was hilarious as one of the stepsisters. The sets included such elaborate scenes as a park with swings, trees, flowers and electric lights, and a beautiful ballroom scene. Principals: Cinderella..Laura Nelson Hall, Prince Brioche..Edgar Baume, Mephisto..Mortimer Snow, King of Azurea..Louis F. Morrison, Queen of Azurea..Cora Witherspoon, Cyrano de Bergerac..Frank L. Sylvester, Charlotte..Edward Poland, Titania..Julia Booth, Bella..Frances Nordstrom. Following Cinderella, Messager's one-act pantomime of Scaramouche was performed as an exquisite bit of terpsicorean art. George Le Soir played as Harlequin, with Julia Booth as Giles, and Miss Hall as Columbine. Beautiful musical accompaniment served as background for the latter play. (Picayune, Monday, December 25, 1905.)
The final year of activity at the Grand Opera House, that of 1906, began with the New Year's production, starting on Sunday, December 31, 1905, of Pinero's *The Gay Lord Quex*. The drama concerning a reformed rake was given its first production in New Orleans during that week. Miss Hall did more than justice to the garish role of Sally, the meddlesome manicurist. She revealed heights of dramatic power never shown before, and received thunderous applause. Morrison was given the lead role of Lord Quex, the first truly important part intrusted to his talents that season, and he was easily equal to the test. The support was excellent. Cast: Sally Fullgarney, Laura Nelson Hall, Marquis of Quex, Louis F. Morrison, Sir Chichester Frayne, Edward Poland, Capt. Bastling, Frank L. Sylvester, Calema, Mortimer Snow, Duchess of Strood, Julia Booth, Countess of Owbridge, Frances Nordstrom, Miss Eden, Louise Kay, Meriel Eden, Celina Lambert, Miss Moon, Cora Witherspoon, Miss Huddle, Rose Roma, Bristow, Hal Donahue. (*Picayune*, Monday, January 1, 1906.)

Another noteworthy occasion was the gala production the week of Sunday, January 7, 1906 of Sheridan's comedy of manners, *The School for Scandal*. The classic play was presented in sumptuous fashion, with gorgeous costumes and props, pleasing incidental music, and lavish sets. A surprisingly...
excellent representation of the Restoration play crowded the theatre to capacity. Laura Nelson Hall was delightful and capricious as Lady Teazle, and Louis F. Morrison was equally compelling as Sir Peter. Each of the principals was given special mention for effective acting, including these cast members: Sir Peter Teazle..Louis F. Morrison, Sir Oliver Surface..Dewitt Newing, Joseph Surface..Mortimer Snow, Charles Surface..Frank L. Sylvester, Crabtree..Hal Donahue, Lady Teazle..Laura Nelson Hall, Lady Sneerwell..Cora Winterspoon, Mrs. Candour..Frances Nordstrom, Maria..Julia Booth. (Picayune, Monday, January 8, 1906.

The leading man of the Grand Opera House Company was changed again, when popular matinee idol Lester Lonergan appeared the week of Sunday, January 14, replacing Edgar Baume. This was exciting news for feminine patrons at the theatre, for Lonergan was a celebrated "heart throb" with the ladies of the city. The production that week was Prince Karl, and the play commanded completely packed houses. Lonergan was cast as the German prince who becomes the servant of an American widow, and falls in love with her. The lead actor's performance was described with superlatives such as "altogether delightful," "splendid" and "clever." He put tenderness and romance into his part that "... made the
girls' hearts beat faster. . . ." At the initial performance, at the end of the first act, Lonergan received an ovation of curtain call after curtain call, and was presented with an immense horseshoe of flowers by his admirers. Miss Hall gave a fascinating portrayal of the young widow, and was, too, warmly applauded. Principals: Karl Von Armheim..Lester Lonergan, Markey Davis..Louis F. Morrison, Howard Alger-non Briggs..James Spottswood, J. Cool Gragan..Frank Sylvester, Mrs. Florence Lowell..Frances Nordstrom, Alicia Lowell..Julia Booth, Maggie..Cora Witherspoon. (Picayune, Monday, January 15, 1906.)

The Pride of Jennico, a dramatization of Edgerton Castle's novel of that name, was the next choice of the Grand Opera House Company, during the week of Sunday, January 21. The melodrama was produced lavishly, with costly costumes and sets, and all members of the cast were given an opportunity in the vehicle to show their abilities. Lester Lonergan was considered to be handsome and dashing as Jennico, while Miss Hall gave a noteworthy performance as the madcap princess. Not to be outdone by Lonergan's fans, at this opening, Miss Hall's admirers presented her with a large crescent of flowers. Bertin was excellent as the villain, and Miss Booth was picturesque as a Gypsy girl. Principals:
Edwin Howard replaced Edward Poland as chief comedian of the company in the newest upset of the troupe in the next production, *Sewing the Wind*, a strong drama, the week of Sunday, January 28. The play's theme concerned the problem of whether children should pay for the sins of their parents. Miss Hall created another striking and memorable character as Rosamond, and Lester Lonergan gave an exciting portrayal of Brabazon, a difficult and complex role. Other notable performances were as follows: Mr. Watkins, Louis F. Morrison, Ned Annesley, Frank L. Sylvester, Lord Petworth, Mortimer Snow, Sir Richard Cursitor, Edward Howard, Mrs. Fretwell, Julia Booth, Maud Fretwell, Frances Nordstrom, Bridget, Cora Witherspoon. (Picayune, Monday, January 29, 1906.)

The foremost production of this season, and in fact of many seasons, was the beautiful and elaborate production of *Romeo and Juliet* which Charles Fourton staged at the Grand Opera House the week of Sunday, February 4, 1906. The play
was presented each evening with the exception of Friday, when Mme. Emma Calve, an international chanteuse, sang in operatic concert. Assisting Mme. Calve was M. Bouxman, former leading basso with the French Opera House Company. To make up for the omission of a performance of Romeo and Juliet on Friday night, an extra performance of the Shakespearean tragedy was given on Thursday afternoon. A new scenic artist, Mr. Barr, designed the exceptionally beautiful stage settings, and Fourton imported gorgeous and authentic costumes from New York and used the Edwin Booth prompt book and text. (Picayune, Sunday, February 4, 1906.) The Shakespearean production was deemed to be so significant that Manager Fourton had a photograph taken of himself standing before the vestibule of the theatre with the billboard of the current production in prominent view. A copy of this photograph, as found in the Meugnier Collection at Tulane University Library, is offered as illustration in this study. (Obtained from Howard Tilton Library, Tulane University, through the courtesy of Mrs. Robert C. Whittemore, Reference Librarian.) The memorable play was cast as follows: Romeo..Lester Lonergan, Mercutio..Frank L. Sylvester, Friar Lawrence..Louis F. Morrison, Tybalt..Mortimer Snow, Paris..James Spottswood, Benvolio..Edwin Howard, Capulet..John Bertin,
Peter..Hal Donahue, Lady Capulet..Julia Booth, Nurse..Frances Nordstrom, Juliet..Laura Nelson Hall, Lady Montague..Cora Witherspoon, Escalus..Edward Faber, Balthazar..Leon Grainer, Gregory..Carl St. John, Abram..Ed Reine, Apothecary..Dewitt Newins, Sampson..Philip Deerborn. The play was a complete success, with capacity houses flocking to see the superior production. Lonergan's Romeo was described as sincere, frank, boyish and volatile. He reflected confidence, and was very handsome in his jaunty costume. Miss Hall's Juliet reflected the most careful study, and she exuded charm, intelligence and correctness, and acted exquisitely. Other standouts included Messrs. Sylvester, Spottswood, Morrison and Misses Booth, Witherspoon and Nordstrom. Not only was the play mounted in sumptuous fashion, and the wardrobe costly and exquisite, but the ushers were all attired in Romeo costumes. The effect was most striking, for never before had such a unique feature as the ushers' dress been part of a production in the city. (Picayune, Monday, February 5, 1906.)

Captain Letterblair, a melodrama by Margaret Merrington, was the choice of the versatile company the week of Sunday, February 11. Although the play had been a major success in New York a decade before, it had never been presented in
New Orleans previously. Lester Lonergan appeared as the handsome Irish hero and made a fine impression, as did Miss Hall as his pretty sweetheart. Mortimer Snow appeared as the heavy. Each of the principals was cited for excellent acting. These included the following: Captain Letterblair Litton. Lester Lonergan, Ambrose. Edwin Howard, Pinckney. Frank L. Sylvester, Merivale. Mortimer Snow, Seton. Louis F. Morrison, Fanny Hadden. Laura Nelson Hall, Miss Messiter. Julia Booth, Hyacinth Messiter. Frances Nordstrom. (Picayune, Monday, February 12, 1906.)

"Two very large audiences . . . went into ecstasy over the brilliancy of the performance given by Laura Nelson Hall and Lester Lonergan in the roles of Nell Gwynn and King Charles II. . ." according to the Picayune, when Mistress Nell opened on Sunday, February 18. The play by Charles Hazleton was based on the story of Nell Gwynne, the actress at the Drury Lane Theatre who became the favorite of King Charles. The action was classed as engrossing and thrilling, the stage settings were gorgeous, and the costumes superb. Miss Hall was said to enact the title role to perfection, being beautiful, graceful, clever and fascinating. Lester Lonergan was an ardent lover and dashing cavalier. The lead players warranted innumerable curtain calls. Each of the

One of the most important productions that season was that of Old Heidelberg, produced during Mardi Gras week, beginning on Sunday, February 25, 1906. The plot centered about the gloomy court life in which Prince Karl Heinrich was bred. Lester Lonergan had one of his finest parts in that of Prince Karl. He had both the pathos and the princely bearing that the role demanded. Katie, Karl's love, was played with great genuineness, charm and emotional power by Laura Nelson Hall. Snow and Sylvester proved to be principal support as the prime minister and a student, respectively. A feature of the production was the incorporating into the cast of twenty-five members of the Tulane University Glee Club to represent Heidelberg students. They wore picturesque costumes and sang college songs. The scenery was sumptuous, and was hailed as the most magnificent of the entire season. Stage director Le Soir did a superior job of coordinating the

Fourton was praised for the lavish production, which was to prove the true climax of the season; for after this week, a series of reversals began to set in.

There was moaning and gnashing of teeth among Grand Opera House theatre patrons on Sunday, March 4, 1906, when it was learned that Laura Nelson Hall had left the Grand Opera House Company. The talented and popular leading lady had suddenly decided to sever connections with the troupe. The reason that she gave to the press was that she was leaving because of overwork and fatigue. It had been announced already that Miss Hall would take the title role in Camille that week, and there was heavy advance selling of tickets at the box-office for the event. Lester Lonergan's wife, Alice Treat Hunt, stepped into the role at a moment's notice, and Camille went on as scheduled. Fortunately, Miss Hunt was a competent actress in her own right, and was available since she had been spending the winter in the city with her
husband. The actress made a most favorable impression in the role, received many curtain calls and was showered with flowers. Lester Lonergan was excellent as Armand Duval, and other principals included: Monsier Duval..Louis F. Morrison, Gaston..Frank Sylvester, Comte de Varville..Mortimer Snow, Mme. Prudence..Cora Witherspoon, Nichette..Julia Booth. 

(Picayune, Monday, March 5, 1906.) Despite Miss Hunt's gallant gesture, she did not fill the void created by Miss Hall's unscheduled departure, and there was great disappointment throughout the city and a falling off at the box-office during the week. The Picayune devoted an entire column to the calamity of Miss Hall's leaving, on Sunday, March 11, 1906, and hinted that Cupid was responsible. The article said in part:

Miss Hall's Retirement: It is a matter of much regret among the theatre-going public of New Orleans that Miss Laura Nelson Hall, the gifted and popular leading lady at the Grand, has resigned from the company of which she was the chief ornament, and what is more to the point, the strongest drawing card. Stock companies have been doing good business in New Orleans for the past few years, and many are the actors and actresses who have been seen here, but not one of them has achieved the popularity of Miss Hall! This popularity . . . is founded on the talents of the actress, who has . . . played parts that ranged from pure comedy to the deepest tragedy. She has thus proved her versatility. . . . In addition to her talents, she is beautiful . . . , and has one of the most sympathetic speaking voices ever heard . . . of contralto timbre . . . and capable of
expressing every emotion. . . . Miss Hall leaves a void that cannot be filled. . . . There has been a decided falling off in attendance at the Grand in spite of the great popularity of Lester Lonergan . . . and the undoubted excellence of the company as a whole. . . . Miss Hall's plans are uncertain, save in the keeping of one engagement in which Cupid holds the principal part. (Picayune, Sunday, March 11, 1906.)

The many changes in the company during that season proved to be too much for Fourton. Miss Hall's departure from the company was the last straw for the manager-lessee, and he decided to sign over his lease to the Grand Opera House to Lester Lonergan after only two more productions. Fourton's second to last production, the week of Sunday, March 11, was the beautiful extravaganza, *Parsifal*. The play was a dramatization of Richard Wagner's opera. Despite the omission of the great music, the production was impressive, the play was presented handsomely, the acting was splendid, and the scenery and costumes were most elaborate. Lester Lonergan was said to give a splendid performance as Parsifal, rising fully to the dramatic demands of the role. Alice Treat Hunt acted excellently and was beautiful as Kundry.

*Principals:* King Titurel..Louis Morrison, Prince Ambrose.. Frank L. Sylvester, Sir Borsman..Edwin Howard, Sir Gawain.. Carl St. John, Lord Klingsor..Mortimer Snow, Parsifal.. Lester Lonergan, Kundry..Alice Treat Hunt, Herzelheide..
Fourton's final production of the last season at the beautiful theatre was *Davy Crockett*, given during the week of Sunday, March 18, 1906. Lester Lonergan appeared in the title role and had fine support from Alice Treat Hunt as Davy's bride. Frank L. Sylvester and Louis F. Morrison gave convincing performances in other top support, and Mortimer Snow was excellent as the heavy. (Picayune, Monday, March 19, 1906.)

When Charles Fourton signed over his lease to Lester Lonergan for the remainder of the season, Lonergan had enthusiastic plans for a long Spring season. He had no idea that his plans would be cut short abruptly in another month when the Grand Opera House would be sold. Lonergan associated Mortimer Snow as co-manager of the Grand, when Fourton bowed out, and several changes were noted in the company. Lonergan announced the addition and deletion of several players in the group. The most prominent losses were Frank L. Sylvester, Cora Witherspoon and Julia Booth, who chose to quit the Grand Company. Several well-known players were brought down from New York to join the troupe, including J. Moy Bennett, Russell Eaton and Edith Harcourt. Alice Treat Hunt, Lonergan's wife, remained as leading lady. (Picayune, Sunday, March 18;
Monday, March 19, 1906.) **Sapho** was Lonergan's first choice to inaugurate his Spring season at the Grand Opera House. Concurrent with the announcement of this play as the offering of the week of Sunday, March 25, 1906, it was also announced that Mortimer Snow had been associated with Lonergan as co-administrator of the theatre. The title role of Sapho was taken by Alice Treat Hunt. The Picayune said of Miss Hunt: "... The clever little actress was as pretty as a picture, and played the part with much success." Lonergan was at his best as Jean. Edith Harcourt, newcomer to the company, pleased the audience as Rosa; while Maurice Brierre, another newcomer and a New Orleans native, proved to be a welcome addition to the troupe; and Albert Veazie, the New Orleans actor who had played at the Grand with the Baldwin-Melville Company, was also welcomed back in the cast. There were several other new faces to the company seen in minor roles in Sapho. Cast: Fanny Le Grand (Sapho)...Alice Treat Hunt, Alice Dore..Frances Nordstrom, Rosa Sanchez..Edith Harcourt, Wilkie..May Clement, Clara Desfour..Dorothy Adams, Machaume..Edna Lewis, Cesaire D'Armandy..Louis F. Morrison, Louis Flamant..Albert Veazie, Dechelette..J. Moy Bennett, Cavdal..James Spottswood, De Potter-Tatave..Hal Donahue, La Gournerie..Maurice Brierre, Gustave..John Bertin, Joseph..Master Reach.
The sensational dramatization of Marie Corelli's *The Vendetta*, called *Fabio Romani*, was Lonergan's choice for the week of Sunday, April 1, 1906. Lonergan made a picturesque Fabio, and packed the Grand Opera House to its capacity. The play introduced a new member of the company, Hallett Thompson, a handsome and flamboyant young actor of considerable reputation, who appeared as Guido. Louis F. Morrison, J. Moy Bennett, and Misses Hunt and Nordstrom gave other strong portrayals. Principals: Guido Ferrari..Hallett Thompson, Pietro..Louis F. Morrison, Respetti..J. Moy Bennett, Countess Nina Romani..Alice Treat Hunt, Mother Biscardi..Frances Nordstrom, Lilla..May Clement, Fabio Romani..Lester Lonergan.

*Resurrection* was the third choice of the Lonergan-Snow management. Alice Treat Hunt gave one of her most striking performances as Katrusha. She was most realistic, and gave excellent contrasts, from the initial coquette to the degraded creature and finally to the spiritual woman. Lester Lonergan was robust and sincere as Nekindoff, Katrusha's lover. He brought out the deep remorse of the role with telling effect. The remainder of the company gave good support.
The attraction at the Grand Opera House for Easter week, beginning on Sunday, April 15, was Brandon Tynan's melodrama of Irish patriotism, Robert Emmet. The Picayune, Times-Democrat and Item newspapers all agreed that no better play had been seen at the Grand Opera House all season. Lester Lonergan was never better than he was in the title role. He won new laurels and many curtain calls with his stirring portrayal. Miss Hunt, as Sarah, Emmet's sweetheart, was attractive and winsome. Thompson was effective as the villain, and Bennett and Morrison gave outstanding support. Principals: Robert Emmet..Lester Lonergan, Sarah Curran..Alice Treat Hunt, Michael Dwyer..Louis F. Morrison, William Lacey..Hallett Thompson, Jimmy Noonan..J. Moy Bennett. The Times-Democrat noted that playgoers throughout the city were already voicing regret that the fine company had such a short period of time left to play at the beautiful theatre. (Times-Democrat, Sunday, April 15, 1906; Wednesday, April 18, 1906; Item, Monday, April 16, 1906; Picayune, Monday, April 16, 1906.) Yet, at the time these newspapers did not imagine that the season would be even shorter than expected, because of the suddenness of the sale of the theatre.

A mammoth Confederate reunion convention crowded New Orleans during the week of Sunday, April 22. In honor of
the occasion, The Ensign, the drama of Confederate patriotism, was given. The appropriate choice kept the Grand crowded to capacity all week with audiences that were wildly enthusiastic. The play told the story of the killing of a man, Lt. Blythe, who insults the Confederate flag. The hero is the murderer who defends the flag, one Ensign Baird. Lonergan took the role of the Ensign, while Bennett enacted the role of Blythe. Misses Hunt, Clement and Shields shared feminine honors. Principals: Dot..May Clement, Midshipman Watson.. James Spottswood, Lt. Blythe..J. Moy Bennett, Alice Greer.. Alice Treat Hunt, Mary..Bessie Shields, Ensign Ben Baird.. Lester Lonergan, Jefferson Davis..Mortimer Snow. (Picayune, Monday, April 23, 1906; Times-Democrat, Monday, April 23, 1906.)

The decision to close the Grand Opera House on Monday, April 30, 1906, was extremely sudden. It had already been announced in the Times-Democrat as late as Sunday, April 22, 1906, that Lester Lonergan and Mortimer Snow would present next, for the week of Sunday, April 29, a lavish production of The Rebel Prince. The play was already in rehearsal and elaborate scenery was being prepared for the "great modern romance." In fact, the entire force of the Grand Company was to be utilized in the production. (Times-Democrat, Sunday,
April 22, 1906.)

It came as a complete surprise to the populace of New Orleans, then, when the press announced on Sunday, April 29, 1906, that previous plans for the remainder of the season had been curtailed, and that the Grand Opera House would close for good on Monday, April 20, 1906. The sale of the Grand Opera House property had gone through that week, and immediate plans were underway for the demolition of the historic Canal Street playhouse. To mark the last performance at the theatre, on Sunday, April 29 and Monday, April 30, 1906, George Bernard Shaw's *Candida* was chosen for production. Lester Lonergan chose this play at a moment's notice, for sentimental reasons, when he realized that he must terminate the season so abruptly. Lonergan had appeared in *Candida* as Eugene Marchbanks on the road during the previous season, and had made a great success in the drama. Miss Hunt, Lonergan's wife, had co-starred in the title role during that season, and had shared her husband's triumph. Consequently, it was *Candida* that Lonergan chose to recreate as the final play to be performed at the Grand Opera House, with this cast: *Candida*. Alice Treat Hunt, Rev. James Morell. Hallet Thompson, Eugene Marchbanks. Lester Lonergan, Miss Garnett. Frances Nordstrom, Alexander Mill. J. Moy Bennett, Mr. Burgess.
F. Morrison. The Picayune declared that no more enjoyable vehicle could have been chosen for the closing bill; and stated: "... Lester Lonergan and Mortimer Snow are closing the famous old theatre with a play that delighted everybody who saw it acted. ..." The company surpassed themselves in their final effort, and the Picayune asserted that "... They have never done any better since they began here." (Picayune, Monday, April 30, 1906.) Miss Hunt was hailed in the title role as being brilliant, charming, bright and strong throughout. Lonergan was at his best as the young poet who loves Candida, giving one of his finest performances and creating one of his greatest triumphs. Chief support came from Hallett Thompson, who was excellent as Morell. The rest of the cast were at their best, according to the Picayune. The Item and the Times-Democrat joined in hailing the final effort at the theatre. The latter newspaper declared that "... This is undoubtedly one of the cleverest and prettiest comedies put upon the stage within the memory of the present generation. ..." (Times-Democrat, Monday, April 30, 1906.) There were four performances of Candida, with matinee and evening performances on Sunday and Monday. There was a gala reception following the last matinee on Monday, April 30, on the stage of the Grand Opera House, at
which time the Grand patrons were invited to come upon the stage and bid "adieu" to the players. The Picayune lamented that the historic last opening at the Grand on Sunday, April 29, did not get the support from the people which the theatre, cast and play warranted; and that the house was only half filled at each of Sunday's performances. (Picayune, Sunday, April 29; Monday, April 30; Item, Sunday, April 29; Monday, April 30, 1906.)

It appears ironic that the press lamented the scant support of the public of New Orleans to the final effort at the Grand Opera House, since the press itself hardly mentioned the forthcoming closing and demolition of the theatre. The cessation of activity at the Grand and its impending destruction was given merely passing mention by each of the city's newspapers, in a scant few lines only one day before the closing of the theatre, on Sunday, April 30, 1906. If more people did not attend the historic closing, it is possible that, from the lack of publicity given to the event, many people were not aware that the Grand Opera House was about to close. There were no headlines announcing the event, and, in fact, the terse announcements were buried in fine print in back pages of the newspapers. From Friday, April 20 through May 1, 1906, the city's newspapers devoted
all headlines and feature stories to the San Francisco earthquake and fire. It was not until May 2, 1906, that the press returned to thoughts of the Grand Opera House. Then, on Wednesday, May 2, the *Times-Democrat* devoted a major feature story to the closing of the Grand, while on Sunday, May 6 and Sunday, May 13, the *Picayune* followed suit. However, of the other major newspapers of New Orleans in that era, no mention was given to the closing and demolition of the Grand Opera House by the *Bee*, the *Item* or the *Taglich Deutchung*.

When the final curtain went down on Monday evening, April 30, upon the last act of *Candida*, there was, according to the *Picayune* of Sunday, May 6, 1906, a feeling of sadness in the audience:

... due not alone to the farewell to a splendid company of entertainers who achieved deserved popularity ..., but ... the feeling was caused by knowing that the last performance had taken place in the old theatre, and that never again would the curtain go up to the sound of applause while the ... actors would bow before the footlights. The lights dimmed down for good, and before many days, the work of destruction will begin and the Grand will belong to history. It was, with the ... French Opera House, one of the proudest theatres in New Orleans, and for many years the home of many leading high-class attractions who came to New Orleans: Edwin Booth, Lawrence Barrett, Henry Irving, Sarah Bernhardt, Ellen Terry, Fanny Davenport, Modjeska, in fact all the great actors have played on that stage. It was the last of the older theatres, with the exception of the French Opera House, which now stands alone as the relic of former...
days. Times change and improvements and the en­croachments of time demanded the site, and it had to go, but its past glories will furnish material for plenty of reminiscences when the old theatre­goer . . . recalls bygone days. (*Picayune*, Sunday, May 6, 1906.)

When Schwartz and Isaacs Company bought the Grand Opera House and the Mercier Building next door to the theatre for a sum total of $650,000, in order to construct the Maison Blanche Department Store and the Maison Blanche Building on the site, the contents of the beautiful theatre were sold at public auction. Samuel H. Stern served as auctioneer. On Thursday, May 3, 1906, first to be auctioned were the con­tents of the Cosmos Club, which had had its quarters on the second floor of the Grand Opera House building. Among the objects sold that day were chairs, carpets, oil paintings, glass and chinaware, ornaments, clocks, safes, games of chance and lounge furniture. Then on Tuesday, May 8, 1906, at eleven o'clock a.m., the contents of the beautiful theatre were auctioned by Stern's Auction Company. These contents included scenery, drop curtain, asbestos curtain, chairs, draperies, carpets, chandeliers, electric fixtures, electric machinery, new switchboard with dimmers, and other stage materials. (*Picayune*, Thursday, May 3, 1906.)

The Variété Club did not sell its furnishings, but
moved all its belongings from its quarters on the second floor of the theatre building, on April 30, 1906, to new headquarters on Gravier Street, between St. Charles and Carondelet streets, over the Stag Saloon. (Picayune, Sunday, May 13, 1906.)

In its feature story devoted as a eulogy to the Grand Opera House on May 2, 1906, with an accompanying photograph of the theatre's celebrated stairway, the Times-Democrat stated that the demolition of the beautiful theatre ended an important era in the social, financial and artistic history of New Orleans. At the time of the closing of the Grand Opera House, Henry W. Conner was the oldest living member of the Variété Association; and with this distinction, Conner was chosen as the subject of an interview in which he reminisced concerning the golden days of the theatre. Conner had come to New Orleans in 1854, and had been a member of the Variété Club in its early days when it owned the first Varieties Theatre then managed by Tom Placide. Conner was also in the club when the second Varieties Theatre was built on the same Gravier Street site after the first theatre burned. But it was in the third Varieties Theatre, built in 1871 after the second Varieties Theatre burned in 1870, that Conner recalled the greatest days of the collective Varieties
theatres. It was in the Canal Street theatre, recognized as the most beautiful theatre in the entire South, as stated, that the greatest number of famous stars appeared. The newspaper agreed with Conner's rating of the Grand Opera House as the most important theatre in the city, and said, in fact:

. . . Altogether it may be doubted if any playhouse on this continent has had upon its stage such a great number of notable actors and actresses as the Grand Opera House has had. On its stage have been seen Booth, Barrett, Irving, Mary Anderson, Salvini, Mansfield, Jefferson, Bernhardt, Ellen Terry, Julia Arthur, Clara Morris, Janauschek, Modjeska, Fanny Davenport, Mrs. D. P. Bowers, Mrs. Chanfrau, Rejane, Jane Hading, Coquelin and many other world-famed artists. (Times-Democrat, Wednesday, May 2, 1906.)

The Picayune, too, featured its eulogy of the theatre, on Sunday, May 13, 1906, in a story that was accompanied by photographs of the interior and the exterior of the Grand Opera House. Although the Picayune regretted the loss of the palatial theatre, it rationalized that culture must bow to modern commerce, and so that the new Maison Blanche Department Store and Building could be constructed, the playhouse must be sacrificed. The article went on:

. . . The demolition of the Grand Opera House is but the expected sequence of events in the formation of the greater New Orleans; in the passing away of the aesthetic and the establishment of the practical and financial, leading to a future whose possibilities are beyond imagining to the time.
when the Crescent City, proudly enthroned on the banks of the curving Mississippi, will be the home of millions of inhabitants, and will receive the industrial and agricultural tributes of the richest valley in the world, and be the mecca of the argosies of every people on the face of the globe. (Picayune, Sunday, May 13, 1906.)

But although New Orleans was to become an industrial and commercial mecca, it was to sacrifice its position as a leading center of legitimate theatre. Mammoth cinema houses would be constructed on Canal Street in later years, but not again in the twentieth century--through the period of the writing of this study--would any other legitimate theatre be built on the historic thoroughfare of Canal Street to bring in person to the city of New Orleans the excitement of a Barrett, a Booth, a Coquelin or a Bernhardt.

Just prior to the time that the theatre was demolished in May 1906, the beautiful Grand Opera House was described one last time by the Picayune, so that theatre lovers could remember the beauty that would be no more and reminisce in later days. It was stated that the magnificent stairway created "... the most unique and striking entrance of any theatre in the country." It was said that no Grand Opera House patron would forget the imposing flight of stairs, rising in three broad series and two wide rests, and flanked by exquisitely carved balusters and ramps supporting at equal
intervals at the beginning of each flight two ornate, gigantic nine-branched chandeliers. In 1871 these chandeliers had been gas lighted, but now in 1906, they gave forth brilliant electric light. And the entire exquisite stairway was covered by the unforgettable thick, red carpet, which stretched from the bottom steps to the upper-most landing. That striking red carpeting was never forgotten by any of the patron informants who had attended performances at the Grand Opera House. Under Greenwall, great and costly improvements had been made: the seating capacity had been increased and the lavish opera chairs were introduced. These chairs had veneer seats, polished hardwood back frames, and had individual hat and coat racks and foot rests. The orchestra, dress circle and parquet rails had been covered with silk plush. The boxes had been finished elaborately in soft colors and gold relief, and furnished with open grill work and drappings of elegant materials. Each box had been provided with handsomely upholstered chairs and rockers. Under Greenwall, the footlights had been cut back several feet to give more orchestra room, the proscenium opening had been built back two feet, and proscenium doors had been added on either side. The stage had been made level from the footlights to the upstage brick wall. New and elegant drop cur-
tains had been fitted to the enlarged proscenium opening, designed and painted on imported Russian linen sheeting. Never to be forgotten were the interior decorations: in white, old ivory and gold, with the walls papered with rich ingrain paper. Nor would patrons ever forget the impressive ceilings of the auditorium, balcony and galleries and the interior of all the boxes—each of which was so elegantly painted in light, harmonious colors; while the fronts of the boxes, balcony and gallery were all gilded in gold. Then, who could forget the elaborate sounding board upon which was painted an allegorical design of feminine figures, cupids, golden chariot and flowers? These improvements had enhanced the acoustic qualities of the theatre, made the full stage visible from every seat in the house, increased the aesthetics and gave brilliancy to the adornments. (Picayune, Sunday, May 13, 1906.)

Fred Lafon might well be chosen as final spokesman for verification of the elegance and beauty of the Grand Opera House. The late Mr. Lafon was a backstage technical worker in all the major theatres in New Orleans consecutively over a time period spanning the years from 1905 through 1933. In

11 According to Mrs. Fred Lafon, in an interview with
his capacity as technical worker in New Orleans' major theatres, Lafon worked at the Grand Opera House, the St. Charles, the Tulane, the Crescent, and other theatres in the city.

Mr. Lafon was interviewed as the subject of a feature story, "Seen from the Wings," that appeared in the Dixie Magazine, the magazine supplement of the Sunday Times-Picayune, on Sunday, May 8, 1955. In this feature story, the veteran theatre worker told of highlights of his many experiences in the theatres of New Orleans. But, Lafon's happiest memories were those of the Grand Opera House, which, according to him, was by far the most gorgeous theatre that he had ever seen. The story says in part: "... As far as Lafon is concerned, the most opulently beautiful entertainment palace in the country was the Grand Opera House. ... 'They don't make them as beautiful as that anymore,' Lafon says."  

At the time of the closing of the Grand Opera House in 1906, the Picayune predicted that New Orleans was not ever to have again so magnificent a theatre, and that the patrons that lady on Sunday, August 12, 1962, Interview No. 23, Fred Lafon died in 1960. At the time of his death, Lafon had retired from theatre work, and was owner of the Happy Landing Restaurant in New Orleans. The restaurant has since burned to the ground.  

of the Grand Opera House would not forget the memorable playhouse. *(Picayune, Sunday, May 13, 1906.)* For almost sixty years after the closing of the Grand Opera House, at the writing of this history of the Grand Opera House, not so ornate nor magnificent a legitimate theatre has been built in the city. Moreover, regardless of the intervening years and the extreme youth of most of the informant patrons at the time of attending the playhouse, no patron interviewed for this study who ever entered the portals of the theatre or attended a performance there has ever forgotten the splendor of the New Orleans Grand Opera House.
The third Varieties Theatre (Grand Opera House) was the most important and the most beautiful of the three Varieties Theatres that were built in New Orleans in the nineteenth century by the Variété Association. Moreover, according to all New Orleans newspapers of the period and many critics, authors and former theatre patrons, this theatre was one of the most important and one of the most elegant theatres in the United States throughout its entire history. The present study covers the entire period of 1871-1906, during which time the third Varieties Theatre flourished in the city of New Orleans, bringing to that city a succession of famous actors and actresses from all over the world in a wide variety of plays. From the first year of its construction, the third Varieties became famous throughout the country for its beauty, for the high quality of its productions and because of the many stars who acted on its stage. These stars included such renowned names as Edwin Booth, Joseph Jefferson, Sarah Bernhardt, Lawrence Barrett, John E. Owens, Clara Morris, John T. Raymond, Charlotte Cushman, Tommaso Salvini, Adelaide Neilson,

At first, the third Varieties had to fight to establish its theatrical reputation with the press. Initially, the theatre received a virtual snubbing from the New Orleans newspaper critics who took a cautious, circumspect attitude concerning the sumptuous new playhouse. At the time of the building of the theatre, the Academy of Music and the St. Charles Theatre were the established first-class rival houses which served to offer considerable competition to the third Varieties in the presentation of top legitimate theatrical attractions. Consequently, in the infancy of the third Varieties, the New Orleans press tended to favor these two.
established houses in reviews and in the allotting of newspaper coverage. At this time, the press also favored the prominent French Opera House which presented to the city the finest in opera. It took less than a year, however, for the third Varieties to prove to the press that it could hold its own with the older, established theatres, and could equal or excel any production presented by the rival houses. Then, in place of a few bleak lines allotted at the end of the reviewing section of the newspapers following the reviews of the other theatres, the third Varieties was soon allotted maximum coverage in ample reviews that moved up to top billing at the head of the theatrical review columns.

The productions given at the theatre included first-class bookings of the leading stars and attractions of the day from the opening of the theatre in 1871 until the boycott of the Theatrical Syndicate prevented stars from appearing at the theatre, beginning in the season of 1898-1899. Although the Syndicate was organized during the summer of 1896, two years previous to the season of 1898-1899, it took a scant two years for the powerful Trust to enforce the boycott of stars from the Grand Opera House. Before the boycott, the leading stars and attractions of the United States and Europe played at the theatre.
The theatre flourished under many managers, beginning with Lawrence Barrett and ending with Lester Lonergan and Mortimer Snow. Two managers tower in significance above all the rest, however. These are David Bidwell and Henry Greenwall. Among the most important findings in the entire study is the fact that the Theatrical Syndicate was begun with money contributed by David Bidwell to Marc Klaw and Abraham Lincoln Erlanger in an effort to curb Greenwall and retaliate when Bidwell lost the lease of the Grand Opera House to the latter. Greenwall is the most colorful, the most enduring and the most important of the theatre's managers. He reigned as head of the theatre from the Fall of 1888 until the Spring of 1904. These years comprised the most glorious, and conversely, the most tragic era of the theatre's history. Before the boycott of the Theatrical Syndicate, Greenwall spent a fortune on the physical plant of the theatre to guarantee the reputation of the Grand Opera House as the most beautiful theatre in the South, and he brought to its stage the greatest stars of its history. After the boycott of the theatre by the Syndicate, it was necessary to fill the Grand Opera House with resident stock companies to prevent the house from being unoccupied.

In between the engagements of the top stars, the
theatre was booked with acting combinations, lesser known
stars, first-class variety combinations and opera companies.
All of the engagements were not of equal caliber of excel-
lence, naturally. However, each manager of the third
Varieties sought to secure the best entertainment that was
available in the country. Within less than a decade after
its initial opening, the theatre became so celebrated that
it was the preferred house in New Orleans of many major
stars. For years, when playing New Orleans, stars such as
Edwin Booth, Sarah Bernhardt, Lawrence Barrett, Adelaide
Neilson and Coquelin appeared exclusively at the Grand Opera
House.

When the theatre opened, the norm was to have a resi-
dent stock company which played as support to visiting stars.
Before the first decade of the theatre was over, however,
the norm changed to a policy of abandoning the resident
stock company, and allowing the stars to travel with their
own companies. Problems arose with the change over, since
if a booking was canceled, there was no longer a resident
company to fill in, and the theatre remained dark for the
period of the canceled engagement. When the Theatrical
Syndicate came into being on August 31, 1896, and manifested
its tyrannical reign in subsequent seasons, the resident
stock company came again into its own. But now, instead of serving as support to visiting stars, the stock company presented its own leading performers who appeared in main roles throughout the entire season.

Even after the Syndicate boycott went into effect, and the elite first-class house became a popular priced theatre, the managers of the Grand Opera House continued to bring the best non-Syndicate talent available in the resident stock companies that peopled the theatre. The lead players of these resident stock companies were comparable in ability to current Syndicate star talent. William Farnum was wooed away from the Grand Opera House in fact by the Syndicate with the tempting offer to star in the title role of the lavish Syndicate production of *Ben Hur* in New York. Farnum, Bert Lytel, Laura Nelson Hall, Lester Lonergan and other actors who played principal roles in the Grand Opera House stock companies already had established reputations, and many of these stock players went on to high respected places in the national theatrical hierarchy.

Amateur theatrical summer seasons underwent a significant decline over the period studied. During the first five summers of the theatre's activity, from 1872 through 1876, many major amateur theatrical organizations flourished in
continual activity all summer at the theatre. Many of these productions were nearly professional in caliber; and frequently, amateur actors were recruited by professional managers to play supporting roles during the professional season. Some of these New Orleans amateurs were, in fact, hired subsequently to travel with a given star and his organization or were sent to New York to join a professional company there. Over the years, however, the popular amateur theatrical societies disbanded and ceased their summer activity. In later years of the theatre, the house remained dark almost the entire summer, with only an occasional charity benefit being produced. In the final period of the theatre, not even an occasional benefit was noted, and the theatre remained unoccupied the entire summer.

The Picayune's reviews have been regarded as the most dependable critiques of the theatre's productions throughout this entire period, for the two following reasons: (1) the Picayune is the sole newspaper that continued throughout this period that has remained extant and available as source material. And (2) the Picayune is the only newspaper throughout this period that reviewed consistently all productions at the third Varieties. Some newspapers reviewed theatrical productions only spasmodically. There were many disagreements
among critics of the various newspapers concerning some actors and also among the several critics of a given newspaper. However, there was much general agreement noted among the various newspapers and among the several critics of a given newspaper concerning the merits of many of the actors. It is particularly interesting to compare the conflicting evaluation of the abilities of some actors by their contemporaries in the newspaper criticisms of their own times and the evaluation that is given to the talents of these actors today. In some instances, there is a marked change in the judgment of the merit of stars from critics then and now. For example, Lawrence Barrett was regarded as one of the memorable actors to appear at the theatre. The great majority of his reviews were so extremely favorable that these critiques rated superlatives and ranked just below the reviews of Edwin Booth. Today, conversely, Barrett is not regarded by many academic theatrical scholars and critics as more than a mediocre actor. On the other hand, some memorable stars like Sarah Bernhardt and Joseph Jefferson received many controversial and even negative reviews by the New Orleans press. It is remembered that Jefferson scorned appearances in New Orleans for many years after being "panned" by the New Orleans press. Also, Sarah Bernhardt was not liked by much
of the New Orleans press of her time. It is recalled that one Picayune critic described Bernhardt, during her first engagement at the Grand Opera House, as "that skinny, ugly foreign actress," and another critic lamented the fact that Clara Morris, who appeared during the same season as the French actress, did not rate an advance in ticket prices at the box-office as Bernhardt had commanded. Yet, the latter critic rated Morris as being exceedingly more talented than Bernhardt.

One further comment regarding reviews of the press is pertinent: when the third Varieties opened, only one decade after the end of the Civil War, much pro-South anti-Union sentiment and considerable overt feeling of bitterness over the defeat of the South was still being reflected in the critiques of plays. However, forty years after the end of that war, in the later period of the theatrical activity at the Grand Opera House, Civil War sentiment had been forgotten to the point where a Northern officer was made the hero of a melodrama that came to the Grand Opera House and drew capacity audiences, when the villain of the plot was a Southern soldier. The play did so well it was later repeated with the same successful response from theatre patrons. Moreover, newspaper critics showed patterns of prejudice in negative
reviews that "panned" some plays in which Negroes were made the heroes of melodrama like The Black Detective and Uncle Tom's Cabin, in which Caucasian characters were the villains.

Stars took great liberties occasionally with scripts; for example, plays were often rewritten to "pad" stars' roles, or a star would steal plum lines designated to be spoken by another actor, and incorporated such lines into his own part. Lawrence Barrett was one star guilty of this offense in his famous production of Shakespeare's Julius Caesar. Since, in the major part of this period, there were no copyright laws, there was little or no restriction upon such changes in scripts. Too, because of the lack of copyright laws, some plays were abridged or changed in some way (as giving the characters different names) and were produced with a new title. Or, in some instances, an actor or producer dared to abridge the script of a given playwright and then present the play with its original title. In the latter offense, some playwrights even disguised the origin of the play and affixed their own names as author. It is remembered that the Theatrical Syndicate's playwright, Paul Potter, was accused of and admitted committing plagerism in stealing the plot of Sardou's La Heine for The Conquerers. In some instances, the title of a play was found to be so attractive

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or such a drawing card that the title was "borrowed" and attached to a completely different plot. As an example of this offense, it is remembered that two completely different plays were produced in the repertoires of two different actresses at the Grand Opera House during one given season, under the title of **Mother and Son**.

Negroes were not only segregated in seating arrangements in the theatre as part of the audience, but Negroes were never used to play important Negro parts on the stage of the Grand Opera House. A Negro character was always taken by a Caucasian in black-face make-up, except for crowd scenes and/or choruses, when groups of Negroes might be used to give authentic atmosphere to a plantation setting. However, besides the minstrel shows in which Caucasians played in black-face, white actors played Negro roles in plays like **Uncle Tom's Cabin**, **The Octoroon**, **The Black Detective** and other plays that had Negro characters.

Patterns of prejudice were noted in audience behavior concerning the Negro in some plays. But this response was unpredictable. While the predominantly Caucasian audience enjoyed thoroughly seeing a white actor in black-face portray a minstrel-type or comedy-type Negro role, the Grand Opera House patrons sometimes resented seeing a Negro
character as the hero of a plot, as in the melodrama, *The Black Detective* which also had a Caucasian villain. Patrons stayed away from the theatre en masse during the week that this production played. Conversely, however, the theatre's patrons thoroughly enjoyed *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, despite the negative ethnocentrism noted in the reviews of the press, and the theatre was crowded to capacity during the entire period during which that play was produced.

Segregation was noted in the seating arrangements, not only according to social status—with the most elite in the orchestra, orchestra circle and boxes and the least elite in the second balcony, or gallery or pit as it was called, but Negroes were always segregated in seating arrangement, and were made to sit in the Quadroon Circle. So strong were the patterns of restriction in seating arrangements for Negroes, that a Caucasian child accompanied by his colored nurse was denied admission to the orchestra and made to sit in the Negro section. Such a traumatic experience was remembered by informant Julius Friend.\(^1\) The late Mr. Friend recalled vividly a performance he saw as a young child of *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, upon which occasion he was accompanied by his

\(^1\) Interview No. 3, Sunday, July 1, 1962.
Negro nurse. The child and nurse were forbidden admittance to the Friend family's customary seats in the orchestra, and both were ushered "...way up in the pit." Mr. Friend represented the injustice of this occasion because: "... We were so far up, it was hard for me to see. But this is where the colored had to sit, and since I was with my nurse, we both had to sit up there in order to be together..." This interview establishes the fact that the section of the theatre to which the Negro patrons were committed was not desirable, and that it was difficult to see the stage from the Quadroon Circle.

The nature of the socio-economic and cultural composition of the audiences at the Grand Opera House changed over the years to become more representative of a wider segment of classes in the social strata. The theatre began as a "high-class" house, built by an elite group and catering to a select patronage. Admission was steep and the highest class of New Orleans society frequented the theatre. The Grand Opera House was also the scene of many of the annual balls of the exclusive Krewe of Comus, the most elite of all New Orleans Mardi Gras secret organizations. Later, after 1898, when the Theatrical Syndicate's ban forced the stars to abandon the theatre, the Grand Opera House became a
"popular" theatre, with top prices of fifty cents and gallery admission as low as ten cents. The admission prices were changed in an effort to compete with local Syndicate houses. During this latter period, a new element emerged as part of the patronage of the gallery. These new patrons were vociferous enthusiasts of melodrama, and they were called "gallery gods" by the newspaper critics. While elite patrons continued to patronize the theatre throughout its thirty-six year history, after the Grand Opera House became a "popular" house, it is noted that children and the "general" public of the non-elite classes could now afford to patronize the theatre. Many of these new patrons had been unable to afford the theatre previously. Among these new patrons, however, were members of the "best" Creole families who had lost their fortunes in the Civil War and had not been able to afford the theatre before the cut in prices at the box-office. Informant Louise Guyol\(^2\) recalls: ". . . All the nicest people were without money in those days. We'd lost it in the war, but we never felt poor. The best plays had such cheap admissions: you could see any play for from 25 cents to 50 cents."

When the Grand Opera House became a "popular" house conse-

\(^2\)Interview No. 5, July 4, 1962.
quently, representatives of all social and economic classes in the city filled the theatre to capacity. Because of the emergence of the "gallery gods" during the days of melodrama, a difference in patterns of behavior and response based on seating arrangements emerged. While the lower portions of the theatre continued to display the same decorum as was customary when the theatre was a "high class" house, the behavioral patterns of some patrons in the "pit" changed. In fact, the press lamented upon one occasion during the latter era of the theatre that policemen should be stationed in the upper portions of the theatre in order to preserve quiet. The theatre acted upon the suggestion, because informant Major George Tate Sheehan asserts that Policeman Tom Griffin was hired to keep order during Greenwall's era as manager.

Decorum was not flawless, however, even in the most elite days of the theatre before it became a "popular" house. Critics of the local newspapers lamented upon occasion concerning the following audience faults: talking during performances, unnecessary noise from standees, undue noise during intermissions, the policy of gentlemen who fled the theatre during intermissions to find the nearest saloon, rudeness of people who left before the end of the performance, and rude-

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3 Interview No. 20, July 22, 1962.
ness of ladies who did not remove their hats. An audience
distinction can be noted, additionally, concerning sex and
age norms. It was the policy for ladies and children to pre­
dominate in the audiences of the matinees. Since many single
or otherwise unaccompanied ladies considered it to be un­
genteel to be seen out unescorted by a gentleman in the eve­
ning, the matinee offered the perfect solution to such
feminine theatre lovers. Groups of children who were not
allowed out in the evenings also were popular adherents of
the matinee.

Several theatrical customs were noted which do not
exist today: (1) actors who were applauded took curtain
calls during scenes and at the ends of individual acts, much
as in operatic performances today. (2) Actors as well as
actresses were often showered with bouquets and garlands of
flowers by adoring fans, while only actresses are rewarded
in such fashion today. Moreover, as is still customary in
opera today, but no longer in drama, young actresses often
took the roles of young men and boys.

It was customary during the entire history of the­
atrical activity at the Grand Opera House to list the names
of male performers before those of feminine performers on
the theatre programs. However, the rule was broken upon
occasion, as is seen in the program of Arthur Rehan's production of *Surprises of Divorce*, as duplicated for illustration herewith. A marked difference is noted in the programs duplicated within the study prior to and during Greenwall's era of management. The earlier programs are smaller in size, comprise a single sheet and are unadorned by any type of advertising. They consist only of the cast of characters and the settings of the acts. Greenwall's programs are larger, fancier and considerably more complex than the earlier programs. The latter consist of several pages each, and are filled with advertisements. Each of Greenwall's programs is adorned by the manager-lessee's photograph on the cover of the program. These programs display upon and inside the cover so many commercial advertisements that it is difficult to separate the cast listing and notices that pertain to theatrical production from the sea of advertisements. It may be surmised that mounting commercialism as seen in these theatre programs became associated with the arts to a greater degree by the end of the nineteenth century.\footnote{A note of explanation is necessary pertaining to the penciled in dates written by hand that appear upon the earlier programs. These dates are written upon the original programs in the collection at Tulane University, and are not found to be accurate. The productions as noted are found generally to be much earlier than the dates written upon the programs.}
The Variété Association was composed of the upper strata of New Orleans society. Overt, restrictive actions were taken by the members of the organization to keep out of the group any potential member deemed as socially undesirable. Stock was sold to members, and along with membership in the club, each member was given a free block of seats in the orchestra of the theatre. These seats were always reserved for members of the club and their guests. The clubrooms of the Variété Association were located just above the theatre proper.

Changing norms in the types of plays presented at the Grand Opera House can be noted over the period of the theatre's history. In the 1870's and early 1880's, the predominant theatrical offerings at the theatre were of three major types: (1) broad comedy or farce, typical of which were John E. Owens' comedy roles of Caleb Plummer and Solon Shingle and John T. Raymond's Colonel Sellers; (2) standard classical drama, typical of which were the Shakespearean roles in the repertoires of Edwin Booth and Lawrence Barrett, and the tragedies of grandeur, typical of which was John Edward McCullough's Virginius; and (3) contemporary drama, typical of which was Charlotte Cushman's Meg Merrilies and Clara Morris' roles of Cora of Article 47 or Mercy Merrick.
of *The New Magdalen*. In the decade of the 1880's, new types of theatrical production became popular fare at the Grand Opera House, in addition to the more standard offerings: (1) extravaganzas were the foremost innovation. These were spectacular productions that were adorned by such novelties as amazon choruses composed of shapely girls in tights, musical specialties, elaborate scenery and lighting effects, expensive costumes, mammoth casts including many supernumeraries, and vaudeville specialties like tumblers or pantomime clowns. *Fantasma* and *The Devil's Auction* are examples of popular extravaganzas of the day. The striking lighting effects that were part of the productions in the new era were a result of the invention of and use of incandescent electric light in the theatres of the day. Many novelty effects were achieved at this time by experimentation with new electric light systems that had never been possible before. (2) The minstrel shows were another spectacular type of production, typical of which was the Primrose and West Minstrels, originally known as the Dockstader-Thatcher-Primrose and West organization. At first, the entire companies of minstrels appeared in black-face and were composed entirely of male performers. After a period of over-exposure, competing minstrel organizations sought to keep the playgoing public's interest by
adding such novelties as using women minstrels along with
the men in the companies, playing in white-face as well as
black-face, and adding a plot to the variety show, resulting
in a minstrel-type play. (3) Musical comedies were another
popular fare of this period. These were spectacular pro-
ductions that relied more upon musical accompaniment and
plot than did the spectaculars. Lillian Russell became a
major star in this type of entertainment. (4) Extreme
realism in sets, costumes and properties became another in-
novation. Great care was taken in the research for authen-
ticity in costumes and sets, and the results were both
striking and costly. An example of the new stress upon
realism in sets and properties was seen in the comparison of
Stuart Robson and William Crane's earlier production of
Shakespeare's Comedy of Errors and Robson's later authentic
production of the play that was a result of costly, prolonged
and meticulous research for authenticity. Henry Irving's
strikingly authentic and realistic settings in productions
like The Merchant of Venice and other Shakespearean dramas
stand as other prime examples of meticulous attention to
detail. In a notable address given to the student body of
Harvard University in 1885, entitled "Scholar and Actor,"
Henry Irving devoted considerable attention to the controversy
about the province of naturalism in drama, and commented:
"... There is no reason why an actor should be less natural in tragic than in comic moods. ... A grain of nature is worth a bushel of artifice. ..." (Picayune, Sunday, April 12, 1885, as copied from the Boston Post of March 31, 1885.)

(5) Realism in plots that dealt with problems of the day was another innovation. Emil Zola's new realistic novels were dramatized and began a new interest in naturalism. Drink, a dramatization of Zola's L'Assommoir is a leading example of the new naturalism. This play dealt with the problem of alcoholism, while other popular plots dealt with such current problems as polygamy as practiced in Mormonism in that day, divorce or marital separation, an example of which was Ibsen's A Doll's House, and anti-Semitism in Russia. Many of these realistic plots were treated in melodrama, which became the predominant dramatic form in the final era of the Grand Opera House, concurrent with the demise of the star system at the theatre. Melodrama flourished during the days of the return to the theatre of its resident stock companies. Besides reflecting current problems of the day, melodrama treated such sensational contemporary interests as hypnotism, commercialism on Wall Street in New York, Jesse James and his gang, and horse race gambling. Melodrama made use of many
newly invented mechanical devices, and relied upon startling mechanical effects. Such devices as elevators that moved up and down, mechanical saws in saw mills, moving locomotives, and a telephone switchboard helped to fill the theatre to capacity. In the last several years at the theatre, melodrama became exceedingly gory and violent. Villains tortured, poisoned, stabbed and mutilated. Victims fell down flights of stairs, fell into tanks of water and were rescued only at the point of drowning or were rescued a hair's breadth from being sliced in two by an electric saw. Moreover, having one villain to a plot became too tame, and the popular melodrama of the early 1900's usually had one or more sub-villains as well as a main villain; and a feminine villain appeared. The latter was usually an adventuress who was an accomplice of the main villain as well as his mistress. She was generally attractive but devoid of scruples, and was sometimes even more fiendish than her villain-lover. As melodrama became more and more violent and sensational, the "gallery gods" became more and more vociferous. Finally, the Variété Association attempted in the final two years at the theatre to turn from melodrama back to standard drama. But the patrons' demand for melodrama necessitated the inclusion of much melodramatic fare during the final season.
Informants for this study were classified into four categories: (1) those who had information concerning the theatre but who had not attended performances there; (2) those who attended performances before the Theatrical Syndicate banned the appearance of stars there; (3) those who attended before and after the Trust boycott; and (4) those who attended the theatre only in the latter years when resident stock companies played.

During the thirty-six years during which the Grand Opera House flourished, it dominated the theatrical life of New Orleans, but it was unable to survive the effects of the boycott of the Theatrical Syndicate, and the cultural and economic changes which occurred during the city's great period of expansion and progress in the first decade of the twentieth century. The combination of the Theatrical Trust boycott, the shock of seeing the elite house become a "popular" theatre, the loss of Greenwall as manager, and the difficulty at the end to keep a first-class stock company together all season, served as multiple factors in the decision of the Variété Association to succumb to an irresistably large offer for the theatre property. But, in the memories of the patrons who served as informants for the study, the Grand Opera House remains as the most beautiful theatre that they ever
attended, and the performances which these informants saw remain so memorable, that the productions are recalled with delight even after sixty years.

The third Varieties Theatre (New Orleans Grand Opera House) is significant not only because it was one of the most important and one of the most beautiful theatres in the entire United States during its entire history of activity, but it is significant in being the underlying reason behind the creation of the Theatrical Syndicate. It has been shown that if the Grand Opera House had not been the cause of the feud between Bidwell and Greenwall, the former would not have had reason to back Klaw and Erlanger financially in an effort to retaliate against Greenwall. Consequently, but for the quarrel between Bidwell and Greenwall with the Grand Opera House as the target, the Theatrical Syndicate might well never have been born; and theatrical history in this country might have taken an entirely different turn.

This study has contributed a needed chapter to the annals of theatrical history in New Orleans and in the United States, and has therefore filled a previously unexplored gap in New Orleans theatrical history. This history is not only significant as a background for the later years of New Orleans theatrical history, but it is necessary for a complete
picture of the theatre of the city. This study has additional significance by revealing areas that should be the subject for further related studies. Additional research is recommended in the following areas: a complete history of the first two Varieties theatres, and theatrical historical biographies of some of the prominent theatre managers who guided the activities of the Grand Opera House. Two of the managers are especially worthy of individual research: Henry Greenwall, the dynamic and fearless theatrical magnate who fought the Theatrical Syndicate almost single handed in the South, and David Bidwell, the second most important manager of the theatre. It is hoped, consequently, that this study will serve to encourage further studies such as those outlined and that this study will be helpful to future theatrical historical researchers.
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PERIODICALS


UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS

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Theatre Programs

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Related Unpublished Theses and Dissertations


APPENDIX
APPENDIX

Included in this Appendix are the twenty-eight interviews of the informants for this study. The interviews are produced in full except where an informant digressed or included thoughts irrelevant to a discussion of the Grand Opera House. In such cases, non-pertinent digression is deleted and indicated by elision marks. The interviews are duplicated in the order in which they were procured in time, beginning in June 1962 and ending in July 1964. Each interview is number chronologically, with the name of informant, date of interview, and a classification number—from one to four. The interviews are classified according to the following explication: (1) those patrons who attended the theatre during the days of the star system, before the ban of stars by the Theatrical Syndicate; (2) those patrons who attended the theatre before the ban of stars and after the boycott, during the days of resident stock companies; (3) those patrons who attended the theatre only after the boycott of stars by the Syndicate; and (4) non-patrons. All interviews were procured in the city of New Orleans, Louisiana.
In the beginning, a tape recorder was used to tape the interviews. However, many informants objects to having their comments put on tape. The reasons for these objections were that the recorder made them nervous, kept them from remembering adequately and prevented them from speaking spontaneously. Because of the objections, the recorder was abandoned and the writer made notes of all that was said. Inaccuracies are noted by affixing the term "sic."

Interview No. 1, Waldo Pitkin, June 30, 1962, Classification No. 3.

(Mr. Pitkin is a well-known theatre personality in New Orleans who has acted in a non-professional capacity in that city's theatre groups for many years. He is particularly well-known for performances at Le Petit Theatre and on radio. The writer first met Mr. Pitkin in about 1950 when they both performed as actor members of the cast of "Road to Yesterday," a dramatic weekly radio show via WWL-CBS, New Orleans.)

I attended one of the final performances at the Grand Opera House Theatre. . . . I was a very young boy at the time. I was born in 1895, and it closed in 1906, so you see I was just a child at the time. [He would have been eleven years.] But I remember very accurately the occasion of the performance--it was the only time I went to see a play at that theatre. Laura Nelson Hall was the star of the play, Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall. I remember very vividly her dramatic gesture at the end of the
first act—or it may have been the second . . . that she gracefully tossed a key over the garden wall. She turned gracefully, back to the wall, and tossed the keys backward over the wall. The gesture was so dramatic, I remember it vividly.

I don't remember anything else about the play, but I clearly remember the red carpet and the brass rails on either side of the steps. This was in the beautiful vestibule as you entered, the red carpet. And the brass rails led up the steps.

I think . . . that Lester Lonergan played opposite Laura Nelson Hall in Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall. But she was definitely the star of the play, and she was a famous actress of her day.

Interview No. 2, Mrs. Julius Cahn, July 1, 1962, Classification No. 1.

(Mrs. Cahn is a lady of advanced years, who was ninety years of age at the time of the interview. Her memory was failing her. But she did attend one performance at the theatre and remembers it vaguely.)

I saw a performance at the Grand Opera House when I was a girl. At the time, I was not married. My family lived in Vicksburg, Mississippi, and we would come to New Orleans to visit. We had relatives here. I met my husband on a visit here, and we lived here when we were married. But that was in 1901. I saw the performance at the Grand Opera House way before that, sometime during the 1890's [1890-1900]. The theatre was on Canal Street, and it took up a whole block [sic]. . . . The play was a deep drama, and the star was Marie Wainwright. . . . I don't even remember the name of the play, but it was very dramatic. And the theatre was beautiful. . . .

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Interview No. 3, Julius Friend, Sunday, July 1, 1962, Classification No. 3.

(The late Julius Friend was a prominent insurance executive who was born and reared in New Orleans. He died on November 27, 1962. His mother, Mrs. Joseph Friend, who died in 1963, was a prominent civic and social leader in New Orleans, widely known for vast charitable enterprises. When the writer contacted the Friend family, it was to interview Mrs. Friend. When the writer spoke with her son, Julius, she was delighted to learn that he as well as his mother had attended the theatre. Since Mrs. Friend was indisposed at this time, Mr. Friend's interview precedes his mother's. Only several months following the interview, Mr. Friend died suddenly of a heart attack.)

I remember very well attending performances on two occasions at the Grand Opera House. I am sixty-eight years old now, and was just a child, but I clearly remember those two occasions. The theatre itself was an impressive structure. There was a huge flight of steps going up to upper levels from the vestibule. There were many galleries [sic]. . . . It was very big and imposing inside. It was on Canal Street where Kress Company is now [sic] . . . [Kress Company is next to the Maison Blanche Building], and was immensely popular. Everyone went to the theatre there.

Both times I went there were for matinees. The first play I saw was *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, and I was about five or six at the time. This was a very popular play as all the mothers of that period used
Little Lord Fauntleroy as a model for them to dress their kids. All the mothers made their little boys look like him, with long curls, and the feminine type clothes. It was the rage, so the play was very popular. I went to the play with my nurse. She was colored, and they wouldn't let her sit downstairs in the orchestra. So we had to sit way up in the pit. We were so far up, it was hard for me to see. But this is where the colored had to sit, and since I was with my nurse, we both had to sit up there in order to sit together.

Much later, about 1905, when I was in the fifth or sixth grade, a group of boys and I skipped school one day to take in a matinee at the Grand Opera House, a very daring thing to do, and we felt twice as daring because we picked a spine-chiller to see. It was Fabio Romani, taken from the book, Vendetta, by Ouida, one of the prominent novelists of the day. This play started in a tomb: I'll never forget it because we were so horrified. A man is buried alive, the tomb moves and the man gets out and vows vengeance on those who buried him alive. It was quite a terrifying experience for us. Ouida also wrote other novels that were dramatized. I remember that stock companies presented these plays, but I cannot remember these names. . . .

Interview No. 4, Theodore "Teddy" Glucksman, Tuesday, July 3, 1962, Classification No. 3.

(Mr. Glucksman's brother Touro was a ticket taker and backstage employee at the theatre. The interview reveals that he had a second brother who worked at the Grand Opera House. Mr. Glucksman died on December 20, 1963, a year and a half after the interview.)

I went to the old Grand Opera House Theatre many
times, but it was a long time ago and I do not remember it too well. I remember it was on Canal Street where Maison Blanche Company is now. It was very complicated to get into the theatre: there was a large, long passageway in the front on Canal Street before you got to the theatre. There was a shorter entrance in the back around to the side.

I am eighty-four now, so I don't remember any particular plays, but there were wonderful stock companies and the actors in the stock companies were as good as the stars. . . . Both of my brothers worked there. Jake was a stage hand, and Touro was more important. He helped manage backstage. From time to time there were articles in the paper about him. All his life he was active in the theatre. When legitimate theatre closed in New Orleans, he became a film projectionist. But that was years later. He was named Touro as he was the first baby to be born at the Touro Infirmary. [This is one of New Orleans' biggest hospitals.] That gave him a distinction from the beginning. He was always a kind man. He would let in children from time to time to see the plays. He always did nice things for people. I no longer have the notices from the papers about him because I gave them to Touro Infirmary, . . . but he was associated with the theatre for a long time.

Interview No. 5, Louise Guyol, July 4, 1962, Classification No. 2.

(Miss Guyol was interviewed at St. Anna's Home, 1823 Prytania Street, New Orleans, where she now lives. The lady was eighty-four years at the time of the interview, but was vibrant and filled with as much ambition and involved in as many projects as a woman of thirty. Her thoughts are interesting historically, and her past is very much a part of
this colorful lady, who has been a writer for many years.

She was, when interviewed, still doing historical surveys:
recently she wrote a history of Kingsley Settlement House,
and when interviewed, was writing a history of St. Anna's
Home.)

I was born in 1878 in New Orleans, and spent my
early years here. I knew the Grand Opera House so
well. Your generation does not know what it has
missed not knowing the Grand Opera House. You
entered from Canal Street, but there was a long walk
from the entrance to the theatre itself. There was
a red carpet all along the walk. At the far end of
the vestibule, there was a wide grand stairway going
up. The ground floor was called the parquette. The
mezzanine was the choice place to be seated, the
'dress circle' it was called. It came way above and
out over the parquette, but close to the stage. The
beautiful impression made, and the beautiful stair­
ways I well remember. All the big schools had their
commencements there, and it made it very dramatic,
having graduation ceremonies in this perfectly beauti­
ful atmosphere. One had to go up the beautiful red
carpeted steps to reach the dress circle. That was
at the first landing, then the steps continued up to
the balconies.

It was not called 'theatre,' but Grand Opera House
and not Grand Opera House Theatre! All the nicest
people were without money in those days. We'd lost
it in the war [Civil War], but we never felt poor.
The best plays had such cheap admissions: you could
see any play for from twenty-five cents to fifty
cents.

I have written all of my life and lectured. I
started to sell stories when I was a young steno­
grapher. . . . I even went to Boston to lecture for
the Humane Society. . . .

Most vividly I remember seeing Ellen Terry and
Henry Irving in *Louis XI*. I remember an outstanding in that play seeing a thin old man seated on a chair in a tragic scene, and I vividly remember Ellen Terry. I vividly remember, too, the acting of the King. I remember with Terry and Irving there were not many people onstage at any one time. They had center stage.

Also I saw Sarah Bernhardt many times. I remember her vividly with Coquelin. The first time I saw Bernhardt, she played with Coquelin in *Cyrano de Bergerac* in the 1890's. I was working as a stenographer for the Sugar Exchange at the time.

*The Comte of Monte Cristo* was the first American play I saw. Until this play, I went to the French Opera House. I was seventeen when I saw the first American play. I saw many stars, most of these at the Grand Opera House. It was long ago and I cannot remember the plays, but I saw James O'Neil as the Count of Monte Cristo. I saw Anna Held several times. . . . Maxine Elliott played there, and she was perfectly beautiful. She said that she felt it tragic that people felt more about her beauty than her acting. I saw Richard Mansfield. . . . Also I saw Joe Jefferson.

One of my richest experiences was knowing the daughter of Julia Ward Howe, Maude Howe Elliott. Julia Ward Howe wrote 'The Battle Hymn of the Republic.' I knew Maud Howe Elliott in Boston. Mrs. Howe entertained many of the stars, as Edwin Booth. She discovered Richard Mansfield clerking in a department store.

I remember seeing very clearly *The Bells* at the Grand Opera House. This was a beautiful mystical play. . . . The scene was an open front, two-story interior of a house. It was very impressive. . . . I saw Ellen Terry as Portia. Minnie Maddern Fiske we adored! She was red-haired. She gave a beautiful performance for a benefit of the S.P.C.A. of which I was the Secretary, about 1896, and I had to work to sell tickets to fill the theatre for the evening.
But most electrifying was Sarah Bernhardt. That beautiful voice! Carrying small handkerchiefs surrounded by lace became the fad for ladies to carry, because of Bernhardt. You see, because she had a cold and had to carry a handkerchief onstage, she chose a small one with lace. It was picked up by all the ladies! When Bernhardt died, I was on the Boston Evening Transcript--I was Assistant Editor. This was in the early twenties. Bernhardt died very simply in a small French town. In the 'morgue' we found a story on her and printed it without proofreading. It was a false obituary, saying that she died in a New York hotel,—a story written years before when she was very ill in New York. People called up complaining, and our faces were very red!

Interview No. 6, Flo Field, July 4, 1962, Classification No. 2.

(Mrs. Field was interviewed also at the St. Anna Home at which residence she lived when interviewed. Mrs. Field is the well-known author of the book and play, A La Creole, first produced at the St. Charles Theatre in the 1920's and later at the New Orleans Community Theatre about a decade ago. The writer attended the latter production at which Mrs. Field was honored. Mrs. Field has the distinction of being the only informant for this study who acted upon the stage of the Grand Opera House. As a girl, Mrs. Field was one of the leading actresses on the amateur stage in the city, and first appeared at the Grand Opera House in the decade of the 1880's. Since she was interviewed for this study, Flo Field
has become a well-known television personality as a "regular" on a live television show in New Orleans. On this program, she reminisces about the theatre of New Orleans in earlier days.)

The Grand Opera House entrance was of red velvet carpeting, and went up to a large platform and then up. There were beautiful candelabra and a gorgeous parquet. The dress circle was gorgeous. And there was an enormous stage. There were several balconies, two or three. The entrance to the theatre was so elegant. The seats were so comfortable and plush; not the kind that flip up like today. A feature of the theatre was the orchestra. There was always a magnificent introduction to the plays. The curtain was exquisite. It was enormous. On it was a huge painting of Othello describing his journeys to Desdemona and her father. The father with his white beard and beautiful headdress looked like a patriarch. And Desdemona was so beautiful. Othello had his foot on a step and Desdemona was leaning on her father. Othello was dark, bearded and handsome. The painting was in many colors. It was exquisite.

William Farnum played Ben Hur. . . . He came to our house every Sunday for dinner when he was in New Orleans. Catherine Cole, my mother, was the first woman reporter on a newspaper in the entire South. She was reporter on the Daily Picayune in 1872. Then her health broke down and we went abroad and she died at forty-four, in 1898. I took over as reporter in her place. I went to New York on vacation, and William Farnum asked my aunt to allow me to become his leading woman in Ben Hur. He had seen me act at home as a girl when I put on plays in our home when Farnum was there. My aunt refused--I did not know at the time. She did not tell me until later. I feel that she ruined my life! I will never forget that! He was like one of the family. And I was an excellent actress!
I saw Still Alarm at the Grand Opera House, with a real fire engine and horses on the stage. We had a home in the French Quarter, upstairs, on Dauphine Street, just adjacent to the Grand Opera House. I would give theatre parties when I was a child and we could lie on our stomachs and watch the performances in the theatre, looking right into the wings. . . . We saw a melodrama with a sawmill, that way, and a man tied and about to be sawed in half.

I saw Bessie Shields play at the Grand Opera House. She played child parts at the theatre. She is living in New York today. My son, S. S. Fields, Sydney Stone Fields, lives in New York, too. He is a well-known writer. . . .

Interview No. 7, James Dempsey, July 4, 1962,
Classification No. 3.

(Mr. Dempsey is the President of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees. He has been an officer of the organization since 1917. Mr. Dempsey's daughter, Mildred Dempsey Rosenberg, is married to Malcolm Rosenberg, the Assistant Superintendent of the New Orleans Public School System. Mr. Dempsey was seventy-one years at the time of the interview.)

I am President of the I.A.T.S.E., and have been an officer since 1917. I was too young to work as an employee at the Grand Opera House, but I remember it well. I first worked at the Tulane and Crescent theatres. I have a vague memory of seeing the blood and thunder shows at the Grand Opera House. William Farnum was the star of many shows, and also his brother, Gustin Farnum [sic]. Lester Lonergan, Alice Trent Hunt and Mabel Montgomery are other stars I saw there.
I knew Henry Greenwall, the last manager [sic] of the Grand Opera House well, and worked for him later at the Greenwall Theatre, just behind the Grand Opera House location. We got new apprentices as backstage workers by hiring them as extra men for the big shows. That way, we trained them in. Most of the shows had a uniform minimum number of men.

The Grand Opera House stage was tremendous. There was so much storage space for costumes and props. Everything was kept, not as today, when you just wire to New York for costumes for a play.

The exact location of the Grand Opera House was in the area now occupied by the S. H. Kress Store [sic] in the 900 block of Canal, and extending through to Customhouse, now Iberville. Extending back from Canal Street was the foyer to a grand stairway where the theatre widened. The entrance to the main theatre was on Canal Street, while the gallery, or pit as it was called, had its entrance on the Burgundy Street side.

From information I have gathered, the theatre consisted of a large property room, scene dock where scenery was built and stored, and two paint frames for the painting of scenery, drops, et cetera, very little velour or drapes was used at that time. Other than draperies, they used openings, windows, et cetera. A gas pressure plant was used also, included before the general use of electricity.

Interview No. 8, Fred S. Weis, July 5, 1962,

Classification No. 2.

(The late Mr. Weis, who was eighty-four years old at the time of the interview, was a well-known New Orleans attorney, who was still practicing at the time of his death in 1964.)
I saw many performances at the Grand Opera House, but I cannot remember the plays I saw. The structure was not on the corner. Christ Episcopal Church was on the corner. The theatre structure was next door. Facing the street was a one-story [sic] building. Flanking the building were two owls, one on either side. You passed beyond this building to get to the main theatre building. There were four galleries in the theatre proper. Originally, the theatre was gas lighted. A man came around with a long taper and lit the lights.

Interview No. 9, Mrs. Joseph E. Friend, July 5, 1962.

Classification No. 2.

(The late Mrs. Friend, mother of the late Julius Friend who was also an informant for this study, was when interviewed, a prominent New Orleans matron of ninety-five years. In her lifetime, this well-known lady headed countless charities, social organizations and civic clubs, and received many honors for her decades of work for charities and for the unselfish giving of herself. She was recipient of the Times-Picayune loving cup, an honor given to one of New Orleans' most outstanding citizens each year, just a year before her death. At the time of her death, in September, 1963, Mrs. Friend still headed the House for the Incurables of New Orleans, which she founded.

I was married in 1889, and did not go to the Grand Opera House until after that time, as it was not fashionable for single young ladies to go to
the theatre unescorted. Colored people had to sit in the very top balcony called the 'pit.' The theatre was gas lighted, and before the performances, a man would go around with a long taper and light them; these were the footlights. I cannot remember the plays I saw, but I saw many good ones.

Interview No. 10, Mrs. Lillie Sherman Popkin (Mrs. Hugo J. Popkin), July 6, 1962, Classification No. 3.

(Mrs. Popkin, an older sister of the mother of the writer, is the wife of a prominent New Orleans dentist, Dr. Hugo J. Popkin. Mrs. Popkin was born in 1898.)

As a small child, I went every Saturday of my life to Saturday matinee for months and months, for two seasons at least—until the Grand Opera House closed. There was a resident stock company. They had a leading man and a leading lady. Bert Lytel stands out in my mind as the leading man. Lily Langtry [sic] was the feminine star; she was a tall willowy blonde. . . . Every week there was a different play. When you think of a play like The Hunchback of Notre Dame, and to think that they put on this play in a few days! Today they take months and months of rehearsing.

I was about six [later Mrs. Popkin recalled that she must have been eight or nine years], maybe a little over six, when I first went to the Grand Opera House. There were two Klinger girls and two Covert girls and me. I think that my sister Rose [Mrs. Rose Marmelzat] came, too. We children in our family usually went out in twos, as mama [Mrs. Sarah Goldboss Sherman—Mrs. Nathan Sherman] wouldn't let us go out alone. And since Myrtle [a younger sister, now Mrs. Myrtle Sherman Barton] does not remember going, I think that Rose came along with us. But from six to ten little girls went together every Saturday to the matinees at the
Grand Opera House. Touro Glucksman took the tickets from the balcony, and he would let us in free. He told us to go in quietly and sit in the last row, and when the play began that we could move down into the best seats vacant in the balcony. That we would do.

These were the days of great acting, not like the superficiality of acting today. Even as a child I could recognize the great acting I saw. These were in the class of Helen Hayes, Katharine Cornell and Ethel Barrymore, this caliber. That was the class these were in. I was just a young child, and I remember so distinctly today, just like yesterday, the great acting! Not the superficial poor acting of people like Elizabeth Taylor and Ingrid Bergman.

They called the theatre the 'old Grand Opera House.' They didn't have the 'rushing the pit' as at the Tulane and Crescent theatres, which I remember doing when I was older, at the latter theatres. We didn't go in the Canal Street front entrance. The entrance to the balcony was around the side of the theatre. We climbed a stairway to enter and Touro Glucksman would let us in.

I don't remember specific names of plays except The Hunchback of Notre Dame. The acting was so magnificent. I was frozen to my seat. Not only the feeling of horror and pity at the misshapen hunchback, but the magnificent acting! I've never wanted to see it again, although it has played again in several productions here and in the movies, as I want to retain the impression of the marvelous performance I saw there. Bert Lytel played the major part. I cannot see, in New York or anywhere in the world, then or today, that acting could have surpassed this acting! I have no desire to see Little Theatre or local theatre today. I am a perfectionist and I don't want my impression of great acting ruined. I can't see it—they don't have the depth nor the ability. Imagine, every week a new play, and they lived their parts. I had a clear uncluttered mind, and this great acting made such an
imprint. Outside of Shirley Booth in _Come Back_, _Little Sheba_, and the three stars mentioned earlier, no one today has this ability.

Bert Lytel was such a matinee idol. The older girls, teen-agers and older, would crowd around the stage entrance after his performance, to wait for him. We small children would wait at a distance. We were too small and timid to crowd around close. They were not autograph hunters; there were none of those in those days. We all just wanted to see him. The big girls would get close and 'oh and ah'; but no tearing of buttons like today.

The balcony on Saturday matinee was never very crowded. Men were represented. That's why we were permitted to go in, because it wasn't very crowded. In those days, you didn't have Saturday afternoon off like today. People worked six days a week. You were lucky to get off on Sunday--there were no minimum work laws--some people had to work on Sunday. But men were well represented, and enjoyed the plays as much as the women. The seats were inexpensive. The highest priced seats were no more than a dollar [sic] [fifty cents was top price at this time], and these were the most expensive, the boxes.

I do not remember Negroes going to the theatre. ... Negroes were not educated to appreciate drama in that time, fifty-eight years ago, and were so worn out from working all day long, they had neither time nor inclination to go to the theatres.

Returning to _The Hunchback of Notre Dame_, the scene of the Hunchback so graphic to me is when the Hunchback goes up the ladder to the belfry to ring the bell. This is what he did in the play, he rang the bell. The pitiful rejection of the beautiful girl whom he loves causes such agony. He rings the bell, and as the bell goes backward and forward, he let [sic] go of the ladder and swung backward and forward, with a look of such utter agony on his face. I never expect in my lifetime to see such acting again. Nothing today touches such acting. I can look at television
like 'Hazel,' but most of it is so stupid, I turn it off.

I remember seeing *The Merchant of Venice*, too. I remember the disgust felt for Shylock and the hate for those who made him what he was. Those were the kind of impressions that such acting created in my mind.

I don't remember the front vestibule and entrance of the theatre, as we only went to the side entrance. Later, when we were more grown, and Touro was at another theatre, they caught on to him after awhile, and he couldn't let us in free any more. Then we'd have to pay a quarter to get in to the theatre--later, this was after the Grand Opera House. But do you know what a quarter meant in those days? A whole family could live on groceries for a week that a quarter would buy!

Touro was a friend of my parents. His family were friends of ours, and neighbors. His parents lived just a block from us. His mother had a business of Carnival costumes in the 400 block of Rampart. They made costumes for the big balls, parades, for the maskers on the floats, and for the Kings of Mardi Gras. Touro passed our house every day going to his job at the theatre, and one day he asked mama: 'Do you think the kids would enjoy going to the theatre?' and he invited us. We were so thrilled; we would dress up in our beautiful party dresses, with lovely sashes, pink and blue ribbons, and bouffant pinafores. You can imagine six of us all dressed up going out at one time! [There were six little girls in the Sherman family. Mrs. Popkin here refers to going out with her sisters, not necessarily to the theatre, since the younger sisters, Myrtle and Celia were too young to attend the theatre. The two oldest sisters, Ethel and Fannye, were already in their teens at this time.] It was an epoch for us. I feel so sorry for the children today; they are so over-saturated with luxuries, that they can't appreciate pleasure as we did. They cannot discriminate, since so much is thrown at them. Today's parents are not interested in the classics; there is no discrimination
as shown on television as to what is good or trash. Children see it all. But we learned to discriminate as to what was beautiful, and to appreciate the finer things in life!

Interview No. 11, Albert L. Voss, July 6, 1962.

Classification No. 3.

(The late Mr. Voss was a prominent citizen of New Orleans, being well known as an educator and a dramatic and musical historian and collector. Mr. Voss taught English at Warren Easton High School in New Orleans for many years, and at the time of the interview, he had retired from this position. But he was still teaching at Tulane University in the Evening Division, when interviewed. Mr. Voss taught English in the latter position, and he was still teaching at Tulane when he died on January 2, 1964. For many years Mr. Voss was a collector of dramatic and musical historical objects including pictures, books, magazines, scrapbooks, scripts, programs, tickets, musical scores and other momentos of the Golden Age days of New Orleans theatre and opera of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The writer was first put in touch with Mr. Voss by Harnett Kane, the author. Since the writer's interview with Mr. Voss was supplemented by many illustrative materials, there was really more time spent in viewing valuable momentos than in conversation. In
addition to viewing several pictures of the Grand Opera House, she was shown a seating floor plan of and ticket from the theatre which are duplicated herewith. She was shown scrap-books of pictures, photographs and newspaper clippings pertaining to many of the stars who appeared at the Grand Opera House and the other New Orleans theatres of that period. She was also shown a photograph duplicated in the *Victor Book of the Opera* which was identical to the Othello and Desdemona curtain of the Grand Opera House. She enjoyed meeting Mrs. Albert Voss, a charming and beautiful woman to whom Mr. Voss had been married for forty-five years. It is indeed ironic that both of these arresting and vibrant people, so in love and devoted for so many years, died within twelve hours, each of a heart attack, on their forty-fifth wedding anniversary.)

I was born in 1888, so you see, I was still very young when the Grand Opera House closed. I was as a boy more interested in opera than in the theatre. But I went to the Grand Opera House a number of times. However, I don't remember much of what I saw. However, these pictures show us the theatre.

Mr. Voss then showed the writer a picture of the interior of the Grand Opera House, which is duplicated in the study. Another photo from the *Times-Picayune* shows the exterior of the theatre, devoid of date. Another picture, from the *Item* newspaper shows the Christ Church Cathedral with the Grand Opera House to the left. This photograph is also duplicated...
in the study. Mr. Voss pointed out the theatre shown only partially. Mr. Voss asked the writer to get the originals or copies from libraries to duplicate. He was extremely reluctant to let her borrow any of his collecting for copying. The writer was able to secure the photos from several other sources, as indicated in the Introduction, for duplication. Mr. Voss did surprise the writer by having a copy made for her of the ticket to the third Varieties, and he sent this ticket to her about a month after the interview. The ticket copy was duplicated also for the study. The photo of the Christ Church Cathedral from the Item had a caption under it which read:

Downtown Canal Street: About Sixty Years Ago, the corner of Dauphine and Canal Streets looked like this. On the corner, where Maison Blanche Department Store now stands, was Christ Church Cathedral. The present Christ Church, consecrated in 1886, is now on St. Charles Avenue and Sixth Street. The white building with the pillars was the old Grand Opera House which extended back to Iberville Street. It was torn down years ago and the contents auctioned. Many Orleanians now possess some of its magnificent furnishings. (New Orleans Item, n.d.)

Mr. Voss pointed out that his picture of the Varieties Theatre is from Jewell's Crescent City Illustrated. Also, the diagram of the seating chart of the theatre was printed by the Illinois Central Railroad according to Mr. Voss, in 1904. Mr. Voss pointed out to the writer the various seating for the orchestra, orchestra circle and the balcony. Mr. Voss and the writer speculated as to the meaning of the "3 6"
on the ticket to the Varieties. Since there is no date on
the ticket, Mr. Voss thought that perhaps the number meant
March 6. Mr. Voss's photo of the interior of the theatre
was a newspaper copy from the Picayune, no date, of the cele­
brated scene of the interior stairway. We counted eight
steps to the first landing, then eight more steps, and two
tiers of five steps each, with a landing between. Concerning
the entrance, Mr. Voss said: "I remember the four terraced
landings, and the marble stairway. It was all marble. Note
the 'No Smoking' sign of the candelabra posts--it mars the
beauty of the entrance." The "No Smoking" signs do not ap­
ppear on other photos of the stairway as the one the writer
used for reproduction in the study.

I remember specifically what the curtain looked like.
It was a reproduction of a very famous painting by
Becker of Othello and Desdemona. The curtain lifted
upward and did not part in the middle.

At this point, we examined the photo of the painting in the
Victor Book of the Opera and the writer noted that it was
exactly as Flo Field described to her a few days before, and
she thought it remarkable that Miss Field was able to remember
it so accurately, even to Othello's stance on the step and
Desdemona's leaning on her father, and the accurate descrip­
tion of the father. Mr. Voss continued:

Scenery was much finer than anything you can get to­
day. I remember people who played at the theatre liked
Dustin [sic] and William Farnum, Lester Lonergan, Alice
Street [sic] Hunt and Mary Mannering [sic]. They played
with the stock companies. . . . I remember seeing Barrie's *The Little Minister* performed. I also remember the first performance of *Cyrano de Bergerac* in English was performed at the Grand Opera House.

Interview No. 12, Mrs. Amelia Goldenberg Joseph,

Classification No. 3.

I saw many presentations, both plays and vaudeville, at the Grand Opera House. But it was such a long time ago—I was just a little girl at the time—that I can't remember too many specifics. I saw *The Two Orphans*. The name of that play I remember clearly. I remember the theatre building clearly, too. To enter in the front entrance on Canal Street, we went through an arcade, half a block long, before entering the theatre. Also, when just a tiny little girl, we could get in as special school groups for just ten cents each—when I went this way with the school group, I didn't go through the front entrance. We would then have to go through a side entrance and sit way up on the top of the balcony. This was similar to 'rushing the pit' which I did later at the Tulane and Crescent theatres, where we would rush in for fifteen cents when everybody was already seated and before the play began, and find a seat way up at the top.

At the Grand Opera House, it was very elegant. There were boxes, and a very big stage, and the seats were all reserved [sic]. . . . [Not in the second balcony.] Many times, actors would come out between acts and talk to people in the front rows. Sometimes there would be a plank, a runway, extending into the audience, and the actors would come out and talk way out on the plank. Some of the plays were good, like classics; but they gave so many, some were dramatizations of dime novels of the day. But all the plays were acted so well, we enjoyed everything we saw. They were all done skillfully. Stock companies did the plays. Usually, one stock company stayed for many months.
When I was a child, I had to be dragged at first by my father to see operas at the French Opera House. Later, I began to like to go. But I never had to be dragged to see the plays. I went many times to the Grand Opera House to see plays. My father was a Frenchman, and he was a widower, and I had one sister. So my father would take my sister or me with him to the theatre. . . . My father sent me to a convent—the Convent of Sacred Heart in Saint James Parish. It was when I came home on vacations that my father took me to the opera or theatre with him. This did not give me too much opportunity to see plays when I was very young, because I could only attend the theatre or opera when I came home; and the convent rules were strict. They did not let us go home except for holidays. Then, too, the theatres were closed in New Orleans in the summer when I had my biggest vacation; and I spent so much time in the summer in New York, where we had relatives. So I saw many more plays in New York than I saw in New Orleans, and I preferred the theatre there. But I remember that the Grand Opera House was a beautiful theatre, more beautiful than the other New Orleans theatres.

I was married in 1906, and I was home from the convent in 1904. So in the two years that I was home before I got married, I went to the theatre there sometimes with my finance. But not often, as he did not have the 'dough-ra-me.' I do not remember specific plays there, it was so long ago, but I do remember seeing . . . Richard Mansfield. . . . But the theatre was very beautiful. I remember that the plays were always good; and going there helped me to cultivate a taste for the theatre. Of course, today there are not such excellent plays to be seen, and I am very happy I went then.
Interview No. 14, Samuel Wilson, Jr., July 15, 1962,
Classification No. 4.

(Mr. Wilson, a noted architect, is not a contemporary of the era of the Grand Opera House, but is an authority on the theatre's architecture, by virtue of his being an architectural historian. He is a man who has as a hobby collecting vast facts relating to buildings which have served a prominent part in New Orleans history and culture. He is also on the faculty of Tulane University and an official of the Vieux Carré Survey. Mr. Wilson was referred by several helpful professionals as one who could "throw light upon" the Grand Opera House. The writer found this gentleman to be most helpful and cooperative.)

The front part of the Grand Opera House was the front of an old building, the 'Lafayette Terrace,' a description of the original building being found in the City Guide of 1838. A photograph of this original front building can be found in the possession of the Vieux Carré Survey, in the office of Mr. Lloyd Cruise. The columns on the front of the Grand Opera House are the same columns as on this original building.

Mr. Wilson noted that the long arch passageway through which one had to enter despite the fact that the theatre seems from observation to front right on the street is explained by the fact that the bottom of the Lafayette Terrace was cut through in the interior to form the beginning of the arcade through the back street parallel to Canal Street. Mr. Wilson also stated that the writer could find a picture of the
exterior of the theatre in the Meugnier Photograph collection at Tulane University, a picture of the lobby interior in the book, City of New Orleans, compiled by the Chamber of Commerce, 1894, published by Englehardt, and he named Jewell's Crescent City Illustrated, 1873, as possessing a wood cut of the building. All these he said the writer could find at Tulane University and suggested she call on Mrs. Whittemore to help in the matter. This extremely helpful information proved to be most accurate, and Mrs. Dorothy Whittemore, the principal reference librarian at Tulane University, proved to be exceedingly gracious, helpful and obliging in aiding the writer. Copies of each photograph mentioned were ordered, thereby, from Tulane.

Mr. Wilson gave the writer additional valuable information. In the Notarial Archives, Court House Records, next to City Hall, Mr. Wilson found the building contract for the Grand Opera House: dated March 8, 1871; the notary was N. B. Trist, under "contract for the new Varieties Theatre," designed by Benjamin Morgan Harrod, architect. Additionally, he found: the main contract for brickwork--contract number 384, for joiners--contract number 390, for the stairway--contract number 400, coppersmith--contract number 408.
Interview No. 15, Mrs. Mae Crumb, July 15, 1962,

Classification No. 2.

(Mrs. Crumb is a prominent civic leader, and an official of the Spring Fiesta Association, as well as many other organizations; and for many years she owned and operated the Crumb Antiques, a large store located on Chartres Street in the Vieux Carré which possessed many priceless antiques. Mrs. Crumb is the mother of Mrs. Ethel Crumb Brett, the talented technical director and scenic designer of the famous Le Petit Theatre du Vieux Carré, a post which Mrs. Brett has held for many years.)

Mrs. Crumb told the writer that she remembers well going to the Grand Opera House, remembers its position on Canal Street where Maison Blanche stands today, and she remembers particularly the long passageway through which one passed before entering the theatre. Although she saw many plays at the theatre, she cannot remember them enough to discuss them since this time was so long ago. However, Mrs. Crumb was most helpful in discussing the interview subsequently with her well-known daughter, Ethel Brett, and this latter communication resulted in a phone call from Mrs. Brett in which she told the writer of the following interesting information (noted separately) concerning the location of two original plaques from the Grand Opera House now in the lobby of Le Petit Theatre.
(Mrs. Brett, the wife of the late Norris Brett, is the celebrated technical director of Le Petit Theatre du Vieux Carré, one of the oldest and most famous little theatres in the country.)

Mrs. Brett, a friend for many years, contacted the writer after the latter spoke to Mrs. Crumb, Mrs. Brett's mother, concerning the Grand Opera House. Mrs. Brett informed the writer that there were two plaques at Le Petit Theatre which once hung in the Grand Opera House, and asked the writer if she were aware of them and if she had ever noticed them. The writer had to respond in the negative, as she was not aware of them, and did not remember seeing them in her numerous previous visits to the Little Theatre. Mrs. Brett informed the writer that the two plaques, which originally hung in the Grand Opera House, now hang on either side of the lobby steps leading into the auditorium of the theatre, on opposite walls. Mrs. Brett said:

They are bronze circular plaques, one of Moliere and the other of Shakespeare. When the site of the Grand Opera House was purchased by Maison Blanche Company, and the building was torn down, the plaques were stored in the attic of Maison Blanche Building for years, before being found and offered to Le Petit Theatre, where they now hang. They were offered by Mr. Ralph Schwartz of Maison Blanche.

Mrs. Brett said that she is not sure of the location of the
plaques in the original theatre building. She graciously invited the writer to come to see the plaques anytime, and to photograph them if she so desires.

Interview No. 17, Mrs. Lucy Bing Rogillio, July 18, 1962, Classification No. 2.

(Mrs. Rogillio is a vibrant and very active lady who lives alone and seems years younger than the seventy-two years, which she was at the time of the interview. She had many interests, particularly in the field of the occult and metaphysical.)

I remember very well going to the Grand Opera House. I was born in 1890; and I'll be seventy-two in October. So you see, I was sixteen when they tore down the theatre. I was very small when I saw an opera at the Grand Opera House. I was about eight. I remember I was sitting in the first row in the balcony when everything was very quiet. It was then I spied all the bald men sitting in the orchestra. It makes a very funny story: My sister Sally took me to the opera. It was my first. Sally was my half-sister, and she was much older than I. She was about thirty at this time. Sally worked at Holmes [a leading department store in New Orleans], and she made dresses for very wealthy people, including millionairesses. In those days, measurements were taken and the dresses made individually by order. My sister Sally made me a beautiful dress for this special occasion. It was a tan pongee dress with a pink silk inserted front, a bouffant skirt and big puffed sleeves. I was so excited, and we had excellent seats in that front row in the balcony. It was a big theatre. We went in the front beautiful entrance, and there was a long arcade through which we walked to get into the theatre. Well, I saw the bald headed men, when everything was quiet, and yelled out: 'Sally, look at all those bald headed men down there!' Facing the acoustics as I was, my voice sounded
throughout the theatre and everyone laughed. You can imagine how embarrassed my sister Sally was!

You see, bald headed men habitually sat in the first section of the orchestra at the Grand Opera House, right behind the musicians in the section nearest the stage. They called that the 'bald headed' section. It seemed like they attracted each other, like chickens on a roof. They all sat in one section. You could see the shining heads very prominently from the balcony. They looked like a lot of penguins.

When I was older, I saw stock several times in the plays at the theatre. But the only opera I saw there was at that time when I was eight. I saw the plays there starting at about eleven or twelve. I saw Lester Lonergan at this time, in At Crippled Creek. This was a 'blood and thunder' drama. Crippled Creek was a junction which was the scene for the action of the play. I saw many stock company plays besides this one at this time; but now I don't remember the plots.

But the most outstanding occasion I remember was the time I caused the sensation in the audience when I called out as I did as loud as I could when I was eight!

Interview No. 18, Elizabeth Woods, July 18, 1962,

Classification No. 3.

I do remember the Grand Opera House, the prominent theatre on Canal Street where the Maison Blanche Company is located now. I attended performances in the theatre several times when I was very young. But this period when I began attending theatre performances there was a period of a very trying time for me, as I had just lost my father. Since it was a trying time, there is a haze over that whole period of my life, and I do not remember this period accurately. Therefore, I remember attending the theatre. I remember going way back through a long arcade passageway, and going up the big and beautiful staircase. And I remember sitting and watching plays. But I cannot remember what plays I saw there. I only remember being there, and what an impressive theatre it was.
Interview No. 19, Mrs. Josephine Johnston Tuckett (Mrs. Russel Tuckett), July 22, 1962, Classification No. 3.

I'm flirting with seventy now, so I clearly remember the Grand Opera House. I trotted there for matinees when I was a girl. But not as often as I liked. Mother wouldn't let me go alone to Canal Street, even almost up to the time I was married. I would be able to go out only with a large group of girls; or if escorted, the young man had to be well known to my family. There was only one [that] mother approved of my going out with alone. Or otherwise, I could go in couples of several couples. Mother and her mother were French--I wasn't taught English until well after I knew French. I learned English as a second language. These were a few of the 'musts' I adhered to as a girl, because of the French upbringing. But I do remember the theatre. I remember the way you entered from Canal Street through a long entrance through which you would walk, an arcade covered over on top. The theatre steps were way in back of this entrance, and the theatre was spread way out in back. The front on Canal Street was not an intricate part of the building itself. You can compare it to the Civic Theatre today [in New Orleans on Baronne Street], the entrance being on the main street, but not an intricate part of the theatre. The theatre was forty or fifty feet back, where the entrance to the theatre itself was. I can't remember now the plays I saw there. I can remember that they were all plays with stock companies.

Interview No. 20, Major George Tate Sheehan, July 22, 1962, Classification No. 2.

(Major Sheehan's interview the writer considers to be most valuable, as this gentleman knew Henry Greenwall and many of those associated with the Grand Opera House from 1895-1898. This gentleman, a charming conversationalist with an extremely alert mind, is a retired Major in the Army Reserves, and a former railroad executive. He was born in 1881, and was therefore eighty-one years old at the time of
the interview. The Major and his youthful, genial wife were married for fifty-one years at the time of the interview.)

My first association with the administration of the Grand Opera House was from the years 1895-1896, beginning when I was a boy about fourteen years old. It was then that I met the Assistant Stuard of the Cosmos Club which was above the Grand Opera House. The Greenwalls lived above the Grand Opera House in an apartment also. The Cosmos was a high-class society club, with high-class gambling—like poker and whist. At the time, I was very stage-struck, and was a student of tumbling and clowning, studying to be a clown pantomimist, which was a calling in demand in those days. Ed Levy, Stuard of the Cosmos Club, invited me there one day, and I met a gang of the people affiliated there, including some of the people affiliated with the Variété Association and the Grand Opera House. One day there, I met Mr. Greenwall there, and he quizzed me, showing great interest in me, a boy completely unknown to him. He was a kindly warm-hearted man, who always showed interest in others. We boys in those days were not like the boys of today who try to act independend of elders. We sought the advice of older men, and I was very happy over Mr. Greenwall's interest in me. He was like a father to me, and I became like a protégé of his. I helped backstage as a hobby, helping with scenery and props and in any way I could be of help. I met all the people who worked at the theatre. I met Eddie Norris, the scenic artist, and McGee and Swift, who were the stage manager and carpenter. William Evans, known to all of us as Billy Evans, was the press agent, and I think Mr. Greenwall's assistant. He had been a singer. Charlie Johnson, a famous tumbler, whom I admired and wanted to be like, I met there. I always called Mr. Greenwall, 'Mister Henry.' Morris Marks was the Treasurer and Mr. Henry's nephew. He was Jewish; both of them were. Mr. Henry was a great man, not only a good man, but an artist, like Otis Skinner. He was not interested in anything commercial. If
you had asked him to put something commercial in
the plays, he'd want to have killed you. He loved
to tell jokes on the Jews, good humor jokes. He
always smoked a big cigar. Wills, a ticket taker,
was also a relative of Mr. Henry. Bud Morrison
was the lithograph man. The lithographs were the
advertisements put up around town advertising the
plays. They were put up in drug stores, and in
groceries mostly, and in other kinds of stores.
I remember when I was a little boy, my father had
a chain of cigar stores; and we got passes to the
Grand Opera House for putting up the lithographs.
They were generally scenes of the plays in very
brilliant colors. They were done on stone. Mr.
Greenwall was Manager of the theatre, but he did
not generally direct the plays. The stage manager
who came with the company did so.

The Cosmos Club had a block of tickets to the
theatre, and could get in any time for perform­
ances. The first entrance of the theatre took
you to the parquette, pronounced 'parkay,' and to
the dress circle. The entrance to the pit, the
balcony, was on Burgundy Street. That's where
the little hoodlums congregated to get in the pit.
The theatre consisted of the parquette, the dress
circle, the balcony, and then the pit. The pit
was like the second balcony. There were just
wooden seats up in there, no opera chairs or any­
thing like that. It cost twenty-five cents [sic]
to go to the pit.

There was an alley about eight feet wide be­
tween the Schwartz Building, where the Maison
Blanche Building is today, and the Grand Opera
House. In that alley was a little candy stand
where Candy Benny sold candy to the patrons of
the theatre. It was home-made in his aunt's
candy kitchen. All the scenery, the back-stage
workers, and the actors and actresses went in the
Customhouse Street entrance. I used to help
take the scenery in there, through very big doors.
This was the stage entrance. Now the street is
called Iberville. Policeman Tom Griffin stayed
outside the theatre before performances for
general supervision until it was time to let the children go up to the pit, and then he went in to keep them quiet.

I met the original Eddie Foy behind stage, and I saw him and Mary Marble perform. I met George Primrose, of the Dockstader-Thatcher-Primrose and West Minstrels. They were outstanding minstrels of the day. They split up, and George Primrose and Billy West stayed together. Then they fell out. Billy West would leave performances to catch a train to New York to see the fights, missing about three nights, and a super had to go on for him. I met John King, a black-face comedian. I met Richard Mansfield, who was the actor of all actors. I saw him perform. He did eight different shows in eight performances.

I met George Adams, a clown in Fantasma. The Fantasma was an extravaganza. It had about ninety people in the cast on the stage. I was very impressed with George Adams, of course, since I was being trained as a pantomime clown by John Denier. In 1895 when I went to him he was sixty-four years old, but was so energetic and in such form, he walked that year a tightrope from Customhouse to Canal Street. On the way, he dropped a dummy from his shoulders, purposely. It was the talk of the town. It scared people who thought it was a real man falling. To get back, The Devil's Auction, which I saw at the theatre, was another extravaganza. It had elaborate mythological characters, and also pantomime clowns. The clowns in those days never spoke; they were pantomime artists. After I trained, my father would not let me become a clown. He thought I'd become a bum, and said I had only one chance in a thousand to make good.

I saw Fanny Davenport in La Tosca and Fedora. I saw Joe Hamilton in Puddin' Head Wilson by Mark Twain. Hamilton was wonderful. When I saw him, it was the first time I ever heard of him. He went on to big things. This was a serio-comic play, they called it. I also saw the Primrose
and West Minstrels. I saw John S. Marble and Mary Marble in Hoyt's *The Milk White Flag*, a light musical.

Professor Sprecht was a leader of the orchestra of the Grand Opera House. There was an overture or sometimes two selections before the play began. 'Poet and Peasant' was played the most. If, very rarely, the train was late getting in that afternoon of performance of a new play with the performers, the orchestra would play three or four times. The orchestra played in the orchestra pit, and entered through a little door under the stage. I saw *The Eight Bells* by the Hanlon Brothers. This was a knock-about musical. They used trap doors, jumped about the stage, were wonderful tumblers. I met two of the brothers.

Mr. Greenwall did the billing as early as January for the next September, or even as much as two years ahead of time. There was an old saying: 'If they can make New Orleans, they'll make the road!' New Orleans was a very difficult place to play. The audience was very critical. So to be a success in New Orleans meant you had a hit.

John Galbreath was a critic for the *Picayune*, who wrote play reviews. He was a very particular man; hard to please. I knew him well. He was a telegraph operator, the way chief, by day, at Western Union, and at night, he was a critic. I was a check boy at Western Union in 1895 when I met him. They called the *Picayune* 'the old lady.' Everyone loved to read the reviews in the *Picayune*. Galbreath was very fair.

Mr. Greenwall wanted good shows. I would listen to him talk. He wanted to make a 'snow ball' of talent. He got the idea if he could get theatres organized from Atlanta, Mobile and New Orleans to take shows every night, with a guarantee every night with continuity of dates, he'd get better shows, some that would never leave the East otherwise. He planned, and then went out to get them all in this agreement. It was a wonderful idea. In this way,
the troupes would have a guarantee, and no fear of ever getting stranded. New groups would come to the deep South that had never been here before.

Just as he was about to sign all the theatres in the plan to his agreement, he was defeated by the New York Syndicate, who bought out the other theatres. Greenwall would not join. He was a great man, a fair man, and he would not be pressured.

I was about fifteen in the nineties when I heard him talk to Dan Rose and Bob Davey, a congressman in New Orleans, about his dream of uniting the theatres and getting better theatre in New Orleans.

When the Syndicate opposed Greenwall, it was hard for him to get good companies any more. Finally, about 1899 [sic], Mr. Henry got the Grau Opera Company when he could not get a continuity of booking. Mr. Grau weighed about 115 pounds, and was about five feet four inches. Grau and his company came for a limited engagement and were so popular, they stayed on for a long time. Langlois was a principal singer with the company, and Stanley Feitch [sic] was the comedian.

I got a job with Wells Fargo Company and had to leave New Orleans, and was in and out from 1897 on. Then I was in California in the Army in 1906 when I heard about the Grand Opera House closing. This was just after the earthquake, which was April 18, 1906. Just a few weeks later, I heard the theatre closed; and Mr. Greenwall built the Greenwall Theatre, now the Palace Theatre which is being torn down. Just the other day, I went down town and watched them tearing down that historic landmark. What a shame not to preserve it!

After the Grau Opera Company, the Baldwin-Melville Company came to the Grand Opera House. Mr. Greenwall gave me passes to see it whenever I wanted to come. He would say to his nephew, Morris, in the box-office, 'Morris, give him passes.' I would say, 'Mr. Henry, I just came to see you. I don't need passes.' And he would smile and say, 'To see me and to get passes, so have the passes!'

W. H. Murdoch was leading man of the Baldwin-Melville
Company. I met William Farnum, later the leading man, also. Farnum was very egotistical. This company did many splendid shows, all stock: *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *The Lady of Lyons*, *The Two Orphans* and *Ten Nights in a Barroom* are some of the plays I saw this group do; and are the last memories I have of the Grand Opera House.

Interview No. 21, René J. Le Gardeur, Jr., July 31, 1962,

Classification No. 3.

(Mr. Le Gardeur is an executive of an export business and the author of several articles on New Orleans theatre and of the book, *The First New Orleans Theatre, 1792-1803*.)

I went once a week to matinees at the Grand Opera House while going to school in the last years before the theatre closed. Since I was only thirteen years old when it closed in 1906, I must have been eleven or twelve when I began going. But I loved it, and didn't miss a week. I'll never forget the beautiful entrance, the magnificent stairway, and the beautiful dark red carpet. Also, the long vestibule entrance; I never saw another like it! It was a long entrance-way similar to the Civic Theatre, but it wasn't opened like the Civic, but all closed in and part of the theatre. Next to the French Opera House, I think it was the most beautiful theatre I ever attended in New Orleans. When you passed through the long entrance-way, you walked into the back of the auditorium. The stage faced Canal Street.

I saw Lester Lonergan and Laura Nelson Hall there in several plays. She was a very good looking young woman, and he was a fine looking young man. They were stars of the stock company then. Plays would be changed about once a week. They played together in *Old Heidelberg* which was a dramatization of *The Student Prince*. 

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I also saw Under Two Flags there. This was a dramatization of Ouida's novel. Ouida was the pen name of Louise de la Ramée. The name is a combination of two words that mean 'yes' in French and Russian respectively: 'Oui' which is French for 'yes' and 'da' which is the Russian. She was a major novelist of the period.

I also saw The Great White Diamond Mystery, one of the many melodramas put on there. Melodramas were as popular as westerns are today.

Interview No. 21, Mrs. Ray Aschaffenburg, August 5, 1962, Classification No. 1.

(The late Mrs. Aschaffenburg was ninety years old at the time of the interview. She died approximately a year after the interview. This lady was a native of New Orleans. She was not well at the time of the interview, and was not as alert as she was prior to a severe fall and subsequent illness three years previous to the interview.)

The Grand Opera House was on Canal Street, and I went there many, many times. It was always an inviting place. It had beautiful stage settings. I saw many kinds of entertainments there--operas, musicals, plays. I remember very clearly when the Drew family played there--from granddaughter to grandmother, in one play. There were John, the eldest son [sic], Mrs. Drew, the grandmother, and the daughter who was about twelve years old at the time. In the play, the grandmother was displeased with the granddaughter and ordered her to her room with the words: 'Go to your room. You have been a very naughty girl!' This was the farewell appearance of the Drew family together.

On another occasion, I wanted very badly to get
into a matinee in which a celebrated actress was playing. It was a complete sell-out, not even standing room was to be had. I was so disappointed, but I determined to get in anyway. I knew well the Durier [sic] family who were managing the theatre at the time. I went in and did not ask, but told them, I was coming in to see the play. They let me stand in the back, and I stood up for the whole play, but I saw it!

I remember seeing Sarah Bernhardt in *Camille*. That was outstanding! And I saw many other plays there, but I can no longer remember them. I could remember much better before becoming ill three years ago, but I broke my hip, and suffered so, and now my memory is not so good.

**Interview No. 23, Mrs. Fred Lafon, August 12, 1962,**

**Classification No. 4.**

(Mrs. Lafon is the widow of Fred Lafon who worked in the Grand Opera House from 1905 until the theatre closed in 1906, as a scene carrier and backstage worker. The writer became acquainted with Lafon's connection with the theatre by reading the article in "Dixie Magazine" of the *Times-Picayune* from May 8, 1955, an article which tells of Lafon's experiences with the theatre. When the writer called his home, Mrs. Lafon informed her that Mr. Lafon died in 1960. The writer arranged an interview with Mrs. Lafon subsequently.

I do not remember much about Fred's experiences at the Grand Opera House, as I did not meet him until years after that. I am fifteen years younger than my husband, and he was very young when he had that job.
He became maintenance man at the Municipal Auditorium in the 30's, and left there when we opened the Happy Landing Restaurant [which had burned down a year prior to the interview]. He talked mostly about his more recent experiences in the theatre to me, at the Auditorium, but I do remember his discussing his recollections at the Grand Opera House which are printed in the 'Dixie' article. I remember his telling me about the bad house at the theatre when weather kept a prominent star from performing: how he, Fred, was once the hind legs of an elephant in an extravaganza when the star rode onstage on the 'animal,' and how he wove waves from the wings in sea storm scenes. Of all the theatres he worked in, my husband liked best the beauty of the Grand Opera House, as is stated in the article.

Interview No. 24, Mrs. Corinne Schneider Guidry (Mrs. Louis Guidry), November 24, 1964, Classification No. 3.

(Mrs. Guidry is the grandmother of Alloyd P. Lambert, Jr., who has been most helpful in assisting with data for this study.)

I remember attending performances at the Grand Opera House. I remember its prominent location on Canal Street. I remember how good the stock company acting was. But I do not remember specific performances.

Interview No. 25, Mrs. Rose Sherman Marmelzat, June 21, 1964, Classification No. 3.

(Mrs. Marmelzat is now living in Los Angeles, California, but was interviewed in New Orleans during a visit to her home city of New Orleans. She is an older sister of Mrs. Lil Sherman Popkin.)
I attended Grand Opera House performances with sister Lil and two Covert children. We were always let in free by Touro Glucksman. I remember Lester Lonergan the most vividly, and will never forget a performance I saw of Monte Cristo. However, I can't remember any details. It was too long ago.

Interview No. 26, Louis Burdette Harris, July 4, 1964,

Classification No. 3.

(Mr. Harris was seventy-two years old at the time of the interview.)

I saw The Belle of New York [sic] at the Grand Opera House. I sat in a dress circle seat. I always sat in the dress circle there, but that play is the only one I remember distinctly. It was a musical. I never sat in the pit. They called the gallery the pit. The stage faced Canal Street, and was closest to Canal Street. At the entrance to the ticket collector, it was black and white marble on the floor. There were three large chandeliers, one at the entrance, another at the middle and the third near the box office. I know that the Farnum brothers, E. A. Sothern and Theodore Gamble [sic] played there.

Interview No. 27, Leo Van Os, July 4, 1964,

Classification No. 3.

(Mr. Van Os is a distinguished New Orleans citizen, very active and well known in theatre circles. He is on the Board of Le Petit Theatre, and is a member of the play-reading committee of that theatre.)

I was born in 1892, so I was still very young when I went to the Grand Opera House. [He was fourteen years when the theatre closed.] I remember the
beautiful red carpeting in the magnificent vestibule. I particularly remember seeing 
Monte Cristo at the Grand Opera House, because that was the first play I ever saw. I also saw
there Under Two Flags and East Lynn.

Interview No. 28, Miss Zillah Mendes Meyer, July 4, 1962.
Classification No. 2.

(Miss Meyer is a very well-known person in theatre and artistic circles in New Orleans. She taught speech and drama for many years at McMain High School in New Orleans— and the writer was a student of Miss Meyer at that school. Although she is now retired, she is very active in theatre circles. She is a board member of Le Petit Theatre, and a member of the play-reading committee and of Le Petit Theatre Guild.)

I was born in 1880. I am now eighty-four. And I remember the great days of the Grand Opera House. [She remembers particularly five outstanding stars that she saw perform during the brilliant season of 1895-1896.] I saw Sarah Bernhardt in several of Sardou's plays [in the 1895-1896 season]. Truthfully, I didn't think too much of Bernhardt. Of course, I was very young when I saw her, and wasn't a critic. But, I thought so much more of Fanny Davenport's acting. She was marvelous. I also saw Ellen Terry and Sir Henry Irving in The Merchant of Venice, and will never forget that production! Too, I saw Otis Skinner, I think the same year.

Later in the days of stock, I saw East Lynne at the Grand Opera House.
VITA

Shirley Madeline Harrison is a native of New Orleans. She received her early schooling at Henry W. Allen School, McMain and Isidore Newman schools, receiving her high school diploma at the latter preparatory school. Miss Harrison attended Sophie Newcomb College in New Orleans and Goodman Theatre of the Art Institute of Chicago. She earned her bachelor's degree in Secondary Education from Loyola University, New Orleans, in 1952, with teaching fields in Speech-English-Social Sciences. Miss Harrison received her master's degree in 1955 from Tulane University, with a dual sequence in Social Group Work and Theatre. She has additional training in theatre and art from a number of professional schools including the New Orleans Art School, the Inter-Arts Workshop, New York City, and in Los Angeles at Michel Chekhov's Workshop, Francis Lederer's Workshop and Jack Fenimore's Cinema Workshop. Miss Harrison has extensive background in working with children in creative dramatics, in teaching on the high school and college and university levels, in directing and acting both professionally and in educational and community theatre, and in writing. In the latter instance she has served as dramatic critic and columnist of several newspapers. She
has appeared professionally in summer stock, television, cinema, on the stage and on the radio. Currently, she is Assistant Professor of Speech at McNeese State College, Lake Charles, Louisiana.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate:  Shirley Madeline Harrison

Major Field:  Speech

Title of Thesis:  The Grand Opera House (Third Varieties Theatre) of New Orleans, Louisiana, 1871 to 1906

Approved:

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Date of Examination:

May 3, 1965

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