The Theatre During the Confederacy.

Iline Fife

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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THE THEATRE DURING THE CONFEDERACY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Speech

by

Hine Fife
B. A., University of Texas, 1937
M. A., Louisiana State University, 1942
June, 1949
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- Library of Congress
- Theatre Division, New York Public Library
- Division of manuscript and newspapers, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina;
- Duke University, Durham, North Carolina;
- Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Division of Newspapers, Washington Memorial Library, Macon, Georgia.
- Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina;
- Montgomery, Alabama; and Jackson, Mississippi
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ABSTRACT

Notwithstanding the fact that the theatre in America in its various phases and periods has been the subject of much study, almost nothing has heretofore been written on the theatre in the South during the Civil War. As a matter of fact, the theatre had become important in the South long before the Civil War, and the wartime theatre is now known to have been an active institution.

The purpose of this dissertation has been to discover (1) to what extent the legitimate theatres in the South remained open during the Civil War; (2) the kind of theatrical activity that prevailed; and (3) in what ways the theatres were affected by the war.

The geographical area covered by the study has been limited to the states which formed the core of the Confederacy, and to the theatrical activity of those states only so long as they remained a part of the Confederacy.

The newspapers of the period are the principal source of information. The only other important source is the John Hill Hewitt collection at Emory University. Scrapbooks and clippings files, particularly of the New York Public Library, furnish a few valuable items.

Whatever may have been the general impressions and uninformed opinions to the contrary, the theatre flourished in the South during the war. At the beginning of the 1860-61 season it was doing a brisk business in the key cities of the states which later formed the
Theatrical activity was not confined to the larger metropolitan areas alone, but was widespread, with touring companies taking the drama to the villages and smaller cities.

The mounting tension created by the secession of the states of the lower South and the formation of the Confederates States of America affected the attendance of some of the theatres and brought about an earlier spring closing in 1861 than was usual. With the attack upon Fort Sumter, the theatres which had not already found the rising tide of excitement too much competition closed and the companies disbanded. Most of the better actors and managers went to the North. From April to September there was no real theatrical activity in the Confederacy.

By early fall, the Confederacy had become adjusted to its new status and the cities began to make plans for the resumption of the regular theatrical season. Concert Hall and the Academy of Music opened in New Orleans, and the Richmond (Virginia) Theatre opened under the management of John Hill Hewitt. Theatrical activity in the cities of the lower South was confined largely to miscellaneous entertainments and amateur productions; it took time for disbanded companies and displaced actors to reassemble into new companies under new managers, and to prepare legitimate productions.

The period from the fall of 1862 through the spring of 1864, was one of growth and development in which the theatre came of age. During this time the veteran actor and manager William H. Crisp withdrew from the army to return to the managerial field; younger managers developed; and young and inexperienced actors reached professional
maturity. The Queen Sisters, a juvenile amateur group who began with benefit performances in Charleston, developed into an important professional company.

The period beginning with the summer of 1864 and continuing until the collapse of the Confederacy in the spring of 1865 was one of deterioration. The theatres did not close, but there was a noticeable decline in the quality of the actors who made up the companies, in the quality of the performances, and in the types of plays presented. This decline was due mainly to the depletion of companies by the raids of the conscript officers and by voluntary enlistment into the army.

The Confederate theatre made little or no permanent contribution to the cultural life of the South, but it served to keep up the morale of the troops and the citizens. It also served as a training period for young and inexperienced actors, many of whom went north after the war to continue their careers on the New York stage. No new playwrights arose during the period except James D. McCabe and John Hill Hewitt, and neither of these made any contribution of permanent value or literary merit. As far as the style of acting, the staging, and the plays produced were concerned, the status quo ante bellum was maintained.

Although a number of local farces and war dramas were written and produced, repertoires consisted mainly of the standard tragedies, comedies, and melodramas of the period, together with a surprising amount of Shakespearean drama. The bills were often better than the performances. The exigencies of the times made it difficult to
provide the proper staging, costuming, and make-up, and the actors were not adverse to taking advantage of the war as an excuse for a poor performance. Nevertheless, many productions were good.

Many "cany Cromwell's" opposed the theatre, but many others, more accurately interpreting human nature, upheld the theatre as a more desirable form of recreation than "rot-gut whisky" and gambling dens. The soldiers and transients formed the greater part of the audience. The substantial citizens and their families patronized the theatre too, but less frequently.

On the whole, the theatre received the support of the Confederacy. Transportation facilities were made available to the touring companies; in the earlier part of the war, at least, the actors seemed to enjoy considerable leniency from the conscript authorities; the press devoted considerable space to the drama, and in most cases, supported it faithfully.

Although the critics of the theatre found much to condemn and much to forgive in the quality of the performances, they also found much to praise. The managers and actors as a whole displayed great courage, energy, and ingenuity in reviving and developing the theatre during four years of war, and in so doing they performed a service to the Confederacy.
INTRODUCTION

Long before the Civil War, even in the earliest colonial years, the theatre had become an institution of importance in the cultural life of the South. The cavaliers of Virginia were more tolerant of theatrical entertainments than were the straight-laced Puritans of New England. One of the earliest dramatic productions on record in the colonies occurred in Virginia in 1665, when a group of enterprising citizens presented a playlet entitled Ye Bare and ye Cubb. The group of would-be actors were ordered to appear in court, but after repeating the performance for the honorable judges, they were found not guilty! Apparently the court did not regard the citizens' histrionics worthy of being called a play.\(^1\)

The first theatre known to have been built in the colonies was erected at Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1716, and another was built at Annapolis, Maryland, as early as 1760. Charleston, South Carolina, early developed one of the richest theatrical traditions of any city in the country. Savannah entertained traveling players in the 1700's and constructed a new theatre as early as 1817. New Orleans, almost from its founding, became famous as the gayest city in the United States. The early theatres, the finest of which was the St. Philip Street Theatre, gave plays only in French; after the

Louisiana Purchase this theatre was shared with American players. An American theatre was built in New Orleans by Ludlow in 1824, and the famous St. Charles Theatre was opened in 1835. The latter was said to rival in size and importance the most famous playhouses in Europe. The Varieties, the Academy of Music Hall, and the Opera House were built in the 1850's. Richmond had a theatre early in her history. It was burned in 1811 and was rebuilt in 1819, and was burned and rebuilt several times thereafter. Wilmington, North Carolina, made provisions for accommodating theatrical groups in the late 1700's. Mobile had a fine brick theatre in 1824, and between that date and 1855 six additional theatres were constructed there, although not all were in operation simultaneously. Atlanta, although not much more than a frontier village, built the Athenaeum in the 1850's. Montgomery had always been a patron of the drama, but had no regular playhouse until 1860, when the new Montgomery Theatre was opened.

By 1860 all the larger cities of the South had built playhouses, and the smaller towns and villages were always able to provide space in some building or hall to accommodate a traveling troupe. Not only were many of the playhouses in the South comparable to those found anywhere else in the country, but they were managed by such celebrities as Alexander Placide and Joseph Jefferson. They played host to the best stars that the New York and London stages had to offer, to Forrest, the Booths, the Jeff ersons, Kean, Macready, and many others.
Numerous studies have been made on the various phases of the theatre in America. The general subject has been treated from almost every possible angle. There are books that deal with plays, with playwrights, with actors, and other special fields. There are books that deal with special periods, from the colonial to the modern; there are books that deal with particular cities and localities; there are biographies, autobiographies, and reminiscences of actors and actresses. There are histories that cover the theatre from the ancient Greeks to Broadway, but none of them includes any information on the theatre in the South during the Civil War. Arthur Hobson Quinn, in his *History of the American Drama from the Civil War to the Present*, devotes a few pages to the theatre during the war period, but he deals almost entirely with the drama in the North, except for a mere mention of James D. McCabe's play, *The Guerrillas*, which was produced in Richmond in December, 1862. Thomas Allston Brown, in his *History of the American Stage*, records information about a number of actors who had played in the South during the Civil War, but he rarely mentions their activity in the Confederacy. The history of the theatre in America from 1861 to 1865, so far as the South is concerned, is almost a complete blank.

In recent years a number of studies for master's theses have been done on various theatres in the South, but only two of them

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include the period of the war, and none of them, so far as the writer has been able to discover, has been published. The two which include the war period are The Theatre in Columbus, Georgia from 1828 to 1878, by William Osler Langley, M. S., thesis, Alabama Polytechnic, 1937; and A History of the Theatrical Activities in Baton Rouge, 1818-1890, by Alban Varmado, M. A. thesis, Louisiana State University, 1947. There are a number of studies on the theatre which cover an earlier period: Dramatic Productions in New Orleans from 1817-1861, by Mrs. Johnnie Perkins, M. A. thesis, Louisiana State University, 1929; A Detailed Survey of the New Orleans Theatre from 1800 to 1825, Beverly B. Lyle, M. A. thesis, Louisiana State University, 1938; The Mobile Theatre 1822 to 1860, Mary Morgan Duggar, M. A. thesis, University of Alabama, 1941; The Ante-Bellum Theatre in Montgomery, Alabama, 1840 to 1860, La Margaret Turnipseed, M. A. thesis, Alabama Polytechnic, 1948. This is by no means a complete list of the studies, but only a sampling to indicate the type of studies done.

There are also a few doctoral dissertations on various phases of southern theatrical history. The Theatre in Southwest Mississippi to 1840, a doctoral dissertation by Joseph Miller Free, University of Iowa, 1941, is an excellent study of the theatre in a small section of the ante-bellum South.

The works on the colonial and early national period such as Ludlow's Dramatic Life as I Found It, and Dunlap's History of the American Theatre, although valuable contributions, are being rewritten
by modern scholars. W. Stanley Hock's study, *The Ante-Bellum Charleston Theatre*, published in 1965, is an excellent example of such rewriting.

Valuable as these studies are, it is still evident that almost nothing has been done on the theatre in the South during the Civil War. From the material that has been published, or rather from the lack of it, it would seem as if with the outbreak of the war, the managers had rung down the curtain on the Southern stage and that it had remained down for the duration.

It was curiousity as to what might have taken place in the legitimate theatres in the South from the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 to its close in 1865 that led Dr. C. L. Shaver to suggest this study and the writer to undertake it. The purpose of the study has been to discover (1) to what extent the legitimate theatres in the South remained in operation during the Civil War; (2) the kind of theatrical activity that went on in the theatres; and (3) in what ways the theatres were affected by the war.

The principal sources of information on the theatre in the South during the war is the newspapers of the period. The only other important source is the collection of scrapbooks, manuscript plays, and prose writings of John Hill Hewitt, theatre manager, musician, and playwright during the Confederacy, at Emory University. Scrapbooks and clipping files, particularly of the New York Public Library, furnish a few valuable items. Letters, diaries,
and journals of the period yield but little information.

A considerable amount of secondary and related material has been consulted for background information on the theatrical, social, and military conditions in the South.

The following is a list of the libraries and archives consulted with a brief comment on the material found. Items from these libraries and archives constitute the principal entries in the bibliography found at the end of this work (p. 468 ff.).

Library of the University of Wisconsin
This library has a large collection of Southern newspapers. The files are by no means complete, but the papers are sufficient in number and variety to be valuable in a preliminary survey.

Richmond, Virginia
1. Confederate Museum
   a. Richmond Newspapers, primarily the Sentinel; Southern Punch, and The Southern Illustrated News. These last two are weekly magazines, and although the files are not complete they were very valuable sources of information.
   b. Excellent file of the Charleston Daily Courier.
   c. Collection of Confederate music.

2. Virginia State Library
   a. Daily Newspapers
      Richmond Dispatch
      Richmond Daily Enquirer
      Richmond Examiner
      Richmond Whig
      The files of each are not complete, but taken together they make an excellent collection.
   b. Incomplete files of The Magnolia, A Weekly Home Journal of Richmond and The Southern Illustrated News, but both are extremely valuable.
   c. Two plays of the period in the Rare Book Coll. The Guerrillas, James D. McCabe
      Great Expectations, printed
      Great Expectations, printed by C. H. Wynne.
3. The Valentine Museum
Scrapbooks and clippings, and a large collection or printed plays. There is not a great deal of pertinent material here.

Library of Congress

A fairly large file of The Southern Illustrated News; fortunately, this file contains issues not in the Virginia State Library. Although the Library of Congress has considerable material on the theatre, unfortunately it does not pertain to the Civil War period in the South.

New York Public Library

1. Clippings, play bills (but only one playbill for a Southern theatre).
2. Scrapbooks
3. Files of literary and theatrical magazines
   The New York Public Library has a great wealth of theatre material, but not a great deal that pertains to the Confederacy; however, a few very valuable items were found here.

Library of the University of North Carolina

1. Letters
2. Diaries and journals
3. North Carolina newspapers: The file of the Wilmington Daily Journal is the most complete. This library has an excellent collection of unpublished manuscript material which furnishes invaluable information on many phases of Confederate history, but there is little relating to the theatre.

Library of Duke University, Durham, North Carolina

1. Newspapers:
   a. The New Orleans Bee, a complete file and in excellent condition
   b. Augusta Daily Constitutionalist, fairly complete files beginning in 1862 and going through 1864.
   c. The Southern Field and Fireside, a weekly magazine published in Augusta, Georgia. The file is fairly complete.
2. Manuscript collection of letters, diaries, sheet music, broadsides, handbills, etc., but little relating to the theatre.
Raleigh, North Carolina, Department of Archives and History

Good collection of letters and diaries of the war, but they are of little value for the theatre.

Library of the University of South Carolina, Columbia
No material for the period; only a few scattered issues of daily newspapers.

Atlanta, Georgia
1. Carnegie Library: Incomplete file of the Atlanta Southern Confederacy, a valuable source.
2. Emory University Library
   a. John Hill Hewitt collection
      This collection includes about forty unpublished dramatic pieces, a fictionized autobiography in two volumes, a narrative history of the Confederacy, several volumes of prose and poetry, clippings, theatre handbills, and music, and various miscellaneous items. Although the material is restricted, Mr. Richard B. Harwell graciously granted the writer permission to use the material.
   b. There are also a few issues of The Southern Field and Fireside and The Southern Illustrated News.

Savannah, Georgia
The newspaper office of the Savannah Daily Morning News has files of the paper covering the war period with the exception of the period from July to December 1862, and January to July 1864. These portions have been lost. There is a Digest of the newspaper, compiled by the W. P. A., that is a valuable aid in using the papers.

Macon, Georgia: Washington Memorial Library
Complete file of the Macon Daily Telegraph and in excellent condition.

Montgomery, Alabama: Department of Archives and History
1. Montgomery newspapers
   a. Montgomery Daily Mail, and Weekly Mail; Daily Post, Daily Confederation. Files are incomplete, but altogether there is a fair collection. There are a few numbers of the Advertiser, but this file is in very bad condition.
2. Mobile Advertiser and Register. The file is incomplete but is valuable.
3. The Department of Maps and Manuscripts has a fine collection of letters, scrapbooks, diaries, etc., but very little is relative to the theatre.

Jackson, Mississippi: Department of Archives and History
1. A small, but well organized collection of letters, diaries, etc., but again little that pertains to the theatre.
2. The newspaper files are most inadequate for the Civil War period. The best file is the Natchez Courier; the other papers from 1861-1865 are so scattered as to be of little value.

New Orleans, Louisiana
1. The Picayune newspaper office has files of the Picayune.
2. Tulane University Library has incomplete files of New Orleans papers.

Hill Memorial Library, Louisiana State University
This library has a good collection of New Orleans newspapers, particularly the Daily True Delta, the Picayune, and the Daily Crescent.

This study has been limited to the theatrical activity of the states which formed the core of the Confederacy. The scope of the study has been determined by: (1) The availability of newspaper material; (2) the geographical location of the states, and (3) the length of time a given state remained a part of the Confederacy.

Texas, Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Florida have not been included. Texas and Florida, because they were on the periphery of the Confederacy, were remote from contact with the centers of social activity. Tennessee and Arkansas were occupied by the Federals early in the war. Though Vicksburg did not fall to the Union until July 4, 1863, the Mississippi newspapers for the whole war period are practically non-existent, and therefore an adequate study of the theatre in this section could not be made. Moreover,
from the scattered papers which are available, the indications are that there was no professional theatre in Mississippi of any significance. The lack of theatrical activity in Mississippi may be partly accounted for by the fact that the struggle for Mississippi, particularly for Vicksburg, began early in the war and continued until that city finally fell in July, 1863.

Further, this study has been limited by the original purpose of the dissertation to the professional theatre. The many private theatricals which were very popular during the war have not been included. They were got up by private individuals for social entertainment, or to raise money for the soldiers, mostly the former. Neither has the theatrical activity among the soldiers in the army been included, for this study is concerned exclusively with the legitimate theatre, whose existence, then as now, was a purely commercial affair.

The nature and the amount of the information collected has made the organization of the material a major problem. In the first place, there is a great deal of repetition in the kind of information. The theatres ran night after night, week after week, month in and month out with the same actors and the same repertoire. The recording of such data, as one newspaper of the period expressed it, becomes "stale, flat, and unprofitable." In the second place, there is a great mass of material for some theatres, while for others there is little information, or great gaps in the material. Therefore, it has seemed impractical to try to give a day by day record of the Confederate stage. In order to give an authentic overall picture of
the theatre in the Confederacy, an effort has been made to select a sufficient number of details which were typical of the activity in the theatre, and to include such details as seemed to have a special significance.

The period covered, 1861 to 1865, is so brief that there were no new trends, changes, or developments in dramatic literature or theatre principles to be traced. There were, on the other hand, many evidences of improvement in the personal excellence of the theatre people, as the companies within the Confederacy gained experience.

To try to follow any actor or group of actors through the period seemed impractical. Organization of data on the basis of plays, staging, or playwrights seemed inadvisable because, as will be seen, there were no plays of merit written during the period, and few changes in types of plays produced or in styles of production. The status quo ante-bellum was more or less maintained. There were only two men who might be considered playwrights of the Confederacy, and they can be adequately treated in a few pages.

After a careful consideration of the many possible ways of handling the material, it was evident that a chronological treatment of the material by theatrical seasons would be the most valuable and practical. There are two drawbacks to this plan of organization. First, there are gaps in the information available for some of the theatres, and second, during the war, particularly in Richmond, the theatre seasons were not well defined. The theatres remained open almost continuously without intermission between seasons. Nevertheless,
there was usually some event such as the engagement of a new star, or a series of benefits for members of the company which can be used to make plausible the division of the seasons. Each season is treated as a chapter. There are nine chapters, with an introduction and a summary.
The Confederacy did not come into existence at once.

The startling events of the summer of 1861. The secession of the Southern States. The war between the two sections of the country. The preparations for war. The battles of Bull Run. The capture of Fort Sumter. The transfer of the seat of government to Richmond. The fall of Vicksburg. The capture of Atlanta. The surrender of Lee at Appomattox. The end of the Civil War.
State after State is taking its forts and fortresses. They say if we had been left out in the cold alone, we might have sulked a while, but back we would have had to go, and would merely have fretted and fumed and quarreled among ourselves. We needed a little wholesome neglect. Anderson has blocked that game, but now our sister States have joined us, and we are strong. I give the condensed essence of the table-talk: "Anderson has united the cotton States. Now for Virginia!" "Anderson has opened the ball." Those who want a row are in high glee. Those who dread it are glum and thoughtful enough.2

In the first days of January 1861, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida passed ordinances of secession. Georgia withdrew on January 16, Louisiana on January 26, and Texas on February 1. On February 4 delegates from six of the states met in Montgomery, Alabama, to form a new government for the seceded states. On account of the distance and the difficulty of travel, the Texas delegates did not reach Montgomery until the convention had completed its work of organizing the Provisional Government, but they arrived in time to vote acceptance of the new government.

There was a great stir and hubbub in Montgomery throughout these early days in which the Provisional Government was being set up. The city was crowded with the leaders of the South, with office seekers, with soldiers, and with the usual miscellaneous collection of the idle and curious. Mrs. Chesnut, writing from Montgomery, where she had gone with her husband, who was a member of the convention, has left the following picture of the social and political

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activities in that city:

Everybody who comes here wants an office, and the many who, of course, are disappointed raise a cry of corruption against the few who are successful. I thought we had left all that in Washington. Nobody is willing to be out of sight, and all will take office.

Mr. Cushman, in high spirits, dines to-day with the Louisiana delegation. Breakfasted with "Constitution" Broun, who is appointed Assistant Secretary of State, and so does not go to Washington. We dine at Mr. Pallard's and go to a ball afterward at Judge Bibb's.

A brilliant dinner at the Pallard's. Mr. Bannell took me down. Came home and found the Judge and Governor Moore waiting to go with me to the Bibb's. And they say it is dull in Montgomery!  .  .  .

Montgomery

Notwithstanding the excitement and tension created by secession, the theatres in the principal cities of the Confederacy, at least in the early months of 1861, kept the even tenor of their way. In Montgomery W. W. Canning was the "sole lessee and manager" of the Montgomery Theatre, with J. W. Albaugh as the acting manager. Some of the actors and actresses whose names appeared in the theatre advertisements during January of that year were Miss Emma Mitchell, Mr. Barr, J. M. Ward, James Lewis and Miss Mary Mitchell. Mary and Emma were sisters of the more famous Maggie Mitchell. Among the play titles appearing in the theatrical notices in the paper were Drown at Sea, An Alarming Sacrifice, Everybody's Friend, Irish Assurances, and American Modesty.  

3 Ibid., 9-10
4 Montgomery Daily Confederation, January 20, 1861.
5 Ibid., January 25, 26, 27, 30, 1861.
particularly gifted one, for a talented group usually included more serious and classical dramas in its repertoire.

An interesting event in the Montgomery theatre during January was the benefit of J. W. Ward. The bill included a play entitled Eddystone Elf, a dance by Miss Mollie Williams, and a song and a dance by James Lewis. These numbers were followed by two plays, Irish Assurance and American Modesty, after which Miss Emma Mitchell danced, and Barr sang a comic song. Then, as if that were not enough, W. P. Sheldon appeared in Richard III. Ward's popularity was demonstrated on the night of his benefit by the large audience which greeted him. Not only that, but the "feature of the evening was the presentation of a beautiful silver cup" by Manager Canning on behalf of several of Mr. Ward's admirers. The gift was received by Mr. Ward with a few remarks in which he thanked the "kind donors for their complimentary token of esteem." 8

The highlight of the theatrical season occurred in February, when Miss Maggie Mitchell began an engagement at the Montgomery Theatre. It was fortunate that the theatre was able to present its distinguished guests and the general public with so fine an actress as Miss Mitchell. She had made her debut on the New York stage in June of 1851 as the child Julia in the play entitled The Soldier's Daughter. 9

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6 "Benefit" is a theatrical term referring to a performance in which the net proceeds were given to an individual actor. Contracts usually provided for a specified number of benefits.

7 Ibid., January 30, 1861.

8 Ibid., February 1, 1861.

Odell refers to her as "dear little Maggie Mitchell" and "that radiant girl." Before coming to Montgomery she had just closed an engagement at the St. Charles Theatre in New Orleans, where her acting had been highly praised.

The play for the opening performance of Mitchell's Montgomery engagement was the French Spy, in which Maggie played three different parts, an achievement which was looked upon with great favor. She also appeared in a second play on the same program entitled Nicholas Nickleby. Her opening performance was greeted by an excellent house and considerable enthusiasm by the press:

Largest and most fashionable audience of the season congregated at this place of amusement on last Friday night, to do homage to youth, beauty, and talent. The Dress Circle was perfectly brilliant with the fair ones of our city, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, which made hearts rejoice, for it plainly showed, to our mind, that the public has an eye to true merit, and will not let it go unrewarded. The beautiful and thrilling military drama entitled the "French Spy," was rendered in an elegant manner, every one knowing their parts and doing their (sic) best.

Miss Mitchell continued to draw good houses for the first part of her engagement, in spite of the excitement attendant upon the constitutional convention then meeting in the city, for a few nights

10 Ibid., 234.
11 Ibid., 246.
13 Montgomery Daily Confederation, February 1, 1861.
14 Ibid., February 3, 1861.
later the paper stated:

Another large audience, we are happy to say, was assembled at the theatre, Tuesday night (February 5), and a more delighted or better pleased audience we have never seen. Miss Maggie was truly brilliant; yea, if there is such a thing as exceeding oneself (sic), she did it on that evening. . . . The characters were all well taken and played excellently...

Among the plays in which Mitchell appeared during this engagement were *Jeanie Deans,* *Antony and Cleopatra,* *Satan in Paris,* *Milly, the Maid with the Milking Pail,* *Kathleen,* *The Wept of the Wish-Ton-Wish,* *As You Like It,* *Nan, the Good for Nothing,* *The Cricket,* and a farce, "written especially for her," called *The Three Sisters.*

An interesting incident occurred during a performance of the Indian play, *The Wept of the Wish-Ton-Wish.* The small child called for in the play screamed so one night that the curtain had to be brought down and one of the "Indians," a modest novice, came before the curtain and delivered the following:

Ladies and Gentlemen: We must ask your indulgences for a few moments, as the child in the last act disturbed the play, and we have to delay the second act until we can get another child.

Towards the latter part of Mitchell's engagement, the activities of the convention interfered somewhat with the interest which at first had been shown in her engagement. For instance, on one occasion the paper observed that the theatre attendance was not

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15 Ibid., February 7, 1861.

16 Reported in the New Orleans Daily True Delta, February 27, 1861.
Montgomery Theatre.

SOL. LESSEE & MANAGER: M. W. CANNING.
STAGE MANAGER: A. W. ALBAUGH.

NINTH NIGHT OF MRS.
MAGGIE MITCHELL.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, FEB. 13th.
Will be performed Shakespeare's great play entitled

As You Like It.

Miss Maggie Mitchell.

The Cook Is Nothing Nam.

Miss Maggie Mitchell.

63. In rehearsal CRICKET.

Box office open daily from 9 A.M. until 5 P.M., and from 8 until 6 P.M., where seats may be secured without extra charge.

DAILY CONFEDE RATION
Montgomery, February 13, 1861
as good as it had been because of a meeting of the citizens and the serenading of the distinguished men who were in Montgomery at that time. But a few days later "there was a perfect jam at the theatre" on the occasion of the performance of the "new piece," entitled The Cricket, which had created such a sensation in New Orleans when Mitchell had presented it there. However, the affairs of the Confederacy soon took precedence over the theatre and Mitchell played her farewell benefit before a poor house.

Owing to the President's arrival on the night train, there was not so good an attendance as we expected on last Saturday night, to take a farewell parting of Miss Maggie Mitchell. The performance was very good, equally as well as the night before. Miss Maggie was peculiarly happy as "Colin" in Nature and Philosophy," and gave general satisfaction.

After Mitchell's departure for New Orleans, where she was to fill a second engagement at the St. Charles, W. P. Sheldon took a benefit. The bill included The Merchant of Venice, Othello, and a farce called Morons. Probably only portions of the first two were played, as it was customary, on occasion, to play a part of several long plays rather than any one in its entirety. The press stated that there had never been an actor in the city more deserving than Sheldon and that "as a comedian he (had) but few equals."

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17 Montgomery Daily Confederation, February 12, 1861.
18 Ibid., February 17, 1861.
19 Ibid., February 19, 1861.
20 Ibid., February 17, 1861.
The audience seems to have diminished and the quality of the plays seems to have grown steadily poorer as the season progressed. For example:

There was a miserably poor audience at the theatre Saturday evening, to greet the "Six Degrees of Crime." Although the attendance was slim, the company done (sic) justice to the piece and created many warm admirers. . . .

The performance concluded with the richest and raciest Farce we have seen this season, entitled "Hunting a Turtle," which abounds in mirth-provoking and rib-tickling scenes and situations. It was played with spirit and life, and passed off splendidly amidst frequent and loud applause.21

And a few nights later the paper observed that "there was a decidedly poor audience to greet the beautiful and thrilling drama of 'Theresa,'" which had been given on March 12.

On March 14 a Mr. Forest and a Mr. Steinmuits were scheduled to appear in Damon and Pythias and Man and Tiger.22 This performance appears to have marked the end of the spring theatrical season in Montgomery. Normally, the season lasted until the latter part of April or into May, but the unsettled conditions attendant upon the setting up of a new government, preparations for the eventuality of war, and the tension growing out of the Fort Sumter affair seemed, for a time, to divert the minds of the people from amusement. The audiences grew steadily smaller and smaller until it no longer seemed worthwhile to try to extend the season.

21 Ibid., March 12, 1861.
22 Ibid., March 14, 1861.
Mobile

Although the honor of being the temporary capital of the Confederacy and of playing host to the constitutional convention caused Montgomery to eclipse her sister city of Mobile in matters of political concern, she did not overshadow Mobile in matters of a theatrical nature. There is not sufficient newspaper material to give a detailed discussion of the theatrical activities in Mobile in these early days of the Confederacy, but there is enough evidence to indicate that the story of the theatre in Mobile was undoubtedly much the same as in Montgomery and New Orleans, particularly New Orleans.

Mobile had long been an important theatrical city, and like the other cities of the South she maintained a resident stock company which was augmented throughout the theatrical season by visiting actors and actresses. In 1861 the Mobile stock company was under the management of McLean and Duffield. The latter had been an indefatigable manager of the Mobile theatre for about five years.

The theatres were not long in responding to the patriotic fervor and excitement of the times. G. W. Jeaminson wrote the following song for Manager Duffield, and sang it during a performance at the Mobile Theatre on January 28.

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23 Mary Morgan Duggar, The Theatre in Mobile 1822-1860 (unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Alabama, 1941), 213. Duffield's management of the Mobile theatre to 1860 will be found in Duggar's thesis, pages 213-239. According to this study, S. B. Duffield leased the theatre in May, 1856, for five years, hence his lease was not due to expire until May of 1861. After his lease expired, he apparently left the South. In 1864 he was manager of a theatre in Nashville, Tennessee, which, of course, was no longer a part of the Confederacy. (Nashville Daily Press, June 23, 1864.)
Trust to luck, Alabama — prolong the loud shout,
Three cheers for our State, boys, she is out, she is out.
Who whine about negroes and white men make slaves—
Though enriched by the South, rankest traitors they stand.
Trust to luck, Alabama — prolong the loud shout,
Three cheers for our State, boys, she is out, she is out.
Trust to luck, Alabama, and end as it may,
Better death than submit to fanatical sway;
No compromise now, the solemn words have gone forth
Which declare we are free from the traitorous North.
We seek no revenge, and would part without strife;
But if war they must have, why then war to the knife.
Trust to luck, Alabama, (prolong the loud shout,)
Three cheers for our State, boys, she is out, she is out.
Trust to luck Alabama, and heed not their boast
Of superior numbers; our cause is a host—
We fight for the homestead, our fathers bequeathed,
Who died to defend them, with victory wreathed.
Like our sires, we will venture our all on the fight,
Trust to luck, Alabama, God sides with the right.
Trust to luck Alabama (prolong the loud shout.)
Three cheers for our State boys, she is out, she is out.

Although this is bad poetry, one can easily imagine that its singing provoked shouts and applause. It was in the songs more than in the plays that the patriotic feeling of the times found expression in the theatre. Among those whose ballads became most popular were Harry Macarthy, an important entertainer; John Hill Hewitt, theatre manager and playwright as well as balladist; and James R. Randall, author of *Maryland, My Maryland*, who wrote many other songs. Of course there were many others.²⁵

It appears that the "stars" who visited Mobile were going either to, or coming from New Orleans. For example, Mr. and Mrs.

²⁴ Montgomery Daily Mail, February 12, 1861.

²⁵ One of the most recent studies in Confederate music is one by Richard B. Harwell, Emory University, whose work is being published by North Carolina University Press.
Barney Williams went to Mobile from New Orleans in January, 1861, for an engagement of about two weeks in the former city before returning to the latter.\textsuperscript{26} Maggie Mitchell also went to Mobile in March after completing her engagement at the St. Charles in New Orleans.\textsuperscript{27} And Miss Joey Gougenheim played with the Duffield company in Mobile before going to New Orleans to play a short engagement.\textsuperscript{28} It is almost certain that the other visiting stars — Eddy, the Wallers, and John Collins — also played in Mobile either before or after their visits to the St. Charles in New Orleans.

**New Orleans**

New Orleans was proud of its reputation as one of the gayest cities in the United States. It was the largest city in the South, and has long been famous as a theatrical center. The theatrical season during the first winter of the Confederacy was, as usual, on a greater scale than in Montgomery and Mobile. If New Orleans had not been captured by the Federal forces in May, 1862, she, and not Richmond, might well have become the theatrical center of the Confederacy.

The excitement of the formative days of the Confederacy scarcely affected the theatre in New Orleans, as is evidenced by the large number of places of amusement which remained open until

\textsuperscript{26} New Orleans Daily True Delta, January 29, 1861, reports that the Williamses had returned to New Orleans from Mobile where they had been engaged.

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., March 3, 1861.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., April 7, 1861.
the early summer of 1861. During the first months of the year two theatres played regularly for seven nights a week; two museums; the Opera House with regular performances on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday nights and often with other types of programs on the alternate days; and various kinds of miscellaneous entertainments at Armony Hall. Concerning the gaiety and the popularity of the various places of amusement, the Bee had this to say:

Notwithstanding the wars and rumors of wars, our places of amusement are most peaceful and prosperous. The managers seem to keep alive to the prevailing tastes of our people, and in this show taste and judgment. . . . 29

There was, nevertheless, much interest in the "wars and rumors of wars" on the part of those connected with the theatre. The Bee reported that:

... We have learned that nearly all of the theatrical performers in this city have informally enrolled themselves as a military company in defence of the South. Good. Now let some of them show their drill powers on the stage, and we will see who is fit to "fall in" on the plain. 30

On January 1, 1861, Mr. and Mrs. Barney Williams began an engagement at the St. Charles Theatre, of which Ben De Bar was the owner and a Mr. Corri was acting manager. The Williamses opened with a "fairy spectacle," which was called Fairy Circle. There were also two other "pieces" on the bill, Latest from New York, and Race for a Widow. The program was repeated for the next two nights, but,

29 New Orleans Bee, January 21, 1861.
30 Ibid., January 21, 1861.
according to the newspaper, neither the performance nor the plays were of much worth.

We dropped in last evening to see the "Fairy Circle," and "Latest from New York," at the St. Charles Theatre. The latter had just as much to do with Gotham as with Timbuctoo. It neither served "to point a moral nor adorn a tale," but "from end to end," was the veriest trash ever put upon the boards. As for the "Fairy Circle," that was a trifle better, which is not saying much . . . When we say that Barney Williams & Co., have retrograded, it will be understood that a word more is wholly unnecessary.*

The Williamses were favorites of long standing on the New York stage. In the 1850-51 season at the National Theatre in New York they were in a company with such celebrities as Jefferson, Edwin Booth, and others. Odell called them a fine group of American actors, and referred to "the delightful Barney Williamses." Their forte was the interpretation of Irish plays, such as Paddy Miles's Boy and Rory O'More. In his day Barney was a famous "Paddy" and Mrs. Williams made a name for herself in delineating "Yankee gals."* Odell says that:

... Those human souls, Mr. and Mrs. Barney Williams, graduating from Chatham Square, passed through the portals of the Broadway, and at once established themselves as legitimate favourites. Thereafter they were to be reckoned with as leading attractions of the American theatre, with their combination of Irish boy and Yankee "gal" fitting neatly into the mood of the times.*

If the Delta's criticism was fair, then truly the Williamses

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* Delta, January 3, 1861.
* Odell, Annals, VI, 36.
* Ibid., 120.
had retrograded. A few days later the Delta made an even more severe comment on Williams' delineation of Irish characters. It called his interpretations a "pretty mess," and continued, "without the ghost of ability, he has made a fortune burlesquing the sons of the 'brave old land' in every conceivable way; reinforced in these forays by the 'Yankee Gal', who also burlesques New England women." 34

The engagement of the Williamses which was not a long one, closed on Saturday January 12. Typical of the plays which they presented were such pieces as *An Hour in Seville*, *Brian O'Lynn*, *Uncle Pat's Cabin*, *Barney the Baron*, *Customs of the Country*, *Limerick Boy*, and a play entitled *All Hollow Eve*, said to have been written especially for the company. 35

Maggie Mitchell followed Barney Williams and his company at the St. Charles, beginning her engagement on Monday night, January 14, in *The Hidden Hand*. 36 A few nights later she appeared in *The French Spy* and in the concluding piece entitled *Milly, the Maid with the Milking Pail*. 37 In a lengthy discussion of her performance in *The French Spy*, the Delta stated in part:

Miss Maggie Mitchell is a long way behind Celeste, as "all the world and the rest of mankind" probably know. But for a femininity of the

34 Delta, January 6, 1861.
35 Ibid., January 8-12, 1861.
36 Ibid., January 12, 13, 1861.
37 New Orleans Bee, January 16, 1861.
land of Miles Standish, she gets along well with the double character. She is young, pretty, has a good bust, good arms, "a knee," as Hirst has it, "round as a period," and makes up, therefore, well for the boy Hamet. She has, too, quick, nervous action, and this gives the character a gallic color, and considerable pantomimic power which makes her generally understood. In fact, we conscientiously believe that the young actress never plays so well as when she is dumb.

An actress, to play the French Spy with the regular French Celeste dash, must strip for it like a young pugilist, and go into it with excessive abandon. Any attempt to be over-modest makes it immodest, in the same way the English and American danseuses spoil the art of Taglioni by long skirts and mincing steps. Miss Mitchell understands this, and shies the shoals and rocks of false delicacy, which is, as Villikins says, "tremendous to behold." Her Hamet is handsome, graceful and captivating, and will hardly fail to please an audience.

This was high commendation, coming as it did from the conservative Delta, which was much more likely to find fault than to praise.

Further in the same article the critic commented on the audience and gave a picture of the performance as a whole.

A very large number of people were present last night to see the play. Its melodramatic scenes, if better put upon the stage, would draw. As it was, with moderate scenic effects, some poor sword exercise, and tolerable acting, the dress circle received it favorably. The champions of the gallery, with "souls in arms and eager for the fray," fairly made the files quiver, whenever a big fight or a patriotic speech came off.

At the conclusion of his comment on The French Spy the critic announced Satan in Paris as the feature of the evening performance.

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38 Delta, January 17, 1861.
39 Ibid., January 17, 1861.
with the following caustic comment: "Yes, he is in Paris as surely as the devil's in Washington City."

Maggie Mitchell's engagement apparently was a very successful one. The *Daily True Delta* for Sunday, January 20, stated that she was drawing generally good audiences at the St. Charles, but commented that she "fails utterly in giving her brogue naturally." Her voice was criticised as being "too weak for so large an auditorium." Her strong points were "youth, a prepossessing face, and the Terpsichorean bits introduced in almost every piece, to please those present."

Although her forte was comedy, Miss Mitchell did occasionally attempt the more serious standard drama. For several nights she appeared as "Naramatta" in *The Wept of the Wish-Ton-Wish*. The *Delta* criticised her interpretation of this role because it "lacked pathos, and therefore failed to strike a tender cord in the audience."

According to the critic, she was especially suited for comedy parts, for "there is a merry twinkle in Miss Mitchell's eyes which is death to all pathetic efforts." However, she fared better in the after-piece, the *Ladies' Stratagem*, because—

> . . . This mischievous look manifested itself strongly in the protean characters of the Ladies' Stratagem. Laughter got the better of the player in her vocal contest with the squeak of the fiddle in one of her songs, and set the house in a roar. And that incident was the best of the performance, because, for once, the pretty little player was natural, and left off attitudinising. 40

But the *Bee* disagreed with the opinion of the *Delta* in regard to Mitchell's performance in *The Wept of the Wish-Ton-Wish*, and

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thought that she had "made quite a hit as Naramatta, the Indian maiden."

January 23 was announced as the last week of Miss Mitchell’s engagement. The feature of the week was the production of The Cricket, "with appropriate scenery and beautiful mechanical effects," in which Miss Mitchell played the role of Fanchon and C. Pope played the role of Landry. The Cricket had been translated from the German by Augustus Waldauer, who was a composer of music and the leader of the St. Charles Theatre orchestra. Undoubtedly this was the premiere for this play. It was not presented in New York until over a year later. According to Odell, Maggie Mitchell presented it for the first time on the New York stage on June 9, 1862, at Laura Keene’s theatre. Odell states:

The theatre was hired by Maggie Mitchell, who then came first before the New York public in that character which was thereafter most closely identified with her fame. As Jefferson’s Rip Van Winkle, Kate Claxton’s Louise, in the Two Orphans, and Mrs. G. C. Howard’s Topsy, Maggie Mitchell’s Fanchon, the Cricket, was for years and years a household word in America. The public loved her and it; one never tired of the wild, loving character or of the exquisite performance of it by Miss Mitchell. . . . Tiny as she was, this lovely actress could possess the biggest stage with consummate ease. Her version of Charlotte Birle-Pfeiffer’s play was thus first seen at Laura Keene’s on June 9 . . .

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41 Bee, January 23, 1861.
42 Delta, January 22, 1861.
43 Charlotte Birle-Pfeiffer is the author of the original play, Die Orille. This play was presented in the German language at the New Orleans Theatre, February 3, 1861. Augustus Waldauer’s play under two titles, The Cricket, and Fanchon, the Cricket, is listed in the Library of Congress Catalogue of Printed Cards.
In commenting on the production given in New Orleans, the

*Delta* observes:

This new drama, translated from the German by our old acquaintance, Mr. A. Waldauer, made a hit last evening at the St. Charles theatre. It is of a domestic nature, and illustrates that the "course of true love never runs smooth," but that it sometimes works wonders and winds up happily.

The author has made no attempt to display his powers as a translator, but suits the language to the characters, who are peasants of the South of France. There are many good speeches in it, many wise ones, though not new, and altogether the drama "points a moral and adorns a tale." It is pure, and that is what we want now, seeing that the stage is so often degraded by vulgar trash. We only wish that there were more of the same sort, so that the true and pure would become a broom which would sweep the Augean stable clean.

"Fanchon," the "Cricket," is a model girl, and of that class which make good wives and deserves to be mother of a gentleman's children in domestic life. We like the character. And, by the way, it seemed to fit the histrionic ability of Miss Mitchell finely. To say that she performed it with ease and excellence is to commend it to her keeping in future (sic). The Cricket is worth a whole bundle of bogus extravaganzes (sic) of the Williams' school...

The Cricket ran from its opening performance on January 23 through January 26. On that night Miss Mitchell received a farewell benefit and the play was repeated again on the next night as a benefit for Waldauer. The Cricket proved to be the happiest choice as a dramatic vehicle for Miss Mitchell, while she was in New Orleans. Even the Delta was extravagant in its praise of her.

Maggie Mitchell is the right person in the right place as Fanchon. If the character of that brave, true, sensible and determined little girl had been expressly written for her from the first,

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*Delta*, January 24, 1861.
it could not have better suited her in physical conformation, facial expression and youthful appearance. Her face glasses the emotions beautifully, and whether at the moment of rollicking hilarity or momentary depression, from an under-estimate of Fanchon's true character, or in love, or giving expression to earnest determination or undeniable truth, she seems so naturally alive to the meaning of the author that none but the veriest hypocrite could fail to be pleased. 45

At the conclusion of her benefit performance, Miss Mitchell was called before the curtain, and "in (the) presence of a crowded and brilliant audience" she delivered the following speech:

You have called me and I have come. What shall I say to you? If I say that I cordially thank you for your kind reception, you must believe me, for it comes from the bottom of my heart.

During my engagement in New Orleans, I have endeavored to make you as merry as I sometimes am. I have not added to your tears, I trust, for the sky has wept enough for all of us. Still, you have come out nightly, braving the inclemency of the weather, and in this, paid me a compliment I shall never forget.

Let me hope that this will not prove my farewell benefit. I shall see you again if I live. Remember that you will not pass from my memory, and though I am absent, when you hear the chirp of a cricket on your peaceful and happy hearth, give one thought to the "Cricket" who did her best to enliven those kind friends who listened to her.

Trusting that whatever may take place, you and I, at least will never secede from each other, permit me again to thank you for this flattering testimonial. 46

After this flattering benefit, Maggie Mitchell went to Montgomery for the engagement already discussed.

Another one of New Orleans' popular places of amusement,

46 Ibid., January 27, 1861.
the Varieties Theatre, was also in the midst of its regular season.

John Owens, an actor of considerable reputation and experience, was the manager. Brown records that Owens was born in Liverpool, England, in 1623, but came to this country with his parents when he was three years old. He began his acting career under the management of William B. Burton at the National Theatre in Philadelphia, and in 1649 he began his career as manager with the Baltimore Museum. He made several visits to Europe, and in 1654 he became manager of the Charles Street Theatre in Baltimore. In 1659 he assumed the management of the Varieties, which, Brown says, he "conducted with remarkable success up to the actual commencement of the National crisis in 1860." Actually, as will be noted, Owens managed the Varieties until May 1861. He was not only the manager, but also took an active and important part in the plays produced.

Some of the members of the stock company engaged at the Varieties were Messrs. George Jordon, Mark Smith, A. H. Davenport, M. W. Leffingwell, Miss Charlotte Thompson, Miss Graham, Mrs. Chapman, Mrs. Leffingwell, Mrs. Preston, Charles Mortan and W. B. Chippendale, who was the treasurer. There were no visiting "stars" featured at the Varieties as there were at the St. Charles, but the company appears to have been a good one. Many in the troupe are mentioned by both Brown and Odell. Miss Charlotte Thompson, apparently an actress of considerable ability, played the role of leading lady.

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48 Brown, *op. cit.*, 360.
The first production for 1861 at the Varieties was the popular play, *The Romance of a Poor Young Man*, which, according to the notice in the papers, was being presented for the ninth night with "a prologue, five acts, seven tableaux, new scenery, new costumes, and a superb cast." It continued to run for several nights and was repeated from time to time throughout the season.

Another play which met with success on the Varieties stage was the play *Dot*. It received unusually high praise from the Delta.

*This domestic spectacular adaption of Dickens' "Cricket on the Hearth," drew a crowded and very intelligent audience to the Varieties last evening.*

The scenery seems to be retouched, and charmed as of old, but the machinery did not work with uniform smoothness. The secret of the success of "Dot" may be summed up in a very few words; it has something in it for the young, the middle aged, the old; that is, for children, lovers and married folks, and the white-haired who have got into the "lean and slippered pantaloons;" and to conclude, the story is illustrated with fine scenery.

Now of the characters. Caleb Plummer presented the best make-up and was most naturally acted. John Perrybingle, formerly played by Coulcock, astonished us, for the personator disguised his face, as well as his person. The dark moustache was gone, and the English side whisker supplanted that heretofore seen in every character. Tackleton appeared as the same Tackleton of last season. . . .

Bertha, capitally performed last season, was by no means so on this occasion. Blind people do not act in places thoroughly familiar to them, as if they were momentarily afraid of tumbling into a trap. They don't feel around with both hands in well-known spots, like a cat in a strange, dark garret. The sense of touch, from the closing of sight, becomes a little too exquisite for such unnatural caution. Besides, the

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49 Delta, January 1, 1861.
loss of sight does not presuppose a loss of the play of the muscles of the face. Blind women do not become statues. A little attention to the peculiarities of the blind might work a great change in Bertha.  

After running for about twenty-two consecutive nights, Dot was finally withdrawn. In regard to the closing of the play the Delta said:

Bourcicault's adaptation of Dickens' Christmas story, "Dot," is on its last legs at the Varieties. Its run last season was extraordinary, and for the number of nights on its reproduction, the run proved that the habitues of that theatre had found a new interest in the lively scenes which, from the fairy gathering to the cushion dance, are so well adapted to please a miscellaneous audience.  

The Bee was much more extravagant in its praise of Dot.

This is the last night of Dot, the most popular piece ever played upon the New Orleans stage, and the Varieties will in consequence be crowded. Its success has been owing in a great measure to its own intrinsic merits as a dramatic production, but nevertheless we cannot award too much praise to the carefulness and liberality which have marked the management in putting it on the stage in such splendid style, and to the excellent acting of nearly all of the members of the Varieties company cast in the piece.  

The manager of the Varieties blew "a big blast on his theatrical bugle" and announced Playing with Fire, The Romance of a Poor Young Man, and Our American Cousin as the coming attractions after the closing of Dot.  

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50 Ibid., January 8, 1861.
51 According to Odell, Bourcicault was the first spelling of the name. Odell, Annals, VI, 288.
52 Delta, January 22, 1861.
53 Bee, January 23, 1861.
54 Delta, January 22, 1861.
Over at the St. Charles, the Williamses, who had been in Mobile, where they had played for a short time, had returned to give a "farewell engagement," which they closed on February 3 with a joint benefit. The Delta, which had been so severely critical of their performances earlier in the season, had this to say in their regard:

... Whatever opinion may be held as to the style of pieces of these performers, one thing may be put down to their credit, and that is, in the midst of all the temptations of theatrical life, the Williamses, by the universal testimony of the fraternity, have maintained an enviable personal status, and are therefore entitled to the respect of their audiences. ... 56

New Orleans was a particularly exciting place during the time that the state convention met to consider the question of Louisiana's secession from the Union. The paper stated that there was "more than the usual amount of animation on the streets," and that "Canal street was literally crowded with fair faces. It was difficult for two blocks to make headway through the silks and satins which rustled on every side." Many of the ladies, according to the paper, would have liked to attend the convention, but there is no accommodation, as very many conversant with the galleries of Lyceum hall are aware. Our fair friends don't like to be perched near the ceiling, like birds on swinging limbs. And so, knowing the state of affairs from old experience of lecture time, but few ventured to be present. ... 57

Notwithstanding the disquieting times, the theatre season

55 Ibid., January 29, 1861.
56 Ibid., February 3, 1861.
57 Ibid., January 30, 1861.
continued without interruption. In February, Jeanie Deans, also called The Heart of Midlothian, was in preparation at the Varieties and was to become one of the main attractions of the season. So great were the preparations for the performance of this play that the theatre was closed on Sunday in order that the production might be ready for presentation on Monday night. Concerning the opening performance, the Delta stated:

We sat out "Jeanie Deans" at the Varieties last night; saw some beautiful scenery; occasionally some good acting; heard three unnecessary oaths which deserved a good hissing; listened to a dialect sometimes Scotch, and sometimes Scotch-English, and sometimes a mixture of Gaelic, Cockney, Yankee and Southern. At one time, we feared that the pathos of Effie Deans would be too much for the gallery, and entertained serious ideas of calling for an umbrella to keep dry from a shower of tears, but the gallery magnanimously held up.

In the opinion of the Delta, other newspapers in the city were entirely too lenient in their criticisms of the theatre, and, further, it attributed much of the poor acting to the fact that the actors had become "spoiled" by so much "puffing" upon the part of the press. The Delta predicted, "This morning, at most this evening, great, glowing, grand accounts will be given of Jeanie Deans, by two or three of our contemporaries." A few days later, the following comment appeared:

The Picayune yesterday thought it hardly fair that it should "criticize" Jeanie Deans,

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58 Ibid., February 17, 1861.
59 Ibid., February 19, 1861.
60 Ibid., February 19, 1861.
inasmuch as the first night was but a dress rehearsal.

"Criticise" indeed! Catch our cotemporary doing that thing. The fact is, the drama was rehearsed again and again, and even the performance of Sunday night stopped to give it a final rehearsal. Great pains were taken by the management to make a perfect first representation, and he would have succeeded, perhaps, with a less bepuffed and spoiled company. . . .

Many newspapers in the South during this period were inclined to make excuses for the failures and mistakes in dramatic productions, and, on the whole, to be more tolerant in their criticisms than the conditions warranted. This attitude upon the part of the press was due in a large measure to the intense feeling of patriotism and loyalty to the South which was a product of the times.

Over at the St. Charles, Edward Eddy, "the American tragedian" had succeeded the Williamses. He was to play a very successful engagement lasting about two weeks. According to Odell, Eddy first played on the New York stage, March 13, 1850, in Richelieu and became a popular idol. In any case, Eddy pleased the Delta's critic better than Barney Williams had been able to do. Concerning Eddy's personation of Robert Landry in The Dead Heart, the paper stated:

The "Dead Heart," a new drama of the sensation school, was presented last night at the St.

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61 Ibid., February 21, 1861.
62 Ibid., February 5, 1861.
63 Odell, Annals, VI, 31.
Charles, for the first time, to a medium audience. It is something, at least not hackneyed, and well calculated to interest the cultivated as well as the mere amusement-seeker.

The incidents are those of the French reign of Terror, when the guillotine dripped blood and Robespierre was king of anarchy. . . .

Mr. Eddy appeared to considerable advantage as Robert Landry. The duel was capitally executed....

The Bee, always less restrained in its praise than the Delta, stated:

At the St. Charles Mr. Eddy, the American tragedian, has been doing remarkably well, and will continue to draw the best houses during his engagement. As Jack Cade, the Corsican Brothers and Charles de Moor he made an excellent impression, but as Robert Landry, in the striking tragedy of "Dead Heart," he created almost a furor of admiration by his carefully correct and intensified acting.  

Eddy appeared in more serious and sensational plays than had been true in the case of the preceding actors. His repertoire included such dramas as The Robber, Jean Remy, The Bag Picker of Paris, Hamlet, and Richard III.

Early in March, Maggie Mitchell returned to the St. Charles "at the request of her numerous friends" for an engagement of a few nights. The Cricket was repeated several times during this brief engagement. For her farewell performance on March 2, she appeared in four plays, The Wept of the Wish-Ton-Wish, The Bonnie Fish Wife, Four Sisters, and Sea Serpents.

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64 Delta, February 8, 1861.
65 Bee, February 11, 1861.
66 Delta, March 2, 1861.
After completing her engagement at the St. Charles, Miss Mitchell again went to Mobile for a short engagement. From Mobile, she evidently went north, as did so many actors when there was no longer any doubt that war was inevitable. The Delta quoted an article taken from a Milwaukee, Wisconsin, paper which stated that it had been reported that while Miss Mitchell was performing in one of the Southern theatres she "stamped upon the stars and stripes and raised the Palmetto flag above her head." The Milwaukee paper wished to know whether this was true before her performance at the Academy of Music in that city. Concerning the report, the Delta said: "'The Milwaukee Public' are a little too fast. 'Fanchon' never meddled with politics in any way. This sort of warfare is contemptible." 67

Spring came, and with it a growing sense of tension and excitement throughout the South as a result of events at Fort Sumter. The attendance at the theatres began to show the effects of the strain, imperceptibly at first, it is true, but increasingly as time went on.

On March 4, the Irish comedian John Collins began a short engagement at the St. Charles. 68 His repertoire consisted mainly of Irish comedies, his most popular being Colleen Bawn, which he performed for twelve consecutive nights during his engagement. Collins was born near Dublin in 1811. He studied for the stage in England and made his debut at the Haymarket Theatre in London as a singer in opera. He made his first appearance on the stage in this country at

67 Ibid., May 12, 1861.
68 Ibid., March 5, 1861.
the Park Theatre in New York in 1846 as MoShane in the Nervous Man. During the war he played in New York and in Europe and England. Although he was an actor of considerable reputation, the Delta complained that "our contemporaries" were praising Collins and the play Colleen Bawn too warmly. In the opinion of the Delta "theatricals had been dull for a fortnight owing to Colleen Bawn and Jeannie Deans." Collins had once had a "clear, ringing musical voice and could sing a song with the best;" he had had "fire and spirit, and had been vivacious, frisky and dashing," but now that he was older, time was beginning to tell on him and he had "lost his zip and his voice (was) cracked."  

After the departure of Collins, Mr. and Mrs. Waller were the next attraction at the St. Charles. According to Odell, the Wallers were playing in the Duchess of Malfi and other plays in New York in the 1857-58 season. It was at this time that Mrs. Waller made her first appearance on the New York stage, and it was the first appearance of Mr. Waller "in his native city" for many years. During the war the Wallers were playing in New York. Odell makes the following comment concerning Mrs. Waller's famous role of Meg Merrilies:

Mrs. Emma Waller, a sound, powerful actress, appeared on December 27 in Charlotte Cushman's great role of Meg Merrilies, and, though acting

69 Brown, op. cit., 74-77.
70 Delta, March 6, 1861.
71 Ibid., March 17, 1861.
72 Odell, Annals, VII, 5.
in her own way, achieved an immense success with the critical. Her performance lacked the unearthliness of Miss Cushman's, but it was thrilling and emotional to a high degree. Mrs. Waller established a fine reputation by this performance.  

Mrs. Waller began her engagement at the St. Charles in the role of Meg Merrilies with Mr. Waller and Ben De Bar in the supporting roles. The appearance on the stage of De Bar, owner of the theatre, was unusual. Whether his appearance in the cast indicates a shortage of actors or whether he appeared with the Wallers for old times' sake can not be determined. The Delta was warm in its praise of Mrs. Waller:

Mrs. Emma Waller appeared last night at the St. Charles theatre, as Meg Merrilies in "Guy Mannering." The audience should have been much larger, as the performance of Meg was at times intense, fiery, powerful. It must be remembered, however, that the witch is not a great favorite, inasmuch as her presence is unpleasant to the public eye, dazzled as it has been of late years by the introduction of so many showy characters. Crowds rushed to see Miss Cushman's personation chiefly because curiosity had been awakened by the strong, flattering criticisms and notices of the English and North American press. Without speaking at any length of Mrs. Waller's Meg Merrilies (sic), we will say just this, that her personation is quite equal to Miss Cushman's (sic), and occasionally her declamation better, for it carries with it at times an electrical influence which makes the auditor feel, however often he has heard the word enunciated.

The theatre-goers in New Orleans were now treated to heavy theatrical fare for a change. Mrs. Waller appeared in such plays as The Duchess of Malfi; Othello, in which Mrs. Waller played Iago.

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73 Ibid., VIII, 567.
74 Delta, March 19, 1861.
and Mr. Waller played Othello; The Lady of Lyons; and Richelieu.

Mrs. Waller was especially singled out by the press for praise. She was best in "heavy tragedy" roles like Lady Macbeth. Her Iago also met with approval. The Delta thought that she did well in a man's role, and that "the stride and man-abandon" were better done than when Cushman did them.75

In a review of the drama in a Sunday issue, the Delta gave the following vivid description of Mrs. Waller's acting:

The event of the week has been the appearance of the Wallers. In our daily issue we mentioned some of the peculiar claims of Mrs. Waller upon intelligent and appreciative play-goers, contrasting her, as a tragedienne, with Charlotte Cushman, and awarding her the tragic palm, all things being equal.

Those who saw Mrs. Waller as Meg Merrilies and the Duchess of Malfi are loud in their praise of her powers. She is really a great actress. In the proudest days of the British drama her personations of these characters would have won the approbation of the best critics.

. . . she startles, electrifies, astonishes. Her elocution is generally artistic and correct; her voice clear, sonorous, searching; her facial acting wonderfully expressive and impressive, and her gesticulation vigorous and fiery at such points as requires it.

It is to be regretted that so many nights have passed without a proper exhibition of appreciation of Mrs. Waller's extraordinary abilities. In fact, a stronger word should be used—genius. For, she is as much a genius as were Kean and Mrs. Siddons. For months past, the true lovers of the drama have kept away from the St. Charles, preferring to remain at home or lounge leisurely on the streets at night, to witnessing the humbuggery of poor extravagansa.76

Perhaps the poor plays and the poor acting did keep the people away

75 Ibid., March 31, 1861.
76 Ibid., March 24, 1861.
from the theatre, but unquestionably, the turbulence of the times also played a part in reducing the size of the audience.

The engagement of the Wallers closed the last of March. Mr. Waller took a benefit on March 29 and Mrs. Waller took one on March 30. On Sunday, March 31, Waller appeared as Richard in Richard III. With the termination of this engagement, the winter season came to an end for the St. Charles. However, as a brief interlude, before the beginning of the summer season, the theatre remained open for a few nights with Professor Hermann, who had been engaged at "great expense" for six nights; he was billed as the "most wonderful Prestidigitator the world has ever known."  

March brought also to the Varieties a round of benefits, which always indicated that the end of the season was near. One of the first to receive a benefit was Miss Charlotte Thompson. The Delta admitted using the "critical scalpel on the body of the beneficiary's personations," but conceded that "as 'Jeanie Deans', for example, she (was) the only person that at all impressed us, and we must say, (she was) the feature of the adaptation in the way of acting. This can also be said - that she (seemed) anxious to please, (was) evidently studious, and particularly lady-like on the boards. . . ." After the performance the Delta commented: "Miss Thompson had an overflowing audience last night, the occasion

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77 Ibid., April 1, 1861. Ibid., March 29, 30, 31, 1861.
78 Ibid., April 1, 1861.
79 Ibid., March 12, 1861.
being her benefit. From a glance at the crowd we are led to think it the most fashionable and remunerative of the benefits of the season."

Charles Bass, a member of the stock company, was given a benefit on March 30.

Mr. Charles Bass takes his benefit tonight at the Varieties, the Merry Wives of Windsor being produced, with the veteran as Sir John Falstaff. He deserves a great house, and unless we mistake the appreciation of the play-goers, will get it. Mr. Bass is one of the few remaining old grenadiers of the drama who remembers the stage in its palmiest days, when novices were not heralded as "stars" on the dramatic sky.

April 5 was announced as the last night of the season at the Varieties and as a benefit for Manager Owens. The bill included The Comedy of Errors, singing and dancing, a military sketch entitled Military Training, and The Live Indian.

Considering the number of places of public amusement which were open, to say nothing of the private social activities, truly, even on the eve of a great civil war, New Orleans lived up to her reputation of being the "city care forgot."

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80 Ibid., March 13, 1861.
81 Ibid., March 30, 1861.
82 Ibid., April 5, 1861.
83 A study of the social conditions in New Orleans at this time may be found in the following: Marjorie Joffrion Lightfoot, Social Life in New Orleans during the Civil War, M. A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1939. John David Winter, Jr., Confederate New Orleans, M. A. thesis, 1947, Louisiana State University.
Georgia Cities

Many other cities in the Confederacy were not so fortunate as New Orleans. Savannah, Augusta, Macon, and Atlanta, though they were to have considerable theatrical activity as the war progressed, had very little that could be called legitimate theatre during this first season.

Savannah had long had a regular theatre building, with William H. Fleming as the lessee and with a resident stock company; but apparently there was almost nothing in the way of standard dramatic production in the early days of the Confederacy. There were scattered entertainments, but no real theatre. For example, beginning on December 31, 1860, George Christy's Minstrels were scheduled to perform at the Masonic Hall "for two nights only." On January 3 the Morning News announced a performance at the theatre for that evening. The bill included a drama called The Marble Heart, The Great Southern Rights Picture, and the comedy entitled The Tailor of Tamworth. Just what The Great Southern Rights Picture was, is not indicated in the advertisement. Perhaps it was a tableau, which was a very popular form of entertainment at that time and often included as a part of the theatre program.

Macon had no regularly equipped theatre building, as did Savannah and Atlanta, but did have a hall where dramatic productions could be given whenever a stock company came that way. The hall where the dramatic productions and entertainments were given was

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84 Savannah Daily Morning News, January 1, 1861.
85 Ibid., January 3, 1861.
called Ralston's Hall, and was located above a restaurant which must have made a specialty of sea-food, particularly oysters, judging by its advertisements.

There was little that could be called legitimate theatre in Macon during this first dramatic season of the Confederacy, and only an occasional musical entertainment, a concert, or a minstrel show. George Christy's Minstrel Troupe was scheduled to perform at Ralston Hall on January 4 and 5. According to the Telegraph, the troupe was known to all "Southern Gentlemen who had visited in New York," and

In many respects . . . is above comparison, and in all the essentials of a sable opera it is complete and thoroughly organised. In the management also, strict attention is paid to variety and promptness, so that the hearer is kept in a constant state of excitement and enjoyment.86

Later in the month Dupres and Green brought their opera and burlesque troupe to Macon for two nights.87

During the latter part of January, Maconites were treated to the legitimate theatre. The Fleming Company of Savannah, which had been playing an engagement in Milledgeville (then the capital of the state) came to Ralston Hall for a week.88 The company opened with The Lady of Lyons, in which a Miss Eberle made a big hit with the audience. In a letter to the Telegraph, one enthusiastic auditor paid Miss Eberle a glowing compliment:

As an Actress Miss Eberle is among the best and resembles in many respects Miss Helen Faucitt.

86 Macon Daily Telegraph, January 2, 1861.
87 Ibid., January 15, 1861.
88 Ibid., January 29, 1861.
Her voice has the same clearness, sweetness, and flexibility - varying its tone from the ringing, clanging shrieks of passion, down to the soft breathing of love-melting on her lips into drops of music, almost without an effort; following the emotions in their expression with the spell and emphasis of nature.89

As far as can be determined from the Telegraph, this engagement of the Fleming Company represents the only standard drama presented in Macon this first season. There were a few miscellaneous entertainments, concerts, and dioramas, but the war was soon to interrupt even this type of amusement.

In the beginning, Atlanta contributed almost nothing to the theatrical activity of the Confederacy. Atlanta was a boom town. Previous to the war, it was only a small village, and it was not until its location as a railroad center gave it a position of strategic importance that Atlanta became a city of consequence. It had a theatre, called the Athenaeum, but in the beginning it depended largely on a group of amateurs, known as the Atlanta Amateurs, under the direction of W. H. Barnes, for its theatrical entertainments.

Charleston

In Charleston, as in the cities just discussed, there was little to be had in the way of entertainment during this first winter of the war. In fact, as will be seen, Charleston was unique as far as the theatre was concerned. As the war progressed, theatrical activity developed tremendously in most of the cities of the Confederacy, except in Charleston. This fact is of special interest because Charleston

89 Ibid., February 2, 1861.
had a theatrical background as old and as illustrious as any city in the South.\(^{90}\)

It will be recalled that South Carolina was the first state to leave the Union, and that Charleston was the scene of many of the events which step by step led to war. Perhaps this, in part, accounts for the lack of activity in the legitimate theatre, and the relative paucity of entertainment during the first months of 1861.

In January at the Institute Hall there were several performances by Dupres and Green's "Original New Orleans and Metropolitan Burlesque Opera Troupe." According to the *Courier*, this group was "a large and well organised troupe, comprising many specialties of great attraction," with "changes of performances nightly."\(^{91}\)

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\(^{90}\) *The Ante-Bellum Charleston Theatre*, by W. Stanley Hoole (University of Alabama Press, 1946), is a very excellent history of the theatre in Charleston prior to the Civil War. In an article on the theatre in Charleston from 1860-1869 Mr. Hoole says that students paint a dark picture of Charleston - siege, bombardment, blockade, destruction, "yet there was a brighter, cheerier side. Amid their sufferings Charlestonians remained calm, eagerly determined to catch the few remaining pleasures life held out for them. Chief among these was the drama. Indeed, a century and a quarter of theatrical and musical tradition lay behind the thinking of these Carolinians, charting their course; in spite of the war and its evils the show had to go on. That it did go on will ever be a tribute to the gallant city and a fighting people." W. Stanley Hoole, "Charleston Theatricals during the Tragic Decade, 1860-1869," *The Journal of Southern History*, XI, No. 4, November, 1945, p38.

However, when the theatrical activity of Charleston during the war is viewed in relation to, and comparison with, the theatrical activity that went on in the other cities of the Confederacy, it pales into almost insignificance.

\(^{91}\) Charleston *Daily Courier*, January 30, 1861.
There was an amateur dramatic performance given at the Charleston Theatre in March, which created quite a stir, and which would seem to indicate that the people had been deprived of theatrical entertainment for some time. The performance was given as a benefit "for a patriotic military purpose." The Governor and his suite attended, and at the end of the performance a patriotic address written by the distinguished minor poet Paul Hamilton Hayne was delivered by G. F. Marchant, the manager of the Charleston Theatre. The play presented by the amateurs -- "ladies and gentlemen of Charleston" -- was The Lady of Lyons.\(^2\) A few weeks later the program was repeated as a benefit for Marchant under the patronage of "his excellency Governor Pickens and officers and soldiers of the 17th regiment." In the main, the cast was composed of the same group of "ladies and gentlemen" who appeared on the first occasion, except, so stated the Courier, "two ladies not in the play last time will perform instead of the two originals and Claude will be played by the manager himself." The interpretation of the role of Madam Deschappelles had been especially pleasing to the editor of the Courier, for he wrote that the role had "rarely been equalled and never surpassed."\(^3\) The paper reported that "another brilliant assemblage" witnessed the amateur performance. Governor Pickens and his staff, and General Beauregard were among the distinguished guests present for this occasion, and the house was full "nearly to capacity."

\(^2\) Ibid., March 1, 2, 4, 1861.
\(^3\) Ibid., March 15, 1861.
The play was "greeted with rounds of applause and hearty laughter."\textsuperscript{94}

Besides \textit{The Lady of Lyons}, the program began with an overture by the Palmetto Band, and concluded with a miscellaneous musical program. The newspaper reported that the singing of Mr. Reeves was well received.

Nothing of importance in the way of entertainment was reported thereafter in the \textit{Courier} for some time. It will be recalled that during this time, March through April 12, affairs at Fort Sumter were developing into a crisis and it is no wonder that Charlestonians were preoccupied with matters other than amusement. About the only incident of interest in the entertainment line which occurred in April was the appearance of a group of players from New Orleans who gave a performance at Turner Hall in the German language for the German citizens of Charleston. The \textit{Courier} carried the following notice of the performance:

\begin{quote}
A small company, consisting of Mr. Rosinsky and Mrs. and Miss Weller, well known already, from the German stage, having arrived from New Orleans, will play to-night, and will no doubt, have a full attendance of our German lovers of play and dance.\textsuperscript{95}
\end{quote}

There were no further theatrical performances in Charleston until May, so far as can be learned from the \textit{Courier}.

\textit{Richmond}

While the stirring events contingent upon secession and the organization of the Provisional Government were taking place

\textsuperscript{94} Ibid., March 20, 1861.

\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., April 19, 1861.
in the states of the lower South, Virginia was still in the Union. The Virginia Legislature had even called an unofficial Peace Convention to meet in Washington February 4, at the very time the Constitutional Convention was meeting in Montgomery. Virginia did not secede until after the attack on Fort Sumter, and Richmond did not become the capital of the Confederacy until June, 1861. Hence, during the first part of the theatrical season 1860-1861, Richmond was technically not a part of the Confederacy. But her neutral position was a mere technicality. She was Confederate in spirit.

Like New Orleans and Charleston, Richmond had long been an important theatrical city in the South. In January, 1861, the Richmond Theatre, under the management of Kunkel and Moxley, and with I. B. Phillips as stage manager, was in the midst of its regular winter-spring season. Judging by the names which appeared in the theatrical notices from time to time, the stock company which was engaged at the theatre during this time was a fairly large and substantial one. The following names, scattered throughout the daily theatrical notices, seem to have made up the company: Mrs. J. B. Phillips, Mrs. Clementine De Bar, Miss Ida Vernon, Miss Emma Morton, Misses Mary and Sallie Partington, Burdett Howe, W. H. Baily, E. Lamb, Charles Warwick, J. W. Barron, G. Werton, R. Meer, Miss Kate Newton, and R. S. Maclure. A few of these—Mrs. De Bar, Miss Ida Vernon, and the Misses Partington, will be treated later in some

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96 Richmond Daily Dispatch, January 1, 1861. Cited hereafter as Dispatch.
97 Ibid., January 1, 5, and February 7, 1861.
detail, for they were to become leading figures in the Confederate theatre.

Not only was the management fortunate in possessing what seems to have been an excellent stock company, but it was also fortunate in the number and quality of the visiting "stars" which were brought to the theatre during the season under consideration. The Wallers, who were in New Orleans in March, 1861, evidently began their southern tour in Richmond, for they were in the midst of their engagement at the Richmond theatre in January, 1861. On January first they appeared in Hamlet, Emma as Ophelia and Mr. Waller as Hamlet.98 Some of those in the supporting cast were Charles Warwick as Claudius, Mrs. De Bar as Gertrude, and Miss Kate Newton, Miss Sallie Partington, and Messrs. Baily, Hows, Lamb, and Barton. On January 2 the Wallers appeared in the Avenger of Sicily. The concluding play for this program was Alarming Sacrifice.99 Masked Desire was scheduled for the January 3, and on January 4 a benefit was announced for Mrs. Waller, with the Wife's Sacrifice opening the program and the last three acts of the Duchess of Walfi concluding the program.100 January 5 was announced as the "last night of the great actress." On this occasion she was scheduled to appear in her famous role of Meg Merrilies, and on the same bill, Waller was scheduled to appear as the Robber Chief in Schiller's play The Robbers; or, The Forest

98 Ibid., January 1, 1861.
99 Ibid., January 2, 1861.
100 Ibid., January 3, 4, 1861.
Thus ended the engagement of the Wallers in Richmond. Although Mrs. Waller, by the wording of the announcements, was the main feature of the team, Waller always played a role as important as his wife's.

The next "star" featured at the Richmond Theatre was Joey Gougenheim, who was described in the theatrical notices as the "beautiful and fascinating comedienne and vocalist." According to Odell and Brown, Joey (Josephine) Gougenheim was a comedienne of considerable reputation. She began her career as an actress when she and her sister Adelaide made their debut in perfection at the Olympic Theatre in London in August 1850. They appeared first in this country in Philadelphia in 1851. A few years later, 1855, they went to California, and in 1856 to Australia, where they remained for some time, managing the Princess Theatre in Melbourne in 1858. They returned to America and began an engagement at Laura Keene's theatre in New York in June, 1859. In November, 1859, Adelaide, who had married, went to Europe, but Joey remained for a time in America. She made a tour through the South in 1860. In October, 1860, she went to England, where she appeared at the Lyceum Theatre. She returned to America in December, 1860. The newspapers show that she toured in the South in the late winter and early spring of 1861, although Brown does not mention the fact, stating only that in 1861.

101 Ibid., January 5, 1861.
102 Ibid., January 7, 1861.
103 Brown, op. cit., 147.
she went again to California and from there sailed for Australia.

Odell, in mentioning the performances of Joey and Adelaide in New York, refers to them as the "attractive sisters."

Miss Gougenheim's engagement in Richmond lasted from January 7 until about the latter part of the month, possibly until January 24 or 26. According to the papers, this was Miss Gougenheim's first appearance in Richmond.

The program for her opening performance included Sheridan Knowles' Love Chase and Rinks, the Ragan. On Tuesday night, January 8, the program, in celebration of the anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans, consisted of "the celebrated Old Dominion Drama founded on Mrs. Southworth's popular ledger Romance of The Hidden Hand." Because of the length of this play no other piece was given. Evidently the play made a hit with the public, for it was repeated on January 9 and 10. On January 11 and 12 Joey Gougenheim appeared in Tom Taylor's An Unequal Match; the first performance was a benefit for her and on January 18 she was given another benefit, when she appeared in the Doom of Deville which had a run of three nights.

According to the Dispatch, The Doom of Deville "met with the most decided success," and it was "pronounced the most powerful and truthful dramatization ever witnessed. It was replete with beautiful language and imposing situations, while the comic scenes elicited irrepressible laughter from the audience."

104 Odell, op. cit., VI, 133.
105 Dispatch, January 8, 1861.
106 Ibid., January 9, 10, 11, 12, 18, 19, 20, 1861.
107 Ibid., January 21, 1861.
The program for January 23 was lighter, consisting of a "fairy burlesque," Cinderella, for the main feature and The Poacher's Doom as an afterpiece. However, the most interesting feature of the program was the introduction of a "new Virginia Song by Miss Joey Gougenheim" entitled "Sic Semper" and written by John Hill Hewitt. The next two nights, January 24 and 25, The Doom of Deville and The Hidden Hand were presented. The performance of the latter seems to mark the end of Joey Gougenheim's engagement with the Richmond Theatre.

It may be well to mention here that the programs at the theatre usually included at least two plays, and occasionally three or more, an overture by the orchestra, and songs and/or dances between the plays. Miss Mary Partington was the most popular dancer at the Richmond Theatre. Her sister Sallie was also a popular dancer, but her forte seems to have been comedy, particularly the latter.

There were four of the Partington sisters, three of whom, Mary, Sallie, and Jennie, figured importantly in the theatrical activities in Richmond. They were not newcomers to the stage. Mary had been engaged as a dancer at the Chatham in New York as early as May, 1852. Odell records performances for all of the girls in New York at various times from 1852 through 1859, and again after the

108 Ibid., January 22, 23, 1861.
109 Ibid., January 24, 25, 1861.
war. E. F. Barnes, an actor in the Richmond company and the husband of Jennie, stated that "The girls with their mother, had left New York several years before (the war), coming to Richmond, and had settled at 4 Leigh Street." Barnes related an interesting incident which occurred in connection with Sallie after the occupation of Richmond by the Union forces in 1865. Sallie was told to sing "a Yankee song provided by the management to curry favor with a northern audience, the theatre being filled with Union troops."

Sallie refused to sing the song, but--

Mr. R. D. Ogden, our manager, was an overbearing and domineering character. In a most impatient and peremptory manner he directed Miss Partington to face her audience and sing the song in question. Miss Partington as peremptorily refused."

It was not long before she left the city, going to Mobile, Ala., where she remained for a great number of years, practicing her profession in the South.

However, according to Odell, Sallie Partington appeared at Barnum's New Museum September 25 to 30, 1865, in The Roll of the Drum.

Mary and Sallie Partington (Jennie died in 1863) became the leading figures in the Richmond theatre as the war progressed.

On January 26 the newspaper announced the presentation of a

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112 A clipping in the file "Actors Appearing in Richmond" in the Valentine Museum, Richmond, Virginia, labeled Richmond Evening Journal, January 16, 1907. The occasion of the article was the death of Sallie Partington in Richmond on January 10, 1907. E. F. Barnes, her brother-in-law, provided the reminiscences.

113 Odell, op. cit., VIII, 47.
"new romantic spectacle romance" written by Burdett Howe, Esq., who was a member of the stock company. It was stressed that there would be "new scenes from the pen of George Heilge," the scenic artist, which were to be exhibited during the course of the play. The notice made much of the new scenery, even giving the names of the scenes to be exhibited: The Castle of Lionel Danvers, The Chapel, The Venus Fountain, Pandemonium, Satan in Council, and Magic Transformation. The play was evidently a great success, for it ran an entire week.

An interesting program was presented on the occasion of a benefit for the artist, George Heilge, on February 4. At this time a play "written by a gentleman of the city," called Parlor and Cabin; or Master and Slave was presented, apparently for the first time. According to the advertisement, the play was a defense against the "vile imputations" of Uncle Tom's Cabin, The Octoroon, and like plays. It must have made quite an evening, for even the manager and lessee, Mr. Kunkel, appeared on the program, presenting "several beautiful Ethiopian Melodies." That the evening was a success is evidenced by the fact that the entire program was repeated the next night. And after several days, Parlor and Cabin was again "with a change of character and restoration of the popular scene between the Northern Philanthropist and Southern Planter, in which a true picture is drawn to the discomfiture and chagrin of every

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114 Dispatch, January 26, 1861.
115 Ibid., February 4, 1861.
116 Ibid., February 5, 1861.
Abolitionist. This great scene should be witnessed by all true lovers of Southern rights.117 This comment is interesting in view of the fact that at this time Virginia was still a member of the Union, and did not secede until after the bombardment of Fort Sumter in April.

There was little of unusual interest at the theatre until the latter part of February. A number of benefits were given for various members of the stock company—one for R. S. Melburn on February 11, one on February 15 for Mrs. I. B. Phillips, the wife of the stage manager, and one on February 18 for Mrs. De Bar.

The next actor of importance to be featured at the Richmond Theatre was John Sefton, whose engagement apparently began sometime late in February and ran through the early part of March. Brown states that Sefton was born in Liverpool, England, in 1805, and made his stage debut in that city in an insignificant role. He played in minor parts in various theatres in England until he secured an offer from Messrs. Cowell and Simpson to come to America to play "Fops, Old Men, Country, Boys, dancing &c." He accepted this offer and made his American debut at the Walnut Street Circus in 1827 "with indifferent success." Later, however, he seemed to catch on and played in New York at the Park Theatre in 1828. In 1831 he joined Wemyss in Pittsburg where he made quite a hit as Jimmy Twitcher in the Golden Farmer; this role he made peculiarly his own.118

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117 Ibid., February 9, 1861.
118 Brown, op. cit., 330.
On February 27, Sefton was scheduled to appear as "Jemmy Twitcher in England," a role which, according to the paper, he had played in "New York City alone for 500 nights." On February 28 Sefton appeared in the "character of the Old French Actor, and Jacques Strop, alias Jemmy Twitcher in France" both of which were said to be "his own." On the same program were two other pieces entitled Life of an Actress, and Mob, the Outlaw. The performance for March 1 was a benefit performance for Sefton; the bill included "Two of the B'hoys, with John Sefton as One of 'em," and "Count Glorioux, the Confounded Frenchman, with John Sefton as the Eccentric Count." On March 2, which seems to have been his last performance, he was scheduled to appear in "three original characters" — "One of the B'hoys," "A Drunken Corporal," and "Jacques Strop."

The next important attraction at the Richmond Theatre was the appearance of Miss Bateman, "the renowned child artist," who, since her return to the stage has elicited praise both North and South, and has been pronounced the most gifted and intensely natural actress on the American stage. Although no name but Miss Bateman is given, she undoubtedly was Kate Bateman, who, with her sister Ellen, toured America and Europe as the Bateman Children. In 1850,

119 Dispatch, February 27, 1861.
120 Ibid., February 28, 1861.
121 Ibid., March 1, 1861.
122 Ibid., March 2, 1861.
123 Ibid., March 4, 1861.
supported by their father, H. L. Bateman, they played an engagement in Mobile. During this engagement they presented *The Merchant of Venice* with Ellen, who was five, as Shylock, and Kate, who was seven, as Portia, and *Macbeth* with Kate as the Thane and Ellen as Lady Macbeth. One can not help wondering what a five-year-old child would be like in the role of Shylock, or a seven-year-old child in the role of Macbeth. According to Brown, the Bateman Children had retired from the stage in 1856. Ellen married in 1860 and Kate returned to the stage, appearing at the Winter Garden in 1860. Brown does not mention Kate's Richmond engagement, but states that in 1863 she was at Niblo's Garden in New York.

Miss Bateman, who was not quite sixteen (she was born October, 1845), began her Richmond engagement with *Romeo and Juliet*, in which she appeared as Juliet. On succeeding nights she played the title role in the play *Geraldine*, written by Mrs. S. F. Bateman, which was repeated for two nights, Parthenia in *Ingomar*, as Juliet again, and as Parthenia again on March 16. This performance was announced as the last of Kate's engagement, but she was persuaded to continue her performances for three more nights. She appeared as Juliet on March 18, and in the *School for Scandal* on March 19 and 20.

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124 Dugger, *op. cit.*, 173.
125 Brown, *op. cit.*, 25.
126 *Dispatch*, March 4, 1861.
127 Ibid., March 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 16, 1861.
Soon after Miss Bateman's engagement closed, C. W. Couldock, whom the Dispatch called the "eminent tragedian," began an engagement. Couldock, although not a Forrest nor a Booth, was an actor of some reputation. He was born in England in 1815, and made his stage debut in Othello at Sadler's Wells Theatre in 1835. He first appeared in this country at the Broadway Theatre in New York in the 1849-50 season. He had played throughout the South. He supported Charlotte Cushman in Mobile in 1850, and played another engagement there in 1855.

The play for the opening night of Couldock's engagement was the Willow Opse, in which he appeared in the role of Luke Fielding. His next role was as the Cardinal in Richelieu. His engagement lasted until March 5, when he took a benefit. The two plays presented on this occasion were Chimney Corners and The Stranger. Also on the program, as usual, was a "pas seul" by a Miss Isabella May, who made her first appearance with the theatre on March 30.

Immediately following Couldock's engagement, James Harrison made his appearance at the Richmond Theatre, which, according to the paper, was the "first appearance in five years of the favorite young actor." Odell and Brown do not mention Harrison. As

128 Ibid., March 25, 1861.
129 Brown, op. cit., 82.
130 Duggar, op. cit., 205-206. Also see Wemyss, op. cit., 42.
131 Dispatch, April 5, 1861.
132 Ibid., April 6, 1861.
133 A benefit was given a James Harrison at the National Theatre in New York, March 19, 1861, but whether he was the Southern actor cannot be determined. Odell, op. cit., VII, 354.
well as it can be determined, he was born in Louisville in 1835
and made his debut in that city, to which, apparently, his acting
was largely confined. He is supposed to have been connected in
some way with Edwin Booth in 1857, but in just what way is not
clear. 134

Harrison began his engagement in The Three Guardsmen by
Dumas, which must have been a thriller indeed, for, according to
the paper, the "magnificent production is profuse in soul-stirring
combats, struggles, situations, tableaux, and deep and thrilling
interest." The "concluding effect" of the production was the
"thrilling exhibition of the storming of Rochelle." 135 Another
feature of this program was the return of Miss Mary Partington,
who had been absent for a short time, possibly on "furlough."

On Monday, April 8 the stage manager, I. B. Phillips, took
a benefit. On this occasion Harrison appeared in the Romance of a
Poor Young Man. Also on the program was The Mute Spy, in which
Mary Partington was scheduled to appear, and the singing of "a new
version of 'The Happy Land of Canaan" by James Wells, one of the
members of the stock company. 136

The Three Guardsmen was the main feature at the theatre on
April 9, and The Romance of a Poor Young Man was repeated on April 10.

134 New York Public Library. A clipping from the magazine
section of the Louisville Herald dated in pencil June 26.
135 Dispatch, April 6, 1861.
136 Ibid., April 8, 1861.
The managers, Kunkel and Moxley, were given a benefit on April 11. For this program the advertisement announced "a new oriental spectacle with magnificent scenery, grand marches, splendid dances, (and) imposing tableaux," entitled Fairy Spell; or, Waters of Oblivion. Another interesting feature of this benefit program was the appearance of "Smith's celebrated first regiment band" which had volunteered its services—so the notice stated. \(^{137}\) No further information was available as to the identity of Smith's first regiment band, but it was probably the band of one of the volunteer groups of militia then forming in Richmond as well as throughout the South.

In the meantime, another place of amusement, the Metropolitan Hall, located on Franklin Street and catering in the main to miscellaneous entertainments such as panoramas, burlesques, and minstrel shows, was open. And, ironically, it seems, on April 10 the "Dioramic Representations" depicting the War on the Danube was scheduled to be shown. \(^{138}\) On April 13, scenes of the Russian war were shown together with "mechanical and chemical illustrations of Fort Sumter." \(^{139}\)

About this time theatrical notices begin to be absent from the Richmond papers. The last notice for the Richmond Theatre in the Dispatch was on April 13. It announced a repetition of the performance given April 11 and 12. The last notice for the Metropolitan Hall was on April 15, it announced that there were only two more

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\(^{137}\) Ibid., April 9, 10, 11, 1861.

\(^{138}\) Ibid., April 10, 1861.

\(^{139}\) Ibid., April 13, 1861.
nights for Tarrant's Russian War Scenes. A note in the Dispatch for April 15 stated that "The Theatrical Company recently playing here open to-night in Petersburg in The Lady of Lyons." Thus ended the 1860-1861 season for Richmond. Earlier than usual, to be sure, but it had apparently been a good one. No theatre could be expected to compete with the excitement that prevailed in Richmond when news of Fort Sumter reached the city.

With the termination of the first theatrical season of the Confederacy, which ran roughly from January to March and April, 1861, certain facts of interest stand out. (1) In January, 1861, the theatrical season was in full swing in those cities of the South that customarily had a season. (2) The secession of the states did not seem to affect materially the activity of the theatres until later in the spring when it became certain that war must come. This was due, no doubt, to the fact that the people of the South confidently thought that they could leave the Union peaceably. Only when it was certain that war was inevitable was there a falling off in attendance, and a tendency on the part of a few actors to desert the "mimic life of the stage" for the real life of the training camp. (3) The season was much the same as it had been in other years, with actors and actresses from the New York stage augmenting the stock companies engaged at the theatres. The repertoire of the visiting stars and of the companies was unchanged, except in a few instances where a play or a song with political implication was introduced, as, for example, the play Parlor and Cabin presented in Richmond, and the song "Sic Semper," which Joey Gougenheim introduced during her
Richmond engagement. There was not much of this sort of thing during this first season, but enough to indicate the temper of the times. (4) The stress and tension of the period finally began to manifest itself as the season progressed, although perhaps not as much as might have been expected, and brought about an earlier closing of the season than was normally the case.

With the closing of the theatres in April, 1861, most of the actors mentioned during the season disappear from this narrative. Such "stars" as Couldock, the Williamses, the Wallers, Maggie Mitchell, Joey Guggenheim, Eddy, Collins, and others were only on tour, and would naturally be expected to return to the North whence they had come; but most of the best stock actors also left the South. When Ben De Bar and his company left the St. Charles Theatre for St. Louis early in April, they started an exodus that was to become general. John Owens, long time manager of the Varieties in New Orleans, went North for the duration; S. B. Duffield of the Mobile Theatre was in Nashville in 1864; I. B. Phillips, stage manager of the Richmond Theatre, went to Baltimore; and the names of many, many stock actors disappeared from the notices in the newspapers.

There were a few regular stock actors who chose to cast their lot with the South, but they were, in the beginning, only second-rate at best, and many of them were nonentities. John Davis and Charles Morton of the New Orleans and Mobile theatres; Mrs. De Bar, Ida Vernon, the Partington sisters, and the Wrens of the Richmond theatre were among the most important actors who remained in the Confederacy. W. H. Crisp was the only manager of importance who stayed with the
South. Others like Dalton, Harrison, and Hamilton were relatively un­known or completely new to the stage.

It was necessary, therefore, for the Confederate theatre to
rebuild itself for the most part, with new names, new companies, and
new managers. Many of these actors developed into substantial mem­bers of the profession and continued their careers on the New York
stage after the war was over. To the indefatigable efforts of these
men and women — "the fag-ends of dismantled companies" — the Con­
federate theatre owed its existence.
CHAPTER II

SUMMER SEASON 1861

The excitement created by the secession of the states of the lower South and the setting up of the Provisional Government was slight compared to that created by the Fort Sumter incident. President Buchanan had refused to surrender the forts in Charleston harbor as demanded by South Carolina upon her secession in December, 1860. Major Robert E. Anderson of the United States Army was instructed by the War Department "to avoid every act which would needlessly tend to provoke action," but "to hold possession of the fort." With this difficult duty to perform, Major Anderson moved his forces on December 26, 1860, from Fort Moultrie to the more strategic and tenable Fort Sumter. The South Carolinians moved into Fort Moultrie. This double move created a situation equally impossible for both the Federal Government and for the Confederacy. South Carolina demanded that Anderson be ordered to evacuate Fort Sumter; the Federal Government refused. Obviously, Anderson could not hold Fort Sumter indefinitely without receiving provisions, and obviously, the Confederacy could not allow provisions to reach Anderson. Neither could Lincoln, inaugurated in March, 1861, permit Anderson to evacuate Sumter. The problem of the forts in Charleston harbor remained unsolved, and peace or war hung in the balance. Late in March or early in April of 1861, Mrs. Casement wrote:
... Our hearts are in doleful dumps, but we are as gay, as madly jolly, as sailors who break into the strong-room when the ship is going down. At first in our great agony we were out alone. We longed for some of our big brothers to come out and help us. Well, they are out, too, and now it is Port Sumter and that ill-advised Anderson. There stands Port Sumter, an evidence, and thereby hangs peace or war.¹

When it became evident that Anderson could hold Fort Sumter no longer without reprovisioning, President Lincoln determined to send relief. The Confederate Government was equally determined that Anderson should not receive the relief. After considerable correspondence and negotiations, the Confederate Government sent orders to General Beauregard in Charleston to demand the surrender of Anderson and, if he refused, "to reduce the fort." On the afternoon of April 11, a formal demand for surrender was given to Anderson. He refused. And so in the early morning hours of April 12, 1861, the Confederates opened fire on Fort Sumter. After a bombardment of about forty hours, Major Anderson surrendered on April 13.²

The attitude of waiting that had been maintained by both the North and the South was not abandoned. With the bombardment of Fort Sumter, the war had actually begun. Excitement ran high. For some, it was a time of joy and exhilaration; for others, it was a

¹ Mary Boykin Chesnut, A Diary from Dixie, 29.

² There are many excellent accounts of the Fort Sumter affair in the various histories covering the period. The two sources followed for this account are: J. G. Randall, The Civil War and Reconstruction, (New York: D. C. Heath and Company, 1937) 197-198, 222-244. See especially 239-242.
time of gloom and sadness. Mrs. Chesnut, who was in Charleston at this time, has left us a picture of the excitement in that city—of aides in red sashes and gleaming swords dashing hither and yon, and women crowding the housetops to get a better look at the show.

I did not know that one could live such days of excitement. Some one called: "Come out! There is a crowd coming." A mob it was, indeed, but it was headed by Colonels Chesnut and Manning. The crowd was shouting and showing these two as messengers of good news. They were escorted to Beauregard's headquarters. Fort Sumter had surrendered! Those upon the housetops shouted to us "The Fort is one (sic) fire." ... In the afternoon, Mrs. Preston, Mrs. Joe Heyward, and I drove around the Battery. We were in an open carriage. What a changed scene—the very liveliest crowd I think I ever saw, everybody talking at once. All glasses were still turned on the grim old fort.3

But for others there was no sense of exhilaration and joy. The Delta expressed the sentiments of many when it wrote:

The Fraternal War Commenced

... Subsequent dispatches remove all doubt and the terrible event, the initiation of civil war, the permanent disintegration of the great North American republican government itself, the sacrifice of thousands of lives, the destruction of millions of property and the disorganization of society, was at length reluctantly realized even by the strongest hope against hope that some pacific method of settlement would still be found for the adjustment of national difficulties. ... 4

President Lincoln called for seventy-five thousand troops "to suppress 'combinations' in seven states 'too powerful to be suppressed

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3 Chesnut, op. cit., 38-39.

4 New Orleans Daily True Delta, April 14, 1861.
by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings. The North put other war measures into operation as rapidly as possible. The South, too, began to make feverish and earnest preparations for war. Virginia by convention meeting in Richmond on April 17, 1861, adopted an ordinance of secession by a vote of eighty-eight to fifty-five. The states of the upper South soon followed suit. Arkansas seceded on May 6, Tennessee on May 7, and North Carolina on May 20.

On April 27, the Virginia Convention offered the city of Richmond to the Confederacy as a capital. The offer was accepted on May 21, and on May 29 the transfer of the Confederate capital from Montgomery to Richmond was begun; the executive offices were moved in June.

New Orleans

As already noted, the tension and anxiety in the South in the spring of 1861 had brought about an earlier closing of the theatres than was customary. Whatever theatrical activity that was still going on seems to have stopped abruptly with the fall of Fort Sumter, except at New Orleans. New Orleans made a brave attempt to have a summer season, as was her custom, but, as will be seen, she was not very successful.

Ben De Bar and his company left New Orleans shortly before

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5 Randall, op. cit., 242-243.
6 Ibid., opposite 254.
7 Henry, op. cit., 472.
the summer season was scheduled to begin at the St. Charles. The

*Delta* reported the event thus:

> As everybody knows, De Bar's company left last Monday for St. Louis, a city in which the black republicans have lately been defeated "horse, foot and dragoon." The manager, departed New Orleans life Wednesday, he having been in the absence of his company,
>
> "The last rose of summer Left blooming alone."  

The exodus of De Bar and his company apparently was the first of many which occurred after Fort Sumter.

The *summer season at the St. Charles officially began on April 6, with Joey Gougenhelm and the Duffield company of Mobile. It proved to be a short season, lasting, indeed, only five days. The *Delta* gave the following as the reason for the short life of the season:

> The "Doom of Devilla" was the doom of the "summer dramatic season" at the St. Charles . . . . It is not at all surprising that it should be so, for since Monday night last the performances have been miserably poor. We like these "summer seasons," but such will not succeed with trashy adaptions of Ledger stories, a rural company, and a flickering light posted as a theatrical luminary.  

This comment of the *Delta* hardly seems entirely fair. Perhaps the performances were not up to as high a standard as formerly, and perhaps Joey Gougenheim was "a flickering light" (although she had been

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8 *Delta*, April 7, 1861.

9 *Ibid.*, April 7, 1861.

well received in Richmond), but signs of disintegration in the theatre had been in evidence for some time. The poor audiences were not wholly due to poor plays and poor acting. The theatre was having a struggle to compete with the excitement of the times. The citizens' meetings, the drilling of the militia, the parading of the volunteers in their new uniforms, the congregating of the people to read the bulletin boards and discuss the latest developments on the political and military fronts would have been too much for almost any theatre.

Meanwhile, a summer season had been launched at the Varieties.11 The main feature for the opening performance was Playing with Fire, and for the next night King Henry VI.

Affairs went better for the Varieties than it did for the group playing at the St. Charles. The Delta reported that:

So far the "summer season" at the Varieties has been successful. At least, one would so think while surveying the auditorium, and recollecting that a prolongation of an engagement necessarily works a reduction of managerial expense.

For a few days past, the war excitement has doubtless, in some degree militated against the interest of amusements generally, so eager were people to learn, during starlight, the facts and rumors brought by the telegraphic wires. But the injury was not as great as most persons would imagine, for where there is attraction there will be always enough auditors to find their way to it. 12

Crowds of sufficient size to enable the theatre to remain open for a little while longer continued to find their way to the

11 Ibid., April 9, 1861.
12 Ibid., April 14, 1861.
Varieties. Mr. Chippendale, the treasurer, who, it will be ob­served from the comment of the press, rarely appeared on the stage, was given a benefit on April 17.

It should be borne in mind, that to-night the benefit of our townsmen, Mr. Chippendale, the courteous treasurer of the Varieties, comes off. It is his first bow as a beneficiary in New Orleans, and though retired for several years from the stage, making his appearance at long intervals from some managerial necessity, he comes forward on this occasion to help along his programme. The bill is good, and the habitues of the theatre should, while amusing themselves, compliment the treasurer, who amid so much that tries the patience, has given great satisfaction.  

However, in spite of the favorable comment of the Delta, poor Chippendale had a small audience, albeit a friendly one.

War and rumors of war prevented a very large audience at the Varieties last night, the occasion of Mr. Chippendale's benefit. Quite a number of ladies were in attendance, and Mrs. Chippendale, who appeared, was bombarded with bouquets. . . . The establishment seems to be doing well for the time.

The effect of the war on the attendance and on the performances at the Varieties for the remainder of the season can be traced by the succinct remarks of the Delta's critic. On April 20 the audience was good, considering the unsettled conditions:

The "Rivals" was performed at the Varieties last night to a very handsome audience, considering the excitement out-doors, hinging on the intelligence from Baltimore and Harper's Ferry. Whether the news disturbed the actors or no, we cannot say; but this was evident, the last act

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13 Ibid., April 17, 1861.
14 Ibid., April 18, 1861.
was bungling enough got through with, waits
and speech-halting not having the best effect
on the play-goers who like to see scenes roll
along oilily. . . . 15

The "intelligence from Baltimore" refers, no doubt, to the mobbing
of the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment as it passed through Baltimore
on its way to Washington on April 19. In the fighting between the
angry mob and the soldiers, several persons were killed. 16 The
allusion to Harper's Ferry probably refers to the seizure of the
Federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry by a small force of Virginians. 17

In spite of everything, it seemed, the attendance held up. On April
21 the Delta commented as follows:

Events full or startling reality have crowded
so rapidly upon the public mind for the last
week that the mimic life of the stage has been
in a great measure unheeded. Still the Varieties
theatre and the Opera House have flourished better
than was expected, for it was fair to suppose
that each, in times of such intense excitement,
would be well nigh deserted. . . . 18

However, a week later the "war-fever" had just about taken the spot-
light away from the Varieties:

Epidemical war-fever has seized upon the
habitues of the Varieties who, but a few weeks
ago flooded the dress circle, parquette and boxes.
The music of the brass bands, the shrill voice of
the fife and rub-adub of the kettle drum are too
much for Fenelon's orchestra. . . . Few now brighten
the boxes of the theatre, and clap their little

15 Ibid., April 20, 1861.
16 Randall, op. cit., 270.
17 Ibid., 271.
18 Delta, April 21, 1861.
variegated fans in token of a point made by this or that histrion.

Real life, full of stirring incidents lays
in the shade the mimic life of the stage. Sentiments give way to sabres, poetry of motion to pluck of action, plot to patrol.

So the audiences of the Varieties have grown
slim night after night. The manager may console himself with the fact that at Niblo's Garden, Forrest performs before an auditorium half full, and that generally at the north theatres have either wholly played out or done a miserable business.

Evidently realizing that the days of the summer season were numbered, the theatre began a series of benefits for its members. A. H. Davenport took one on May 3, and was fortunate enough to have a "large and fashionable audience. In fact, it was a surprising house, when we consider those of the week past." Benefits followed for Mr. Jordon, and for "that rollicking and pleasant featured favorite of Farcedom, Miss Leighton." This round of benefits brought the season to an end. On Saturday, May 4, the Delta promised three more days of the summer season:

Three more nights wind up the summer season at the Varieties theatre, although the summer commenced with the first of May.

It was the intention of the manager to have kept open until the first of June, and if patronage justified, until the first of July; but, as we said before, Fenelon's orchestra is now nearly drowned by the "spirit-stirring drum and ear-splitting fife," or at all events expects to be drowned, and so the leader capitulates in time.

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19 Ibid., April 28, 1861.

20 Ibid., May 4, 1861.

21 The Delta had previously announced April 9 as the opening of the summer season for the Varieties.
The Sunday paper of May 5 had two conflicting announcements. In one it announced that the evening performance was the end of the season:

To-night the "summer season" at the Varieties terminates with a benefit. It has been brief but not a loss, as a fanatical Northern journal prophesied when the season commenced. No doubt next year, provided the sword is sheathed in the scabbard of peace, the manager will be remembered in such a way to be a lesson to those who shut up the doors of their theatres early, so that another iron can be placed in the fire elsewhere. . . .

"Those who shut up their doors early" was probably intended as a reprimand to Ben De Bar, who, it will be recalled, had gone to St. Louis early in April. The other announcement was in the form of a "Card" which announced that on Monday night, May 6, a benefit and last performance would be given Manager Owens. The bill included three farces: P. P., or The Man and the Tiger, A Thumping Legacy, and Forty Winks. The papers reported the benefit a success.

"The benefit of the manager of the Varieties was quite complimentary in point of numbers, fashion and intelligence. It would have been great but for the out-door excitement." No more theatre notices appeared in the papers, and so it may be assumed that the performance of May 6 was the last. The amazing thing is that it remained open as long as it did, considering the spirit and enthusiasm of the city.

A stranger visiting our city at this time would deem its streets the parade ground of one vast encampment. At every step a soldier is met, and martial music fills the air. The tramp of armed men is heard by day and by night, and

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22 Ibid., May 8, 1861.
reverberations of the drill-room assail the ear upon almost every side. The enthusiasm with which our people enter military organisations is not of the ephemeral character which subsides with the last tap of the drum; it is rather of that firm texture which endures beyond the first blush of elation, and braves the purpose to the performance of the intention. A spirit so determined is not to be awed by proclamations, or subdued by a paper blockade.23

Now with the theatres closed, the Opera House and Vannuchi's Museum were the only places of amusement in New Orleans. The opera, long one of the most fashionable and popular forms of amusement in the city, stood the strain of the war-fever longer than the drama, but only for a few days, for it too closed on May 11 after the performance of The Pardon of Ploreral, which had been so popular throughout the winter and spring. Vannuchi's remained open for a short time featuring the "great attraction — Fannie Wallace the Scotch giantess," who weighed 675 pounds.

As far as public amusements were concerned, New Orleans was without entertainment until late in the summer, and then the only offering to a city famed for its gaiety was the Panopticon.24 The Picayune stated that the exhibition of the Panopticon was drawing crowds and recommended that parents take their children to see it.

... All our little folk should go and witness the bombardment of Fort Sumter. It will give them a more accurate idea of military operations, besides impressing the great events of this war for Southern independence on our youthful minds. ...25

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23 Ibid., May 8, 1861.

24 New Orleans Daily Picayune, August 2, 1861.

25 Picayune (afternoon edition), August 9, 1861.
The dullness of the summer was somewhat brightened by the appearance of an entertainer announced as "Harry Macarthy, the Arkansas Comedian." Macarthy, assisted by Lottie Estelle, was scheduled to give "personation concerts" for a "few nights" only at the Academy of Music. The first concert, scheduled for August 7, was a benefit for the families of volunteers. A few nights later, the paper announced that Macarthy was the author of the "new National Song of the South," entitled "The Bonnie Blue Flag," and that his program on August 7 had been so well received that he would remain "a few nights" longer. The "few nights" lengthened into an engagement of about two weeks, or until August 17, which was announced as "positively the last night" of the concerts.

Harry Macarthy became one of the most important figures in the theatrical activity of the Confederacy. His forte was the singing of popular ballads, many of which he composed himself, and the impersonation of Irish comedy characters. He might justly be called the George M. Cohan of the Confederacy. When he began his series of "personation concerts" at the Academy of Music in August, 1861, he was apparently a relatively unimportant figure in the entertainment world. Odell does not mention him until after the war, and Brown says only that he was born in England in 1834, and that he made his first appearance in Philadelphia in 1849 at Barnum's Museum. At the

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26 New Orleans Daily Crescent, August 6, 1861.
27 Ibid., August 8, 1861.
28 Picayune (afternoon edition), August 17, 1861.
time of Brown’s writing, Macarthy was “traveling in the West.” He had been in New Orleans at least on one other occasion, for the paper reported the following:

Mr. Harry Macarthy, who accompanying his talented and popular sister, Marion, was such a favorite a few years ago, on the boards of both the St. Charles and the Varieties theatres, and who is now giving a series of "personation concerts," at the Academy of Music, assisted by a very clever actress, singer and danseuse, is certainly a comedian of remarkable versatility. His programmes are extensive and comprehensive, embracing character acting, singing, dancing, imitations, and all sorts of fun. . . . His new "National Song of the South," composed by himself, and called "The Bonnie Blue Flag with a Single Star," takes his audiences mightily, everyone of the many hits it contains telling with unerring certainty upon their sympathy and their enthusiasm.

The public, in these dull times of ours, have reason to be obliged to the management of the Academy of Music for affording them such an opportunity of enjoying an evening's entertainment so really good as Mr. Macarthy's "personation concerts."

Lottie Estelle was apparently a newcomer to the stage. Neither Brown nor Odell mention her in the period before the war. She and Macarthy apparently were married, but the newspapers always billed her as Lottie Estelle until the latter part of the war when she was sometimes referred to as Mrs. Macarthy.

According to the reports in the newspapers, the "personation concerts" were most enthusiastically received by the public. Perhaps their success may have been due, in part, to the fact that

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30 Picayune (afternoon edition), August 10, 1861.
the people had been so long without amusement; but, in any case, said the Plessy. Macarthy "takes the rag off the bush"."31 His negro characters were never "excelling," and he had "a fine voice over which he has perfect command, and his powers as a comedian were perfectly irresistible."32 The Plessy seemed unable to retain its enthusiasm for Macarthy.

"A laugh is good," says the old song, and if that fact be generally admitted, we would counsel those who are fond of good things to go to the Academy of Music, any or every evening of this week, and enjoy plenty of them, in the songs, performances, dancing, and other attractive performances of Mr. Harry Macarthy and pretty Lettie Estelle. They had a succession of full and fashionable audiences last week, and everybody present manifested in the most unmistakable way the fullest satisfaction with everything that was done, Macarthy has a good deal of the Power, not a little of the Burton, and a strong dash of the Cowell, in his style of acting and imitation; while as a vocalist he has decided merit. His song of the "Bennie Blue Flag, whose single star has grown into eleven," is nightly encored, and deservedly. In the first place, it is a good song, and, in the next, he sings it with infinite spirit and effect.33

Apparently, the "Bennie Blue Flag" was introduced by Macarthy for the first time during this engagement. The notices referred to it as a "new" song, and the press made much of it. The song expressed both the enthusiasm and ideology of the South. The following are three of the seven stanzas of the song:

1st Verses: We are a band of brothers, and native to the soil,
Fighting for the property we gained by honest toil;

31 Plessy (afternoon edition), August 9, 1861.
32 Ibid. (morning edition), August 9, 1861.
33 Ibid. (afternoon edition), August 12, 1861.
And when our rights were threatened,
the cry rose near and far;
Hurrah for the Bonnie Blue Flag that
bears a single star!

Chorus: Hurrah! hurrah! for the Bonnie Blue flag
that bears a single star.
Hurrah! hurrah! for Southern Rights Hurrah!
Hurrah for the Bonnie Blue Flag, that
bears a Single Star!

2nd Verse: As long as the Union was faithful to her trust
Like friends and like brothers, kind were we and just;
But now, when Northern treachery attempts our rights to mar,
We hoist on high the Bonnie Blue Flag, that
bears a Single Star.

Chorus: Hurrah for the Bonnie Blue Flag that bears a Single Star!
Hurrah! Hurrah! for Southern Rights Hurrah!
Hurrah for the Bonnie Blue Flag, that bears a Single Star!

7th Verse: Then cheer, boys, cheer, raise the joyous shout,
For Arkansas and North Carolina now have both gone out;
Then let another rousing cheer for Tennessee be given—
The Single Star of the Bonnie Blue Flag has grown to be Eleven.

(Chorus repeats)\textsuperscript{34}

With the feelings of the people already at a high pitch over the recent victory at Manassas, one can well imagine the enthusiasm which must have greeted Macarthy's singing of this song.

At the conclusion of Macarthy's engagement only one other entertainment of any consequence occurred in New Orleans during the

\textsuperscript{34} The words above were taken from a copy of the sheet music of the song "as composed and arranged, and sung at his (Macarthy's) personation concerts." Music Collection, Confederate Museum, Richmond, Virginia. There were seven stanzas with the chorus repeated after each.
summer of 1861. On August 21, the Bee announced that a "Dramatic Representation" would be presented by "ladies and Gentlemen of New Orleans" on August 27. The purpose of the program was to raise funds to buy winter clothing for the families of volunteers "now at the seat of war." The papers wrote daily of the progress of the preparations. The Bee stated:

Curiosity and expectation are on tip-toe regarding the amateur dramatic representation that is to be given at the Opera-House next Thursday evening, when certain ladies and gentlemen who have been figuring with success in private theatricals will undertake London Assurance and other pieces. . . .35

The Picayune reported that the "Dramatic Representation" went off in fine style and that

The Governor of the State and his full staff, and Gen. Grivot with other military gentlemen, were present in full uniform, upon the occasion, occupying two of the proscenium boxes. Members of the committees of management, wearing badges of the Confederate colors, officiated as assistant doorkeepers and ushers, thus contributing greatly to the comfort and pleasure of the evening.36

As a pecuniary success, this affair was well worthy of so much laudable and united effort. . . .

And the Bee, with its usual exuberance, recorded:

The amateur dramatic representation at the Opera-House, last evening, for the benefit of the volunteers, was a brilliant success. Such an assembly, for beauty and fashion, for natural loveliness and splendor of toilette, we have not seen before in any city on this continent. The house was, of course crowded to its utmost capacity,

35 Bee, August 26, 1861.

36 Picayune (afternoon edition), August 28, 1861.
and at least three thousand dollars must have been realised for the noble cause that prompted the whole affair. . .37

The Bee over-estimated the amount of money made by the amateurs, for according to the Picayune, a sum of $1,850.40 was realized from the performance.38 This amateur performance at the Opera House was the last entertainment of importance until the opening of the fall season.

Although New Orleans' summer season was in reality only a token season, the other cities of the Confederacy were not even as fortunate as New Orleans, for they had no summer season at all. With the coming of war and the closing of the theatres, stock companies disbanded or moved north in masse, as did De Bar's company. The actors scattered; some went north; while others remained in the South. It took time for those who chose to cast their lot with the South to reassemble into companies under new managers. Too, many of the actors must have joined one or another of the many military companies in the first flush of enthusiasm for the cause, although later, many were to seek divers means of evading the conscript officers.

Mobile

There was nothing that could be called legitimate theatre. Throughout the long, hot summer the people went without entertainment, except for an occasional performance by an amateur group, a concert, a diorama, and now and then a minstrel show. For example, in Mobile

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37 Bee, August 28, 1861.
38 Picayune (afternoon edition), September 3, 1861.
the Confederate Minstrels, composed of "young men of the city,"
gave a concert on July 20 for the benefit of the Ladies Aid
Society. 39 The paper reviewed the program several days later.

A large audience—considerably larger than
the usual attendance during the latter part of the
recent dramatic season—assembled last night at
the concert of the Confederate Minstrels. The
troops (sic), eleven in number, consisting of young
gentlemen of Mobile, gave an Ethiopian entertain­
ment which would compare favorably with most of
those given by pro (f)essional companies. The
music, from lungs unpracticed to fill a large
building, lacked volume, but the selections were
very judiciously made (t)o meet this defici(e)ncy,
and the respectful attention of the audience
compensated for it. There was also an entire
absence of that abolition sort of songs which have
been too long tolerated on the Southern Sta(g)e,
where we h(o)pe never to hear "Swanee River" or
"Nelly Gray" again. The conc(e)rt must have
realised a very handsome sum for the object to
which it was dedicated. 40

Another interesting event in Mobile was the appearance of
Charles Morton, who had been a member of the stock company both in
Montgomery and in New Orleans during the previous winter season.
He was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1832 and made his debut in
this country in Charleston, South Carolina, under the management of
Joseph Jefferson. 41

In August he appeared at the Mobile Theatre to present "two
of his celebrated entertainments." According to the paper, Mr.
McLean had "kindly offered" the theatre for Morton's use on this

39 Mobile Register and Advertiser, July 20, 1861.
40 Ibid., July 25, 1861.
41 Thomas Allston Brown, The History of the American Stage,
253. Brown records that he made his first appearance at the Olympic in
New York in April, 1865, but Odell records that he made his first appear­
ance there in September, 1865. Odell, Annals, VIII, 11.
occasion. He was scheduled to appear in twelve different characters
with "innumerable songs, comic and sentimental and patriotic, recita-
tions, &c." 42

A little later Fitz's Panopticon of the South was scheduled
to be shown for a "few nights only." The Panopticon was a mechanical
exhibition of "life-like moving figures." The feature of the exhibi-
tion was the representation of "scenes in the Revolution of 1861,"
some of which depicted the bombardment of Fort Sumter. 43

Montgomery

Such was typical of the amusement available for the citizens
of Mobile in the summer of 1861. Montgomery fared no better. Burton's
Moving Panorama gave a benefit program on April 17 for the benefit of
the Ladies Gunboat Fund. 44 In May, Mago Del Mage, a magician, gave a
performance at the theatre.

Charles Morton came up from Mobile after his concert there to
give two programs. The Post gave him a good "puff."

Mr. C. H. Morton, the excellent Comedian and
Vocalist, who is one of the favorites of our drama
lovers, is at present in our city, and will give
two musical and dramatic entertainments, at the
Theatre, on Saturday and Monday evenings next, for
the benefit of the families of Volunteers, who have
left Montgomery. Mr. Morton has lately given similar
entertainments in New Orleans and Mobile, and met
with great success. We feel satisfied that the
Theatre will be crowded each night, as the programme

42 Mobile Advertiser and Register, August 21, 1861.
43 Ibid., September 1, 1861.
44 Montgomery Daily Advertiser, April 17, 1861.
will be rich and varied, including a number of new songs, among which are the new national song "The Flag of the Free Eleven," and Albert Pike's "War Song of Dixie." Let everybody get ready to attend Mr. Morton's entertainment. 45

But in spite of the urging of the Post, Morton met with indifferent success:

The attendance of Saturday night at Mr. Morton's entertainment, we are sorry to say, was rather small, but those who were present all expressed themselves highly pleased. Tonight is the last concert Mr. Morton will give in this city, and we hope to see the Theatre crowded. 46

Georgia Cities

Macon, Savannah, and Atlanta seem to have been even more barren of entertainment. The newspaper material is very meager for Savannah and Atlanta during this period; however, the indications are clear that the amusements in the summer of 1861 were restricted to an occasional musical program, or a variety program by a group of local amateurs given as a benefit for some war project.

The newspaper files of the Macon Telegraph are complete for the entire period, and, as far as can be determined from them, Macon spent an "amusementless" summer, with only an occasional concert to break the monotony.

Charleston

Neither did Charleston have anything that could be called

45 Montgomery Daily Post, August 29, 1861.
46 Ibid., September 2, 1861.
true theatre in the summer of 1861. However, a series of amateur productions took place which proved to be of significance in the development of the Confederate theatre. On May 7 the following appeared in the Courier:

We announce with much pleasure the performance for Thursday evening next. It is gratifying that we can find talent enough in our city to entertain an audience, and we doubt not there will be a crowded house. The versatile talents of the little queen sisters, and their brother and sister, were fully developed and appreciated at the recent performance for the Sumter Guards and Mr. Marchant. Seats should be secured early.47

This announcement undoubtedly has reference to the performance given in March48 by the "ladies and gentlemen of Charleston." At least a part of the cast for that production was made up of the Waldron family. Another announcement by the Courier a few days latter gives a little more information concerning the Waldrons:

This Theatre this evening will present to us the best efforts of those gifted children, to whom the complimentary benefit is tendered, and on which occasion MR. MARCHANT kindly gives the gratuitous use of the house. The juveniles have spared no exertion or expense in preparing for the occasion, and will be assisted by talented young ladies and gentlemen of Charleston. They propose forming a Dramatic Amateur Company in this city with the proceeds of their benefit, and we trust they will be liberally patronized.49

The guiding force behind these amateur productions and the projected formation of an amateur dramatic company was Mr. Alfred

47 Charleston Daily Courier, May 7, 1861.
48 See page 50-51
49 Daily Courier, May 9, 1861.
Waldron. It has not been possible to determine exactly who he was and why he was in Charleston. However, there are certain facts which appear to be fairly certain. According to Mrs. Clementine Lebey, Alfred Waldron and his family were from the North, but had come South to give amateur theatrical programs. They were in Charleston when the war came and decided — probably as the path of least resistance — to cast their lot with the South. Later, they moved to Augusta, Georgia, where Mr. Waldron engaged in the wholesale liquor business, as well as in the theatrical business. While in Augusta, he was the lessee of Concert Hall, Augusta's theatre, and the manager of the Waldron troupe.

The Waldron theatre group was composed of six children and the father, Alfred Waldron, who managed them. The girls were Miss Laura, who was the oldest of the girls, and Misses Fanny and Julia. Julia was apparently the youngest of the girls, for occasionally she is mentioned as the "infant Julia," while Fanny is always Miss Fanny, though she, too, must have been quite young. The boys were Alfred, Andrew, and Arthur. Alfred undoubtedly was the oldest of the boys, but whether he was older than Laura is problematical. Andrew, apparently, was the middle boy, while Arthur was the youngest. On one occasion the paper referred to him as "a little lad not more than 6 or 7 years of age."

50 A personal interview with Mrs. Clementine Lebey, the youngest daughter of John H. Hewitt who was associated with the Waldrons as playwright and acting manager. Hewitt will be treated fully later in this work.

51 Augusta Daily Constitutionalist, August 2, 1862.
This family of six children, presided over by the father, formed the nucleus of the Thespian Family, or Queen Sisters, as they were variously called. The family group was augmented by other children, and, later, by professional actors or actresses. This troupe came of age professionally during the war, and were an important part of the theatre of the Confederacy, for they represented the only instance of the development of an entirely new Southern company. The following indicates the esteem in which they came to be held in Augusta where they finally made their permanent home.

...  

The Drama is at present represented in Augusta by the "Thespian Family, or Queen Sisters." We hail the advent of this troupe, (whose organization is coeval with our Confederacy,) as the dawning of a better and purer day for the stage — a stage purged of the grossness and immorality with which it has so long and so justly been charged. Indeed, such is the condition of our country, with only here and there a city of sufficient size to authorize the employment of leading talent, that few save strolling stock companies, below the par in Europe and the larger American cities, have found their way to the interior, and our people have little save the worst aspects of dramatic art. The manner in which the Troupe now under consideration is organized promises happily to adapt itself to the conditions of our society, and the higher order of dramatic taste. The corps consists mainly of one family — six in number — accompanied by their parents, and under the management of their father, Mr. Waldron. Respected and esteemed in private life it is to be expected that they will carry with them upon the stage the sterling qualities on which their social standing is based, and that their virtue and excellence will shed their influence on all their dramatic associations. Hence, in this Troupe we recognize the nucleus of a purifying and elevating power which we hope will prove the inauguration of a new era in the dramatic literature of our young republic, and widen and enlarge its influence until the entire dramatic world will feel its beneficial effect. Nor is it extravagant to indulge these exalted
hopes of the bright and promising children of Thespis, who compose this interesting family. That we are not singular in our ideas, is sufficiently evidenced by a glance at any of the numerous audiences which habitually attend their performances. Among them may be found large numbers who conscientiously and habitually abstain from attendance on any similar exhibition. 52

During the summer of 1861 the Queen Sisters furnished almost all of the entertainment which Charlestonians had during that period, and as has been said, it was the formative period for the new troupe.

Apparently the performance which they gave on May 9 was a successful production, for we find them presenting the Hunchback later in the month. The standing of the group had now advanced to the point where the Courier refers to them as "The Little Thespians" and the "Queen Sisters." The latter title apparently developed from a reference by the paper to Julia and Fanny as the "little queens." Furthermore, a citizen of Charleston, a Mr. Ottolengui, wrote a play for them called the Vigilance Committee; or, Lovers in a Box. In announcing the preparation for this play by the amateur group, the Courier stated that:

The little "Queen Sisters," whose dramatic and elocutionary performances have commanded the admiration of all critical spectators and witnesses, have received a new and original piece, written specially for them and their family, entitled "The Vigilance Committee." The piece introduces, in dramatic form, a summary sketch of leading events in the history of secession, including the death of the marauder ELLSWORTH, and the hero-martyr JACKSON, at Alexandria,

52 Southern Field and Fire Side, Augusta Georgia, January 10, 1863, I, No. 2, 12.
and concluding in "Dixie," a new and appropriate
vision by way of epilogue.

As there is a very general desire to see and
hear these gifted children of Thespis we trust they
will find it convenient soon to execute their purpose
of giving an entertainment for the benefit of the
"Palmetto Relief Association" and the Jackson testi-
monial. 53

The incident of the death of Elsworth and Jackson included in the
dramatic sketch occurred in the early days of the war when the
Federal forces occupied Alexandria, Virginia. Colonel Ellsworth,
leader of the "New York Fire Zouaves," personally removed a Con-
federate flag which a Mr. Jackson had placed above his hotel, the
Marshall House. As Ellsworth was coming down the stairs with the
flag he was shot by Jackson, who, in turn, was killed by Ellsworth's
men. 54 The melodramatic possibilities are obvious. The play was
no great piece of dramatic literature; rather, it was merely a
dramatic sketch consisting of a number of incidents which were
interspersed with songs.

The Courier showed much interest in the preparations for
the production of The Vigilance Committee. On June 7 the paper
reported that the rehearsals at the theatre for the Jackson Memorial
Fund were under way and progressing favorably, and the program was
described as a "novel and interesting one," and because of the "laudable

53 Daily Courier, June 6, 1861.

54 There must be many accounts of this incident. The two used
here are: Mrs. Richard Putnam, Richmond During the War; Four Years of
Personal Observation by a Richmond Lady (New York: G. W. Carleton
Lady Sees Civil War, May 25, 1861, 61-62. MS, University of North
Carolina Library, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.
object, to which the proceeds (were) to be devoted, the press expressed the belief "that the house (would) be crowded." On June 10 the Courier again called attention to the program and announced that the preparations were "progressing nicely."

The paper also announced that "a professional lady" had been engaged to assist the amateurs with the program, and to appear with Mr. Marchant "in one of those elegant comedies which are always so popular in Charleston when well acted, and when the worthy object for which the performances are to be given is considered, we shall be disappointed if the house is not one of the most brilliant of the season."

The long awaited program for the benefit of the Jackson Memorial Fund was finally presented on Wednesday, June 11. Ottolengui's The Vigilance Committee and a farce, Rough Diamond, plus the usual singing and dancing made up the bill for the evening. The performance was given in Institute Hall with the price of admission fifty cents and reserved seats one dollar. In commenting on the program the next day, the Courier said:

The entertainment presented on Tuesday evening, in the Institute Hall, was of rich and rare attractions in many respects. In variety of features and general excellence of performance, musical and dramatic, it was a gratifying success throughout; and when it was considered as the achievement of a single family admiration rose to a high pitch. The little queens, Fanny and Julia excelled their previous efforts, and were ably supported by their gifted brother and sister.

The vocal execution of little Fanny, in the prayer from Zampa, was equal to her best dramatic efforts, and this is high commendation, and Julia was equally happy in her allotted song. Miss Laura's voice betokens promise of rich vocal achievement, and her rendition of the "invocation for Peace" was a triumphant hit.
Our little "non-commissioned officer," Mike (Andrew), was irresistibly droll, and made his part tall to the utmost.

One auditor was so carried away by the production and by the performances of the little actors and actresses that he wrote a letter to the Courier praising them and offering advice for improvement in future productions. The letter was signed E. W. M. and stated in part:

An eye-witness of the performance at the Institute Hall, of "The Waldron Children," Tuesday evening, I must beg admission into your columns for the purpose of "rendering unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's." The Hall contained one of the most brilliant and choice audiences that has ever graced a Charleston public.

The correspondent continued at great length to praise each member of the cast and then gave the following advice:

... but to John I would kindly suggest in his next attempt, to speak louder and very much slower; though, notwithstanding his fleetness in speech and action, he deserves equal credit, it being his first appearance upon any stage. In a word I would say well done all and all, and I only speak the kind of way when I herein beg them, these dear little home children, to give another and still another performances, during the dull and amusingless summer season.

Several days later another benefit for the Jackson Memorial Fund was presented at the Charleston Theatre. On this occasion two acts of Richard III were presented by the "amateur gentlemen assisted by the talented Southern actress Miss Katie Estelle." It was probably Estelle who was referred to as the "professional lady" who came to help out in the performance by the Queen Sisters on June 11.

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55 Daily Courier, June 17, 1861.
Both Mr. Marchant and Miss Estelle were on the program, appearing in an "amusing piece" called *Storm in a Tea Cup* and in the concluding number, *Raising the Wind*. Another interesting feature of the program was the recitation by Marchant of an address written by "South Carolina's young poet," Paul Hamilton Hayne.56

There is no further record of the Queen Sisters until August, when they again appeared before the Charleston public. The *Courier* commended their performance very highly:

> On Thursday evening we witnessed one of the most delightful entertainments ever given by our young artists, the Thespian Family or Queen Sisters. Their new piece, "Vigilance Committee," was given with perfect effect, and the new songs were received with simultaneous bursts of applause and encores.

> The Address by little FANNY was a most brilliant specimen of her wonderful powers of elocution, and brought down the house. Miss LAURA was in excellent voice, and sang with great effect "The Soldier's Grave," "Invocation for Peace" &c. The amusing abilities of Master ANDREW and infant JULIA are so well known we need not say a word for them.

> The entertainment was for the Jamison Rifles and was a decided success.57

With this performance the summer season in Charleston ended. It had been a fair season, too, especially in consideration of the paucity of theatrical entertainment throughout the South at this time. Certainly in relation to the growth and development of the Confederate theatre, it was an important season, for it saw the beginning of the Queen Sisters.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid., August 3, 1861.
Richmond

There was much too much excitement in Richmond in the summer of 1861 for the theatre to compete with, for, to borrow a phrase of one of the papers of the day, the stirring events of "real life laid in the shade the mimic life of the stage." As has already been stated, the Confederate capital was moved from Montgomery to Richmond in late May and early June. The change had a tremendous effect on the size and character of the new capital city:

... It had been a quiet city of 37,000 people when madness had seized the country, a place of peace and pleasantness.

... By the middle of May preparation, excitement, and confidence were in the air, and from confusion order was gradually emerging. But as yet war was in the picturesque stage, when youth saw only the glamor and none of the misery of the conflict that was about to open.58

This interesting picture of the city is given by one who was among those present:

The city was thoroughly jammed — its ordinary population of forty thousand swelled to three times that number by the sudden pressure. Of course, all the Government, with its thousand employees, had come on; and in addition, all the loose population along the railroad over which it had passed seemed to have clung to and been rolled into Richmond with it.

... Besides, from ten to fifteen thousand troops were always collected, as a general rendezvous, before assignment to one of the important points — Norfolk, the Peninsula, or the Potomac lines. Although these were in camp out of town, their officers and men thronged the streets from daylight to dark, on business or pleasure bent; and the variety of uniforms — from the butter-nut of the

Georgia private to three stars of the flash
colonel — broke the monotony of the streets
pleasingly to the eye.\footnote{\textit{\textsuperscript{59}}}

The changed character of the city — its lawlessness, dis-
turbed Mrs. Putnam of Richmond:

Meanwhile, with the incoming of the Confederate
Government, Richmond was flooded with pernicious
characters. The population was very soon doubled.
Speculators, gamblers, and bad characters of every
grade flocked to the capital, and with a lawless-
ness which for a time bade defiance to authority,
pursued the rounds of their wicked professions, and
grew rich upon their dishonest gains. Thieving,
garrotting, and murdering were the nightly employ-
ments of the villians who prowled around the city,
until, by the increased vigilance of the police
under the newly-appointed Provost Marshal, this
alarming state of affairs was in a measure rectified.

\begin{quote}
Richmond had already become a "city of refuge."
Flying before the face of the invader, thousands
sought within its hospitable walls that security
they could not hope to receive in exposed places.\footnote{\textit{\textsuperscript{60}}}
\end{quote}

The change of the capital from Montgomery to Richmond was
not the only outstanding event of this summer. Undoubtedly, the
first battle of Manassas, July 21, was the most important single
incident of the summer of 1861. It was the first major battle of
the conflict and was hailed as a great victory for the South. Winning
the first real battle of the war gave impetus to the feeling that the
war would be a short and victorious one. A wave of confidence and
exultation spread throughout the Confederacy.\footnote{\textit{\textsuperscript{61}}}

\footnote{\textit{T. G. DeLeon, \textit{Four Years in Rebel Capitals}, (Mobile,
Alabama: The Gossip Printing Company, 1892), 86.}
\footnote{Putnam, \textit{op. cit.}, 76, 78.}
\footnote{Randall, \textit{op. cit.}, 276; Henry, \textit{op. cit.}, 61-62.}
Under these circumstances it is understandable that the theatres were closed for a time. Soon the newness and thrill of high adventure would wear off, and the hundreds of civilians and soldiers who thronged the streets "on business or pleasure bent" would seek solace from grief or relief from boredom, as the case might be, in the theatres which would be provided for them when the first flush of excitement had died down. But not now. There were too many thrilling things to do and see. And so in the interim from about April 13 until November there was no theatrical activity in Richmond worthy of mention. There were a few musical concerts and an occasional diorama, but even these did not appear until late in the summer.

In reviewing the theatrical activity for the summer of 1861, one finds that one main fact stands out: the theatre in the Confederacy was completely eclipsed by the thrilling events which were taking place. Fort Sumter, and the feverish preparations for war which it brought; moving the capital from Montgomery to Richmond; and, most important of all, the victory at Manassas, proved to be entirely too much competition for the theatre. So from New Orleans, where the "music of the brass bands and the shrill voice of the fife" finally got the best of Fenelon's orchestra, to Richmond, the stage was largely deserted by the actors, and the dress circle, parquet, and galleries by the public, while nearly everybody went off to the war in one way or another.
CHAPTER III
WINTER–SPRING SEASON 1861–62

New Orleans

The first indication of the revival of theatrical activity in New Orleans for the 1861–62 season occurred with the announcement in the Picayune on September 15, that Mr. David Bidwell desired to open the Academy of Music on St. Charles Street to "the lovers of rational dramatics and musical entertainments." Mr. W. B. Chippen-dale who, it will be recalled, was the treasurer at the Varieties the previous season, was acting manager and Mr. John Davis was stage manager. The first attraction scheduled was Harry Macarthy, who had been so popular there in August. He was engaged for a week to present "his popular entertainments, eccentricities and peculiarities, queer, quaint and quizzical."

The Picayune predicted a profitable season, for the city was "unusually full" for the time of the year and there seemed to be "no reason why this opening of one of (the) most popular places of amusement with such an attraction should not be eminently successful."  

Apparently Macarthy’s programs surpassed the expectations of the manager for he was re-engaged.

At the Academy of Music, the universal favorite, Harry Macarthy, the distinguished comedian and balladist, with the clever and engaging Miss Lottie Estelle, still continue to draw full houses. Having been reengaged they will produce this week entirely

1 New Orleans Daily Picayune (morning edition), September 15, 1861.
new and attractive programmes. Southern actors are being solicited to form a new company for this charming little theatre, under the management of Mr. Chippendale, whose ability to cater to the public taste is indisputable.

By October 1, Messrs. Bidwell, Chippendale, and Davis had the Academy of Music "under most flourishing headway." The programs were not restricted to singing and dancing, but included the performance of "light pieces." Typical of the bills presented is the following:

This evening, Mr. Harry Macarthy will appear as Bryan, in John Brougham's beautiful two act drama, "Temptation," assisted by Lottie Estelle, Mr. John Davis, and the corps dramatique; and as Brian O'Linn, in the farce of that name. In the course of these pieces he will sing a variety of his best Irish songs, and between the two will introduce his popular song, "The Volunteer."

Not only was the Academy "flourishing," but even greater things were promised the public:

Mr. Henry Macarthy (sic) and Miss Lottie Estelle, who have been of late doing so much and so successfully to entertain the lovers of the Comic Muse, are in the last week of their engagement here.

This evening they appear in the great drama of "Ireland and America" and "The Irish Tutor." Mr. Macarthy, besides several Irish songs, incidental to both pieces, will sing his original national song of "Missouri."

Mr. Bidwell has engaged Miss Eloise Bridges the accomplished comedienne, who will appear, supported by Mr. and Mrs. Chippendale, Mr. Morton, Mr. Davis, and an enlarged company in the course of a few days.

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2 Ibid. (afternoon edition), September 23, 1861.
3 Ibid., October 3, 1861.
4 Ibid., October 9, 1861.
Miss Bridges was born in Brooklyn, New York, and made her debut as a reader under the name of Mrs. T. J. Johnson in 1853 at Irving Hall, New York. Her first appearance on the stage as an actress was at Burton's Theatre in 1854:

Another debutante — Eloise Bridges, formerly known on the reader's platform as Mrs. T. J. Johnson — made her stage debut, on March 12th, as Mariana, in The Wife. One can only wonder why this theatre (Burton's) of stars had sunk to the level of ambitious amateurs. Miss Bridges, with Conway as chief support, played Evadne, Much Ado about Nothing, The Hunchback, Love's Sacrifice, Ingomar — the eminently sacrosanct repertoire for an actress of that type.5

In 1857 she was married to a Mr. C. Erwin, a Southern merchant, which perhaps accounts for her presence in the South.6 At the time of her engagement in New Orleans, Miss Bridges probably was no better than a third-rate actress, but she became one of the most important figures in the Confederate theatre.

Miss Bridges opened her engagement at the Academy of Music on October 14 in the role of the Widow Cheerly in The Soldier's Daughter, which she "played with much spirit and effect."7

Besides The Soldier's Daughter the bill for the evening also included a farce, Loan of a Lover, in which Mrs. Chippendale and Mr. Charles Morton made quite a hit. Still another feature of the program was the appearance of Morton between the plays in the character of Mr.

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5 Odell, Annals of the New York Stage, VI, 346.
6 Thomas Allston Brown, History of the American Stage, 46.
7 Picayune (afternoon edition), October 14, 15, 1861.
William Barlow. This role, in which he sang comic and dramatic songs and gave humorous lectures, became one of the regular features at the theatre and a speciality with Mr. Morton.

Miss Bridges' engagement lasted until October 19 after which she was re-engaged for another week. For her benefit on October 16 she played Pauline in The Lady of Lyons, and the program concluded with The Dead Shot. There was only a fair house — certainly not as good as Miss Bridges deserved, according to the Picayune:

There was a very fair house here, last evening, the occasion being the benefit of Miss Eloise Bridges, who, however, on many accounts, deserved a much better one.

. . .

Considering the circumstances under which the management have got this company together, all of them unused to playing together, and improvised, in fact, as the corps dramatique may be said to have been, we must say that we were agreeably surprised by the generally excellent manner in which this play was performed. We have seen its representation, by a regularly constituted company, in a theatre opened for a whole dramatic season, entitled to far less praise than that of last evening.

We were particularly pleased with Miss Bridges's Pauline and Mr. Davis's Claude. Both personations evinced the true artist. Mr. Morton's Dumas struck us as too comic.

On October 25 Miss Bridges was given another benefit in which she appeared as Julia in The Hunchback. After the play, Miss Bridges recited the poem, "We Never Can Be Conquered," and the farce, A Ghost in Spite of Himself, concluded the performance. She ended

8 Picayune (afternoon edition), October 19, 1861.
9 Ibid. (morning edition), October 25, 1861.
her engagement on October 27 with The Robber's Wife.

The most interesting event to occur in the theatre after Miss Bridges' departure was the production of the original drama, The Roll of the Drum, written by John Davis, the stage manager. The play had been announced several times in the papers as being "in preparation." At last it was presented on November 4, with the "entire Confederate Company," which had been "materially strengthened for this occasion" in the cast.

The play had quite a long run, remaining on the bill until November 23; it became one of the most popular original plays on the Confederate stage. The Picasyn gave an interesting synopsis of the piece:

Mr. Davis has arranged, a la Boursicault, from several familiar sources, a very amusing drama, which under the title of "The Roll of the Drum," touches somewhat graphically upon incidents and associations connected with the war. The thread of the story upon which he has strung the pearls (so to speak) of his events, is sufficiently strong to hold them, and keep them in their places and in due sequence.

Miss Fanny Pierson, a northern girl with Southern principles, whose brother, Mr. Gobay, is an officer in the Federal army, disguises herself as a vivandiere, and joins the Confederate army on the Potomac, that she may get a chance of slipping over the lines and being near her brother, in case he is wounded. She enamors all the camp, including a private, Mr. John Davis, who afterwards becomes a Colonel; fascinates him from his post by warbling a ballad, (very improper, by the way, after taps,) by which he comes to grief, and is on the point of getting shot for his folly, but is kindly let off by his Colonel, while she, having secured a pass from a sister vivandiere, who is jealous of and wants

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10 Ibid. (afternoon edition), November 4, 1861.

11 All names are those of the actors and not the characters, except Peter Pestle.
to get rid of her, escapes.

The brother gets killed, at the battle of Manassas, and the Confederate private and lover of the pseudo vivandiere, to whom, by-the-by, we should have stated he was married, "by roll of drum," in the camp, comes back a Colonel, and marries the adventurous damsel. The real vivandiere consoles herself by marrying a gallant drum major, Mr. Morton, who in the course of the piece sings a very good song, about Bull Run and Manassas.

A bashful and very funny apothecary, one Peter Pestle, has a most laughter-moving representative in Mr. Chippendale, whose obligato accompaniment to Miss Fanny Pierson's singing of the "Marseillaise" is very graphic and pointed. Mr. Campbell plays a camp "contraband" capitaly, and makes much fun.

To those who love a laugh, we can recommend at least one sitting out of "The Roll of the Drum," at the Academy.\(^\text{12}\)

After *The Roll of the Drum* closed, there was only about a week left in the season. Such plays as *Don Caesar de Bazan* and *Still Water Runs Deep* made up the bills. The theatre closed the season on December 1 with the production of *The Golden Farmer*.\(^\text{13}\)

There was little in the way of any kind of amusement during the months of December and January, and nothing that could be called true theatre. The main source of entertainment was to be found in the showing of War Illustration under the management of Lee Mallory, and an occasional concert, or program of tableaux at the Opera House.

Late in January Mr. Morton was engaged to appear in connection with the War Illustrations, which had been showing for some time at the Academy of Music. Mr. Morton's function was to appear between the parts of the "Pantechnicon" in "scenes and acts from favorite

\(^{12}\) *Picayune* (afternoon edition), November 6, 1861.

\(^{13}\) *Ibid.* (morning edition), December 1, 1861.
farces," and sing comic songs. The programs met with approval—could it have been because they were the only source of entertain-

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ment?

Academy of Music—With the reopening of this popular place of amusement there seems to have sprung up a vigorous determination on the part of the public to give our only theatre a good and remunerating support. The performances of Mr. C. H. Morton, the comedian and vocalist, are very much liked, and the pantomimon has lost none of its attractiveness. The Museum is open, as usual, every day and evening, and is also a place of very popular resort.

The War Illustrations closed on February 3 with a benefit for Mr. Morton.

Throughout February the amusements were more or less of a miscellaneous character. On February 20, Johnson's Minstrel Troupe was scheduled to begin an engagement in Amory Hall which was to last until March 23. This constituted the only professional entertain-
tainment in the city during this time, and almost the only entertain-
ment of any kind, except for an occasional amateur program or concert. The following from the Picayune, certainly, in view of the paucity of amusements advertised in the press, sounds like whistling to keep up courage.

While the enemy, crammed in Ship Island, undergo a thousand and one discomforts and miseries, they find undoubtedly some kind of solace in the fond belief that we in the Crescent City are much worse off. In this, as in many other things, they are greatly mistaken; for, with a population considerably reduced by military enlistments, and in spite of the scarcity of goods more or less necessary to our comfort,

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15 Ibid., January 30, 1862.
New Orleans does its best to keep up the reputation it always had, of being the gayest city in the American States. We would refer the unbeliever to our advertising columns, wherein he would find a proof that hardly a day passes away without a concert, a ball, or a theatrical performance.

We are speaking of public amusements; but were we to refer to all the private soirees dansantes or chantantes given among the uppertendom of the city, those melancholy people who keep aloof from society on account of the hard times, and retire at 8 or 9 o'clock in the evening, would then know that the world outside is now just as merry as it ever was, ere the Northerners blockaded the mouths of our noble river. Some of those private parties are a new and attractive feature of New Orleans social life.16

The advertising columns carried two notices of amusements for February 21. One was for a "Grand Dramatic Performance" to be given at the Academy of Music Hall for the benefit of Company A Pinckney Battalion Artillery, and the other was for the Johnson Kinstrels at Armory Hall. True, the museum was open, but that could hardly be called theatre. The "Grand Dramatic Performance" mentioned was composed mainly of amateurs assisted by Mr. and Mrs. Chippendale.

Whatever may have been the state of private entertainments among the "uppertendom," unquestionably there had been a great falling off in public amusements. It is not surprising that this was true. The fortunes of the Confederacy were at a low ebb in the spring of 1862. Fort Henry had been captured by the Union forces on February 6, and Fort Donelson had fallen on February 16. Nashville was occupied by the Federal forces on February 23 and southern Kentucky and middle Tennessee were lost to the Confederacy. And, closer home, the activity

16 Ibid., February 21, 1862.
of the Federal Navy in the Gulf, and the massing of forces on Ship Island were both threatening and distressing to New Orleans. The following from the *Picayune* suggests the feeling of anxiety many must have had:

> We are undoubtedly on the eve of the greatest event yet of the whole of our war for independence. Within a very brief space of time a battle is to be fought — perhaps more than one which is to test to the utmost the determination, the ability, and the patriotism of the people of the Confederacy. Our own Beauregard transfers to the West the prestige which the hero of Manassas created for his name in the East . . . .

Whether the writer of the above referred to the movements in Tennessee which were the prelude to Shiloh, or to the activity in the Gulf, is not clear. The mention of Beauregard's transfer seems to indicate a reference to the former.

As the situation in the Gulf region grew more threatening for the Confederates, the tension in New Orleans increased. General Lovell, in charge of the defense of the city, declared martial law, and the *Picayune* agreed that the "emergency" demanded it and that it would "be beneficial to the city."

Although not up to the usual standard, there was still some dramatic activity in the city. During March there were several amateur productions by a group which called themselves the Juvenile Thespian Association. They gave a performance on March 18 at the Academy of Music for the benefit of the Free Market, an association

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17 *Picayune* (morning edition), March 5, 1861.

which provided food for destitute families of soldiers. Free Markets were found throughout the South. They were maintained by contributions from citizens and charitable organisations and were always generously supported by the theatre. The amateurs gave another benefit performance on March 29 for the relief of the sick and wounded soldiers. The bill, which included Don Caesar de Bazan and Grandfather Whitehead, was the same for both occasions.

On March 28 The Roll of the Drum was scheduled for a performance "with full company" at the Concert Hall under the direction of John Davis, who had just returned from a successful engagement in Algiers. However, the program was not given. The paper carried the following notice:

In consequence of the order of the Provost Marshals, the performances at this theatre were suspended. Those who had purchased tickets which could not be redeemed last evening, can have their money returned by applying at the box office, between the hours of 12 and 2 this day.

John Davis, Mgr.

In a few days, however, the theatre was opened and the performance was given.

One of the most interesting events in the theatrical activity of New Orleans in these closing days of the season was the visit of the Queen Sisters of Charleston. They were engaged to appear at the Academy

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19 Ibid., March 15, 1862.
20 Ibid., April 1, 1862.
21 Ibid., April 8, 1862.
of Music beginning on Monday, April 7, for "one week only." They opened in a "new protean comedietta" entitled Little Blanche, written for them by D. Ottolengui; the "grand patriotic song, 'We Conquer or Die!'" and the "great clown song of 'Tippety Witchit!" completed the program. The Queen Sisters presented the usual run of light pieces from their limited repertoire, such as The Vigilance Committee, The Young Widow, and Naval Engagement. Music by the Palmetto Band, which always accompanied them, and singing and dancing rounded out their programs. The Picayune commented tolerantly:

... These little folks are very well worth seeing and hearing, and we bespeak for them the patronage, at the hands of the public, which they so very richly merit.23

At Concert Hall, now called The Confederate Theatre, John Davis was trying to keep the drama alive. Most of the productions were his own pieces. A play called The Battle of Oak Hill was given on April 13, and The Roll of the Drum was repeated a number of times.

The Queen Sisters ended their engagement at the Academy of Music of April 21, and Harry Macarthy and Lottie Estelle took over the following night. The Picayune rejoiced to have them back:

The "Bonnie Blue Flag" begins to wave again, this evening, at the favorite place of public entertainment. Harry Macarthy, the author and singer of that popular song, and of a good many other popular

22 Ibid., April 8, 1862.
23 Ibid., April 15, 1862.
and patriotic songs, has returned from a successful engagement at Richmond, and commences one here... 24

Harry Macarthy's was the only entertainment listed in the amusement column of the papers, now filled with news of the siege of the city.

On April 26 the Picayune carried the following:

The Federal fleet that has so long been threatening this city, succeeded, yesterday morning, in passing the last line of our defenses, notwithstanding a most gallant and vigorous resistance, at the fortifications below Chalmette. They took position in force in front of the city, which they now occupy, and sent on shore, under flag of truce, two officers, who demanded an unconditional surrender. Major General Lovell as military Commander of this Department, the Mayor of the city, and the members of the Committee of Safety met the Federal Officers, in the Mayor's room at City Hall.

General Lovell refused to surrender the city on the terms proposed, holding them to be unusual, and demanded twenty-four hours notice... The consternation which this announcement brought to the people of New Orleans was expressed by a young girl who wrote in her diary:

Oh! never shall I forget the 25th of Apr. 1862. Such expressions of woe as were on the faces of everyone, such sadness as reigned in every heart. Oh! that that day should ever come! We reached home, very wet, changed our clothes, and then began to pack. I was of little assistance being so excited, and I sat by the window, watching the rain which was pouring in torrents, for the heavens indeed were in tears. 25

But in spite of the despair that must have reigned throughout as the fall of the city became hourly more imminent, Macarthy and Estelle continued their performances through April 27. At least, the

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24 Ibid., April 22, 1862.

paper announced a performance for them on that date; there were no
more notices in the paper after April 27.

On April 29, the Picayune gave the following admonition:

In the face of a great danger it becomes a
brave people to be calm as well as resolute. We
are in the face of a mighty danger, and we must
meet it with the courage of men who know that they
are right, and who are prepared for every extremity,
in preference to a voluntary submission to their
own ruin and degradation.

On April 29 the Confederate Flag was hauled down and the United States
Flag was raised over the city. The mayor had sent a notice to Flag
Officer Farragut stating that the city was defenceless and that the
raising of the United States Flag should be accomplished with measures
to protect life and property. On May 2, the paper stated:

The arrival yesterday, in front of the city of
the Federal troops, makes it probable that the final
occupation of the city will take place soon, perhaps
today. . . .

A large body of Federal troops variously estimated
at from 1,500 to 2,500 under the command of Gen. B. F.
Butler landed from their shipping last evening, in the
First District. . . .

James Parton, apparently a witness to the occupation, wrote that Butler
had given orders for the troops to march in absolute silence:

No notice to be taken of mere words; if a shot were
fired from a house, halt, arrest inmates, destroy
house; if fired upon from the crowd, arrest the man
if possible, but not fire into the crowd unless
absolutely necessary for self-defence, and not without
orders.

At five the procession moved, to the music of
the Star Spangled Banner. The crowd surged along the

26 Ibid., April 29, 30, May 1, 1861.
pavements on each side of the troops, struggling chiefly to get a sight of the general: crying out: "Where is the d—d old rascal?" "There he goes, G— d—n him!" "I see the d—d old villain!" To which were added such outcries, as "Shiloh," "Bull Run," "Hurrah for Beauregard!" "Go home, you d—d Yankees." From some windows, a mild hiss was bestowed upon the troops, who marched steadily on, looking neither to the right nor to the left. . . . And so they marched; along the levee to Poydras street; past the famous hotel, closed and deserted now, though alive with five hundred inmates three days before; along St. Charles street to Canal street and the Custom-House that vast unfinished, roofless structure upon which the United States had expended so many millions, one Beauregard being the engineer.

Thus New Orleans, no longer gay, to be sure, but still proud, passed from the Confederacy, and began a new existence as an occupied city.

Although a few, like Davis, Chippendale, and Bidwell put forth valiant efforts to revive the drama, theatrical activity in New Orleans during the season of 1861-1862 never approached anything comparable to its former glory. The well known theatres of the legitimate drama, the Varieties, and the St. Charles, did not reopen, and neither did the Opera House. Nevertheless, considering the circumstances, there was a considerable amount of amusement available for those who desired it. Little of it could be called theatre, it is true, but there was a variety of entertainment in the concerts, amateur productions, tableaux, and panoramas, with some legitimate theatre scattered throughout the season. Certainly, as it will be seen, New Orleans fared better than any of the other cities of the

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27 James Parton, General Butler in New Orleans; being a History of the Administration of the Department of the Gulf in the Year 1862 with an Account of the Capture of New Orleans, and a Sketch of the Previous Career of the General, Civil and Military (New York: Mason Brothers, 1864), 73-74.
Confederacy in both the diversity and amount of amusement provided the public.

**Mobile**

In Mobile the season 1861-1862 depended almost entirely on amateur productions. The first performance of which there is record was an amateur program called a "Grand Joint Performance" in which the Mobile Minstrels, composed of local "Gentlemen of Mobile" took part. Their songs, jokes, and duets contributed "Fun, Wit, and Sentiment" to the evening's entertainment; the program concluded with a series of classic tableaux with selected music consisting of songs and ballads between the tableaux. This was typical of the many amateur entertainments which largely made up the season.

On October 19 Harry Macarthy and Lottie Estelle began an engagement at the Mobile Theatre. Here, as in New Orleans, Macarthy made a big hit with his "Bonnie Blue Flag." On the opening evening when he appeared to sing the song he "wore a costume of blue cambric, with a large white star on his breast, and on his head a blue cap, surmounted by a silver star."

The engagement lasted until October 31, and as was his custom, he gave a number of benefits for various war projects. His entertainments won the most flattering praise from the press.

Harry Macarthy is a jewel and no mistake, an Arkansas pebble of the first water, and to see him

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28 Mobile Register and Advertiser, October 11, 1861.

is a sight for sore eyes, to hear him a sovereign specific for the muligrubs, and to know him is to witness his stage transformations with the greater astonishment that so quiet a gentlemen can turn himself into so many, so outre, so boisterous shapes. We have some doubts of that last expression, but let her — ahem! let it pass. . . . 30

From January until early March an organization called the Mobile Histrionic Association, apparently an amateur group, was the chief source of entertainment. Miss Eloise Bridges, who had been in New Orleans in October, was featured with the group, but this was not unusual, as in the early days of the Confederacy a professional actor or actress was often supported by amateurs. Two plays — usually both light comedies and farces — with singing, dancing, music by the orchestra, and recitations made up the bills. Miss Bridges was still reciting the poem, "We Never Can Be Conquered," which she had used in New Orleans. The organization appears to have been a purely altruistic one:

. . . It must be remembered that the services of the members are entirely gratuitous and that the proprietor of the theatre derives no revenue from them whatever. The Theatre, in the meantime, which through the efforts of the Association, is made the means of an ample revenue to the charities of Mobile, is greatly in need of repairs and the Association appeals to the citizens to contribute the means of effecting them. . . . 31

On March 29 the Queen Sisters were scheduled to appear at Temperance Hall for a performance. 32 Evidently they were just stopping

30 Register and Advertiser, October 23, 1861.

31 Ibid., February 15, 1862.

32 Ibid., March 29, 1862.
over on their way to New Orleans, where, it will be recalled, they were scheduled for an engagement of a week. Whether the Queen Sisters gave the performance as announced by the press is uncertain, for on April 24 the paper announced that they would make "their first appearance" in Mobile on Friday night, April 25.

Their engagement was a long one, lasting until May 31. Originally they were engaged for only a short time, but "by special request" of "influential families" their engagement was prolonged. During the latter part of their engagement, probably to encourage a large attendance, Mr. Waldron gave free copies of the play, 'The Soldier's Dream' to all who came to the theatre on that particular night.

The Queen Sisters met with the hearty approval of both the press and the public. One enthusiastic visitor from Montgomery who attended a performance wrote the following flattering letter to the paper:

Messrs. Editors: Being a visitor in your beautiful city, I chose to while away a few hours of leisure by attending Tuesday's night's performance of the Queen Sisters. I have often seen the beautiful plays they treated their audience to on the occasion, but never have I been more pleased with either actor or play. Mr. Waldron deserves all thanks of his audience for the good taste and style in which the pieces are brought out. Among the musical pieces I noticed particularly the "Mobile Firemen Gallop," composed by Mons. Gilles, your talented leader of the orchestra; and, secondly a new song, "The Soldier's Dream," which was sung by Miss Laura to such perfection that it called from the audience

33 Ibid., May 6, 15, 1862.
a prolonged app(lication) for an encore(s). I learn that they contemplate visiting our Capital next, where they will be sure to meet with a hearty welcome.

MONTGOMERY

On May 30, "the last night but one" of the engagement, Miss Laura was given a benefit. The paper made the following very interesting comment:

The performance at the Theatre to-night is tendered to Miss Laura Wadron as a well merited testimonial of the appreciation in which she is held by those who have listened to her from night to night. As an actress Miss Laura has not yet found her sphere; the plays in which the Queen Sisters are necessitated to appear being of too light a character for style in which she is best qualified to shine. We do not hesitate to say that she is destined, if fortune is propitious, to shine at some future day upon the — yet to be — Southern stage. It is as a singer that she most charms her audiences. With an agreeable voice, not difficult in strength, of a most graceful figure and carriage, and the most pleasing play of feature we have ever seen, without exception, she charms every one by the expression she gives to her patriotic songs. Those are her forte, and promises that hereafter she will find her proper position in the role of heroic tragedy.

On May 31 the Queen Sisters ended their engagement and closed the season in Mobile with two performances, a matinee for children and an evening performance.

The theatre in Mobile for the 1861-1862 season was not up to the standard enjoyed in previous seasons when the theatre was host to such talent as the Williamses, the Wallers, and John Collins, but it was not without merit, even so. There was at least a great

34 Ibid., May 22, 1862.
deal of variety in the entertainment offered in the performances of Macarthy, in the minstrel shows, the panoramas, and in the productions of the Histrionic Association which featured Eloise Bridges, and finally in the performances of the Queen Sisters.

Montgomery

The newspapers are not available for Montgomery during this season, but judging from the preceding seasons, and from the activity there in the season for which there are papers, it is not unreasonable to assume that theatrical activity in Montgomery followed much the same pattern as it had in Mobile. Undoubtedly, Harry Macarthy, Eloise Bridges, the Queen Sisters, and the various minstrel troupes then traveling about the Confederacy also visited Montgomery.

Georgia Cities

In Georgia there was almost nothing during this season which could be termed true theatre. Amateur dramatics, minstrels and burlesque troupes, panoramas, and musical concerts provided the only entertainment.

In September, Atlanta received a visit from Professor Reeves and Dr. Couturier of Charleston, who gave a series of programs of vocal music and dramatic readings. The press found the programs highly amusing:

The Dr.'s reading of gems from Shakespeare, Byron and Bulwer are equal to anybody's, and far superior to any strolling vagabond Yankee that ever passed through the State, or elsewhere.—The professor's singing is rich, rare, and—we don't know what else—full of the most irresistible laughter—provoking mirth, sublimity, or pathetic
heart-touching of the softer strings of the heart. . . .35

The Atlanta Amateurs, mentioned in an earlier chapter, were the most important group in the theatrical affairs of Atlanta. They gave all of their programs for the benefit of a war effort or a charitable cause. Their performances were not true theatre, but rather variety programs which were called a "grand medley soiree," made up of dramatic sketches, songs, dances, readings, etc.

Other amateur groups had been formed to raise money for charitable causes. One such group was the Marietta (Georgia) Amateur Club which traveled about in Georgia giving their variety programs, but this group never achieved the popularity of the Atlanta Amateurs.

In November Fitz's Panopticon of the South was exhibited at the Athenæum.36 This exhibition was followed by a performance of the Zouaves, who were engaged for "one night only."37 The Zouaves, a dramatic corps, performed fancy drills, gave pantomimes, sang comic and dramatic ballads, and performed dramatic sketches. According to the information gleaned from various advertisements, they were originally organized by a group of French soldiers at Sebastopol during the Crimean war, apparently to break the monotony of camp life. There were many appearances of the Zouaves throughout the Confederacy. It is not always possible to tell whether the Zouaves announced are the

35 Atlanta Southern Confederacy, September 11, 1861.
36 Ibid., November 14, 1861.
37 Ibid., November 19, 1861.
same or a different group, but each advertisement proclaimed them as "the original French soldiers."

Late in November, the Atlanta Amateurs presented one of their "Grand Medley Soirees," for the benefit of the Hospital Supply Society. They were highly praised by the press for their altruistic work:

This club has done more good, and raised more funds to supply the wants of our soldiers, than any similar organization in the Confederate States, we may safely venture. They have by their Concerts, in the last six months, realized, clear of all expenses, over $5,000, every cent of which has been appropriated to the benefit of the soldiers. They have labored, often night and day, exercising their talents and ingenuity to get up public entertainments; and no company of Amateurs ever succeeded so well.38

About the middle of December Blind Tom, a pianist, gave two concerts in Atlanta for the benefit of the sufferers in the Charleston fire, which occurred on December 11. Blind Tom, though not a member of the theatrical profession, deserves mention because he was an important entertainer during the war. He was a young Negro slave on the plantation of General Bethune who lived just outside Columbus, Georgia. Apparently, Blind Tom was about eleven years old at the beginning of the war. He had an unusual musical gift, and played the piano with remarkable skill and exquisite interpretation, although he had never had a lesson and was reputed to be stupid and idiotic looking. He had only to hear a piece once, and then he could repeat it perfectly.39

38 Ibid., November 23, 1861.
Blind Tom always received the most flattering praise wherever he performed. The Southern Confederacy wrote extravagantly of his appearance in Atlanta:

We have heard of this most wonderful creature for several years, and have seen his astonishing performances elaborately noticed and lauded in the principal journals in America, but we somehow never had an opportunity to see him and witness his performances till he came here. Like the Queen of Sheba, when she saw the wisdom, riches and magnificence of Solomon, of which she had heard and made a pilgrimage over dreary deserts and mountain barriers to witness, we can truly say that "the half had not been told."40

There was a great deal of discussion among those who heard Tom as to the nature and source of his musical powers. In an interesting discussion of this subject, the Southern Field and Fireside quoted a correspondent of the Savannah Republican who thought that the secret of Tom's ability was that he was a medium —

... a musical machine — a divine, breathing, bundle of wires, attuned to the most delicate standard of harmony by the finger of God himself! Tom is the spirit hand of some great master or masters of the divine science of music. ... Yes, Blind Tom is an unconscious spiritual medium, through whose peculiar organism some departed Mozart loves to discourse sweet symphonies to mortals. ...

The writer in the Field and Fireside adds — irreverently — that "if Mozart is the motive power of Blind Tom, he certainly will not be accredited with much taste in selecting his machine."41

40 Southern Confederacy, December 21, 1861.
41 Southern Field and Fireside, December 14, 1861, 1, Augusta, Georgia, III, No. 90.
After the war, then no longer a slave, he studied in New York and toured in Europe giving concerts. He never learned to read music, but continued to play by ear.⁴²

Macon seems to have had even less entertainment during this season than did Atlanta. Indeed, Macon could hardly be said to have had a season at all. There was no legitimate drama except an engagement of the Queen Sisters. The traveling minstrel troupes and the panorama exhibitions usually stopped over in Macon for a night, or perhaps two, as they traveled between the larger cities.

In November a local group of amateurs gave an entertainment which drew a crowded house. The paper called attention especially to the recitation of Max Antony’s oration, which was "declaimed with effect," and to "The Soldier’s Tear," which "elicited great applause."⁴³ This gives an idea of the sort of programs and entertainments which were presented by the amateurs.

Several concerts by Blind Tom and then a few performances by the Confederate Minstrels⁴⁴ ended the amusements in Macon for some time.

After a period of nearly four months in which, as far as can be determined by the newspaper, Macon went without entertainment, the Queen Sisters came for a short engagement of four nights in March. Their repertoire was unchanged; they were still performing Naval

⁴² Langley, op. cit., 87.
⁴³ Macon Daily Telegraph, November 22, 1861.
⁴⁴ Ibid., November 22, 23, 24, 1861.
Engagement and The Vigilance Committee and singing "patriotic and sentimental songs" to round out the program. 45

The theatrical activity in Savannah was practically a repetition of that found in Atlanta and Macon. A display of the Panopticon and a concert by Blind Tom constituted the main entertainments for the fall. 46

Late in January the Queen Sisters made a short visit to Savannah. The Morning News felt that the experience which the troupe had had since their last visit had greatly improved their acting and singing.

Notwithstanding the inclement and threatening aspect of the weather last evening there was a fair attendance at the Athenaeum to witness the performances of this talented little troupe. Their histrionic and vocal efforts afforded the highest degree of pleasure to the audience, and evinced the great improvement they have made during the few months they have been before the public. . . .47

The performances of the Queen Sisters met with such success that their engagement was prolonged.

The very flattering success which has attended the efforts of this talented little troupe to amuse and entertain our theatrical public, has induced them to prolong their stay in our city. In spite of war's alarms they have well filled houses, and have elicited the hearty admiration and applause of their audiences. They give their seventh entertainment to-night, when they will perform the popular piece, written expressly

46 Savannah Daily Morning News, October 26, November 4, 1861.
47 Ibid., January 25, 1862.
for them, entitled The Vigilance Committee, for the last time.

The drama provided by the Queen Sisters was, indeed, a far cry from the legitimate drama produced in Savannah before the war by such actors as Joseph Jefferson, but it was better than nothing. The Morning News philosophically accepted them as a substitute for the "Star Companies" the Athenaeum was wont to have.

The Queen Sisters had another good house last night, and, as usual kept their audience in the best possible good humor throughout their entertainment. It seems that the longer they remain with us the greater favorites they become with our public, and as we are not likely to have any more "Star Companies" from New York, Philadelphia and Boston Theatres in Savannah for some time to come, we would suggest to our little friends to "enlist for the war" on our boards...

One of the most popular numbers on their program was the singing of the song "Tippety Witchit" by Master Andrew, who had made the song popular with the public when the troupe was in New Orleans. Evidently it made even more of a hit in Savannah, for the newspaper reported that it was simply "killing the audience."

The Queen Sisters closed their engagement on February 14 with a benefit for the Irish Jasper Greens, a group which deserved the compliment of a benefit because of "their highly commendable conduct in re-enlisting at this particularly trying moment."

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48 Ibid., January 31, 1862.
49 Ibid., Feb. 8, 1862.
50 Ibid., February 11, 1862.
51 Ibid., February 13, 14, 1862.
There were only scattered entertainments for the remainder of the season. In March Mago Del Mage, the magician, gave a benefit at the Masonic hall for sick and wounded soldiers. Blind Tom came for a series of musical concerts early in April, and Johnson's Minstrel and Burlesque Opera Troupe and Brass Band gave several performances the latter part of April.

By way of summary, it can be said that Atlanta, Macon, and Savannah had no theatrical season for 1861-1862 in the strict sense of the term, but they did have some entertainment which was largely provided by amateur groups. Perhaps the Queen Sisters might be considered as professionals, although they were still more or less in their formative period. As yet there were no stock companies well enough organized to bring the legitimate drama to the hinterland.

Charleston

In Charleston, the theatrical picture was much the same as in the cities just discussed. Early in October the Queen Sisters played several engagements at the Charleston Theatre. On the occasion of a benefit which they presented for the Irish Volunteers in Virginia, the Courier reported that the house was "full to overflowing" and some even had to be turned away for want of room. Notwithstanding the

52 Ibid., March 18, 1862.
53 Ibid., April 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 1862.
54 Ibid., April 21, 1862.
55 Charleston Daily Courier, October 9, 1861.
enthusiasm of the public on the occasion of this performance by the Queen Sisters, subsequent attempts to revive theatrical entertainments met with such poor response that the theatre was soon closed.  

Late in October there were two entertainments. One was a drawing room entertainment at Hibernian Hall given by Messrs. Reeves and Couturier. The other was a performance at Institute Hall by the Queen Sisters, in which they presented "by special request" the program they had previously presented at the Charleston Theatre.  

The French Zouaves came to the Theatre for an engagement of three days, but they met with such success that they were "re-engaged" for three nights longer.  

The French Zouaves must have been the last group ever to perform on the stage of the Charleston Theatre, for in less than two weeks after their engagement the Theatre, together with a great portion of Charleston, was burned to the ground. On December 12, the Courier stated:

"Last night at half past eight o'clock our whole community was thrown in a state of greatest alarm, owing to a fire, which at the time of writing (11 o'clock) threatens to be one of almost unlimited magnitude, causing a fearful destruction of property.\..."

The next day the paper listed as having been destroyed five churches, St. Andrews Hall, Institute Hall, the two Savings Institutions, the Theatre, and the large Southern Express buildings. J. L. Petigru,

57 Daily Courier, October 23, 24, 1862.
58 Ibid., November 22, 28, 30, 1862.
writing of his own loss in the fire, said:

But one may forget his own loss in the general calamity, when one sees the cathedral, the church in Meeting street, several Episcopal churches, the Institute and the Theatre involved in the same ruin.

With the burning of the Charleston Theatre, an important period in Charleston theatrical history came to an end; however, very soon after the fire, Hibernian Hall was remodeled into a theatre, and was formally opened by Reeves Musical Company on March 20. Reeves was followed in April by Blind Tom.

Blind Tom's concert may be taken as the end of the season of entertainments for Charleston. The most important event in Charleston during the season was, unfortunately, the burning of the Theatre, which was not rebuilt during the war. Although Hibernian Hall had been remodeled to accommodate theatricals, there were so few instances of dramatic performances for the remainder of the war that the discussion of the theatre in Charleston is terminated at this point.

Wilmington

The theatre in Wilmington, North Carolina, though it did not compare with that of the larger and more cosmopolitan cities, was an old and important institution. It had its beginning with the formation of a theatrical organization which was known as the Thalian Association, organized very late in the eighteenth century. A Colonel James

59 The word is illegible.

60 Pettigrew papers, Manuscript Division, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The letter is written to one Johnson, and dated November 15 in error, for the fire occurred on December 11. The letter is signed J. L. Pettigru.

61 Halle, 22. 540.

62 Courier, April 23, 1862.
Innes, in a will probated in 1759, bequeathed some land, money and hogs for the establishment of a free school for the youths of North Carolina. The appointment of trustees in compliance with the provisions of the will in 1762 was the beginning of the Innes Academy. Before the academy had been completed, a theatrical corp was organised and arrangements were made with the trustees of the Academy for the lower part of the building to be used as a theatre. A perpetual lease was secured by the Thalian Association.63

This was the beginning of the theatre in Wilmington. The building was used by strolling players and amateur groups from time to time as interest waned and revived.64 When the original property was sold, it was with the understanding that a place for theatrical performances would be provided with half of the money realised from the sale. Thalian Hall was the result. O. P. Marchant, named above as manager of the Charleston theater, 1860-61, became the manager of Thalian Hall in 1859.65

The first entertainment in the season of 1861-62, for which there is an account, was a performance of the Zouaves, who were to appear for two nights beginning on December 6.66 However, they


64 Ibid., 23-26.

65 Ibid., 49-50.

66 Wilmington Daily Journal, December 4, 1861. No newspapers for Wilmington are available for the earlier seasons.
were prevented from making their appearance as scheduled:

We regret that in consequence of the late arrival of the company, occasioned by some detention on the railroad no performance could be given last night, to the serious disappointment of many of our citizens, and equally so to Mr. Merchant, who will thus be deprived of giving more than one performance—than of to-night. 67

The company was augmented by thirty volunteers who had been trained by Zouave Frederick in the execution of the "Double Quick Step."

A kind word was put in for Merchant, who, said the Journal, had been a soldier of one of the volunteer companies in active service. By his uniform course he had "secured the warm regard and confidence of the people, while he (had) earned the abuse of the northern theatrical critics and papers generally." Merchant, who had brought the Zouaves to Wilmington, may have been manager of both the Wilmington and Charleston theatres.

The Queen Sisters came to Wilmington early in January for a short engagement. The Journal announced their coming cautiously:

We can only speak by hearsay of these performers, but unless the Charleston Courier and Mercury, the papers of Augusta and Savannah, the Richmond papers, and the Petersburg Express and Norfolk Day Book, with sundry journals, all deceive, they are really admirable, and are accompanied by an admirable band — the Palmetto. 68

Bad weather prevented their opening January 6 as scheduled, but they opened the next night with the program which had been previously announced with the addition of the "admired piece," The Young

67 Ibid., December 7, 1861.
68 Ibid., January 10, 1862.
Widow. 69 Apparently The Young Widow was added to make up for having
disappointed the public for their failure to open on time. The
editor of the paper gave the following very interesting comment on
the opening performance:

The Theatre was crowded last evening to witness the
performance of the "Thespian Family," or "Queen Sisters,"
and we think that the expectations raised were fully
realized. They are really a very talented family,
and the entertainment they present is in the highest
degree pleasing.

The opening piece (Vigilance Committee), if it
can be called a piece at all, is simply the flimsiest
thread upon which to string sundry gems in the way of
songs and recitations, and this we suppose is all it
was intended for. In this, little Fanny’s recitation
of the Death of Ellsworth, and the martyr hero Jackson,
and the musical "Invocation for Peace" by Miss Laura,
struck us particularly, the latter especially. Master
Andrew as Mike O’Donovan, was quite comic, although
his Irishman was two-thirds negro minstrel, a mistake
which we have seen made by older actors, for we believe
nearly all American personators of low Irish characters,
and that means the whole, for the stage Irishman is
always made low, mix up the negro and Celtic and make
up something (that) never existed off the boards.
Little Julia and Master John did their parts satis-
factorily.70

Further, the editor approved of the singing and dancing and thought
the play, The Young Widow, especially "capital" because it gave "better
opportunity for the display of comic talent than any of the proceeding
parts."

Master Andrew as Splash, was rich, Miss Laura
as the Young Widow, excellent, Miss Fanny as
Lucy, piquant, and Master John as Mandeville
made all out of the character that was in it.

By the way, we must not omit to mention
the patriotic address and Southern Marseilles

69 Ibid., January 9, 1862.
70 Ibid., January 10, 1862.
Hymn by Little Fanny. That was a gem and Fanny is a little Trump.

The "Family" do not pretend to play heavy pieces, but they do make up a light pleasing and tasteful performance, wherein everything is excellent of its kind, and consequently everything is a success.

For their second performance, the bill included Lottery Ticket and My Neighbor's Wife, with, of course, the usual musical numbers. Although no representative of the press was present, the editor reported the next day that he "could hear the burst of applause a square away." Their last performance was presented on January 13 when they repeated the Lottery Ticket and My Neighbor's Wife. Although the repertoire of the Queen Sisters' was limited and they often repeated their programs, the public did not seem to mind.

In February the Confederate Minstrels began a short engagement at Thalian Hall. They opened under an unfavorable circumstance, so the paper said, but in spite of that they had a "fair house," and gave a very good performance. Just what the "unfavorable circumstance" was the Journal neglected to state. It could have been a reference to the weather, but the following comment from the paper suggests, rather, that it was apropos of some adverse criticism for giving and receiving entertainment in such trying times.

Now, the truth is, that whatever people may think to the contrary, a place of public amusement is a public benefit in war times. Surely the soldier or officer who spends his time laughing at the witticisms of our friend "Bones" ... does better than if he spent his time and money in a bar room. There are at times like the present, always a very large number of good men lying about loose. Let them be innocently amused and they will be kept
out of mischief. Let them not be, and who can say what mischief they might get into.71

In March the Baily family, assisted by other amateurs gave several performances at the theatre. The Journal on one occasion requested the men and boys to remember the presence of ladies both on and off the stage and to order their conduct accordingly. This suggests that the audiences in Wilmington had not been behaving as decorously as was desirable.72 The Baily's had only a fair house, which was "by no means such as the character of the performance, or the disinterested (sic) efforts of the performers deserved, to say nothing of the object to which the proceeds are to be devoted."73 Another performance was announced for March 24, and still another for the 29. The latter, however, was postponed until April.74

Only scattered issues of the Journal are available for the remainder of the year, but the indications are that the season ended with the performance of the Baily's in April. It will be observed that Wilmington, like the other cities of the Confederacy whose records have been examined so far, did not have a resident stock company, but depended on the traveling groups and amateurs. Later, as theatrical activity increased, the Wilmington theatre played host to the best of the stock companies and traveling stars.

71 Ibid., February 11, 1862.
72 Ibid., March 3, 1862.
73 Ibid., March 4, 1862.
74 Ibid., April 3, 16, 1862.
Richmond

Richmond, as has already been indicated, spent a busy summer getting adjusted to her new role as the capital of the Confederate States of America. Her real theatrical season did not get under way until early in November, but, as a sort of prelude to the theatrical activities which were later to make Richmond the gayest city in the Confederacy, Metropolitan Hall opened on September 13 under the management of Wells and Warwick with a "Grand Dramatic and Ethiopian Entertainment." The notice in the advertising columns stated that "Ethiopian Burlesques, Farces, Songs, Dances," would be presented every night. The doors were open at seven and the performances began at eight. Tickets were twenty-five cents.75 Warwick and Wells had both been members of the Richmond Theatre stock company the previous season. The Partington sisters, Mary and Sallie, who had also been with the Richmond Theatre the previous season, joined the group at Metropolitan Hall for a short time.76 This place of amusement, which had been showing scenes of the war since August, was to remain open all winter with variety and burlesque entertainments.

On October 10, the Richmond Dispatch carried the following notice of the reopening of the Richmond Theatre:

Richmond Theatre. Ladies and Gentlemen who may wish to enter an engagement at this Theatre, will please apply immediately to the undersigned, the only person authorized to negotiate. It is

75 Richmond Daily Dispatch, September 13, 1861.
76 Richmond Daily Enquirer, October 15, 1861.
expected the Theatre will open on or before the 1st of November. John H. Hewitt,
Manager.

When John Hill Hewitt assumed the management of the Richmond Theatre, it was not his first venture into the theatrical profession, but it was to be his most important. He was born in New York in 1801; his father had been a figure of some repute in the early musical history of America. Hewitt entered West Point Military Academy with the class of 1822 and completed his course of study, but was not commissioned. While at West Point, he studied music with Richard Willis, the director of the Academy Band. This musical training was to be his mainstay through a long life; Hewitt termed it his "sheet anchor." In 1823 he came South with his father on a theatrical venture which ended in failure on account of a fire in Augusta, Georgia. Hewitt did not return to the North with his father, but remained in Augusta to teach music.

Hewitt was a man of many interests. He studied law, taught music, wrote poetry, composed songs, wrote plays, and edited various newspapers. While he was editor of The Baltimore Saturday Visitor he won a prize in a poetry contest in which Edgar Allan Poe also

77 John Hill Hewitt, Gilbert Crampston, romance and reality, being the biography of a man of letters; edited by a cosmopolite, II. MS in Emory University Library, Atlanta, Georgia. Also see:

1. John Hill Hewitt, King Linkum the First, ed., Richard B. Harwell (Atlanta, Georgia: Emory University Library). In the introduction to the play, which is the only published play of Hewitt, Harwell gives an interesting account of the author.

competed. Although Hewitt was a prolific writer, very few of his works were ever published. He was probably best known in his own day as a composer of popular ballads.

Hewitt, having gone to Richmond in 1859 to teach music, was in that city when the war came. On the strength of his West Point training, he offered his services to President Davis, but, although the President received Hewitt with his accustomed courtesy and graciousness, he never offered him a commission of any kind.

Being disappointed in his failure to get into the service of the Confederacy in some capacity, Hewitt was probably easily persuaded to take over the management of the Richmond Theatre, which, it will be recalled, had closed almost immediately after the fall of Fort Sumter. Concerning his assumption of the management of the theatre, Hewitt wrote:

In the month of November, 1861 — I was induced by friends to undertake the management of the Richmond Theatre, one of the oldest and best appointed establishments of the kind, in all probability, on the Northern Continent. The chance for making money was good, as Richmond had been selected as the Capital of the Southern Confederacy, and it was apparent that here would be a great influx of strangers from all parts of the Southern States who would be desirous of mingling pleasure with business. But, how to gather a company was the question. On the breaking out of the war, the best of the profession had fled North, thinking it the safest ground to stand upon— for actors are cosmopolites and claim citizenship no where. I, however, managed in a short time to collect enough of the rag-ends of dismantled companies

78 The writer found no information concerning the former managers, Kunkel and Moxley, after the close of the theatre in April 1861, but I. B. Phillips, the stage manager, went to Baltimore where he opened the Holiday Street Theatre.
to open the theatre with a passable exhibition of novelty, if not of talent. Here I produced successfully the melodramas of "The Scouts," and the "Log Fort" — also the farce of the "Prisoner of Monterey." The thing took well, and money flowed into the treasury, but often had I cause to upbraid myself for having fallen so low in my own estimation, for I had always considered myself a gentleman, and I found that, in taking the control of this theatre and its vagabond company, I had forfeited my claims to a respectable stand in the ranks of society — with one or two exceptions, the company I had engaged was composed of harlots and "artful dodgers." I endeavored with all my might and main to mend their bad habits, and by stringent (sic) rules to compel them to walk in the path of rectitude, but it availed nothing, for "what is bred in the bone, will not come out of the flesh."  

Soon it was evident that Richmond was to have more than one place of amusement. The following notice appeared in the advertising columns of the papers:

The Manager begs leave to inform the citizens of Richmond and vicinity, that he has engaged, with great expense, a Star Company, and intends keeping first class performers during the season, and hopes to meet the approbation of the citizens of Richmond, as he will endeavor to please all. The performances will be conducted on the strictest rules of morality. The Hall is situated on Franklin Street, first door below the Exchange Hotel in the building formerly known as the Trinity Church.

The following comprises the performers engaged:

Miss Jennie Powell, from St. Charles Theatre,
New Orleans
Miss Hollie Johnson, from St. Charles Theatre,
New Orleans
Miss Virginia Vernon, from Marsh family
Miss Dora St. James, from Marsh Troupe
Miss Isabella May, from Richmond Theatre
Harry Hunter, the inimitable Brudder Bones and Negro Delineator, from New Orleans Opera Troupe

Mr. George Vaughn, from Liverpool Theatre

79 Gilbert Carumpton, op. cit.
John Hill Hewitt
(Presented to the author by Mrs. C. Lehey)
Mr. A. C. Middleton, favorite Violinist, from Rumsey and Newcomb's Troupe
Mr. J. W. Brown, the well known Jig Dancer and Banjo player from New Orleans Harmon (eons)
Mr. R. Christy from the Nashville Theatre
Master Waddie, Willie, Albert, Edgar, from Richmond

Tickets 25￠; reserved seats 50￠; doors open 7; performance begins at 8. 30

Franklin Hall, later called the Richmond Varieties, specialized in "theatrical and musical entertainments," which included music, singing and dancing, and dramatic pieces. According to the advertisement, there was a "full orchestra" and a brass band which would give free concerts in front of the hall every night.

During October there were also a number of concerts and musical entertainments at the African Church. Hence, by the middle of October the entertainment situation in Richmond was looking up: there were now several places where entertainment and amusement might be had — Franklin Hall with its variety shows, Metropolitan Hall with its Ethiopian burlesques, and the African Church, where the more discriminating might enjoy a musical program or a lecture. The African Church evidently had a large auditorium, or an especially commodious one or both, for though it was a Negro church, it was used frequently by the whites for lectures, readings, and musical concerts. Blind Tom, who was a frequent visitor to Richmond during the war, always gave his piano concerts there.

On November 2, the Richmond Theatre "having undergone a

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30 Daily Dispatch, October 16, 1861.
31 Ibid., October 18, 1861.
thorough renovation," opened with the following bill: The Loan of
a Lover, King's Infant Drum Corps, A Melange, and the commedietta,
Conjugal Lesson. There was also an opening address "spoken by Miss
Ella Wren." Of the opening of the theatre, Hewitt wrote:

The Broad street (Richmond Theatre) theatre was
open and nightly crowded with soldiers and civilians
— it was rarely that ladies visited it. The opening
night presented an unique programme — the full company
not having yet arrived. There was an old farce per­
formed in which Miss Ella Wrenn (sic) and Mr. Charles
Morton appeared. This farce was followed by an
olio composed of singing and dancing by Miss Parting­
ton; then came a drum solo by a little boy who made
the sticks fly to an orchestra accompaniment. The
skill of the little drummer boy brought down the house,
for he had the military on his side. His efforts in
a sheepskin accompaniment to the popular tune "Dixie,"
worked the soldiers up to the highest pitch of
enthusiasm. The result of this display of the boy's
agility in the legitimate use of drum-sticks was he
obtained a place in the ranks of a drum corps and
drew pay from the government treasury. . . .

Ella Wren, who appeared with the Richmond stock company
for the season just opened was to become one of the leading actresses
of the Confederacy. According to Brown, she was the sister of the
actor, George Wren, who came to this country in 1847 from England,
going first to Canada. There were five boys and four girls in the
family, all of whom followed the theatrical profession. George,
apparently the oldest, organized the Wren Juvenile Comedians in

82 Ibid., November 2, 1861.
83 The Dispatch, December 17, 1861, states that Morton
made his first appearance in Richmond on December 16, 1861.
Hewitt probably was confused about the date.
84 John Hill Hewitt, Five Years Under the Confederate Flag,
part 4, "Richmond during the war," 139. M3 Emory University Library.
In 1855 in New York, when the war broke out, he joined the Union army.

Three of the Wren family, Ella, Eliza, and Oliver, were to figure importantly in the Confederate theatre. In 1860 Ella married a Mr. F. P. Redford in Richmond, which accounts, perhaps, for some of the Wrens being in the South.85

The following names gleaned from the various theatrical notices appear to have made up the company at the Richmond Theatre; Ella Wren, Miss Sallie Partington, Miss Katie Estelle, Mrs. Clemintine De Bar, Miss Maggie Estelle, Miss H. Percy, E. R. Dalton, J. S. Charles, H. Guinn, C. T. Nelson, J. Malls, H. J. Brown, J. Allen, E. Banker.

Many of these persons remained obscure throughout the period of the Confederacy, but a few, Ella Wren, Sallie Partington, Katie Estelle, Mrs. De Bar, and E. R. Dalton were to become of considerable importance in the theatre in the South as the war progressed.

On November 11, the Queen Sisters, who had been performing in Charleston in October, began a short engagement at the Richmond Theatre which lasted about a week. As far as has been determined, this was the first association of Hewitt and the Waldrons. Later Hewitt joined the Waldrons in the management of the Concert Hall Theatre in Augusta and wrote many of his plays for them.

The bill for November 13 included Hewitt's play, The Prisoner of Monterey; Little Blanche; and the usual singing and dancing. Since the notice specifically stated that Little Blanche would be "by the Queen Sisters," and made no mention of which group

85 Brown, op. cit., 403.
was to do the other play, it seems safe to assume that the Waldrons did not perform *The Prisoner of Monterey* at this time; however, it later became a part of their repertoire. *The Prisoner of Monterey* is merely a dramatic "sketch in one scene," laid in Monterey, during the Mexican war. It is a stereotyped sketch making use of the old stage tricks of secret panels and mistaken identity.\(^6\)

*The Scouts; or, The Plains of Manassas* was another one of Hewitt's plays which saw its first production in November. The notice for November 18 announced it as a "great national drama." It is of very little merit as a play, but its "gushing patriotism" must have appealed to the overwrought feelings of the times. Hewitt understood well the sentiments of the South and expressed them boldly in his plays. The following bit of dialogue between a "Yankee Officer" and Alice is typical:

**Big:** (The Yankee Officer) Prettily spoken. It is a pity you're a rebel.

**Alice:** A "rebel" as you interpret it, I would always be. If to love our home institutions - to cherish our rights - to have respect for the constitution and laws - to despise canting hypocrisy, and to oppose lawless invasion, constitutes rebellion, then I am proud of being called a "rebel;" for I have the example of the immortal Washington.\(^7\)

Apparently the play took well with the audiences, for it ran six consecutive nights and was repeated often throughout the season.\(^8\)

Ida Vernon, who, it will be recalled, was a member of the

\(^6\) MS of *The Prisoner of Monterey* in the Emory University Library.

\(^7\) MS, Emory University Library. Act II. Pages not numbered.

\(^8\) *Dispatch*, November 18, 1861, and Richmond *Enquirer*, November 23, 1861.
Richmond company the previous season, made her first appearance on December 2 in *Camille*. From the notices in the press, it appears that she was even at this early date a favorite actress; however, Odell records only that she appeared in New York in 1855, and suggests that this was perhaps her first appearance unless she was the Vernon who had appeared with the group of amateurs who had attracted attention the previous season. Certainly she became the most popular, and perhaps the most talented actress on the Confederate stage. Her engagement continued through December 14. The program for the last night of her engagement included *All That Glitters is Not Gold*, dancing, an overture by the orchestra, and as a concluding farce, *A Kiss in the Dark*. The *Dispatch* paid Miss Vernon the following compliment:

> Miss Ida Vernon's successful engagement at the theatre terminates to-night. The unlimited patronage bestowed upon the establishment is pretty good evidence of public approval, for we take it that people would not continue to repeat their visits unless they were pleased with the performance.

The "nightly crowds" which thronged to the theatre were not always orderly and well behaved; perhaps some of the auditors were

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89 *Dispatch*, December 2, 1861.

90 Odell, op. cit., VI, 419.

91 According to a clipping (New York Public Library) from an unidentified paper dated 3/3/23, Ida Vernon was "one of the beauties of the South, being born in that region in 1843." Her father, an officer in the British Army, was a younger son of the Scotch Earl of Caithness. Her mother was of French Huguenot extraction.

92 *Dispatch*, December 14, 1861.
not used to attending the theatre and were, therefore, not acquainted with the proper manner of conduct expected of them. In any case, the misconduct at the theatre was often a subject for discussion in the press. On one occasion, when the behavior had been particularly bad, the Dispatch expressed regret that Richmond was now a "mighty metropolis":

"... it is enough to make one wish that Richmond was now the quiet provincial village it was a year ago, since its sudden transformation into a nightly metropolis has attracted all sorts of surplus population not very beneficial to its social character or standing. The disturbances at the Theatre on Monday night were intolerable, and, if they are allowed to continue the establishment will degenerate to the Bowery standard and respectable persons will forsake it altogether."

In the meantime, Metropolitan Hall and Franklin Hall continued with the production of variety programs, which attracted audiences less discriminating than those at the Richmond Theatre. The French Zouaves were scheduled to appear at Franklin Hall on December 10. Perhaps this was the same group of Zouaves who were in Wilmington on December 7. An interesting item concerning them occurred in the papers about a month later. "The French Zouaves, who were performing at Franklin Hall, in this city, a short time since, left Norfolk, for the North, on Friday last, under a flag of truce." This is interesting, because it is one

93 Dispatch, December 4, 1861. Monday night was the opening night of Vernon's engagement.

94 Richmond Enquirer, January 7, 1861.
of the few instances of a theatrical group leaving the South to go to the North. There seems to have been almost no crossing of the line by entertainers during the war.

About the middle of December Miss Ella Wren "re-appeared" at the Richmond Theatre, and Mr. Charles Morton, who had given dramatic readings in Mobile and Montgomery in August, joined the troupe at the Richmond for the first time. After the coming of Wren and Morton, the plays presented were in a lighter vein. Mr. Morton's forte was comedy, and apparently at this time Miss Wren had not yet begun essaying the more difficult roles of heavy drama.

The program for the opening night included "a new comedy," The Old Guard, dancing, and How to Win a Husband. The papers noticed their appearance in the following:

Miss Ella Wren, who for two weeks past has been absent from the stage re-appeared last night in a new comedy; and another candidate for popular favor, Mr. Morton of New Orleans, made his first bow to a Richmond audience. The house was crowded, and, so far as we could judge everybody was pleased. . . .95

On Christmas Eve the Richmond Theatre presented a program evidently designed to fit the holiday season. The main feature of the program was a play entitled Christmas; or, The Duel in the Snow, which was written by the acting manager, E. R. Dalton. As far as it has been possible to determine this was the first presentation of this play. It became one of the popular dramas during the period of the Confederacy. There was an overture, "Tancredi," by the orchestra,

95 Dispatch, December 17, 1861.
and to conclude the program the "grand pantomine, The Frisky Cobbler and the Jolly Tailor." 96

Apparently there was no performance at the Richmond Theatre on Christmas night, but there was a matinee at "2½ o'clock for ladies and children." The bill included, of all things, The Spectre Bridegroom, and songs, dances, and recitations, and concluded with the pantomime of The Frisky Cobbler and the Jolly Tailor. Perhaps the "Ladies" enjoyed the Spectre Bridegroom, and the children the pantomime.

The Metropolitan announced a gala program for Christmas night. The Southern Harmonion, who had now been at the Metropolitan for a long while, were scheduled to give "a series of their chaste Drawing-Room performances, consisting, in part, of Songs, Glee, Dances, Farces, and Burlesques." The troupe was composed of nineteen talented performers. 97

Over at the Franklin Hall the Queen Sisters, who had probably been down to Petersburg or Norfolk after leaving the Richmond Theatre in November, were scheduled to appear "for three nights only." According to the notice, "their performances in the principal Southern cities has been received with the most unequaled applause and approbation." On their opening night, December 30, they presented the inevitable

96 Ibid., December 24, 1861.
97 Italics the writers.
98 Dispatch, December 25, 1861.
99 See page 128.
Performances were suspended at the Richmond Theatre for two days because of the "extensive preparations for the National Drama of the Log Fort," a play by Hewitt. However, rehearsals and arrangements were completed on schedule and the play was presented on December 30; "The Highland Fling," danced by Mary Partington and the comedy Charles II completed the evening's entertainment.

The Log Fort was repeated on the next evening, December 31. This was the last play ever to be presented on the stage at this theatre, for in the early hours of New Year's morning it burned to the ground. Fortunately, because of the lateness of the hour, there was no loss of life as there had been in the disastrous fire which destroyed the Richmond Theatre in 1811.

Manager Hewitt has left the following vivid account of the fire:

On the morning of the 1st of January, 1862 the theatre was consumed by fire - doubtless, the work of an incendiary.

My office was in the front part of the building, and in it were all my manuscripts, music, books, works of art and private papers. There I slept

100 Dispatch, December 30, 1861.
101 Ibid., December 28, 1861.
102 Richmond Whig, December 30, 1861.
103 In the fire of 1811 seventy-two people lost their lives, among whom were the Governor of Virginia and other prominent Richmonders. W. Asbury Christian, Richmond Her Past and Her Present (Richmond: L. H. Jenkins, 1912), 76.
— having for my companion an actor by the name of Ogden, a fellow whom I had engaged to do the light business on a small salary. He was a fawning sycophant, with just brains enough to know how to fascinate a frail woman and keep himself from the clutches of the conscript officer, by swearing allegiance (sic) to the Queen of England when it was known and proved that he was born in this country. This man slept in the same room with me on the night of the fire. On the previous night the "Log Fort" had been performed — in it a number of fire arms were used — and to them, as paradoxical as it may seem, I owed my life.

I had retired to rest after the performance had concluded and the building secured. At about 12 o'clock Ogden came in and sought his couch — I did not notice him particularly but endeavoured too (sic) woo myself into the embraces of "Nature's own restorer — sleep." I was awakened during the morning by a strange noise among the rafters, like the running of rats between the plastering and wood work. Being used to these kind of noises, I turned over, and again essayed to sleep. Suddenly there were several loud explosions and I thought I heard the roar of flames. I immediately jumped up, opened the door of the office and found the entire stage and prosenium wrapt in the fiery element. The heat was intense, and the flames like hungry serpents (sic) were twisting around the columns that supported the family circle of boxes — the skeletons of the flats and wings were sparkling as if studded with myriads of stars — and tongues of fire lapped the damask curtains of the private boxes. My first impulse was to arouse Ogden, who was in a sound sleep. He leapt a frighted (sic) from his bed, and gathering up his clothes, made his way hastily down a flight of steps to the front door, and then bellowed to me for the key. I took the key from its hanging place, went down stairs, opened the door, and let him out into the less heated atmosphere — then returned to the office, in order to secure my own clothes and a considerable amount of money that was looked up in my secretary. On my return I found that the flames had passed the orchestra and were leaping over the parquette. The atmosphere was intensely hot, and I had to place my hand over my mouth and nostrils to keep from

104 The reference is probably to Mrs. Elizabeth Magill, the owner of the theatre.
respiring it into my lungs. On entering the office, I closed the door behind me to keep out the hot air. I was long searching for the key of the secretary, and after all, could not find it, so — hastily drawing on my pantaloons I began to make efforts to save myself — giving up the money as lost. When I opened the door to pass along the lobby and from thence to the stair-way, the flames attacked me furiously and the smoke almost suffocated me. I, however, made my way through the fiery barrier and reached the street with my face and hands severally burned. . . .

With the Richmond Theatre an ash heap, it was necessary for Manager Hewitt to suspend activities until a suitable place for his company could be found. This he was not long in doing. He wrote:

Immediately on the destruction of the Richmond Theatre, I engaged the old Trinity Church, gave it the title of the "Richmond Varieties" and continued to attract crowded houses, not from the superior merits of the corps dramatique, for they were nearly all commonplace; but such was the mass of contractors, officials, congressmen, legislators and soldiers that flooded the city — that the poorest exhibition could not help drawing a crowd.

Trinity Church, which Hewitt mentioned above, was Franklin Hall, where the Queen Sisters were holding forth. They remained there until about January 5. The hall was conveniently located and, apparently, doing a good business employing traveling groups when Hewitt leased it.

He opened it as the Richmond Varieties on January 6 with "the company of the late Richmond Theatre," which played there for over a year while the new theatre was under construction. The Dispatch made the following optimistic comment on the opening:

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105 Hewitt, Gilbert Crampton, op. cit.
106 Ibid.
Manager Hewitt will open to-night, at Franklin Hall, with the Dramatic company of the late Richmond Theatre. Sheridan's celebrated comedy of "The Rivals" and an amusing piece entitled "Sketches in India," will be produced, and the actors will doubtless exert themselves to retain the good opinion of the public. Misfortune has overtaken them, but industry and perseverance will soon enable them to work their way out. The stage at Franklin Hall has been enlarged recently, and now affords space enough to get up a play in very good style.

Where there had been three places of amusement open before, now there were only two, the Varieties and Metropolitan Hall. The Southern Hamoncons were still holding forth at the latter with their variety and burlesque shows.

The Southern Hamoncons will to-night introduce fresh attractions to the public in the first appearance of Misses Viole Bertaine and Morton. Wells and his company are constantly striving to keep on the right side of their friends by the presentation of novelty, and their unparalleled success is due to the meritorious character of the performances.

The Varieties company continued, almost as if they had not been interrupted by the fire, to produce light comedies and to round out their programs with singing, dancing, and miscellaneous numbers. They seem to have met with the approval of the public.

"The Varieties" establishment rapidly wins its way in the favor of the public. Mr. Dalton's recitation of Mrs. Norton's beautiful poem, "Bingen," Monday night, was a meritorious performance. Mlle Boisvert made her first appearance last evening, and sang La Marseillaise, in a style which at once established her reputation. Professor Barlow (Morton) has some new local rhymes nearly

107 Dispatch, January 6, 1862.

108 Ibid., January 6, 1862.
every night, and is wont to keep the house "in a roar." There is much to commend in the performances at "The Varieties." 109

Hewitt was anxious to produce good plays, but the exigencies of the times made it impossible to present really first class shows. Writing in later years of his managership at the Varieties, Hewitt said:

... The soldiers filled the pews every night, for the building was next door to Ballard's Exchange Hotel, which furnished it nightly with customers. Military dramas, suiting the pulse of a military audience, proved a great feature. They all were replete with the most gushing patriotism. The stars were Mr. Kebel (sic), an English (sic) tragic actor of considerable merit, Miss Ida Vernon and Harry Dalton. Mr. Morton managed to keep the house in a good humor by singing his impromptu version of "Billy Barlow;" he was sometimes called on the stage twenty consecutive times. Every time he improvised new verses — giving the news received by telegraph from the seat of the war, he having made arrangements with the office to send them to the theatre as soon as received. 110

Whatever Hewitt may have thought in after years of his part in entertaining the Richmond public during the first year of the war, the press was highly pleased with his efforts and pointed with pride to the fact that, after a time, the company was able to undertake the production of legitimate drama:

The Dramatic Company at the Varieties having succeeded admirably in the representation of light pieces, will commence this week with discreet selections from the "legitimate drama." Manager

109 Ibid., January 15, 1862.

110 Hewitt, Five Years under the Confederate Flag, op. cit., 161.
Hewitt is entitled to credit for the manner in which he has, under extremely annoying circumstances, furnished the public with pleasing performances at his new play-house. The entertainments of the week will be diversified by the pretty ballads of Mlle Boisvert, and the dances of Miss Mary Partington, and the good music of the orchestra.

If the reports of the press were any indication of the true state of affairs, then the dramatic business in Richmond was, indeed, a profitable one, for the theatre increased in public favor until the house was "literally crammed."

During the past week this little box (the Varieties) has been literally crammed, and we are glad to say, with quiet and attentive audiences. The ladies, too, have taken it under their patronage, and nightly attend. The performances generally are highly creditable, and in fact, such plays as the Mountaineers, Ingomar, and even Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice, have been rendered with considerable effect. . . .

Harry Macarthy, accompanied by Lottie Estelle, began an engagement at the Metropolitan on February 12. The proceeds of his first concert was presented to the Ladies Aid Society and the Army Committee of the Y. W. C. A. Macarthy, as has been mentioned, was always most generous in giving benefits. Perhaps he realized that it was good business, for it was a sure means of gaining the approbation of the press, which was, of course, excellent publicity for his entertainments. Too, the giving of benefits helped to appease

\[111\] Dispatch, January 27, 1862.

\[112\] Ibid., February 10, 1862.

\[113\] Ibid., February 8, 12, 1862.
those of the public who looked with disfavor on the entertainer and entertained alike. In any case, Macarthy was hospitably received by the Richmond public and according to the Dispatch had "rendered himself very popular." 114

Ella Wren, who had been absent from the stage for some time due to illness returned on February 27. Although the papers, particularly the Dispatch, were inclined to be lenient in their criticism during the early part of the period, the comments often reveal a great deal of "between-the-lines" criticism which indicate that the plays and players often left much to be desired. For example, the following:

Miss Ella Wren made her first appearance on the boards of this little Theatre on Monday night, after a long spell of illness. Her "Julia," in the Hunchback, was well sustained, though evincing physical weakness. The leading characters were well rendered by Messrs. Dalton, Morton, and Ogden — and, in fact, the entire company give (sic) general satisfaction to the quiet and orderly audiences that nightly crowd this well conducted place of amusement. 115

Early in March the musical department of the company at the Varieties was increased by the appearance of Miss Louisa Clyde, whose first appearance "at this cozy little theatre on Tuesday night, created quite a sensation among musical connoisseurs." Her voice was described as being "powerful, yet under perfect control." 116 Miss Clyde, as will be noted later, remained with the Varieties only

114 Ibid., February 22, 1862.
115 Ibid., February 27, 1862.
116 Ibid., March 6, 1862.
a short time before launching out on her own as a manager of a
theatrical troupe.

Plans were progressing for the construction of the new
theatre on the site of the old one which had burned on New Year's
morning. In fact, the ashes had hardly ceased smoking before the
contractors were on hand to make plans for the new building.
Joseph Hall and John F. Regnault were the contractors for the new
structure; Hall was the architect and Regnault was in charge of
upholstery and decorations. The scenic artist was "a gentleman from
New Orleans and one of the best in the Confederacy." The paper
gives the following description of the future theatre.

The building will be four stories high. The
vestibule at the entrance will be nearly on a
level with the pavement. Next to the vestibule
will be a lobby, from which access can be had to
the dress circle by two large flights of steps.
The front of the balcony of the dress circle will
be ornamented cast-iron. A promenade or lobby
will extend from the partition of the dress circle
to the front window of the building. The front
of the tier of boxes will be supported by ornamented
cast-iron columns, — again supported by ornamented
cast-iron columns between those named and the wall. —
The seats and backs are to be cushioned and divided
by a cast-iron scroll. The stage will be sixty-one
feet deep, on either side of which, between the foot-
lights and curtain, there will be four private boxes
within the proscenium. Every care will be taken to
make each seat in the building desirable, which was
not the case in the old Theatre. The building will
be finished in July. 117

Unfortunately, as was so often the case in the South, the press was
overly optimistic, for the theatre did not open until February 1863.

It seems strange that, when the Confederacy was so hard

117 Ibid., March 12, 1862.
pressed for men and materials, a theatre such as the one described should have been built. It will be recalled that the Charleston theatre was not rebuilt. But, too, it must be remembered that the first months of the war had not gone badly for the South. Optimism was the prevailing mood, and hope was high that the war would be a short and victorious one for the Confederacy.

Macarthy's engagement at the Metropolitan had developed into a long and successful one. The Enquirer, in a notice which announced that he was in fifth and last week, termed him "the acknowledged favorite of the South."\footnote{118}

Flattering notices continued to appear in the papers, praising the audiences and performers alike.

During the past week the little Theatre has been literally crammed; the audiences have been orderly, and everything tends to make it an attractive place of amusement. The Willow Copse, Macbeth, and Richard III have been produced with good effect.\footnote{119}

And again -

A large attendance greets the performances at Prof. Hewitt's cozy little Theatre every night, despite the exigencies of the times. Miss Ella Wren has established her reputation with the playgoers in the several pieces in which she has appeared since her recovery, and is ably seconded by Mrs. Dalton, Mrs. Powell, Mrs. De Bar and others. Mr. Dalton is playing the leading business in the "legitimate drama" with much skill and success. His Richard on Friday night was greatly applauded. Mr. Morton is deservedly a favorite at the Varieties; and so is Mr. Ogden, whose forte is light comedy. Mr. Toler Wolfe lends his valuable aid to the\footnote{118 Richmond Enquirer, March 11, 1862.\footnote{119 Dispatch, March 15, 1862.}
performances, and taken collectively the little theatre on Franklin street presents many attractions to a person who desires to pass an evening pleasantly.120

On the rare occasions when an account or mention is made of the theatre in a diary or journal of the period, it is usually at variance with the "puffing" accounts given by the daily papers. For example

Amusements were almost entirely abandoned. Our only theatre had been destroyed by fire; and the exhibitions at the Varieties and the heterogeneous shows and performances at the Metropolitan Hall, failed to attract the better class of the Richmond public.121

Nevertheless, the testimony of the newspapers of the period is too strong, both in quantity and consistency, to permit acceptance of the statement that "amusements were almost entirely abandoned;" however, the evidence does seem to indicate that the "better class" of people were not the ones who "crammed the theatre night after night." They went, perhaps, on rare occasions, but not regularly. The so-called "better class" resorted to private theatricals, both as a means of raising money for the war effort, and as a means of entertainment. In her Recollections, Mrs. Putnam says:

Our women, who during the day watched beside the couch, and made up clothes for the soldiers would often at night, get up concerts for their benefit. Little children added their mite to the soldier’s funds by hoarding up their trifling sums, originating in fairs, and selling refreshments. Such were the means of virtuous endeavor.122

120 Ibid., March 17, 1862.
121 Putnam, op. cit., 191.
122 Ibid.
Many of the private theatricals were presented purely as a social entertainment. Mrs. G. C. Clay in her book, *A Belle of the Fifties* describes an amateur performance of *The Rivals*, which, she said "made that first winter in Richmond memorable and our hostess, Mrs. Ives, famous." Another writer of the period stated that parties were not the only resource for the pleasure loving, but that charades, tableaux, and concerts were the rage, "while a few—more ambitious of histrionic fame—got up private theatricals."

In spite of the fact that many did not patronize the theatre, there were still many who did; and the theatre prospered. New members were added to the Varieties' stock company late in March.

The paper announced their appearance in the following flattering notice:

> Crowds continue to visit this little Theatre nightly, and the utmost order prevails. On Monday night, Jessie Crisp Clarke, a daughter of the veteran manager, Captain Crisp, now commanding a battery in the interior, made her debut in this city, and was greeted with applause throughout. She is a pleasing actress, and a great acquisition to manager Hewitt's *corps dramatic*. The stock company has also been made more substantial by the addition of Mr. Sam Hubbard. We are glad to perceive that the "Varieties" is largely patronized by the ladies; their presence saves the police of the establishment much trouble.

Captain Crisp was W. H. Crisp, a well-established theatrical manager.

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124 De Leon, *op. cit.* 149.
125 *Dispatch*, March 26, 1862.
and actor in the South before the war. After serving a time in the army, he again assumed his role in the theatre business. With his daughter Jessie and other members of his family, he became important in the theatrical history of the Confederacy, particularly in the cotton states. As far as it has been possible to determine, Sam Hubbard was a newcomer to the stage.

Nothing worthy of any particular notice happened in the theatre during the remainder of March. Blind Tom returned to the African Church for a series of concerts. Harry Macarthy, who had been at the Metropolitan for so long, at last had given way to Lee Mallory's War Illustrations. And The Romance of a Poor Young Man, which had had a successful run at the Varieties in New Orleans in the winter season 1860-1861, was presented at the Richmond Varieties. According to the paper, "the pressure at the ticket office" was so great that it was repeated the following night. Ogden was highly complimented for his performance of the role of Manuel, which "he rendered . . . with all the force of expression and gentlemanly ease which characterized all of his performances." In April a new play entitled The Council of Ten, said to have been written by a "gentleman of this city," was presented.

126 Ibid., March 27, 1862.
127 Ibid., March 29, 1862.
128 Ibid., March 31, 1862.
129 According to Southern Punch (April 20, 1864, II, No. 12, 8), "Our Dr. Bricken" was the author.
The tragedy, in one entire act, entitled "The Council of Ten," is to be performed for the first time at this theatre tonight. We understand that the plot is a rare one, full — but, as the press is pledged to secrecy we shall say nothing more than announce that the author himself will appear on the stage to-night, and there will be no small exposure of the doings behind the scenes.130

It must have been a gala occasion, indeed.

April was the month of benefits. Walter Keible, who became an important figure in the Confederate theatre, played the title role in Hamlet for Ogden's benefit.131 Charles Morton was another among those who had a benefit in April. The newspaper paid him the following flattering compliment.

Mr. C. H. Morton, the popular actor, takes a benefit at the Varieties to-night. Mr. Morton is one of the most finished artists on the Southern boards; he is ready for anything, from the heaviest to the lightest, and always chaste and natural in what ever he undertakes. The bill of fare will be filled in every part.132

There was no marked distinction between the winter theatrical season and the summer season in Richmond in 1862. The theatres and places of amusement remained open as continuously as possible, apparently to take advantage of the war boom to do a big business. However, the round of benefits makes a convenient dividing point, as it was customary to end a theatrical season with benefits for the members of the company.

130 [Missouri] April 1, 1862.
131 [Missouri] April 7, 1862.
132 [Missouri] April 10, 1862.
It can be seen that with the capture of New Orleans by the Union in May, 1862, Richmond became the unrivaled theatrical center of the Confederacy. She was to keep this supremacy throughout the life of the Confederacy. During the season under consideration, Richmond alone, of all the cities discussed, produced the legitimate drama and had a theatrical season in the strictest meaning of the term.
CHAPTER IV
SUMMER SEASON 1862

Mobile

There was no regular summer season in Mobile in 1862, but there were a few scattered and miscellaneous entertainments to help the citizens while away the tedium of the long hot summer evenings. On June 2, Johnson's New Orleans Minstrels, "composed exclusively of Southern talents," were announced for a week's engagement. Their first performance was given as a benefit for the Free Market. ¹ Mago Del Mage "the great Southern Wizard and Magician," as the press liked to term him, came June 12 for a very brief engagement. ² Johnson's Minstrels were back in Mobile late in June for their third appearance in a relatively short time. ³ During this engagement they gave another concert for the Free Market. Johnson's Minstrels seems to have been a very popular troupe, and they were generous with benefits.

July might well have been called the month of minstrels. Charlie White's troupe, the "Southern Harmoneons," played a week's engagement early in July, ⁴ and a little later in the month The

¹ Mobile Advertiser and Register, June 2, 1862.
² Ibid., June 12, 1862.
³ Ibid., June 26, 1862.
⁴ Ibid., July 10, 1862.
Sable Melodist and Burlesque Opera Troupe came to perform for a "limited number of nights." The "limited number of nights" developed into quite an extended engagement, for the troupe remained in Mobile well into August. According to the press, the Sable Melodists, at the time in their fourth week, were meeting with "unparalleled success." The notices announced "an entire change of program every night," with interesting "novelties" such as "The Sham Doctor," "Uncle Jeff," and "The Mischievous Nigger." After a long and successful engagement, the Sable Melodists finally closed the latter part of August.

The next attraction in Mobile was a very short engagement of Harry Macarthy and Lottie Estelle. They began their personation concerts on September 4 at Odd Fellows' Hall. The paper stated that when Macarthy had completed his "short season" of concerts in Mobile, he would visit "every town and city in the Confederacy giving concerts for the benefit of the sick and wounded soldiers."7

Macarthy's engagement terminated the summer season of entertainments for Mobile. Perhaps the people were not too disappointed that the engagement lasted only a few days, for they had the promise that W. H. Crisp, well known in Mobile from past years, would come in the fall to begin a bona fide dramatic season.8

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5 Ibid., July 21, 1862.
6 Ibid., August 12, 1862.
7 Ibid., September 4, 1862.
8 Ibid., September 9, 1862.
Montgomery

There are almost no Montgomery newspapers for the summer of 1862; however, judging by the periods for which newspapers are available, it seems safe to assume that Montgomery had a program of entertainments similar to that in Mobile. It appears that each group that played in Mobile was either going to, or coming from Montgomery. For example, the Johnson Minstrel Troupe had just completed an engagement in Montgomery when they appeared in Mobile on June 2. The Montgomery Weekly Mail carried the following item:

The Johnson Minstrels. This company of excellent performers make their last appearance at the Theatre, to-night, and offer a good and attractive bill. They are deserving of patronage, aside from their professional merit. We understand that they have not forgotten our unfortunate soldiers, but have contributed within about three months, as many thousand dollars, for the aid of soldiers' hospitals and societies. It is further stated that some of the company have served twelve months in the army of Virginia, and that they all intend to join the Confederate service when they again reach the Mississippi river. If they can and will continue to contribute one thousand dollars per month, of their receipts, for hospitals — we think they would serve their country as usefully by continuing their minstrelsy. Give them a benefit to-night.  

There were many who shared the point of view expressed in the above; there were others, on the contrary, who did not.

Atlanta

Because of its geographical position and the importance of its railroads, Atlanta became an important military center and supply depot, and by 1862 it had also become the headquarters of the

9 Montgomery Weekly Mail, May 31, 1862.
Quartermasters and Commissaries as well as a chief hospital point. Here arms, ammunitions, and other war materials were extensively manufactured. This expansion in business and military activity brought about a "constant influx of people, some drawn through the operation of old attractions, and many through the circumstances and exigencies (sic) of the times."¹⁰

Naturally, the growth in population and the development of business brought a corresponding increase in the number and variety of amusements. There was greater theatrical activity in Atlanta for the summer of 1862 than in the previous seasons, albeit the activity was of a miscellaneous character, featuring, during the first part of the season, minstrels, then the Queen Sisters, and finally a month's engagement of W. H. Crisp and his company. The entertainments for the summer began about the middle of May with Johnson's Minstrels, who had come back to Atlanta for an engagement of five nights.¹¹

Late in May the Atlanta Amateurs presented one of their variety programs as a benefit for the Fulton Dragoons, and in June they gave another program with the assistance of the Wyly Artillery (Band).¹² About the middle of June, Johnson's Minstrels

¹⁰ B. Y. Clarke, Atlanta Illustrated (Atlanta: Jas. P. Harrison & Co., 1881), 40-42. Also see E. Merton Coulter, Georgia, A Short History (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1947), 260.

¹¹ Atlanta, Southern Confederacy, May 13, 1862.

¹² Ibid., May 23, 1862.

¹³ Ibid., June 13, 1862.
were back in Atlanta for "three nights only." They had, according to the press, "played with great success in Mobile, Montgomery, Columbus, Atlanta, Augusta, Savannah, Charleston, and Columbia." 14

On July 1 the Queen Sisters, accompanied as usual by the Palmetto Band, began an engagement in Atlanta. They had increased their repertoire somewhat, for they were now presenting Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady, The Two Gregorys, and similar light comedies. Master Andrew introduced a "new war song," and the music of the Palmetto Band rounded out the programs. 15

The Queen Sisters apparently met with success; good houses greeted them every night and the press complimented the performances.

This gifted band is still entertaining large audiences at the Athenaeum every night. On Wednesday night the "Naval Engagement" was acted with increased attractions; and the Two Gregorys (sic) was acted in the most mirth provoking style of anything of the sort we have witnessed anywhere.

The editor closed his comments on the theatre with the following admonition to the public:

By the way, all who go to see these farces should bear in mind the fact that the scenes are not real, but only imitations. This much precaution is necessary to render all parts of the entertainments agreeable. 16

The engagement was due to close on July 19, but on account of the interest manifested in the performances it was extended until July 22. The farewell bill included The Spectre Bridegroom and

14 Ibid., June 17, 1862.
15 Ibid., July 1, 1862.
16 Ibid., July 11, 1862.
The Graplories, with patriotic, sentimental and comic songs to com-
plete the evening’s entertainment.\footnote{17}

Eliza Bridges, billed as the "celebrated Southern Actress
and Shakespearean Reader," followed the Queen Sisters. The press
notices stated that she would give "Personations! Recitations!!
Readings!!!\footnote{18} Miss Bridges was scheduled for only two performances,
July 24 and 25, with a change of program each night.

The Atlanta Amateurs appeared again on July 31 to present
their usual program of "music, mirth, melody, and tableaux." This
troupe had the unqualified support of the press.

Our Amateurs will give an entertainment to-
night. We have had foreign theatricals here a
long time, who have pocketed the proceeds of
their shows and gone with it. The Amateurs are
our own citizens - a band of talented and
patriotic ladies and gentlemen, who get up as
good entertainments as anybody, and who devote
the proceeds of their entertainment to the good
of the cause. We are glad they are again to
appear before the people of Atlanta. Give them
a rousing reception.\footnote{19}

Undoubtedly, the entertainers who had visited Atlanta had not pre-
sented as many charitable benefits as the editor thought appropriate.

The really big event of the summer season was the appearance
of W. H. Crisp and his Company for an engagement which began August 27.

One source reports that W. H. Crisp, a light comedian from
the Dublin Theatre, came to Mobile early in March 1846 to fill an

\footnote{17} Ibid., July 22, 1862.
\footnote{18} Ibid., July 23, 1862.
\footnote{19} Ibid., July 31, 1862.
engagement with Mrs. Anna Cora Mowatt. According to Brown, Crisp appeared at the Arch Street Theatre in Philadelphia in 1848; Brown added that he had "been in the South for some time." Crisp must have returned to the South shortly after his Philadelphia appearance. In 1854 he succeeded Joseph Jefferson as manager of the Savannah Athenaeum. He traveled extensively in the South both before and during the war as manager and leading actor of his company, which he called Crisp's Gaiety Company. Mrs. Crisp and the daughters, Miss Oscilla, and Mrs. Jessie Clark, were important members of the troupe. A son, Henry, appears to have alternated between a place in his father's company and the Confederate Army. Henry, who had been born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1844, and brought to this country when he was two or three years old, became a well known actor on the New York stage. The elder Crisp was the only manager of consequence of the ante-bellum South who remained in the South during the war. After the collapse of the Confederacy, he went North, where he continued his profession. He came to be recognized as one of the most versatile and accomplished actors of his day. His

21 Thomas Allston Brown, History of the American Stage, 86.
23 Clipping in the Robinson Locke Collection in the New York Public Library. The clipping concerns the death of W. H. Crisp, Jr., and is dated April 28, 1882.
24 Clipping from the New York Public Library, op. cit.
personal reputation and his professional popularity in the South were extensive, and he won the admiration and esteem of the people for the high type of actors and actresses that made up his company. He contributed greatly to the elevation of the drama and the acting profession in the South.25

Crisp was scheduled to begin his engagement on Monday, August 25,26 but he "was detained by the good people of Columbia, S. C., who would not hear to his leaving them in time to appear . . ."27 in Atlanta on schedule. However, he managed to leave "the good people of Columbia" in time to begin his engagement in Atlanta on Wednesday, August 27. The notice of the second performance gave the following:

Second appearance of Mr. W. H. Crisp, and his distinguished Southern Company /Thursday Evening, Aug. 28, 1862/ Lady of Lyons, or Love and Pride./ Claude Helnotte . . . W. H. Crisp/ Pauline . . . Miss Elisa Wren/ Madame Deschappelles . . . Mrs. W. H. Crisp/ Madame Helnotte . . . Miss Jessie (sic)/ Clark/ During the evening Mrs. Jessie Clark will sing the "Bonnie Blue Flag," "Rock Me to Sleep." /To conclude with the roaring farce of the/ Dead Shot/ Hector Timid . . . Mr. Anderson/ Captain Cannon . . . Mr. Wolfe/ Clatter . . . Miss Cecilia Crisp.28

Crisp had been in Richmond, as will be seen in a later discussion, and while there he evidently succeeded in recruiting some of the members of the Richmond company for his own troupe. Both Wolfe

25 Clipping on Savannah Theatre, op. cit.
26 Southern Confederacy, August 23, 1862.
27 Ibid., August 28, 1862.
28 Ibid., August 28, 1862.
and Eliza Wren had been with the Richmond company; Dalton, though not mentioned above, was also with the company.

Perhaps this program was the very one which a soldier mentioned in a letter dated September 14, 1862, from Chattanooga, Tennessee:

When I arrived at Atlanta I found there a theatrical troop (sic) and I concluded to remain there a few days, to participate in the culminating splendors of the season. The first night I went to the Theatre. Miss Jessie Clark sang the very popular ballad of "Rock Me to Sleep Mother," a song which thrilled my very soul with a delicious sense of happiness, and the sweet voice of this fair singer received the flattering homage of all whose pleasure it was to hear it on that occasion. . . .

Here are two stanzas of the song which so touched the soldier.

Backward, turn backward, 0 time! in your flight,
Make me a child again — just for to-night.
Mother, come back from the echoless shore,
Take me again to your heart, as of yore;
Kiss from my forehead the furrows of care,
Smooth the few silver threads out of my hair;
Over my shoulders your loving watch keep—
Rock me to sleep, mother — rock me to sleep!

Last verse:
Mother, dear mother! the years have been long
Since last I was hushed by your lullaby's song;
Sing them again! — to my soul it shall seem
Womanhood's years have been only a dream;
Clasp me to your arms in a loving embrace,
With your soft, light lashes just sweeping my face;
Never hereafter to wake or to weep
Rock me to sleep, mother — rock me to sleep!

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29 Letter to Mrs. W. R. Cannon, signed D. H. Morrison, MS in the Samuel Weak Papers, Mississippi Department of Archives, Jackson, Mississippi.

30 The lines were copied from the Willis Brewer Scrapbook in the Division of Manuscripts and Maps, State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama. Hewitt composed music to these words for Ella Wren; whether the music used on this occasion was that composed by Hewitt can not be determined.
On August 29 the newspaper carried this rather amazing report of the opening performance:

On Wednesday evening we witnessed the first performance of the second engagement of the Crisp family in our city. Mr. and Mrs. Crisp are old favorites here, who used to labor hard, and successfully too, for our amusement in years past. Since then they have played successfully in New Orleans, Mobile, and other places, and Mr. Crisp has been playing soldier in the Confederate army for over a year. Mr. and Mrs. Crisp look younger, fresher, and (Mrs. C.) prettier than when we saw them last, notwithstanding "tempus fugit." We know two hundred young ladies (whom we have known for some time) who would divide their wardrobe for Mrs. Crisp's secret of keeping fresh and looking young. Miss Jessie, our old favorite really looks killing. She is much improved — looks rounder and plumper than ever; and then she does so well.

And then little Cecilia — that used to be — has grown up to be a large, magnificent, and really beautiful young lady; several little Crisps that were not "on the boards" when the family was here last, figure in the juvenile parts.

The first piece was "The Stranger" — rendered by the whole company with fine effect. At several points Mrs. Crisp produced an unpleasant moist sensation about the eyes of over half the large audience. The Athenaeum was crowded; and thanks to Col. Lee's police order was preserved.

One word more. It is an unpleasant subject to mention, but we feel it to be our duty. Frequently there has been seen at the Athenaeum Cyprians seated about promiscuously in the audience, and sometimes on the same seat with respectable and unconscious families. This should not be suffered. Let a place in the gallery be set apart for such creatures, if they are allowed to visit the theatre at all. Let some of our local city police be placed at the door to eject from the first floor all such candidates for admission.

While the Crisp company was at the Athenaeum, the Atlantans were treated to more substantial dramatic fare. Among the plays

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Southern Confederacy, August 29, 1862.
presented during their engagement were Pizarro with Crisp as Rollo; Don Caesar de Baskan with Crisp in the title role; The Gamester; The Lady of the Lake, in which Crisp played Roderick Dhu; The Iron Chest; and Black-Eyed Susan.

Crisp and his company, according to the press, were well received by the public and attendance was excellent throughout the engagement.

On Thursday evening we again attended the performance of the excellent Company under Mr. Crisp. The audience was unusually large — especially was the occasion honored by the presence of many beautiful ladies of our city. The Orchestra added much to the interest of the occasion.32

Early in September the last week of the company's engagement was announced. The notice stated that because of arrangements which Mr. Crisp's agent had made for him to appear in the Mobile Theatre on Monday, September 15, Crisp was "reluctantly compelled to announce the present as positively the last week." According to the notice, the Athenæum was nightly filled "to overflowing (with) the fashion and intelligence of the city."33

During that last week of their engagement, the company presented Romeo and Juliet with Crisp as Mercutio, E. R. Dalton as Romeo, and Eliza Wren as Juliet. On September 12 The Robbers was presented, Dalton playing Charles Delmore, and on September 13 Dalton took the title role in Richard III.34

32 Ibid., August 30, 1862.
33 Ibid., September 9, 1862.
34 Ibid., September 11, 12, 13, 1862.
The proceeds of the last performance were set aside "for the sick and wounded soldiers of Atlanta." 35

With the departure of Crisp and his company, the summer season ended. All in all, it had been a good season and Atlanta had come into her own both as a city and as a patron of the theatre.

Macon

Macon was less fortunate in its summer season. In fact, there was no regular season in Macon at all, but only occasional entertainments of a miscellaneous character. In May Burton's Diorama Panorama was displayed for a few nights. 36 Later in May Johnson's New Orleans Minstrels stopped over in Macon for three nights. 37

In June a group of "young gentlemen" of Macon presented a series of tableaux for the benefit of the 12th Regiment, but the most important event of the month was the return of the Queen Sisters for an engagement of about ten days. The Telegraph commented thus on their return:

By reference to our advertising columns, it will be seen that this talented and meritorious band will make their appearance again, at Ralston's Hall, to-night. They set forth a rich bill of fare, and we trust that the Hall will be filled to overflowing. They are none of your peripatetic roving and rascally Yankee humbugs, but the performances are really good.-- The performers are

35 Ibid., September 14, 1862.
36 Macon Daily Telegraph, May 2, 1862.
37 Ibid., May 19, 1862.
from the glorious old Palmetto State. Mr. Haldron, the manager, is a gentleman of decided ability and cleverness. He bespeak for them a crowded house.

Throughout their tour through the West, they have met with unbounded success. At New Orleans, they created quite a furore. Mr. Randall, the author of "My Maryland" was present and listened to the singing of it by Miss Laura, and expressed his warm gratification at the excellent style with which she sang it. 38

Among the plays presented during their Macon engagement were Box and Cox, Toodles, The Young Widow, Vigilance Committee and Little Blanche, the old stand-bys, Swiss Cottage, Rough Diamond, and others of a similar nature. It will be observed that the repertoire of the troupe had been considerably enlarged since the early days of 1861 when their performances were confined almost entirely to the Vigilance Committee and Little Blanche.

Miss Laura was given a benefit June 26 and the Telegraph urged the public to go and "give her a bumper." The engagement ended on June 28 with The Loan of a Lover and Paint Heart Never Won Fair Lady.

The Queen Sisters were followed by a performance of Charley White's Southern Harmoncons, who were under the management of Lee Mallory. 39 Lee Mallory's name was usually connected with the panoramas, but apparently his talents were varied. The Southern Harmoncons returned to Macon in July for two more performances. 40

38 Ibid., June 18, 1862.
39 Ibid., June 30, 1862.
40 Ibid., July 18, 1862.
Eloise Bridges closed the summer season of entertainments in Macon with two appearances, one on July 31 and the other on August 1. The papers announced, "She comes well recommended by the New Orleans, Mobile, Montgomery, and Atlanta papers. She is said to be an artiste of the first order, and her entertainments chaste, instructive and amusing." In reporting on her performance the Telegraph stated:

**MISS ELOISE BRIDGES**

Was greeted with a respectable audience last night. She possesses a voice of matchless sweetness and compass; an easy, graceful carriage, and her elocution is faultless. Her delineations of character were superb. A more chaste and agreeable entertainment is seldom met with. She appears to-night for the last time in three of her best characters. We advise those who did not attend last night, by all means go to-night.

Augusta

Burton's Panorama, which had just been shown in Macon and Savannah, moved over to Augusta to begin the summer season of entertainments for that city. The scenes which were represented by the Panorama, according to the press notices, were the "Manassas Panic," the "Turtle-Ram Fight," and "splendid scenes on the Bosporus."

In June Lee Mallory presented the Charley White Harmonians for about three nights. Later in July the same group returned to play

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41 Ibid., July 31, 1862.
42 Ibid., August 2, 1862.
43 Augusta Daily Constitutionalist, May 9, 1862.
44 Ibid., July 19, 1862.
another brief engagement of three nights. 45

The main event of the season came the latter part of July, when the Queen Sisters began an engagement. Although the papers for Augusta before 1862 are not available, the Queen Sisters undoubtedly had played a number of times in Augusta as they traveled back and forth in Georgia and South Carolina during their earlier tours. Announcing their engagement, the paper stated:

Our citizens will have an opportunity of witnessing, this evening, performances of this talented little family. The charming singing of Miss Laura, and the excellent acting of Misses Fannie and Julia, and the boys, have drawn good houses wherever they have performed; and in all places they have received high encomiums. But they are well known to our citizens, and nothing more is needed to secure their success here (than) to mention the fact that they perform at Concert Hall this evening, and that since their late visit to Augusta, they have had a large amount of experience in their line of business; besides which, they have added many new pieces to their repertoire. Their former kindly offices in behalf of our volunteers in the field will also be remembered in their favor, and assist in securing for them a large attendance at Concert Hall this evening. 46

John Davis, who had been a member of the Varieties company in New Orleans, and whose efforts to open the Concert Hall in New Orleans had been interrupted by the untimely occupation of the city by General Butler, was now associated with the Queen Sisters as stage manager. The paper stated that the improvement in the performances of the troupe were due, no doubt, to "his care and supervision." 47

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46 Ibid., July 23, 1862.
47 Ibid., July 25, 1862.
The theatre-goers in Augusta were probably not a particularly sophisticated audience, and they found the performances of this juvenile troupe highly satisfactory.

Concert Hall is nightly attended by large and appreciative audiences, who witness with pleasure the charming performances of Mr. Waldron's talented little family.

The improvement which the little actors have made since their debut in this city is very satisfactory — and all of them evince a marked dramatic talent. Miss Laura, the oldest of the sisters — is perfectly au fait in her roles, and her songs are always rendered with a sweetness and grace that is quite refreshing. The two younger sisters — Misses Fannie and Julia — are remarkable for the ease and facility with which they personate many characters difficult for "children of large growth" to perform. And Master Andrew possesses a very comic vein indeed — while Master John and James, and Arthur usually fill the rest of the bill in a satisfactory manner.48

An interesting picture of the type of programs presented by the Queen Sisters and the enthusiastic reception by the public is presented in the following from the Constitutionalist:

... 

At the close of "Little Blanche," which was well performed by this Company, on Thursday evening last, the "Happy Land of Canaan" was sung with fine effect. We append here two of the verses.

The first was sung by Master Arthur Waldron, a little lad of not more than 6 or 7 years of age; and the second by little Fanny, the sprightly little dame whose versatility is quite remarkable in one so young.

If you think I aint so 'putty' as my sister says I am,

Remember that I'm but a little rebel trainin';

But I'll fight against old Lincoln,

48 Ibid., July 30, 1862.
Whilst I've got an eye a blinkin',
    Right here in the Happy Land of Canaan.

If you think we're not so clever as some Yankees
who've been here,
    Remember that we've had but little trainin';
But to Carolina's daughter,
I surely think you ought to
    Give a welcome in the Happy Land of Canaan."

The applause with which this little appeal was
received, was a good evidence of the appreciation in
which this little Southern Company is held by an amusement
loving people.

We have no hesitation in commanding the Queen
Sisters and Palmetto Band to the patronage of the
pleasure seeking public.49

The engagement of the Queen Sisters closed on August 2, for
they were scheduled to appear in Savannah the next week.50

Savannah

The company appeared in Savannah as scheduled and remained
the better part of August.51 This was the only theatrical event of
any consequence during the summer season in Savannah. The entertain­
ments followed the same pattern as in Macon and Atlanta. The Panoro­
rmas and minstrels which had visited those cities also came to
Savannah.52

Richmond

While the cities in the lower South had been able to have for

49 Ibid., August 2, 1862.
50 Ibid., August 2, 1862.
51 Savannah Daily Morning News, August 18, 19, 28, 1862.
52 Ibid., May 8, June 23, 1862.
the most part, only a miscellaneous and spasmodic summer season, Richmond did a flourishing theatrical business. It was an eventful period for Richmond both in the theatre and in military affairs. General McClellan was on the Peninsula with a large Union force, and McDowell was in Fredericksburg ready to join with McClellan to form a ring around Richmond. All through the spring and early summer the capital stood in great peril. It was a time of tension, excitement, and great activity as preparations went on to defend the city. There was a constant coming and going of troops who were being brought up to take part in the great battles to be fought later in the summer. The noise of the Union guns shelling the Confederate works at Yorktown could be heard on a damp day, and as the spring wore on into summer and the fighting moved closer, the guns could be heard almost daily.

In spite of the huge Union forces which threatened the city and the noise of the not too distant guns, the show went on. There was no intermission between the winter-spring season and the summer season; the performances went on night after night. The engagement of Walter Keeble, who, it will be recalled had given a volunteer performance of Hamlet for Ogden's benefit early in April, may be considered to mark the beginning of the summer season. He opened at the Varieties

53 J. B. Jones, A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, Ed., Howard Swiggett (New York: Old Hickory Bookshop, 1935, 118). Jones' entries from April through July give a good account of the activities before, during, and after the Peninsula campaign, 118-147.

54 Ibid., 118.
on April 21 in *Lady of Lyons*. Apparently this was Keeble's first appearance on the Confederate stage. According to Odell, Keeble made his first American appearance as Duke Areza in *The Honey Moon* in New York in 1854. Speaking of the cast of which Keeble was a member, Odell remarks that it was "not an astounding array." Brown states that Keeble retired from the stage in 1860 and went into the mercantile business at Pulaski, Tennessee, but "reappeared at the Richmond, Va., Theatre during the rebellion." Keeble was usually enthusiastically received wherever he played.

In these exciting days of summer 1862, not only was the present season going well, but the future promised even greater activity. The paper reported that the building of the New Richmond Theatre, although not progressing as rapidly as had been hoped, was moving along:

The builders are getting along very finely with this establishment, having under numerous disadvantages, owing to scarcity of lumber and other materials, succeeded in putting down the foundation. . . . The new edifice will be higher than the one which it supplants, and more imposing in looks at least. The effort of the owner of the Theatre to buy the adjacent lot and increase the capacity of the edifice, was defeated by the refusal of the owner to sell. Messrs. Hall & Reguinsit, the contractors, give their constant personal superintendence to the work.

Also, preparations were going forward to open a new place of

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55 Richmond *Daily Dispatch*, April 21, 1862.
56 Odell, op. cit., 294, 316.
57 Brown, op. cit., 201.
58 *Dispatch*, April 22, 1862.
amusement. Anna Louise Clyde, a member of the Varieties company whose singing had received favorable comment from the press, announced that she would open the Richmond Lyceum with Sallie Partington, also of the Varieties, as her stage manager. The new theatre was located on Broad Street in the "late Monticello Hall" just a few steps from the spot where the New Richmond was being constructed. The opening date was scheduled for April 28. Typical of the bills presented at the Lyceum is one for May 1 which included Walter Arlington, The Queen's Page; a "favorite ballad" by Anna Louise Clyde; a double dance by the Partington sisters; and as a concluding number, The Young Actress, in which Miss Sallie Partington "will sustain five characters, sing two songs and dance the Pas de Ariel."  

Walter Keable was in the second week of his engagement at the Varieties, and E. R. Dalton was dividing his time between the Varieties and the Metropolitan Hall; at the latter he was delivering lectures on the fall of New Orleans in connection with the War Illustrations being displayed there. Hewitt was advertising for "ladies and gentlemen of the dramatic profession" for the New Richmond Theatre "now in the progress of completion."  

Coincident with these events, there was increasing apprehension and anxiety on the part of many for the safety of Richmond. Troops passing through the city on their way to the Peninsula were

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59 Ibid., April 24, 1862.
60 Richmond Daily Enquirer, May 1, 1862.
61 Daily Dispatch, May 1, 2, 1862.
showered "with loaves of bread and slices of ham" by the ladies.62

The Lyceum prospered, devoting its efforts almost entirely to light comedy, with a great deal of singing and dancing to round out the program. Perhaps it was just such light, gay entertainment as was provided by the Lyceum that the civilians and soldiers who thronged Richmond needed at this particular time. Some of the best of the Richmond Varieties' company had joined with the Lyceum. The Partington sisters have already been mentioned. Mrs. De Bar, an asset to any group, had also left the Varieties for the Lyceum. The paper reported that:

This lady (Mrs. De Bar), as previously intimated, has left the "Varieties" and coalesced with the company now performing at the "Lyceum" where she opened on Monday evening as "Dame (Lib," amid round after round of most flattering applause. Her rendition of the character was truly excellent, and justly appreciated by the audience, who caused the air to reverberate with their continued laughter.

Mrs. De Bar in her particular line of business, (comic old woman,) has no superiors, and but few, if any equals. We congratulate Miss Clyde upon her extremely good fortune in securing so valuable an auxiliary.63

Mrs. Clemintine De Bar was the divorced wife of Junius Brutus Booth, Jr., and thus, the sister-in-law of John Wilkes and Edwin Booth. Her brother was Benedick De Bar, the owner and manager of the St. Charles Theatre in New Orleans and of the Ben De Bar Theatre in St. Louis. Blanche De Bar, Mrs. De Bar's daughter, said that her mother was "a straight-laced woman of great mental ability and wonderful

62 Jones, op. cit., 122.
63 Dispatch, May 7, 1862.
education," and that she was in the South during the war engaged in nursing soldiers and singing in hospitals. According to Odell, Mrs. De Bar appeared in New York in 1859 in the same company with Ida Vernon. It is hardly likely that Mrs. De Bar devoted much, if any, time to nursing soldiers and singing in the hospitals, for she was too constantly on the stage to have much time left for other activities. Undoubtedly she must have been an actress of considerable ability. Not one word adversely criticizing her is found in the press, not even from those papers which so severely and mercilessly criticized other actors.

The Varieties seemed to prosper too, despite the war and the competition of the Lyceum. The papers reported that Keeble's engagement was proving very successful:

The engagement of Mr. Keeble at this establishment has succeeded in attracting large audiences, who nightly give evidence of their appreciation of his talents by hearty rounds of applause. To-night he will enact Macbeth, on which occasion all the fine original music will be sung.

One of the features of the summer season in Richmond was the unusual number of benefits which were given for the sick and wounded soldiers, due, no doubt, to the nearness of the war, which made the need seem so much greater than when the war was distant. Perhaps the managers sincerely desired to help the cause, but they were no doubt

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64 Clipping (The World Sun, January 11, 1925) in a scrapbook in the F. C. Ross Collection in the New York Public Library.

65 Odell, op. cit., III, 133.

66 Dispatch, May 9, 1862.
aware that the giving of benefits worked wonderfully to create good will for the theatres. On the occasion of the announcement by the Varieties that a benefit would be given for the soldiers, the paper commented:

We understand that it is the intention of the management to appropriate the proceeds of the next Tuesday night for the benefit of the sick soldiers. This is as it should be — amusement of a public character, while they contribute to the gratification of the hale and hearty, ought to do something for the brave defenders of our soil, who have suffered on the field of battle.

Not to be outdone by the Varieties, the Lyceum gave a benefit for "the sick and wounded soldiers" on May 12.

Meanwhile the Union forces were drawing ever closer to Richmond. Jones reports in his diary for May 14:

Our army has fallen back to within four miles of Richmond. Much anxiety is felt for the fate of the city. Is there no turning point in this long lane of downward progress? Truly it may be said, our affairs at this moment are in a critical condition. I trust in God, and the chivalry and patriotism of the South in the field.

The gunboats of the Federal Navy were halted at Drury's Bluff and the city breathed easier for a few days.

The theatres continued as if nothing were amiss. At this time three places of amusement, the Varieties, the Lyceum, and Metropolitan Hall, were going full force with crowded houses every

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67 Ibid., May 10, 1862.
68 Ibid., May 12, 1862.
69 Jones, op. cit., 125.
night. There was amusement available to suit every taste. The Lyceum provided light comedy and farces such as The Serious Family, The Cobbler’s Wife, Black-Eyed Susan, Lottery Ticket, Loan of a Lover, and an abundance of singing and dancing to complete the bills. The Richmond Varieties, presented the standard or legitimate drama for those who desired heavier fare, such as The Corsican Brothers, Jack Cade, Still Water Runs Deep, Camille and, of course, a farce and singing and dancing to round out the programs. For those who desired a completely different type of amusement, the Metropolitan displayed War Illustrations.

According to the press, the War Illustrations, which were being shown at Metropolitan Hall were elaborate and realistic scenes.

Lee Mallory’s new exhibition, the Battle of Hampton Roads, is still on exhibition at Metropolitan Hall. The auditor enjoys views of Old Point Comfort, Fortress Monroe, Rip Raps, Sewell’s Point, Newport News, and the Federal ships destroyed by the gallant Virginia. One of the best things ever seen in its way, it is an improvement on the ordinary stage-seas. The turbulent billows have an air of reality which gives one an impression that he is looking out upon a genuine sea of waters, through which the strange-looking Virginia moves on and darts upon her victims.  

Interesting things were happening at the Varieties. The following appeared in the Dispatch for May 20.

Miss Jennie Powell, one of the most talented members of the dramatic company at the "Varieties," was presented last Saturday night, by her friends

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70 Dispatch, May 16, 1862.
and admirers, with a beautiful gold watch and chain, and a handsome set of jewelry, consisting of a breast-pin and ear-rings. Truly a well deserved compliment.

Mrs. Jessie Clarke, who was still with the Varieties company, was given a benefit on May 21. The bill included *Still Water Runs Deep*, dancing, and the musical farce, *Swiss Cottage*. Later, May 29, Jessie's father, W. H. Crisp, already mentioned in connection with the summer season in Atlanta, made an appearance at the Varieties in the role of Julian St. Pierre in *The Wife*. The following advertisement had been running in the paper for several days:

Mr. W. H. Crisp, Manager of the New Orleans, Memphis, Savannah, Mobile, and other Southern Theatres, is about to re-commence management, and will be pleased to receive application from Ladies and Gentlemen of professional experience and ability. Address, Powhatan Hotel.

Concerning Crisp's appearance in *The Wife*, the Dispatch gave the following complimentary review:

This veteran manager and soldier appeared last night at the Varieties as Julian St. Pierre, in Sheridan Knowles' beautiful play of "The Wife." Captain Crisp, who is known throughout the South as a manager and actor of sterling abilities, played an active artillery part in the grand drama of Manassas, previously leaving the sock and buskin for the field of "grim visaged war" when the South called for volunteers. On the boards, in former years, he acquired much celebrity in the high walks of the drama, such as tragedy and genteel comedy. His Edinburgh training, and his tour in the dramatic heavens as star in this country, has not only made him a veteran in all those minute proprieties which belong to stage life, but won for him so enviable a

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Footnotes:

71. *Dispatch*.

Ibid., May 26, 1862.
distinction as to render these words well nigh superfluous. Of course, the soldier-manager was warmly welcomed back to the boards.72

The battle, known as Seven Pines or Four Oaks, that had been impending for so long, was fought May 31 to June 1. There were terrific losses on both sides, about 5000 on the Union side and about 6000 on the Confederate. Joseph Johnston, commander of the Confederate army, was so badly wounded that he was inactive for months; General Robert E. Lee was made commander of the Army of Northern Virginia.73 On May 31, the day the battle began, the following item appeared in the Dispatch: “We understand that after to-night General Winder has interdicted performances at the place of amusement known as the 'Varieties,' on Franklin Street.” On June 3 Louisa Clyde announced through the Dispatch that since the Lyceum was not suitable for use as a hospital, she would give half of the proceeds from the performances, after expenses were paid, for the benefit of the wounded. It was a grim time for Richmond. Jones recorded in his diary:

May 31st. At night. The ambulances are coming in with our wounded.

June 1st.-The ambulances are now bringing in the enemy's wounded as well as our own. It is the prompting of humanity.

And later on the same day:

All day the wounded were borne past our boarding-house in Third Street to the general hospital;

72 Ibid., May 30, 1862.

and hundreds, with shattered arms and slight flesh
wounds, came in on foot. I saw a boy, not more
than fifteen years old (from South Carolina), with
his hand in a sling. . . .74

The Varieties remained closed for several days. It
anticipated opening on June 9 and the following notice appeared:

This establishment, which was voluntarily
closed by the management on Saturday night last,
will be re-opened on Monday. This act of patrio-
tism and feeling is commendable, and redounds
much to the credit of those concerned. We under-
stand that the force of the already efficient
company will be increased, and that negotiations
are in progress with the best talent the South
can afford. Miss Ida Vernon will appear shortly
in her role of characters, sustained by Mr.
Keeble.75

A few days later to correct the false impression that the Varieties
had been used as a hospital, the paper published a notice to the
effect that upon inspection the theatre was found to be unsuited
for such use. The notice gave the following reason for the theatre's
closing:

Out of respect to the dying and wounded soldiers,
and the general gloom which pervades our city,
there has been no performance during this week
— a fact which speaks loudly for the humanity
of those in charge. "Romeo and Juliet" will be
played Monday night.76

The Varieties opened as promised on Monday, June 9. The next day
the paper stated that

74 Jones, op. cit., I, 130-132.
75 Dispatch, June 5, 1862.
76 Ibid., June 7, 1862.
This establishment re-opened last night, after having closed for a week, in consequence of the exigencies of the times, with fresh attractions and an increased patronage. Miss Ida Vernon, who is so well known to the Richmond public that, we could say in her favor would be unnecessary, sustained the character of Juliet unexceptionably, and Mr. Keeble was excellent as Romeo. . . . 77

Miss Vernon and Walter Keeble continued to take the leading role throughout the remainder of the summer. In July the company at the Varieties was augmented by the appearance of Katie Estelle and James Harrison, and in August Mrs. De Bar again joined the Varieties. 79

During the time that the Varieties was closed, Crisp went over to the Lyceum for a brief engagement. 80 He was evidently marking time while he negotiated for actors with whom to form his own company. The Lyceum closed the last days of June or early in July. There was no comment in the papers, but the theatrical notices disappeared after about June 28.

Early in June, Buckley's Nightingale Opera Troupe came to Metropolitan Hall for an extended engagement. There were now, since the closing of the Lyceum, only two places of public amusement in Richmond, Metropolitan Hall and the Varieties. These two remained open throughout the summer, despite the battle of "Seven Days" (June 26 to July 1) and the wounded and dying who crowded the hospitals,

77 Ibid., June 10, 1862.
78 Ibid., July 17, 1862.
79 Ibid., August 8, 1862.
80 Richmond Daily Enquirer, June 10, 14, 1862.
homes, and streets of the city.

As a variation from the heavy drama which the Varieties had been producing the greater part of the summer, an extravaganza entitled Beauty and the Beast, with "music, fun, tricks, and transformations, new scenery, dresses, decorations," was presented on August 12. It seemed to take well with the audiences for it was presented again on August 13 and the afternoon of August 14, and brought back August 20 and 21.

During the summer an important change occurred in the management of the theatre. Ogden, who had been with the company for a long time, and who, it will be recalled, shared with Hewitt in the excitement the night the Richmond theatre burned, supplanted Hewitt as manager of the Varieties. Ogden had risen from a place of obscurity in the company to acting manager, and finally to manager. The circumstances surrounding Hewitt's departure are not known, but the general tone of his comments in his various writings indicate that he was not happy with the Richmond company, and that he had neither liking nor respect for Ogden. Hewitt wrote concerning his leaving:

Here let me draw the curtain before this part of the drama of my life. Careworn and disgusted, I retired from a position so little congenial to my nature as that of theatrical manager. The office is a thankless one — and though a manager may be the despot of his troupe, and hold up his head when he looks down upon the underlings within his pay — yet, rarely is he respected with the community whose patronage he so humbly craves.

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81 Dispatch, August 12, 1862.
82 Hewitt, Gilbert Cramp ton, II. MS., op. cit.
Ogden remained manager of the theatre throughout the period of this narrative. He seems to have been an indefatigable worker, for he kept the theatre operating through many difficult times.

There is little or nothing of interest to report for the remainder of the summer. The interest of the press seems to have waned, for there was seldom any comment on the theatre during the latter part of the summer — only notices in the advertising section.

There was no intermission between the summer season and the beginning of the winter-spring season for 1862-63, but September may be taken as an arbitrary dividing point between the two seasons. Before the war, it had been customary to have a short summer season early in the summer before the weather became too warm and then to begin the fall season in September or October. The war changed the custom and the theatres remained open as long as there was an audience. And there usually was an audience.

It became evident in the summer of 1862 that the theatre was not only not going to be discarded, but that it was going to be even more active than it had been before the war. True, the summer season of 1862 in the cities of the cotton states was more or less a miscellaneous collection of entertainments made up of minstrels, panoramas, magicians, and amateur theatricals, but there were definite indications of increasing activity and improvement. (1) The progress and development of the Queen Sisters gave promise of better drama for the lower South. (2) The appearance the latter part of the summer of W. H. Crisp with his stock company gave promise that a high
standard of legitimate drama would be available. (3) Richmond had unquestionably assumed the lead in theatrical matters and had taken the place left vacant by the fall of New Orleans.
CHAPTER V

WINTER–SPRING SEASON 1862–1863

Mobile

It will be recalled that the summer season of 1862 closed in Mobile with the promise that the theatre would soon be opened for a regular dramatic season with a home help company. The promise was kept, and on September 9 the local newspaper announced that the Mobile Theatre would be opened on Monday, September 15, for its fall–spring season under the managership of W. H. Crisp, who had just closed an engagement in Atlanta. In announcing the commencement of the season, the press, eager to support the theatre and to give Crisp a good boost, took full advantage of his short service in the Confederate army and of his loyalty to the South. These would be drawing cards if nothing else would.

We are happy to announce that the veteran manager, Mr. Crisp, has taken a lease of the Mobile Theatre, and will open on Monday night for the season, which will probably extend far into the spring months. Mr. Crisp, his accomplished lady and family, are too well known professionally to require any commendations from us, identified as they have been for a series of years, with the cause of drama in every state of the Confederacy. Dependent as the Southern (gig) stage had mainly been upon birds of passage, who with the approach of summer wing their way to their Northern residences, it was a necessary incident of the times that with the outbreak of hostilities our theatres should go into suspension, and we could hardly expect anything "regular" in the dramatic line until the war shall cease. Mr. Crisp, however, was not one of the birds of passage, but had both wintered and summered with us in the days of his and our prosperity, and he hesitated not to cast in
his lot with the country of his adoption. Not only so, but he was among the first to respond to the call which that country made upon all strong arms and willing hearts to rally to its defence, and the memorable 21st of July found him in command of a battery which did efficient service upon the hordes of the invader. His two sons also joined the army and won for themselves an honorable record during the first year of the war.

When the Virginia Valley was invaded, Capt. Crisp, disabled by illness, was residing with his family at Luray, and compelled to fly from the Yankee marauders, they barely escaped with their lives, leaving behind them all their movable articles, upon which the enemy wreaked a special spite, not sparing an article of value in his house, but devoting furniture, wardrobe, everything, in fact, to utter destruction. It may be said, indeed, that in consequence of the war Capt. Crisp has lost his all, except the talents which have heretofore been successfully devoted to the refined gratification of our people. By the continued exercise of these aided by the warm-hearted appreciation of his services on the stage and in the field, which will be accorded to him, we trust that his sacrifices will not be found to have been made in vain, but that his latter days will be better than the beginning, and that he will long continue to be gratefully recognised as the preserver of the drama of the Confederacy.¹

The members of the troupe which Mr. Crisp brought to Mobile were as follows: Mrs. W. H. Crisp, Miss Eliza Wren, Mrs. Caulfield, Mr. C. Wolfe, Mr. K. Watkins, Mr. H. Quion, Mrs. Jessie Clarke, Miss Cecila Crisp, Mr. E. R. Dalton, Mr. J. Anderson, Mr. H. Henry, Mr. J. B. Genobly. A number of these people, Wren, Wolfe, Dalton, and perhaps others, had been with the Richmond company.

Mrs. Caulfield is the only one of importance who has not been encountered before in this study. Very little has been discovered about her career prior to this time. Apparently she was an old stock

¹ Mobile Advertiser and Register, September 9, 1862.
actress, for she had been a member of the Mobile stock company for the 1841-42 season. Later, as will be noted, the press speaks highly of her portrayal of old women.

Apparently "the good people of Atlanta" did not detain Mr. Crisp and he arrived on time to begin the season on September 15 as scheduled. "The campaign" opened with Pizarro and My Neighbor's Wife, and the music of Mons. Gilles' orchestra to complete the bill.

The first few days of the season got off to a bad start due to the inclemency of the weather, but with the return of good weather the houses improved.

The weather has brought out improved houses for the last two nights. We have seen only a portion of the play on each occasion — the "Stranger" and "Romeo and Juliet" — but enough to speak with approval of the general tone of the acting, enumerating among the well-played parts Mr. Crisp's Stranger and Mercutio, Mrs. Crisp's Mrs. Haller, and Miss Eliza Wren's Juliet. The afterpieces give an opportunity to the comic talent of the company to shine, and it had made a decided impression already. We must express our approval of the new fashion of inserting in the bill music which is to be played; it recognizes Mons. Gilles and his orchestra as an integral part of the entertainment, and every night some of the pieces enumerated are waited for with as much interest as the capital scene of the play.

During the latter part of September the Lady of the Lake was presented. The poem by that name had been dramatized by Crisp for this production, and according to the paper it was a mistake.


3Advertiser and Register, September 20, 1862.
The entertainment Monday was Mr. Crisp's adaptation of "The Lady of the Lake," of which we saw too little to speak understandingly. The story has good possibilities, and the text of the poem has been faithfully retained, but the reader of such a poem must painfully feel the inferiority of the adaptation to the original. This constitutes our standing objection to the dramatization of a good poem or novel. The novels from which Shakespeare took the hints of his plays were poor things, but the master saw something good could be made out of them. To take the works of a master and degrade them, from the mere inability of the dramatizer to rise to the height of the master's genius, is a different thing. While the Merchant of Venice, Winter's Tale, and King Lear are immortal, curiosity alone leads us to search for the old legends in which they germinated; but while we can read the Bride of Lammermoor, Guy Mannering, Rob Roy and the Lady of the Lake, we would fain be spared the infliction of their travesties in the dramatic garb.4

Perhaps if the editor had seen the whole of the production, he might have felt more kindly towards it.

The season seems to have rolled along smoothly enough. The programs were made up, as usual, with a serious or "heavy" play, a light farce or comedy, and orchestral music, dancing, and singing to complete the evening's entertainment. In fact, judging by the comments of the press from time to time, many people went to the theatre more to hear the music of the orchestra than to see the play. Some evidently endured the dramatic part of the program that they might enjoy the music.

On October 4 the paper published a letter congratulating the citizens of Mobile on their good fortune in having the Crisp Company at their theatre, but deploring the lack of proper behavior on the

4 Ibid., September 24, 1862.
part of a few so called "gentlemen;" The letter said in part:

The shower of beautiful bouquets upon the stage every evening, speaks in the most flattering style of the ability of the beautiful and accomplished Mrs. Jessie Clarke, one of the sweetest singers we have heard for a long time, while the ability of Miss Cecilia Crisp to take the leading characters in the most different (sic) plays, places her, although a young actress, among the star performers.

We will not trespass on your limited space to notice the gentlemen, but beg to complement (sic) Messrs. Watkins, Wolfe, Dailton (sic) and others.

But Messrs. Editors, we cannot close without saying we exceedingly regret to see some young gentlemen, at least claiming to be such, every evening, to the great annoyance of the entire audience, post themselves in conspicuous parts of the house to laugh and talk during the play. We think they have more brass, in the shape of buttons and lace on their dress, than they have brains to appreciate the performance of the stage. We hope these fellows, who have more respect for a glass of bursthead whiskey, than they have for the ladies, will not be allowed to remain in the theatre.

A Stranger

Throughout October the theatre continued night after night with the usual type of bill. Among the plays produced were The Italian Wife's Revenge, Richard III, All That Glitters Is Not Gold, Marble Heart, and the like. As a slight variation from the standard comedy and serious play that usually made up the bills, a sensation drama entitled Dream at Sea was presented October 15. The evening performance was concluded with a farce entitled The Secret; or, A Hole in the Wall. Later, October 23, there was still another innovation in the way of programs. On this evening "for the first time a new war drama" written by Eloise Bridges and entitled Our Cause; or The Female Rebel was presented. In connection with the drama,
"two beautiful Panoramas" were shown which included the following scenes: "Arrival of Stonewall Jackson's Division, A Battery Masked and under Fire, Sinking of a Steamer, Grand Engagement Between a Federal Gunboat and a Battery, Destruction of the Gunboat, Victory to Our Arms!" Apparently the program was a combination of play and panorama. It must have taken well with the audience, for it was repeated for the next two nights.

In November, Miss Eloise Bridges took her leave of the company. On November 6 the performance, which was a farewell benefit for her, included Love's Sacrifice and Delicate Ground. The press expressed regret at her leaving:

This lady makes her last appearance at the Theatre to-night, for her own benefit. We regret the necessity, whatever it may be, which deprives our stage of the presence of Miss Bridges on which we have seen little of her during her brief engagement — too little while we retain the agreeable impression she made during her former season in Mobile. We trust that she will to-night receive a substantial acknowledgement of the esteem in which she is held among us. She appears in the exquisitely touching character of Margaret Elmore.\(^5\)

Perhaps it was because she was not given a more important place in the company that Miss Bridges cut her engagement so short; her name rarely appears in the casts given in the notices. She went to Montgomery, as will be seen later.

Mago del Mage, the magician, added a little variety to the amusements offered in Mobile by his appearance the latter part of November at the Odd Fellow's Hall. He came for only a "few nights!"

\(^5\) Ibid., November 6, 1862.
The paper referred to him as a "talented and dexterous performer," and stated that his performances were "fine illustrations of the wonders of natural magic." 6

During the latter part of November, the leading roles were being sustained by Crisp, Mrs. Crisp, and John Davis. Davis will be remembered as stage manager in New Orleans and later as stage manager for the Queen Sisters. Among the members of the supporting actors were Cecilia Crisp, Watkins, Wolfe, and Mrs. Jessie Clarke. Lucretia Borgia, Don Caesar De Baman, and Othello were typical of the plays which made up the bills, with an occasional production of such plays as Dream at Sea and Davis' Roll of the Drum for variety.

Early in December the theatre-goers were treated to "another great novelty" in the form of a "grand Fairy Melo-Dramatic Spectacle." The piece, Forty Thieves, was an adaptation from the Arabian Nights Tales. A Mr. Zeuchting designed new scenery; a Mr. Wh(a)len had charge of the mechanical effects; a Mr. Jordan took care of the properties; and Mons. Gilles composed new music for the program. 7 The stress which the notice placed on the various phases of the production indicates that it must have been quite an elaborate program.

Another event of interest in December was the engagement of Mr. Sloman and his daughters, the two Misses Sloman. They had been in Mobile for several days giving musical concerts before they joined the group at the theatre where Sloman was to do impersonations and

6 Ibid., November 21, 1862.

7 Ibid., December 7, 1862.
sing comic songs. Apparently it was better to have Sloman a part of the company than to have him as a rival. Sloman's appearance and the program were announced thus:

Greatest Bill of the Season/ The Veteran Actor, Popular Comedian/ Inimitable (sic) comic vocalist/ Mr. Sloman, will appear for 6 nights/ Day after the Fair/ Mr. Sloman in 7 characters and four comic songs/ Three great pieces - Bamboozling, Day after the Fair/ and Forty Thieves.8

Sloman was John Sloman of Charleston, South Carolina. According to Brown, Sloman was born in England and made his debut in that country as a comic singer in 1815. He first appeared on the stage in this country in 1827 at the Chestnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia.

Brown says that Sloman retired from the stage and settled in Charleston.9 According to Hoole, Sloman served as theatre manager in Charleston for the 1852-53 season, and had played on the Charleston stage off and on for twenty years.10 Singing and comic business was his forte.

It may be that the audiences were growing a bit weary of heavy drama, for December 14 was announced as the beginning of a "fashionable comedy week." During the week the School for Scandal and She Stoops to Conquer, which, said the notice, "could not be achieved by any other company in the Confederacy," were presented. Other comedies presented during this week were The Soldier's

8 Ibid., December 13, 1862.
9 Thomas Allston Brown, History of the American Stage, 337.
10 W. Stanley Hoole, The Ante-Bellum Charleston Theatre, 60.
Daughter, The Stranger, and finally Katharine and Petruchio. Mr. Sloman and his daughters, the Misses Sloman, were featured in all the programs through December 19, when they took a benefit and made their farewell appearance.

On Monday, December 22, a Christmas benefit was given for the "wives and children of the brave soldiers." Mr. Crisp was living up to the promise made by the press at the beginning of his engagement. On Christmas night the two plays billed were Soldier's Daughter and The Golden Farmer. On December 28 the extravaganza, Beauty and the Beast, was presented.

Apparently the season was proving a prosperous and popular one. The bills presented were generally good and the attendance seems to have been excellent. One soldier noted in his diary for December, 1862, the following: "Enjoyed myself very much this month. Visited a great deal in Mobile . . . . I went to the theatre frequently, Mr. W. H. Crisp and his family were playing here all winter. . . ."

A rather unusual program was presented on New Year's night which had been announced as "Newly Weds Night." The main feature of the evening was the comedy Married Life! There was also a "variety of popular music" by the orchestra and the "fairy extravaganza," Beauty and the Beast, which concluded the program.

January 9 was scheduled as a benefit for John Davis. The play for the occasion was Macbeth with Davis in the title role and Crisp as the Ghost, while Mrs. Crisp played Lady Macbeth. The press in a

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11 Crenshaw Diary 1861 (Alabama Department of Archives and History), 12.
complimentary squib urged the people to attend as testimony of their appreciation of his efforts to entertain them.

This gentleman, long and favorably known in Southern cities and elsewhere as an actor of fine abilities and a gentleman of good social standing, receives a benefit to-night, previous to taking leave of the Mobile public for a time. . . . During the engagement Mr. Davis has been an acknowledged favorite, and the patrons of the stage should not lose the opportunity of testifying their gratitude for the enjoyment his efforts have afford him (sic). 12

On January 13 the press announced that Theodore Hamilton, "the talented young tragedian" was engaged and would "shortly appear." Hamilton, as the paper stated, had "acquired some celebrity in Southern theatres;" he had a "fine personal physique," and "histrionic talents and acquirements" . . . "of no common order." 13 Hamilton was scheduled to open his engagement, apparently his first in Mobile, in Metamora.

Metamora had been written by John Augustus Stone for Edwin Forrest, who made the play famous. It was the public's favorite role as far as Forrest's repertoire was concerned, and was considered his own particular dramatic vehicle. Apparently it was not performed by other actors. Forrest, the first American to achieve fame as a great actor, reached the pinnacle of his popularity and success in the forties and fifties, but he was still a commanding figure on the American stage during the Civil War. Perhaps Hamilton aspired to become his counterpart in the South. At any rate, as will be seen, he presented Metamora many times and his interpretation was often compared

12 Advertiser and Register, January 9, 1863.
13 Ibid., January 15, 1863.
to that of the great tragedian. The play was never presented without an attempt to justify, by a strange process of logic, the "stealing" of Forrest's play. In reference to Hamilton's engagement and his appearance in this role in Mobile, the paper stated in part:

The reader hardly need be informed that this is the play upon which Edwin Forrest, of divorce memory, founded his fame and fortune. That he has a copyright of it can scarcely be pleaded in bar of its performance in the South, just now, when his countrymen are stealing from us everything they can lay their hands on, and as it will be entirely new to nine-tenths of the public, there will doubtless be a tremendous rush after a novelty that promises so fairly.

If it do not turn out a pretty piece of business, it will be followed by an amusing farce under that title.

The editor seemed a little doubtful that Hamilton's role of Hetamora would be successful. Perhaps he had seen Forrest in the role and doubted the ability of anyone else to do it justice.

However, the performance seems to have been a great success, for it was repeated the next night and the notices announced the "Great Success of the prize play Hetamora, with brilliant and crowded audiences." It was presented again on Saturday afternoon "in compliance to requests," and again for the evening performance.

Mr. Crisp evidently tried to make the theatre of real service

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14 Evidently a slur at Forrest whose divorce from his wife, Catherine Sinclair, created quite a scandal.
15 Advertiser and Register, January 15, 1863.
16 Ibid., January 16, 17, 1863.
to the community, or, as the paper put it, he had a ready will "to meet the wishes of, and provide entertainment suited to all ages."

On Saturday, January 24, Crisp arranged a special matinee for the Catholic and Protestant orphan homes in the city. The program was arranged with the children in mind and particularly designed for their enjoyment. The paper stated:

... We learn that the managers of the Protestant Orphan Asylum have signified their acceptance for the orphan children in their charge, of Mr. Crisp's generous invitation, and that a number of seats, have been already engaged for ladies and families. The attendance is sure to be large and fashionable.17

Whether the children from the Catholic Orphan Asylum were permitted to go to the theatre was not stated, but, according to the paper, the children who were there had a wonderful time.

There was a very large assemblage of little folks at the Theatre yesterday, all of whom seemed to enjoy the fun as amusingly. Blue Beard did not frighten the children, and if he had there was the lover of Fatima to take their part. They all thought Fatima was very pretty, and her sister (Mrs. Jessie Clarke) was such a sweet lady, who sang so prettily. This was the first entertainment of the kind this season -- but was such a success we have no doubt Manager Crisp will continue them weekly.18

Po-ca-hon-tas, one of the most popular of the lighter pieces given this season, had a three day run the last of January beginning on January 29 and running through January 31. There was also a matinee performance on this last day and the parents were urged "to

17 Ibid., January 23, 1863.
18 Ibid., January 25, 1863.
bring the children." 

The theatre continued throughout February with the same company and the same type of program. Nothing of particular interest seems to have taken place. The bills included such plays as Still Water Runs Deep; The Lady of Lyons; Lucretia Borgia; The Marble Heart; Richard III; The Gamsister, which was presented twice; and Corsican Brothers, which was presented for four consecutive nights. Among the comedies and farces given as an afterpiece were Dumb Bells; Sketches in India; Irish Tutor; Wanted 1000 Young Milliners, which was repeated a number of times; Shandy McQuire, and the like.

Sam Hubbard, who was with the Richmond Varieties company during the last summer season, came for a short time in February. The paper referred to him as "the talented young comedian of Mobile." He appeared in such roles as Teddy O'Rourke in the Irish Tutor, as Paddy Miles in The Limerick Boy, and as Gaston Rieux in Camille. Hubbard developed into quite a favorite comedian.

The indications are that the theatre was well patronized and that on the whole the season was proving a good one. Even the ladies attended, contrary to the testimony of some who wrote reminiscences in later years. Theodore Hamilton, presumably in an interview with the press in 1896, stressed the absence of ladies from the theatre, he said:

... Barring scenery and costumes, the performances were up to the same standard as they are to-day, and some of the best players won fame and reputation in

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19 Ibid., January 29, 30, 31, 1863.

20 Ibid., February 25, 27, March 1, 1863.
THEATRE.

LUMBER AND MANAGER, W. W. GILBERT

Thursday Evening, Jan. 29th.

First issue of the World Annual, Amphitruo, Pollio, Pygmalion, and Plutarch's Lives, now published, being a fine specimen of fine print and fine presentation.

PO-CA-HON-TAS,

OR THE

GENTLE SAVAGE.

[Theatre program details and ticket information are not transcribed in this format.]

THE MUSIC.

A great goose-quill.

THE SCENERY.

Painted from nature and copied by Mr. Bush, in a manner that will satisfy the most discriminating eye.

THE COSTUMES.

Designed by Mrs. Kirk.

THE MACHINERY.

Wine, Better, Water, etc., painted by Mr. Webster and assistants.

THE PROPERTIES.

Greatly assisted by Mr. Spalding, Mr. Bush, etc.

PO-CA-HON-TAS

Is now presented in the person of the great woman, Po-ca-hontas, with a cast of characters who were

Teapot, "Bunny and Shiny" of the Company.

And signed by all the cast, which is laid

THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF

Appointed, Authorized, Engraved, Engraved, Special

This will be on Mr. J. H. Dryden, and all the tickets will bear the names of the great Po-ca-hontas.

REACHING ITS LEADING CAPACITY

Now becomes nerved, and much will be heard and done in the city.

Declaration of Southern Independence.

Notice of Deep Interest to be Public.

Read the Programme! Read the Programme!

ON: READ THE PROGRAMME.

F. A. COTTON, Proprietor.

DAILY ADVERTISER AND REGISTER
Mobile, January 29, 1863
those stormy days, when women stayed at home and men alone passed upon the merits of the summers. Perhaps the ladies did not attend as often and in as great numbers as the men did, but they certainly attended some of the time. In fact, ladies were unquestionably a part of the audience in Mobile the winter Hamilton was playing there. General Joseph Johnston, who was in Mobile and staying at the Battle House, attended the theatre during February. He must have seen Hamilton, but he did not remember him. Johnston left this interesting comment:

Notwithstanding the tragedy at the front theatres are still open. The outlook from Mrs. R.'s box to the staff box opposite where "the glittering horse-shoe curved between" was brilliant with colors and jewels. I never saw so many beautiful women together. I hardly saw the actors, and do not remember the play. It would have taken very good acting to have held my eyes from that "drama of fair women," and my ears from the running fire of remarks in our own box. . . .

The inflation which the war brought to the Confederacy affected the theatre, as it did everything else. In fact, the increasing inflation as the war progressed can almost be traced by the rising price of theatre admissions. In April the admission prices were increased and the public was given the following explanation:

21 A Clipping from the Sunday Republic dated by hand December 18, 1898. (Mobile, Alabama, folder, New York Public Library).

22 General Joseph Johnston, "Social Life in the Confederate Capitol," 14, February 1863, Mobile (Typed MS in the Manuscripts and Maps Division, Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama).
The Manager has had the honor of catering for the public amusement for 32 weeks, during which time the necessary expenses of the establishment have increased in the same ratio with all other pieces of business. At the commencement of the season, the Manager made the "scale of prices" the same as at his Theatre in New Orleans in time of peace. The extraordinary and unreasonable advance in all mercantile affairs, equally affecting Dramatic Amusements, (ever an expensive undertaking), compels the Manager to announce an alteration in the price of admission to the Dress Circle, while all other compartments of the House will remain as heretofore. Dress Circle (no extra charge for reserving seats) . . . $1.50. Private Boxes, Parquette and Gallery at the old scale.23

As the war progressed, inflation increased and the price of admission to the theatre became enormously high. Hamilton, reminiscing years after the war, told an amusing incident of a soldier who came to the theatre box office after the performance had begun and presented a "roll of bills as large as his arm and demanded a seat, saying, 'Don’t stop to count, the performance will be over before you get through'."24

The appearance of two new actresses and a series of interesting benefits must have added zest to the latter part of the spring season. Ida Vernon, who was rapidly rising to the position of "first lady of the Confederate theatre" came March 25 to make her "first appearance" in Mobile. For the opening performance of her engagement, she appeared as Juliet in Romeo and Juliet. Mr. Hamilton sustained the role of Romeo, Mr. Crisp portrayed Mercutio, Mr. Wolfe, Capulet, Anderson, Friar Lawrence, and Mr. Guion took the role of Tybalt. The

23 Ibid., April 23, 1863.

24 Clipping from the Sunday Republic, op. cit.
program concluded with **Wanted 1000 Young Milliners.**

On March 27 the theatre notice stated that "by request of Miss Vernon and by the tenor of her engagement, the Manager respectfully announces Camille with the full strength of the Company."

*Camille* was apparently one of Miss Vernon's favorite plays. Among the other plays presented during Miss Vernon's engagement were *Madelaine; Othello, The Marble Heart;* and *Jessie Brown; or, The Relief of Lucknow.*

A number of benefits were given for various members of the company in which Miss Vernon participated. One presented to John Anderson on April 10 included two plays, *London Assurance* and *Andy Blake.* An interesting feature of the program was the recitation of "The Flea," which, according to the paper, Mr. Anderson had written in imitation of Poe's "The Raven." Anderson was complimented by the press.

... We think the theatre-goers owe this gentleman a rousing benefit. He is very faithful, hard-working, and is always well up in his duties, besides being an actor of no mean abilities. It is just such men as he that the Manager can depend on in all emergencies—ever ready to play his part and do it well. If our people will on such occasions as this show their appreciation of the regular actors, they will strive to their utmost to please their patrons—there is nothing like a large audience to bring out the good points of a player; and we do hope that Mr. Anderson will have no room for complaint.  

The paper neglected to state whether Mr. Anderson had a full house.

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25 **Ibid.,** March 25, 1863.

26 **Ibid.,** April 10, 1863.
A little later the paper reported that the benefit of Mr. Watkins had been well attended, that, on the whole, the houses had been good, and that there was variety in the shows. A Mrs. Denight who played minor roles and who evidently was a newcomer to the stage received the commendation of the press and the hope that if she should be given a benefit that it would be a good one. "She labors hard, and an ever-generous public should never forget her efforts to please, however humble they may be." 27

A complimentary benefit was announced for Ida Vernon on April 21 in which Miss Annie Deland was scheduled to assist Miss Vernon. Miss Deland was born in Augusta, Georgia, in 1842, and made her first appearance at Newark, New Jersey, in 1857. She was engaged by Laura Keane's Theatre in New York, and later played at Cincinnati and at the St. Charles in New Orleans. She married a Mr. Finnigan in 1860 and, according to Brown, retired from the stage.28 However, she appeared frequently in the Confederacy during the latter part of the war.

The program for Miss Vernon's benefit included the "great comedy" Masks and Faces, in which she played the role of Peg Woffington and Miss Deland played the role of Mable Vane. The program concluded with the burlesca Po-ca-hon-tas. Concerning the benefit the press reported that:

If there has been any doubt as to the popularity of this lady, the rush last (Tuesday) night into

27 Ibid., April 19, 1863.
28 Brown, op. cit., 411.
the Theatre must have put it at rest. The pit presented a perfect "sea of upturned faces," the dress circle was arrayed with the beauty and fashion of the city, with every inch of standing room occupied; and this, too, when the whole evening was inclement, finishing up at 11 o'clock with a thunder storm. It was an ovation to Miss Vernon's genius, which she acknowledged in as pretty a little speech as we ever heard from the stage. Mable Vane (Miss Annie DeLand) took the audience by surprise at the first appearance, and commanded the admiration of the audience to the end. Flowers were showered on her without stint. It was a decided "hit," and we hope to see this lady again.

On April 26 the paper announced that "our favorite," "our Jessie," had returned to the stage after a short absence. Jessie Clarke, whose forte was the singing of popular ballads and the acting of light comedy roles, undoubtedly had a pleasing voice and a charming manner, for she never failed to receive an enthusiastic welcome from the press.

On April 26 Mr. Hamilton was "tendered" a benefit by "many distinguished citizens" of Mobile. A letter, signed by an imposing list of names, among them many military titles, stated in part:

Dear Sir.—Being solicitous to testify our appreciation of artistic merit, particularly when combined with private worthy, and feeling that we are your debtors for many hours of pleasure, we propose for your acceptance a Complimentary Testimonial, to take place at the earliest opportunity at your command.

The bill for the benefit, an excellent one, included Hamlet, with Hamilton in the title role, Crisp as the Ghost, Mrs. Crisp as Gertrude, and Jessie Clarke as Ophelia; a "variety of popular music,"

29 Ibid., April 23, 1863.
and the comedy, "A Kiss in the Dark."

On May 1 Mrs. Denight, whom the editor had previously mentioned as deserving a benefit, finally received one, but the paper neglected to state whether it was well attended. The program began with The Brigand and concluded with the burletta, Swiss Swain. Three volunteers, T. Sinclair, Alfred Fays, and H. N. Moore, added to the evening's entertainment with singing, dancing, and a violin solo by Fays.

May 15 was announced as the "last night but one" of the season. The program, dedicated as a benefit for the Free Market, included Married Life, a song by Miss Brown, an amateur of Mobile; and the farce, Poor Pillicoddy.

The season closed May 16 with a benefit for Manager Crisp, and well he deserved it too, for a long and successful season. During the season, lasting eight months, Crisp had presented the public a great deal of variety in the bills, which included something of every type of drama to suit every taste. There had been plays of the sensation school, spectacles, comedies, farces, burlettas, music, singing and dancing, and a considerable amount of standard drama. Not only that, but Crisp, at one time or another, had brought to the theatre the best talent the Confederacy had to offer, apparently maintaining a fairly competent stock company throughout the long season. Certainly the citizens of Mobile owed him, as the papers were wont to say, "a bumper."
Montgomery

In Montgomery the theatrical activity for the winter and spring of 1862-1863 was late getting started, but the prospect of a dramatic season was joyfully hailed by the press:

We are most delightfully pleased to announce that this public place of dramatic resort, has been leased for the season to Messrs. Gerdine and Erwin, who have the talent and the will to serve the public. They desire to open Monday night week, and their charities it is trusted will be acknowledged by our soldiers.

The Southern press, in most cases, tried its best to encourage the theatrical activity and to mollify the public by references to the cultural values to be obtained from the theatre, the fine character of some of the performers, and the good cause served by the benefits that were given. The Montgomery papers were especially earnest in their efforts to support dramatic endeavor in their city. With the promise of a genuine dramatic season, the editor of the Mail seemed to be almost delirious with enthusiasm. The following, though long, is given in full because it illustrates this attitude:

He took pleasure, in a recent issue of the Daily Mail, to announce a visit of Colonel Gerdin and Mr. Erwin, gentlemen of acknowledged dramatic abilities, and widely known to fame.

We learn they have leased our new and magnificent Theatre, and will at once bring on our boards an array of talent well known and appreciated by the elite and sapient frequenters of such elevating dramas as they only can produce, and have produced.

Being acquainted with the Colonel by the best of references — genuine worth, merit, and

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30 Appeared variously as "Gerdine" and "Gerding."

31 Montgomery Daily Mail, November 9, 1862.
responsibility — and knowing how long he has been the man who has fostered and cherished the drama in the South, we can only assure our readers, and citizens, he will establish a first class Theatre in our city. As the old friend of Mr. W. H. Crisp, and a gentleman of worth, we were glad to greet him, at our office.

From a source entitled to the best credit, he will have actors of the first ability, and character, who "catch the manners living as they rise."

But the names — the ladies always first:

Miss Ida Vernon, the accomplished and beautiful tragedienne, whose rendition of her parts is applauded (sic) by each man who has the soul to love a pure standard of morality and "see himself as others see us." She can "hold the mirror up to nature." Intelligent audiences would never tire of greeting her. A thousand years to such female excellence.

Next in the diamond cluster is Miss Eliza Wren, the estimable lady, and as we said before, the Mocking Bird of the Southern Theatres. We have heard her sing in Richmond to such houses, and her lovely songs (which she was encored in thunder tones until we thought we were in the paradise of song, when she consented to appease our auricular organs. Never was it more truthfully spoken by any other than the Poet who says: "Give me the making of the songs of the people, and I care not who make their laws."

Then in the same wreath of beauty is Miss Eloise Bridges — the natural artiste, and a credit to her sex. She is model in her character and wins our hearts whilst she enchants our gase.

Then we have Miss Eliza Wren a beautiful and pet favorite on our Southern Stage. How one so young can do so much true acting, we cannot comprehend. But dramatic genius like the dews, descends from above. The compliment is due and we tender it.

Mrs. Caulfield, that model personifier of the old woman, and a credit and honor to any corps is, we learn, of this talented quintuple.

The gentlemen shall receive our compliments now.

Mr. Dalton, a gentleman of the finest abilities, which, added to a high regard for his profession, is a star of the first magnitude. He is one of the people's favorites, and the public know him, as a true actor.

Mr. Morton is a gentleman of true histrionic genius, always in his good humor, and one who has few superiors on the boards.—He has made his mark on the public heart, and it will remain there so long as merit is treasured.
Mr. Walter Keeble is another to add to this list of favorites. He is among the list of true theatrical celebrities of this company.

The stage is to be under the direction and supervision of an old manager, who understands his business.

The house is brilliantly illuminated with gas, the scenery costly and superb, and all the stage effects are complete, and will be gotten up without regard to expense. The hall is furnished with the best of arm chairs, and good stoves.

Police will be in attendance to enforce good order, and the modesty of none will receive a shock.

We learn one of the finest orchestras of the South has been secured, and in fact, it is, to sum all up — a complete theatre.

Benefits will be regularly given to widows and orphans of deceased patriots, and to sick and wounded soldiers; to charitable and religious institutions, and the proprietors will leave to the South an example of their interest in the Southern cause, and their devotion to the Drama.

The house will open with a splendid bill on Monday-night, Nov. 17th, of which due particulars will be given.

Col. Gerding, desiring to make the Drama in our city a source of true merit and amusement, nothing will be left undone to please all; the most fastidious will find a place in the theatre where they can spend a pleasant instructive evening.

We desire to call the special attention of our public to this fact, that if a liberal patronage be extended, we will retain a true Dramatic company this winter in our midst, and such an one, that not within the Confederacy can its equal be found.

Mobile will learn with regret of the withdrawal of Col. Gerding from their midst — while we extend our hand of welcome, with a "welcome here."

After this elaborate "puff," the citizens of Montgomery must surely have thought that it was their patriotic, civic, and moral duty to support the theatre.

Certainly no more talented a group could have been assembled in the Confederacy. Dalton and Keeble were among the best, if not

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32 Montgomery Weekly Mail, November 15, 1862.
the very best, the Confederacy could offer in the way of leading men. Ida Vernon, Eloise Bridges, and Ella and Eliza Wren all ranked high as leading ladies. Mrs. Caulfield and Mr. Charles Morton were an excellent comedy team. However, the paper was a little misleading, since all of these "stars" did not appear in the same company at the same time, as will be seen, but instead their appearances were scattered throughout the season.

The theatre did not open November 17 as scheduled, because the assembling of the company and the preparations of the house evidently took more time than was expected. Mrs. Caulfield did not arrive in Montgomery until November, and the Mail commented as follows:

This excellent lady who has so often and so long made the drama and its attendances the study of an extended existence, has arrived in our city.

To say how much the South is indebted to her for polishing rough diamonds, our space hath not amplitude for enumeration. . . .

Evidently the managers spared no effort or expense to get the theatre in excellent condition for the season. The editor of the Mail reported:

Yesterday, in response to a cordial invitation, we accompanied Messrs. Gerding and Erwin's accomplished scenic artist Mr. Budd to the Montgomery Theatre.

It was enough for us to say our eyes never rested on more sublime spectacles than we beheld on the visit.

It was a series of the most beautiful artistic handiwork, and gotten up in a spirit, in keeping with the progress of the age.

We promise, that the public will accord unanimous applause to the management of this
Theatre, for the expensive manner things are being done for the recherche taste. . . .

A card appeared in the newspaper November 25 requesting the managers to allow Miss Bridges, who had evidently come from Mobile, to give dramatic readings while waiting for the company to assemble. At this time there appeared a notice in the paper that John Sloman and the Misses Sloman, who had been in the city giving concerts, had been engaged by the management to appear at the theatre.

Miss Bridges and the Slomans, with possibly some of the stock company, kept the theatre going while the other members of the company were assembling. On November 25 they presented the farce Family Jars, with an instrumental and vocal concert completing the bill. The next night they presented another program called a "Grand Musical Performance and Dramatic Reading." The theatre remained open, offering this type of program each night, until the full company assembled.

Evidently, the press began to show signs of impatience that the great company had not put in an appearance, for on November 30 the paper reported that the editor had met Gerding, who showed him "telegraphic dispatches from Erwin proving that the dramatic corps is on the way." It was hoped, said the editor, that the theatre would be able to open with the "legitimate drama" December 1. However it was not until December 6 that the "full dramatic corps" had assembled and the "regular dramatic season" was begun.

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33 Montgomery Daily Mail, November 22, 1862.
With the arrival of Ida Vernon, the first "star" to appear, the Montgomery public was treated to more serious drama for a change. Among the plays presented by her were The Lady of Lyons, The Stranger, Romeo and Juliet, All That Glitters Is not Gold, and Camille. The press complimented Miss Vernon and Hubbard on their performance in Camille.

At the theatre, last night, we were very much delighted by the excellent rendering of that celebrated French play of "Camille." Miss Ida Vernon is an excellent "Camille," and acted her part as the consumptive, admirably. Mr. C. H. Hubbard sustained his part with admirable tact and naturalness. We consider him to be quite an acquisition to this excellent company, and as he is quite a young gentleman, we anticipate a brilliant future for him.34

Throughout December and until the termination of Miss Vernon's engagement the bill of fare continued to run to heavy drama. Typical of the programs presented was the one given January 1 which included Richelieu with Dalton as the Cardinal, Hubbard as De Hauprat, and Miss Vernon as Francesca, the page; a song by Miss Jessie Day; and the farce, Miss Cottage as an afterpiece.35

Blind Tom came to Montgomery January 20 to augment the theatre programs, which now became a combination of drama and piano concert. The bill for the first night presented Miss Vernon as Katherine in The Teming of the Green and a piano concert by Blind Tom. On the next night, Blind Tom again augmented the program which included Miss Vernon in the burlesque Poo-poo-hon-tas. This was her closing

34 Daily Mail, December 17, 1862.
35 Ibid., January 1, 1863.
NEW ADVERTISEMENTS
THEATRE.

MANAGERS AND MANAGERS.............. J. C. FLEMMING & SON.
STAGE MANAGERS.............. E. B. DALTON.

The Managers take pleasure in announcing that they have completed arrangements for resuming the regular "DRAMATIC SEASON."

SATURDAY NIGHT, DECEMBER 6th,
with a full Corps Dramatici embracing, (as acknowledged by critics) the best talent of the South.

LET EACH BE THEIR OWN JUDGE!

The Ladies of the Corps.

MISS DA VERENION—The acknowledged T. placitance of the North.

MISS ELOISE BRIDGES—The talented Artiste from the New Orleans Theatre.

MRS. E. B. DALTON—The charming Comedienne from the Savannah Theatre.

MRS. CAULFIELD—The well established Artist from the Mobile Theatre.

MISS RENITA HOWARD—The fascinating Comedienne.

MISS JESSIE DELL—The Songstress of the South.

The Gentlemen of the Corps.

MR. E. B. DALTON—The Actor of the South.

MR. J. B. HUBBARD—Of the New Orleans and Mobile Theatres.

MR. D. RUSSELL—The favorite Low Comedian of the South.

MR. C. T. NELSON—Of the Richmond Theatre.

MR. H. HUNTER—Of the Richmond Theatre.

MR. P. E. BOWERS—Of the Mobile Theatre.

MR. O. T. WARREN.

MR. T. HUNTINGTON and MR. JAMES CLARK.

SATURDAY NIGHT, DECEMBER 6th.

OPENING ADDRESS.
Written for the occasion, by the Hon. Judge Rev. P. P. Fowkes, will be delivered by Mr. E. B. DALTON.

At the performance will commence with Co. man's celebrated Tragedy in Three Acts, entitled the

IRON CREST!
Mr. Edward Mortimer.............Mr. E. B. DALTON.

COMIC SONG.......................Mr. D. RUSSELL.

To conclude with the petite Farcce of the

ROUGH DIAMOND!
Mrs. B. ..........Mr. E. B. DALTON.

Admission: doors open at 6h o'clock, curtain rises at 7h o'clock. Box office open daily, from 10 until 2 o'clock, when seats can be secured without extra charge.

DAILY MAIL
Montgomery, December 6, 1862
performance with the Montgomery Theater. The press complimented Blind Tom on his musicianship, and expressed regret at the departure of Miss Vernon:

The performance on last evening was a success. The negro pianist "Blind Tom," who is only 13 years of age, performed with such skill and ease on the piano, that he astounded the entire audience. In fact, he is the "world's wonder," and all those who have not had the pleasure of seeing him, we would advise them to attend the theater to-night. He was born in Columbus, Ga., and his father is a common field hand.

To-night is positively the last appearance of the star actress of the South, Miss Ida Vernon, who has made an engagement with the Richmond theater. We are exceedingly sorry that this accomplished actress leaves the Montgomery boards for Richmond; but we are in hopes her engagement there is limited, and that she will, ere long, make her reappearance at the theater in this city. She will take the character of Po-ca-hon-tas in the Erratic Demi-Savage Extravaganza of "Ye Gentle Savage." This is quite an interesting play, and it being the last appearance of Miss Ida Vernon, we have no doubt that there will be a crowded house at the theatre to-night. The great pianist and imitator, "Blind Tom," will conclude the performance.

On January 26 the Mail announced the "first appearance" of John Davis, who, it will be recalled, had been playing in Mobile. The program on Davis' opening night included Don Caesar de Bazan, in which he played the lead, and concluded with The Widow's Victim, with Russell and Hubbard in the main roles.

The theatrical activity continued through February with little change. The same type of plays were presented and no new actors were added to the company until late in February, when Mrs.

36 Ibid., January 21, 1863.
Anderson from Mobile joined the company. There were several benefits during the latter part of the month. Eloise Bridges, having returned early in January after a "serious indisposition," performed regularly during most of February. February 28 was the last night of the season, and at the same time the spectacle Forty Thieves was announced as being in preparation. The theatre did close, but not for long.

The opening program presented the Forty Thieves, which ran for three nights.  

It reopened with Erwin as lessee, E. R. Dalton acting manager, and John Davis as stage manager. While the theatre was closed, it had been "thoroughly cleaned and renovated."

Apparently the theatre enjoyed a successful and prosperous season. On March 16, Mail reported that:

This place of amusement continues to draw large and fashionable audiences. The enterprising manager is using every available means to place upon our boards the best talent in the Confederacy, and we are happy to announce that he has made an engagement with the talented and popular young actress Miss Ella Wren, who will make her first appearance to-morrow evening as Mariam, in Sheridan Knowles' great play of "The Wife." Miss Wren is highly spoken of as an actress, and we hope that she will be greeted with a full house. . . .

Miss Wren, it will be recalled, had been announced at the beginning of the season in November, but was just now making her appearance.

The programs presented during Miss Wren's engagement included such plays as the Hunchback, Lucretia Borgia, Hamlet, The Romance of a Poor Young Man, and Camille. Throughout Miss Wren's engagement,
the audiences seen to have been only fair. For one thing, the weather was bad. The Mail reported that "the almost incessant fall of rain for some days past has prevented large attendance at this favorite place of resort, although the pieces and the acting have been of a very superior order."38

On April 4 Ella Hren completed her engagement with the Montgomery Theatre, but was immediately re-engaged, so that her performances did not cease.39

Music featured heavily in the programs for April. Signor Fatti and Professor Hansen Brown in a concert, and the dramatic corps in a two-act play, entitled Moses, Her Faith and Trials were presented April 9.40 Later in April, the company presented the "favorite opera" The Bohemian Girl, with Ella Hren as Alina Thadine. The program was evidently a success, for it was repeated for the next two nights.41

Ella Hren's engagement ended on April 25, and Ida Vernon, who had just completed an engagement in Mobile late in March, came back to Montgomery April 27 for a short visit. Miss Vernon opened in Camilla, with Annie DeLand, who had appeared in a supporting role on the occasion of Miss Vernon's benefit in Mobile.42 The next

38 *Mail*, March 21, 1863.
39 *Mail*, April 4, 5, 7, 1863.
40 *Mail*, April 9, 1863.
41 *Mail*, April 19, 20, 21, 1863.
42 *Mail*, April 26, 1863.
night Miss Vernon and Dalton played *The Lady of Lyons*. To a "respectably large and highly appreciative" house. Miss Vernon's rendition of 'Pauline' was perfect," and Mr. Dalton was "perfect" as Claude Melnotte; the other members of the cast did a creditable job. 43

H. Guion, who had been in Mobile, made his "first appearance" on May 7. The program included Jessie Brown and Pleasant Neighbors. Apparently Guion came up to Montgomery only to help close the season, for the newspaper announced May 9 as "positively the last night of the season." The program, a joint benefit for the Daltons, included *Christmas Eve; or, Duel in the Snow*, with Miss Vernon in two roles; a dance by H. Clinton; and a "grand allegorical tableau—Sic Semper Tyrannis." 44

Although the expectations aroused by the long and glowing forecast given in the opening announcement by the press in November were not quite realized, still in 1862-63 season in Montgomery was a good one. It was also the best season that Montgomery had had since the beginning of the war had brought a temporary suspension of theatrical activity. The actors represented the best talent the Confederacy had to offer at that time, and the programs had been varied, including a great deal of standard drama during the course of the season.

43 *Ibid.*, May 1, 1863.
44 *Ibid.*, May 9, 1863.
Atlanta

Mobile and Montgomery were more fortunate in their dramatic season for 1862-63 than were the Georgia cities. These, with the exception of Atlanta, depended entirely on the Queen Sisters and miscellaneous entertainments. The Queen Sisters, who had become, by this time, the most important group of entertainers in this section of the Confederacy, began the theatrical season for Atlanta on October 7. 45 John Davis, who had joined this group during the previous summer season, was still with them. They presented their usual repertoire, but the Vigilance Committee appears on the bills less frequently than it did when this group first began its theatrical activity. Among the plays presented during this engagement were Still Water Runs Deep, Serious Family, Dead Shot, His Last Legs, Toodles, and The Spectre Bridegroom. The engagement ended on October 26. 46

There was little entertainment after the departure of the Queen Sisters. Blind Tom came in November for several nights. 47 Followed by Keeper's Southern Harmoncons 48 who presented a benefit for the sick and wounded soldiers on November 17.

December was almost completely barren of entertainment. The Queen Sisters were in Savannah, Crisp was in Mobile, Erwin was getting

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45 Atlanta Southern Confederacy, October 8, 1862.
46 Ibid., October 26, 1862.
47 Ibid., November 6, 7, 8, 11, 1862.
48 Ibid., November 12, 23, 1862.
a company organized for Montgomery, and there was nothing available
for Atlanta. 49

During the early months of 1863, the Atlanta Amateurs gave
an entertainment occasionally for the benefit of the poor or of some
war project. Early in April, Blind Tom was again in Atlanta for a
few concerts. 50

Manager Erwin of the company playing in Montgomery had
evidently been searching for new engagements for his troupe, for the
press announced on April 5 the Athenaeum had been leased by C. H.
Erwin and Company and that a season would begin on Monday, April 6. 51
John Davis was listed as the stage manager, and E. R. Dalton as act­
ing manager. The names given in the notice of April 5 were John
Davis and Mrs. Davis, Miss Eloise Bridges, Sam Hubbard, and "Little
Dan," who may have been a child of one of the company. Acting
manager Dalton had not yet joined the group, for his engagement in
Montgomery did not close until May 9.

The Company opened with The Lady of Lyons, in which Miss
Bridges played the role of Pauline and John Davis that of Claude
Belnotte. There was a "Confederate Jig" by little Dan and then the
farce Paddy Miles' Boy to conclude the program. The price of admission
was one dollar for the parquet and fifty cents for the upper circle.

49 Ibid., December 5, 1862.
50 Ibid., April 2, 3, 4, 1863.
51 Ibid., April 5, 1863.
The company met with a "flattering reception" and the Anthenaean was "nightly crowded with appreciative audiences," and "the main characters in each performance were represented in the most admirable manner," but apparently the supporting actors were less competent. The paper complimented Miss Bridges and John Davis on their performance.

... Her carriage upon the stage was comme il faut; her gesticulations, which is (sic) always natural and graceful, appeared even more so on this occasion; and her soft sweet voice, when breathing accents of love to her inconstant Fasio, were melting as ever Parthenia addressed to Ingomar, the barbarian, and might have been supposed sufficient to wean him from the corrupt arms of Alda Bella, his enchantress. ...

Mr. Davis as Fasio, was non pareil. His easy, natural manners, graceful gesticulations and distinct enunciation, stamp him as an actor of the first water." ^2

The Roll of the Drum or, the Battle of Manassas, presented on April 30, had a run of about seven nights. The title of the play had been changed, but this probably does not mean that the play had been revised or altered. Titles of plays were often changed to fit the times, or a particular locality. Davis probably thought that reminding the people of the victories at Manassas in the title of his play would be a drawing card.

Beginning on May 7, Camille ran for three nights, with Miss Bridges in the title role, Davis as Armand and Sam Hubbard as Gaston. ^3 Because of the length of the play no afterpiece was given.

About the middle of May, the troupe was augmented by the arrival of the members of the company that had just closed the

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^2 Ibid., April 10, 1863.
^3 Ibid., May 8, 1863.
engagement in Montgomery. The theatre was closed on Monday, May 18, in order to make preparation for the new group. Among those who came to Atlanta from Montgomery were E. R. Dalton and Mrs. Dalton, Dan Russell, Nelson, Mrs. Caulfield, and others. They made, according to the paper, "the largest and best (company) in the confederacy."

On May 19, the company, re-enforced by new members, presented Othello with Dalton as Othello, Sam Hubbard as Iago, and Miss Bridges as Desdemona; and Rendezvous and with a "Professor Barlow" act by Dan Russell.

The price of admission had been increased during May. The parquet was now one dollar and fifty cents and the circle one dollar; children and servants, as usual, were admitted for half price.

Some of the plays which were presented during the latter part of May were The Wife, Ireland as It Is, and Romeo and Juliet. Duel in the Snow was announced as being in preparation. Richelieu was scheduled for Monday, May 25, with Dalton as the Cardinal and Miss Bridges as Julia. Unfortunately the file of newspapers ends with the issue for Sunday, May 24, and it is not possible to determine how much longer the troupe continued in Atlanta.

There was little comment in the press, but from the few remarks that did appear from time to time, it seems that the season prospered and that the houses were crowded every night.

54 Ibid., May 17, 1863.
55 Ibid., May 1, 21, 1863.
56 Ibid., May 24, 1863.
Macon

The season of 1862-63 in Macon was singularly barren of entertainment. There was nothing of consequence in Macon until Harry Macarthy and Lottie Estelle came in October to present their personation concerts. The press notices of their programs were complimentary. The song, "It is my Country's Call," which Macarthy sang, was "received with unbounded applause."

There was a musical concert by Mr. and Miss Sloman in November, and a short engagement of Blind Tom in October and again in December.

The situation did not improve as the season advanced. In February the magician Mago Del Mage was at Balston Hall for four days, and an amateur group, who called themselves "the Dixie Family," presented a concert. Their program was largely a musical one, consisting of the "best Confederate songs."

Macon seems to have been off the beaten track and did not become important to the theatre until later in the war, when the city became a place of refuge. People flocked there from other cities nearer the center of the war.

Augusta

The season opened September 1 with the return of the Queen Sisters, who took up permanent residence in Augusta about this time.

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57 Macon Daily Telegraph, October 8, 1862.
58 Ibid., October 18-22, 1862; November 10, 1862; December 2-5, 1862.
59 Ibid., February 10-13, 1863; March 30, 1863.
It will be recalled that they had played a long engagement in this city only the month before. The press welcomed them back to Concert Hall.

This talented little family of Thespians opened to a very good house at Concert Hall last night.

After the close of the first piece, the play of the Conscript, Mr. Davis came before the curtain and read the dispatch announcing the victory of Manassas Plains. It was received with loud and long plaudits and cheers, and was followed by "Dixie" by the Orchestra—all of which put the audience in a good humor. 60

The victory announced by Davis was the second Battle of Manassas, which had been fought on August 30, 1862.

The Constitutionalist was always an eager and sincere supporter of the Queen Sisters. Comments such as the one which follows were calculated to encourage patronage by calling attention to the improvement of the Waldron troupe, and more important still, by stressing their loyalty to the Southern cause.

Concert Hall offers nightly attractions for full houses, in the agreeable entertainments which Mr. Waldron's talented little family present. Their popularity seems to be all the time on the increase, and a liberal patronage greets them wherever they perform. And this is not strange, when it is considered that they are really a bona fide Southern company; that they have given several benefits to the Confederate cause; and that their performances are really excellent.

Accompanying their entertainments are the Palmetto Band of Charleston, which add interest to each evening's performance. 61

The prices for admission were seventy-five cents for the

60 Augusta Daily Constitutionalist, September 2, 1862.

61 Ibid., September 3, 1862.
gallery, and half price for children and servants, but on September 16, when a benefit was given for the Soldiers' Wayside Home, the price of the seats in the parquet was increased to a dollar and the "free list" was suspended. The paper neglected to explain who composed the "free list." Two pieces, Serious Family and Rendezvous, were presented for the benefit.62

The play, The Battle of Manassas; or, The Roll of the Drum was scheduled for presentation on September 26. The concluding piece was The Dead Shot. The next day the paper commented that:

The new drama of "The Battle of Manassas" will be repeated this evening. The piece has met with a very flattering reception, and, being adapted to events now transpiring, is calculated to meet with public favor. Much of the effect is due to the scenic artist, Captain Sandrue, who has painted some new and appropriate scenery in a most creditable style. The scene representing "the encampment," is really beautiful.

Of the performers, we need say nothing. Our city readers are already familiar with their merits, and not fail to give them the proper share of applause.63

The Queen Sisters concluded their engagement in October, but not before they had given two more benefits, one for Master Andrew and one for the Catholic Orphan Asylum. The former was presented on October 1. The bill, according to the paper, was excellent and Master Andrew deserved a "bumper" of a benefit.

The popular comedian of the Thespian Family, Master Andrew, appears before the public, this Wednesday evening, for a benefit. Possessing a natural talent for the comic and the ludicrous,

62 Ibid., September 16, 1862.
63 Ibid., September 27, 1862.
he never fails to elicit the applause of his audience, in any of the characters in which he appears, as well as in the comic songs with which he sometimes regales the spectators. He has reason, therefore, to expect a bumper this evening, and, in order to more certainly deserve it, he puts forth a very attractive bill, vis: "Foodles," and "The Spectre Bridegroom," the song of "Billy Barlow," and the music of the Palmetto Band.64

The benefit for the Catholic Orphan Asylum was given on October 2, and the bill included The Battle of Manassas and the Irish Lion. Four hundred dollars was realised from the benefit and presented to the home.65

The Queen Sisters closed their engagement on October 4 with a bill which included Paint Heart Never Won Fair Lady and The Young Widow.66 They went to Savannah, but returned to Augusta few months later to continue their theatrical activity.

During the interim, Augusta was not long without entertainment, for on October 12 the paper announced that Harry Macarthy and Lottie Estelle would give a benefit for the Ladies' Volunteer Association of Richmond County. A few days later, October 15, the announcement was made that Macarthy and Estelle would "give a few entertainments.67" The team met with its accustomed success:

The entertainments given by Harry Macarthy, and Miss Lottie Estelle, at Concert Hall, are received with much favor. The audience is kept

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64 Ibid., October 1, 1862.
65 Ibid., October 2, 4, 1862.
66 Ibid., October 4, 1862.
67 Ibid., October 12, 15, 1862.
in a constant good humor, at the several comic changes and imitations of the performers, and an opportunity is thus afforded of passing a very pleasant evening. 68

The public manifested so much interest in Macarthy's entertainments that he was "induced to remain a short time longer," he continued his performances "with a change of program nightly," until about October 23.

The amusement loving citizens of Augusta were without entertainment of any kind until December 2, when Lee Mallory's War Illustrations were engaged for an exhibition of about two weeks. The War Illustrations were followed by a few nights of magic and fun presented by Mago Del Mago. 69

On January 1, real theatre came back to Augusta with the return of the Queen Sisters, and the Daily Constitutionalist faithfully reported the event.

Good houses continue to greet these popular favorites at every performance, and their bills are as attractive as ever. With the dramatic representations, Miss Laura's singing, and the music of the Palmetto Band, a most agreeable entertainment is presented, and an opportunity for spending a pleasant evening is afforded to our citizens. 70

A few days later a more detailed comment was given concerning the performance of the troupe.

The rendition of the fine old comedy of Sweethearts and Wives was worthy of more than a

68 Ibid., October 15, 1862.
69 Ibid., December 2, 3, 1862; December 5, 1862.
70 Ibid., January 4, 1862.
passing notice. Miss Laura, as Eugenia, never appeared to better advantage. Alfred's personation of the gouty old Admiral was one of his happiest efforts; the Billy Lackaday of Master Andrew was, however, the chief feature of the play; from first to last he kept "the table in a rear," with a good conception of the part, he made it all that could be desired, and would have done credit to any comedian we have ever seen. This young gentleman is rising rapidly in the profession, and gives great promise of future eminence. The Misses (Fanny) and Julia performed their parts effectively; so also did Mrs. Williams, a new candidate (for) histrionic honors.

The Charles Franklin of Mark Oliver was a little lame, owing to his being not well up on the part. Masters James and John added no little to the interest of the piece. 71

The Thespians continued night after night with their usual repertoire and with the compliments of the press. Good houses seem always to have been in attendance, unless some untoward circumstances interfered, such as bad weather.

The inclement weather of the past few nights has, doubtless, prevented many of our citizens from visiting Concert Hall. In view of the fact Manager Waldron would do well to repeat the beautiful comedy of "Still Water Runs Deep." This is a fine play, and brings out the theatrical talent of the troupe to the best advantage. Hence, it is well worth a repetition.

The delightful music of the Palmetto Band, and Miss Laura's sweet voice, add much to the interest of each evening's amusement. 72

February 10 was to be the last week of the Queen Sisters, but the press announced that the troupe had "determined to prolong their stay," which they did until March 14. During the latter part of their engagement, the troupe drew heavily on the plays from the

71 Ibid., January 11, 1863.

72 Ibid., January 21, 1863.
pen of John Hill Hewitt. One of the first of Hewitt's plays presented during this season was the *Vivandières*, which was advertised on February 8 as "a new operetta, written and composed by Mr. J. H. Hewitt," which was little more than a musical sketch giving an opportunity for patriotic dialogue and a good deal of martial music. It was just the sort of thing to appeal to the spirit of the times and particularly to a theatre audience composed largely of soldiers. Hewitt, writing in later years, said, "My most successful opera was a military affair called the 'Vivandières'; it took well in the South during "the war of the rebellion." Evidently it was very popular with the audiences, for it ran four nights consecutively and later was repeated at least one more time before the season closed in March. On February 10 the paper gave the operetta an extended review.

We had the pleasure last night of hearing the first rendering of a Southern opera by the Thespian Family. We were curious to know what kind of music could be extracted from the camp scenes and bustle of the existing war, which has much more reality than romance in it. That we were pleased would be saying (sic) too little for the production of a gentleman who has here-tofore held a high reputation as a poet and ballad composer; we were more than pleased with the style of the music and the sentiments uttered throughout—there was an inspiring vigor in the strains that suited the times, and the audience testified their admiration by frequent rounds of applause.

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73 MS of the *Vivandières* in the Hewitt Collection Emory University Library.

The "Vivandiere" cannot strictly be called an opera— it is, as the composer has rightly named it, an operetta— full of military and patriotic spirit— to which the fine accompaniment of the Palmetto Band added greatly. The troupes seemed to be perfectly at home, though it was their first attempt at this species of drama. Miss Laura's "Louise" was rendered beautifully— her martial solos were executed with perfect abandon, while in the touching song of "Brother dear" she excelled all her former efforts. Alfred's "Canteen" was good— and little Fanny sustained her part admirably. Master James' "Captain Singleton" was decidedly one of the best rendered characters in the play. This talented young gentleman bids fair to become one of the brightest ornaments of the stage. Master Oliver and Andrew sustained their parts well. The choruses, though weak, were well rendered.

We predict for the "Vivandiere" a successful run, and hope that Mr. Hewitt, the composer, will try his hand at something of a higher order— he has good material to work upon, and an orchestra, probably, not surpassed by any in the Southern Confederacy.

Apparently Hewitt must have joined the Waldron troupes about this time, for, as has been stated, he relinquished the management of the Richmond Theatre to Ogden sometime in the summer of 1862, and it was during the winter in Augusta that the Queen Sisters began to include in their repertoire so many of Hewitt's plays. The Waldrons were limited in their ability to produce the heavy drama which formed the repertoire of most legitimate troupes. Hewitt, a facile writer, adapted himself to the situation by writing sketches, musical skits, farces, and by adapting old plays to suit the talents of the company. He drew heavily on the sentiments of a country torn by civil war thus assuring a good measure of popularity for his pieces at that time. Soldiers flocked to the theatre in "droves," and would "laugh, whoop

75 Daily Constitutionalist, February 10, 1863.
and holler at anything on the stage. Some of the plays written by Hewitt which were produced during the latter part of the season were The Prisoner of Monterey, The Scouts; or, The Plains of Manassas, The Marquis in Petticoats, The Veteran, and King Linkum the First. The latter, described in the notice as a grand tragicomic operatic drama of King Linkum the First, was presented for the first time on February 22; it was repeated again on February 25 as an afterpiece. The Southern Field and Fireside called it a "comical burletta on the Cabinet at Washington." It is the crudest kind of burlesque on President Lincoln, but it is the type of thing that was highly amusing at the time it was given. The names of the characters are thinly disguised. Linkum, of course, is Lincoln, General Fuss and Feathers is General Winfield Scott; Steward is William H. Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State; and General Bottler is General Benjamin F. Butler. No comments on how the audience received the play were found, but undoubtedly it was greeted by shouts of approval, at least from the soldiers.

The long engagement of the Queen Sisters finally came to an end on March 11. Judging by the comments of the press, it had been a successful and happy season for all concerned. The Southern Field and

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76 Personal interview with Mrs. Clementine Lebey, daughter of John Hill Hewitt.

77 All of these plays are in the Emory University Library. The last, King Linkum the First, is the only one that has been published. It is edited by Dr. Richard Barksdale Harwell, and issued by the Emory University Library, Atlanta, Georgia, 1947.

78 Southern Field and Fireside (Augusta, Georgia), February 21, 1863.
To conclude with the Serio-Comic Opera, in two acts, of

**KING LINKUM**

"The First!"

KING LINKUM THE FIRST—And the first, not of his dynasty, a long, drawn, genteel man in a cumbersome, and addicted to real painting.

GEN. Fuzz and Feathers—A bowler—sold under the banner of the Union, and the natural ancestor of the great "Colonel"—who added painting to his list of accomplishments.

STEWARD—The King's Prime Minister, a large man, who considered himself greater than the great, and was the Dictionairy in the Union to/io.

GEN. BATTLE—A soldier, good at speaking, and admired by all parties.

BOBBY LINTON—A Union soldier, having never settled with the law, the special pet of the ladies, and addicted to drinking.

BLACK ORDER—A military concept, rather pedagogic, and addicted to gambling.

BLACK OBEY—A messenger from the enemy, who, in seeking the shades, he turned a fine past into the shaping grace.

GHOST OF DUNKIRK—In the person of a young lady, having once lived a month in every big city.

THE GRAND ARMY OF THE UNION—Added to painting.

QUEEN LINKUM—An angel of mercy and charity, and addicted to weights.

MUSIC INCIDENTAL TO THE PIECE.

To conclude with the First Time, the entire new Dramatic Sketch entitled the

**VETERAN**

Or, '76 and '62.

John Alexander, the Veteran, aged 100.

Robertson, his Son, aged 75.

William, his Grandson, aged 50.

John, his great, great Grandson, aged 25.

Mrs. Alexander, his Granddaughter.

Villagers &c.

Friday Evening, August 28th, 1863.

First night of a new Local Comedy written by Prof. Hewitt, called

**The Exempt!**

OR

BEWARE OF THE CONSCRIPT OFFICER!

MAJOR O'CONNELL, C. S. A.

MARMADUKE MAIDEN, an ancient old gentleman.

MRS. COPPERLEAF, a Rich Young Widow.

Recitation:

"THE BATTLE OF MANASSAS!"

By Miss ELLA WREN.

From a Scrapbook of John Hill Hewitt
(Courtesy of Mary University Library)
Pireside, in a long and glowing tribute to the Queen Sisters, gave
an excellent review of the beginning and development of this troupe.

The Thespian Family close their engagement in
this city to-night, after a most successful season
of about seventy nights, in which they have received
a larger share of public favor than has ever been
extended to any dramatic corps in this city. During
the time, their audiences have been large, highly
respectable, and orderly -- most gratifying evidences
of the cordial appreciation of our play-going citizens.
They have brought out a number of original pieces -- to
which we have before alluded — all of which were pleas­
ing and attractive, and some of which possessed genuine
merit, highly creditable to the versatile powers of
Prof. Hewitt, and intitling (sic) him to recognition
as a successful dramatic author. During their stay we
have been pleased to observe a marked and continuous
improvement in all the members of the company, and
they have attained a degree of excellence that is truly
wonderful. Our notices may have appeared somewhat
colour de rose; but we have felt such genuine admira­tion
for the brilliant genius displayed by these pro­
miscuous children of Thespis, and seen so much to admire
in their personations, as to disarm any purpose to
indulge a fault-finding spirit. But they have attained
a degree of excellence where they have little to fear
on this score, and may well court the verdict of im­
partial criticism. In evidence that our estimate of
them is not overdrawn, we may be pardoned for present­
ing the following article, from the pen of a gentleman
from a neighboring State — himself a scholar and a
poet, and familiar with the best dramatic representa­
tions with which the country has been favored:

"I have just enjoyed a most delightful treat, in
witnessing the performance of the Queen Sisters in two
capital pieces, "Still Water Runs Deep" and "The Veteran."
Before entering into a criticism of the performance, I
cannot refrain from giving a brief sketch of this truly
talented family of dramatic artists, in order to show
the wonderful progress they have made in a comparatively
short time. The reverberating echo of the booming guns
that thundered from the battlements of Fort Sumter — the
key note, as it were, to this bloody (war) had scarce
died away, when one of the first amateur entertainments
of the war was given at the Charleston Theatre for the
benefit of the Sumter Guards, a gallant band of heroes,
who have since distinguished themselves in the bloody
fight at Secessionville, where half of their number
were killed or wounded. At this entertainment, Mr.
Waldron generously tendered the services of the Queen
Sisters, who there made their first appearance on the stage. The trial proved so successful, that Mr. N. actuated by the same patriotic motive, allowed his talented family to give a series of performances for similar charitable purposes in Charleston, Augusta, and Savannah. Meanwhile, his children evinced such uncommon talent for the stage, that from amateurs they soon took a prominent place in the public favor as professionals, and as "tall oaks from little acorns grow," the small company of amateurs has now developed itself into a large and flourishing professional company, who number upwards of thirty pieces in their "roles," and for ten successive weeks have drawn audiences, in number and quality unprecedented in the annals of the Augusta stage, even when the best stock talent that Yankeedom could furnish had possession of the boards. Independent of the acknowledged merit of the performers themselves, Mr. Waldron, from his generous patriotism, well deserves the patronage so liberally bestowed by the citizens of Augusta, Savannah, and other Southern Cities. In the rendition of the sterling old comedy "Still Water Runs Deep," all of the characters were admirably sustained. Mrs. Sternhold was personated by Mrs. Laura, a young lady of bewitching grace, with such spirit and discrimination as proved that she had caught the proper conception of the part, and in so doing, had identified herself with the character. The young and fascinating Miss Fanny excelled in her rendition of Mrs. Wildmay, although the character was not strictly in her favorite line, which is the pert, sprightly, piquant femme de chambre, in which she calls to mind that queen of chambermaids, Miss Agnes Robertson. Alfred's Captain Halsley was a perfect piece of acting, and we trust that gentleman will not think we flatter, when we assure him, in good faith, that in his personnel and style he brought vividly to mind the younger Wallack. Master Andrew enacted John Porter as well as such a comparatively subordinate part admitted, and so has not lost the laurels he has won in his inimitable impersonation of characters more suited to him. Master James, as Wildmay, was excellent; it was truly a master piece of acting, and would have reflected great credit on an old and experienced actor. He was particularly happy in his rendition of the scene in which he exposes the villianny of Halsley, who, by-the-by, was also extremely effective in the same scene. Masters Oliver, Charles, and John, had no scope for a display of talent, as their parts in this piece were subordinate. A beautiful ballad sung
sweetly by Miss Laura, and a pretty dance by Miss Fanny and the charming little Julia, brings us to the concluding piece, "The Veteran," a capital adapta-

tion of a French farce, in which Prof. Hewitt gives new evidences of his great powers as a dramatist. . . .

I had intended, in justice to this clever Southern author, poet, and musician, to give an extended notice of this and other productions of his able pen, but my casuethes scribendi has brought me so far into the little hours of morning, that I have only time to accord him in general terms the credit he deserves for producing no less than five good plays in the last two months. All did creditably in "The Veteran," and Alfred played the centenarian to the life.

We understand that Mr. Waldron intends to brave the Yankee iron-clads, and predict for the Queen Sisters a glorious reception by the citizens of our beleagured sister city, Savannah.

THESPIS."79

Whatever else the other cities might have in dramatic entertainment, Augusta counted herself fortunate and happy to have the Queen Sisters.

Savannah

Savannah shared the Queen Sisters with Augusta. This troupe now spent the greater part of their time in one or the other of these two cities. They opened the season for Savannah sometime in the latter part of October, for the Morning News stated on November 11 that the Queen Sisters were in the third week of their engagement.80

They continued their performances throughout November and December, with the usual type of program. Early in December the theatre had to be closed for a short time "in consequence of the difficulty in procuring material requisite for the production of

79 Ibid., March 14, 1863, I, No. 11, 84.

80 Savannah Daily Morning News, November 11, 1862. The file of the Morning News is incomplete and hence it cannot be determined exactly when this engagement began.
"Roll of the Drum." Finally, the preparations were completed, and on December 15 the paper announced that after "an armistice of a week, that irresistible corps, The Queen Sisters, renew their attack to-night" with The Roll of the Drum.61

The company evidently continued through December and possibly into January. The Morning News for December 23 stated that the troupe was in the eighth week of its "eminently successful dramatic season," and that the houses were good.

On January 17 the Savannah presented "a grand entertainment" at the Theatre.62 Mago Del Mago began a short engagement on January 31, and according to the paper, his program of tricks gave "satisfaction."63 Outside of these two programs, there seems to have been nothing by way of amusement for Savannah until the return of the Queen Sisters about the middle of March.

The second engagement of the Queen Sisters in Savannah for the 1862-63 season began on March 17, when they presented The Prisoner of Monterey.64 which, as has been mentioned, had its premier in Augusta.

In Savannah, as in Augusta, the Queen Sisters, still relying heavily on Hewitt's plays, presented The Veteran or '66 and '62, The Prisoner of Monterey, King Linnum the First, The Scouts, and The

61 Ibid., December 15, 1862.
62 Ibid., January 17, 1863.
63 Ibid., January 31, 1863.
64 Ibid., March 16, 1863.
Several of the plays will be recognised as having been presented in Richmond in the early days of Hewitt's managership there; however, several of them were new.

Apparently the Queen Sisters met with their usual success, for the press was flattering in its remarks concerning their performances. Commenting on the production of *Black-Eyed Susan*, April 16, the press stated that the leading role, William, "was well rendered by Alfred," but added: "He has his faults and who has not. If he would stand erect and discard his habitual stoop, he might give a more pleasing view of his figure, naturally faultless." Miss Laura, who usually was highly praised for her efforts, was only "fair" on this occasion, and was advised by the editor to "throw off her stiffness if she wishes to take high rank in her profession." The rebuke met with the disapproval of one person at least, for the next day the *Morning News* printed a letter from "an old Theatre Goer," which said in part:

"Having read your notice in yesterday's paper, I am induced to make a few remarks respecting our young performers, the Queen Sisters. I have watched their rapid improvement and zealous efforts to build up a Southern Dramatic company of respectability and ability, and feel that they are better intitled to commendation and encouragement than rebuke."

There was no more adverse criticism of the Queen Sisters, and they continued their engagement, apparently basking in the good will and flattering comments of their admirers until the latter part of

June. On June 8 the press announced that the "talented young company" was nearing the end of its season and commented that their improvement has been remarked by all who witnessed their exhibitions. We look upon the Thespian Family as the nucleus of a purely Southern Drama." 87 Apparently their last performance was given on June 20, 88 when they presented Black-Eyed Susan and "A Grand Olio." The former had evidently become a favorite with the group, for it appeared often on the bills.

Richmond

When the summer season had closed only two places of amusement had been open in Richmond, Metropolitan Hall, still occupied by Buckley's Nightingale Troupe, and the Richmond Varieties; but early in October the hall which had been known as the Lyceum under the management of Annie Louise Clyde 89 was reopened as the Broad Street Theatre 90 with C. W. Blair as lessee and Sam Hubbard as stage manager. Professor Benedict was the leader of the orchestra and C. S. Mackenzie, Dan Russell, and Ella Wren were among the more prominent members of the stock company. 91 The prices of admission were fifty cents for regular seats and seventy-five for reserved seats. In the main the repertoire at the Broad Street Theatre consisted of light pieces such as Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady,

87 Ibid., June 8, 1863.
88 Ibid., June 20, 1863.
89 See page 178.
90 Richmond Daily Dispatch, October 7, 1862.
91 Richmond Semi-Weekly Enquirer, October 17, 1862.
Irish Assurance, and The Conscript, but melodramas such as The Drunkard, and All That Glitters Is Not Gold, were included.

Over at the Varieties, Ogden, who it will be recalled, had taken over the management during the summer, was busily making plans for the opening of the new Richmond Theatre. He announced that a contest would be held for the "best original and appropriate address, to be delivered on the opening night . . . about the middle of December." A committee of judges was to consist of "five gentlemen of the best standing in the city of Richmond, entirely unconnected with the theatre."^2

Among the company at the Varieties for this season were

D'Orezey Ogden, manager and actor; J. W. Thorpe, stage manager and actor; E. S. Barber, treasurer; Professor Loebman, director of music; R. Mundin, machinist; B. Lewis, "property maker," and J. O. Goode, scenic artist; the members of the acting company were Charles Morton, Theodore Hamilton, F. M. Bates, James Harrison; and among the women were Katie Estelle, Mrs. Clementine De Bar, Maggie Estelle, Sallie and Mary Partington, and a "full Corps de Ballet." Manager Ogden advertised for a "lady to play second leading character," and promised the public that this excellent company would appear "each evening in favorite tragedies, comedies, and farces."^3 From time to time there were changes in the personnel of the troupe, but for the most part they remained the same throughout the season.

^2 Ibid., October 24, 1862.

RICHMOND VARIETIES

ACTING MANAGER..... D'ORSETT ODDENS.

Encouraged by the unlimited success of their first spectacular production, "Sanno and the Beast," the management have, with much care and expense, prepared fully in every detail, the interesting and entertainingly funny spectacle from the Oriental Tales, entitled the

ARABIAN NIGHTS ENTERTAINMENTS

OF THE

FORTY THIEVES

Or the

ROBBER'S CAVE & THE BLACK FOREST

The production of this great semi-dramatic romance has called into requisition every resource of the Theatre, and will be placed upon the stage perfect in every respect, and in a style of

UNEXEMPLARY SPLENDOR.

Which will rival any production of the kind attempted in America.

NEW SCENERY by car artist, J. O. Grodil, Esq.

NEW DRESSES by Mrs. Lewis and assistant.

NEW PROPERTIES by E. Lewis, and J.

T. BAYNE, MECHANICAL EF.

NEW Effects, Tricks, TRANSPORT.

MATIONS, &c., by R. D. Mon.

dim and assistant.

THE MUSIC

Prepared and complete, has been arranged by Professor Leszczinkian, and will constitute one of the attractive features of the spectacle, abounding with

SONGS! DUETTS! CHORUSES! MARCHES, &c.

THE WHOLE PLAY

Replete with

TABLEAUX MARCHES COMBATS

SOGS.

DANCES, &c., &c.

Arranged under the direction of the Stage Manager,

Mr. J. W. THORPE

THE BALLET

Under the supervision of the accomplished damas,

Miss MARY PARTINGTON.

AND, Previous to the Spectacle each evening, a

FAVORITE FARCE.

MONDAY EVENING, Sept. 8, 1862.

Will be presented for the first time the grand Oriental Spectacle of the

FORTY THIEVES!

With the following powerful and admirable cast:

Cassim Baba, a rich Merchant.

S. Mervland.

Ali Baba, a poor Wood-Cutter.

O.H. Morton.

Gusen, his son.

Miss J. Partington.

Moustapha, the Cobbler.

Dr. D'Orey's Opian.

Abdul, Captain of the Robbers.

J.W. Thorpe.

Hammar, his Lieutenant.

T. Hamilton.

1st Robber.

Hops.

2d Robber.

P. Jackson.

Selim.

W. Derrand.

Abd.

W. T. Wirt.

Overbrook, Enchanter of the Black Rocks and Protecto.

J. Harbison.

War.

P. Jackson.

Families.

Four Dancers.

Hope.

Rapids.

S. Mervland.

Morgan.

Miss J. Partington.

Garmoner.

Miss E. Sawyer.

Cogan Baba.

Mrs. C. De Har.

Zada.

Miss Jenny Taylor.

Lula.

Miss Mollis Johnson.

Patriot of the Lake, Protectors of All Baba.

Miss M. Bethall.

[With an auxiliary aid, improved and augmented]

The evening's entertainment will commence with

FORTY THIEVES:

STATE SECRETS

OR THE TAILOR OF TAMWORTH.

For Synopsis of

SCENERY, INCIDENTS, DANCES, MUSIC,

COMBATS, &c., of the

FORTY THIEVES.

RICHMOND DISPATCH

September 8, 1862
During November the Varieties and the Broad Street theatres continued their nightly performances in the accustomed manner, and there was little of special interest to report. At the Broad, Dalton, who had come late in October for a short engagement, and Ella Wren were doing the leading business. After Dalton's arrival the quality of the bills improved and more standard drama was offered than in the beginning. At the Varieties, Keeble, who came about the middle of the month for an extended engagement, with Hamilton and Harrison, played the leading roles, the three making an unusually strong male cast. The bills consisted of the standard heavy drama, including Shakespeare. However, according to the prevailing custom, the afterpieces were almost always light comedies or farces.

On December 1 Hamlet was presented with Keeble in the title role, and Harrison as Laertes, P. E. Bates as the King, Charles Morton as Polonius, Ogden as Osrick, Thorpe as Harclluls, Hamilton as the Ghost, Katie Estelle as the Queen, and Sallie Partington as Ophelia. The role of the Ghost seems a relatively unimportant one for an actor of Hamilton's reputation, but, otherwise, the play seems to have been very well cast. A dance by Mary Partington, and the farce, A Kiss in the Dark concluded the performance.

On December 6 the drama Pizarro; or the Death of Rolly was presented. Mr. Keeble sustained the role of Rolly, Mr. Hamilton that of Pizarro. The evening's entertainment concluded with a dance by Mary Partington as usual, and with a farce, That Blessed Baby. The Examiner did not like the production, and several days later

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94 Dispatch, December 1, 1862.
LOKDOM A fltO R A B G B.
LO B DOV A M U R A R O H,
LOB D O S A M U  B ANC I,
LOMDOB I H D U  BOB,
LOK DOM A M U  BA BOB,
LOBDON A M U B A N G B.
LOMDOB A iS C B A B O B.
DOBLOB ABBOBABOB.
LOB D O B  ABBOBABOB.
LOMDOB  ABBOBABOB.
LOMDOB A iS C B A B O B.
D OBLOB ABBOBABOB.
LO B D O B  ABBOBABOB.
LOMDOB  ABBOBABOB.
LOMDOB A iS C B A B O B.
LOBDON A M U B A N G B.
LOMDOB A iS C B A B O B.
LOBDON A M U B A N G B.
LOMDOB  ABBOBABOB.
LOB D O B  ABBOBABOB.
LOMDOB A iS C B A B O B.
L O B D O B  ABBOBABOB.
LO M D O B  ABBOBABOB.
LO M D O B  ABBOBABOB.
LO M D O B  ABBOBABOB.
LO B D O B  ABBOBABOB.
LOMDOB  ABBOBABOB.
LOMDOB A iS C B A B O B.
LOBDON A M U B A N G B.
LOMDOB A iS C B A B O B.
LOBDON A M U B A N G B.
LOMDOB  ABBOBABOB.
LO B D O B  ABBOBABOB.
LOMDOB A iS C B A B O B.
LOBDON A M U B A N G B.
LOMDOB A iS C B A B O B.
LOBDON A M U B A N G B.
LOMDOB  ABBOBABOB.
LO B D O B  ABBOBABOB.
LOMDOB A iS C B A B O B.
LOBDON A M U B A N G B.
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commented that:

The performance of "Pizarro" at the Varieties on Saturday night, was a failure. Keeble was not up to his part; neither was Hamilton or Ogden, nor the ladies of the temple. It was a relief when the curtain fell upon the tragedy, and a light fare—"The Blessed Baby"—tripped nimbly over the boards.95

Some of the other dramas which were offered by the Varieties during December were Macbeth (December 8); The Willow Copse (December 9); Othello (December 15); Richard III (December 17); and Hamlet again, (December 19).96 Concerning Macbeth, the Examiner commented briefly on the 9th that it was "performed, amid the usual array of slouch hats and military caps," and promised to speak in more detail later, but no other comment was found. The performance of The Willow Copse, however, had the good fortune to meet with the approval of the critical Examiner, which thought that it suited the audiences of the Varieties. Moreover, more fully within the grasp of the company which should be content to do pieces that they could "handle and comprehend," rather than to attempt pieces that were too difficult for their abilities.97

The paper closed its remarks on The Willow Copse with this enlightening comment concerning the audiences at the Varieties: "We can commend the management upon one thing, if not all things, and that is the preservation of good order, which is no small matter among characters so mixed and incongruous."

95 Richmond Examiner, December 9, 1862.
96 Dispatch, December 8, 9, 15, 17, 19, 1862.
97 Examiner, December 10, 1862.
On December 11, Hamilton left Richmond to fill engagements in Columbia, South Carolina, and Mobile. With Hamilton's departure, only Keable and Harrison were left to sustain the leading roles.

Over at the Broad Street theatre, Harry Macarthy and Lottie Estelle, having begun on December 1, were giving their "personation concerts." Late in November Macarthy had announced through the papers that "having escaped from New Orleans and the Beast Butler" he would soon begin an engagement at the Broad Street theatre. Apparently Macarthy's programs met with the approval of the public, for his engagement was a long one.

Buckley's Nightingale troupe was still holding forth at the Metropolitan Hall, which had reopened after being closed a few days for renovation. Judging by the length of its engagement, the troupe seems to have been particularly satisfactory to a large number of people.

By far the most important event in the theatrical life of Richmond during December was the production on December 22 of a new play, *The Guerrillas*, by James D. McCabe, Jr., of Richmond. The play concerns the guerrilla struggle of the loyal Southerners in the western part of Virginia (later West Virginia) against the invading Federal forces and the opponents of the Southern cause in that section.

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98 Ibid., December 11, 1862.

99 Dispatch, November 26, 1862.

100 A copy of *The Guerrillas* may be found in the rare book collection in the Virginia State Library, Richmond, Virginia.
The play is extremely melodramatic, but it reflects the sentiments and patriotic feelings of the times. Quinn says, "As a drama its merits are not high, but there is a certain vigor in the intensity of the patriotic feeling which appealed to a Southern audience."\(^{101}\)

Quinn ranks the play higher than a good many of the dramas that came out of the war both North and South; however, McCabe himself, in later years, came to consider it among "his literary sins."\(^{102}\)

The play evidently met with the approval of the audiences, for it was repeated for about four or five consecutive nights. The Magnolia commented on the opening performance in the following:

The new Southern play of the "Guerrillas," (sic) was also produced for the first time, and the thronged assembly were loud in their approval. It is a spirit stirring drama, abounding in startling incidents, and the leading parts were sustained in a very interesting manner. Miss Estella was a fine representative of the noblest of created beings — the Southern woman — Mr. Thorpe, as Uncle Jerry, was productive of an immensity of fun.\(^{103}\)

... The Southern Illustrated News was less complimentary in its remarks:

A new drama in three acts, entitled the "Guerrillas," written by James D. McCabe, Jr., was produced at the "Varieties," for the first time on Monday evening last. The plot of the play (if plot it has) is laid in Northwestern Virginia, just after the Rich Mountain affair. ... It is the same old story that has been written about until it has become

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102 James Wood Davidson, The Living Writers of the South (New York: Carleton, Madison Square, 1869), 346.

103 The Magnolia, December 27, 1862, I, No. 13, 50.
The Manager, Mr. R. D'Orey Ogden, from the first evinced an unusual interest in the piece, and spared nothing that could, in the least, contribute to its success. To him the Author feels himself greatly indebted for the success of the play, and embraces this opportunity of expressing his thanks for the encouragement and assistance received at his hands.

The play is now given to the public, with the hope that its future success may be as perfect as that with which it has already met.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

CONFEDERATES.

Henry Douglas, a Veteran of '76 ............................................... Charles Morton.
Blanton Douglas, his son .......................................................... G. Morton.
Henry Ogden .............................................................................. F. M. Evans.
Wint Willey, a Spy ....................................................................... E. Gorman.
Jim Gentry .................................................................................. W. T. Witt.
Clayton ........................................................................................... F. Beckham.
Jack .............................................................................................. E. Grisham.
Mrs. Douglas ............................................................................... Mrs. C. Dulan.
Rose Maylie, betrothed to Arthur ............................................... Miss Katie Estelle.
Ellen Graham .............................................................................. Miss M. Jackson.
Mrs. Raymond ........................................................................... Miss Dunham.

FEDERALS.

Col. Bradley ................................................................................ J. Steverson.
Maj. Talbot ................................................................................ O. Smith.
Farnone's Disorder ................................................................... H. J. Brown.
Bill Stokes ................................................................................... Q. Maxim.
Joe Wells ...................................................................................... C. Warren.

Original Cast of Characters for The Guerrillas
(From a copy of the play in the Virginia State Library)
entirely threadbare — verily, like a 'thrice told tale." (sic)

The play as a whole possesses some little merit, but it is full of "blood and thunder." It is a large amount of small talk done up in pleasant style. The author also is guilty of some strange inconsistencies: for instance, he makes General Lee commander-in-chief of the Confederate forces at the outbreak of the Revolution. The piece is done much after the style of Horse Shoe Robinson but does not possess one-third of the historical merit of that play. The author has drawn upon his imagination, we doubt not, for every incident in connection with the piece, introducing prominent characters to give it a fictitious affect. The taking down of the sword from the wall looks as if the idea had been drawn from the admirable play of "Richelieu." As a historical drama the piece possesses no merit, as well known facts in connection with the present Revolution are totally overlooked or ignored. We considered this a very grave mistake. The Southern people are making history now, and our Southern play-writers should be faithful chroniclers of the times in which we live. The rising generation demand this.

A few of the performers were selected for special comment:

Mr. KEEBLE, as Arthur Douglas, the hero of the play, was as marked and measured in his reading as if he had been reciting blank verse from Shakespeare. He affected a sepulchral and unnatural voice, while mannerism strongly predominated. This gentleman is by no means a melodramatic actor.

The Character of Henry Douglas was personated fairly, but not well, by Mr. MORTON. It was, however, an unimportant character — only living through the first act. Query: Did "Light Horse Harry Lee" use a cavalry sabre or an infantry sword?

This "query" is in reference to a bit of business in the first act when the father, Henry Douglas, takes a sword from the wall and presents it to his son, Arthur, saying that the sword had been presented to him by Light Horse Harry Lee in the American Revolution. The son is to use the sword to defend his homeland in this "Revolution." Other actors were sharply criticized as the following excerpts will show:
Mr. THORPE, as Jerry, the faithful old slave, was wholly out of his line. A man may be a good stage manager, and still unable to delineate negro character in the proper style.

Mr. HARRISON personated Gen. Fremont. We have never seen this distinguished gentleman, and do not know how close the portraiture approached accuracy; but it did seem to us that the "pathfinder" had gotten out of the path; for he scarcely knew what to say. Fremont may be ever so bad a man, but we doubt not he knows when to speak and what to say, especially when he has the "cue."

Col. Bradley, by Mr. STEVENSON, was not spirited enough. The rendition was cold and stiff.

The Rose Maylie of Miss KATIE ESTELLE was cold and careless. She did not seem as if she liked being cast for the part — evidently she had not set her "heart upon it." The announcement that her husband had been condemned to be hung, was received with the utmost coolness and nonchalance. Notwithstanding the fact that several dates are embraced in the play, she walked through the entire piece with the same dress — a muslin body and plaid skirt.

The other parts were rendered in the usual mechanical super style.104

On December 31 and January 1 the play, Jibbenniscoy; or, Nick of the Woods was presented. The News commented favorably on the performance of December 31.

Wednesday night the play of the "Nick of the Woods" was produced, with all its startling effects, solemn music and the veritable huge and bloody knife. Mr. KEABLE sustained the character of Bloody Nathan in a truly spirited manner, though he seemed to be suffering from a severe cold.

Roaring Ralph Stackpole was personated by Mr. MORTON in a roaring manner, while Mr. RATES was truly sentimental as the lover, Roland Forrester.

The Telle Doe of Miss KATIE ESTELLE was as feeling a rendition of the part as we have ever seen. The melancholy maiden was portrayed in a life-like manner, though at times less spirited.

104 Southern Illustrated News, January 3, 1863, I, No. 17, 8.
than we would like to have seen it. We chronicle
the improvement of this lady's acting with much
pleasure.

The scenery, always an important part of dramatic productions in
this period, also met with approval:

The piece was much better gotten up than we
had a right to expect. The scene of the Rolling
Pass reflects great credit upon the artist of the
new establishment, Mr. GRAIN. It was finished in
a bold and effective manner. The precipitation of
the canoe of fire down the cataract was spirited
and elicited much applause. The smallness of the
stage was the most serious drawback to its effective-
ness.

The News, always zealous in its efforts to promote good behavior
both in the audience and on the stage, was shocked and disgusted at
the performance of one of the members of the troupe:

One word to the Stage Manager. Did you see the
rendition of the part of Nelly Bruce by one of the un-
important members of the corps de ballet? If so, were
you not disgusted? We have no doubt she imagined she
was rendering the part admirably well, but we thought
it was ridiculously bad. It made us sick at heart to
be compelled to witness a female cutting such fantastic
capers, even before an audience almost exclusively of
gentlemen. Thanks to that queen of good actresses,
Mrs. DE BAR, she twice endeavored to restrain the young
lady in her levity. Such conduct would not be tolerated
even in the shades of the stamping grounds of ruthless
savages, and we pray you do not inflict it upon an
intelligent community in our new-born Confederacy. Let
us have no more of such scenes.

The News felt that the production also showed a lack of proper
attention to the details of costume.

One more word, Mr. Stage Manager. Did you not say on
the bill - "new costumes of the period"? If so, we
would like to enquire if the Indians who inhabited the
Western wilds in those days wore cavalry boots? We
thought they used moccasin leggings. But perhaps
they belonged to the cavalry arm of the service.105

105 Ibid., January 10, 1863, I, No. 18, 8.
Adequate and appropriate costuming of the plays became increasingly difficult as the war wore on and the blockade became more and more effective.

The performances at the Varieties continued night after night with little or nothing worthy of special mention. The people continued to patronize the place, apparently not caring that the drama presented was inferior. The *Southern Illustrated News* commented that the "amusement-loving portion of our community still continue to throng the various places of amusement," although as far as the *News* could tell, there had been "no marked improvement in the performance given at any of the halls."

During January, Harry Macarthy became lessee of the Broad Street Theatre and engaged the New Orleans Burlesque Opera Troupe to augment his personation concerts. He was evidently very successful both in his own concerts and in the management of the theatre; however, Hewitt wrote rather disparagingly of him in later years.

A young Irishman named Harry McCarthy (sic), a good vocalist as well as protean actor, became the enthusiastic friend of the Southern cause (though he dodged the conscription act, and obtained papers showing that he was a loyal subject of her majesty Queen Victoria), and gave the patriots several wishy-washy songs which became extremely popular for the reason that he was continually singing them at his public entertainments; the best known of them were "The Bonnie Blue Flag," "Missouri," and "Weep not, dearest, weep not."

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107 *Dispatch*, January 6, 1863.
There was very little originality in them, and they were all of the clap-trap order. However, as can be seen by the incident reported by the News, Macarthy was most surely in the good graces of the people of Richmond.

Harry Macarthy, the Arkansas comedian, has given way to the New Orleans Opera Troupe. Before leaving, however, he was made the recipient of a magnificent gold watch and chain, valued at $1,000. The presentation speech was made by Lieut. Charles Rant, in a neat and appropriate manner, which was happily responded to by Mr. Macarthy. We learn that this versatile young actor, with commendable liberality, has donated over nine thousand dollars for the benefit of sick and wounded Southern soldiers. Truly has we won the proud sobriquet of the "Soldier's Friend!"

The News was mistaken about Macarthy's leaving, for he continued at the Broad Street Theatre well into March and then went over to the Varieties.

S. C. Macensie, who had been stage manager at the Broad Street before Macarthy took over the lessee-ship, went to Fredericksburg to open the theatre. According to the notice, the theatre had been sacked by the "Yankee vandal horde," but had been "thoroughly renovated, and regardless of expenses, new scenery, decorations, and appointments have been added, making it one of the first-class buildings of entertainment." The theatre was scheduled to open January 13.

The battle of Fredericksburg, to which the notice referred, had

108 Hewitt, Five Years under the Confederate Flag, MS. op. cit., 291.
109 Southern Illustrated News, January 17, 1863, I, 19, 8.
110 Dispatch, January 10, 1863.
been fought, December 11-13, with heavy losses on both sides, particularly the Union. In an effort to dislodge the Confederate soldiers, who had barricaded themselves, "modern" warfare fashion, in the houses, cellars, and streets, the Union forces had bombarded the town with great effectiveness, leaving much of it gutted by fire or otherwise destroyed. Nevertheless, after three days of bloody fighting, the Union forces had withdrawn and left the Confederates in possession of the ruins. 111

One might almost say that the battle of Fredericksburg began with the theatre and ended with the theatre, for on the night of December 10, before the battle opened the next day, the Washington Artillery of Louisiana had entertained the troops with an amateur theatrical performance. Sergeant John Wood, the impresario for the occasion, died in the battle. 112

By far the most important event of the season was the opening of the New Richmond Theatre for which the people had waited so long. It had been a great undertaking to construct a new theatre in war time, but at last, on February 9, it was finished. The Examiner pronounced it a "very gay, very gallant little theatre," 113 and the News predicted that

If the establishment is managed with half the spirit which animated the proprietress in undertaking the rearing of a structure of such gigantic proportions, in so magnificent a style, in these times of extortion and fabulous prices, then the citizens of

111 Henry, op. cit., 208-213.
112 Loc. cit.
113 Richmond Examiner, February 10, 1863.
the Confederacy may boast of at least one first-class place of amusement.

... 

The account of the opening night at the new theatre given by the News is particularly interesting because it is so vivid and detailed and so well illustrative of the rhetoric of the time.

According to announcement the new Richmond Theatre was opened on Monday night last. Glowing descriptions of the magnificence of the building, and the lengthy announcements in all the Richmond papers of the opening, by the manager, had raised the public expectation to its very highest pitch. The old man who had not crossed the portals of a hall of amusement since his hair became tinged with gray — the young cavalier who had read, seen or heard nothing but "wars and rumors of wars" since the vandal horde had invaded our land — the gay-hearted maiden, with sweet and ruby lips — the politician or man of office with care-worn look, as if great matters of State still weighed heavily upon his heart — all might have been seen, about seven o'clock last Monday night, quietly wending their way to the new and gorgeous temple of Thespis. Through the courtesy of the manager, we, in company with several other members of the press, were "undeservedly" shown through a private entrance to a box (thus saving ourselves the necessity of elbowing through the crowd.)

At half-past seven a full head of gas is turned on — the interior of the building is brilliantly illuminated — the dress circle is lined with a bevy of handsome and bright faces — some with that beautiful rosy tinge upon the cheeks and the lips which nature alone gives, while others appear fresh from the artist's hand, the superfluous rouge not yet brushed away — the soldier with his immense circular-saw spurs, jingling like so many sleigh bells — the gay gambler, with his flash apparel, and magnificent diamonds dazzling the eye as the soft lambent light falls upon them, while he saunters to and fro with a nonchalant air, and seemingly wondering if the whole audience is not gazing admiringly upon him — the quiet observer commending the beautiful Arabesque, and pointing out the failures of the artists in their attempts at Figures — all rise involuntarily and gaze in wonder and

114 Southern Illustrated News, February 14, 1863, I, No. 23, 8.
admiration. At quarter to eight the door in the Orchestra box opens - the members of the Orchestra singly appear and take their respective seats - Prof. Loebman nods his head and the members join in one grand "concord of sweet sounds."

The strains of the music had scarcely died away, when Mr. Keeble entered from the door under the private box and delivered the following.

A fairy ring
Drawn in the crimson of a battle-plain,—
From whose weird circle every loathsome thing
And sight and sound of pain
Are banished, while about it in the air,
And from the ground, and from the low-hung skies,
Throng, in a vision fair
As ever lit a prophet's dying eyes,
Gleams of that unseen world
That lies about us, rainbow-tinted shapes
With starry wings unfurled,
Poised for a moment on such airy capes
As pierce the golden foam
Of sunset's silent main,—
Would image what in this enchanted dome,
Amid the night of war and death
In which the armed city draws its breath,
We have built up:

Bid Liberty rejoice! Aye, though its day
Be far or near, these clouds shall yet be red
With the large promise of the coming ray.
Meanwhile, with that calm courage which can smile
Amid the terrors of the wildest fray,
Let us among the charms of Art awhile
Fleet the deep gloom away;
Nor yet forget that on each hand and head
Rest the dear rights for which we fight and pray. 115

The reading of the poem was followed by the singing of the Marseillaise," by Mr. Chas. Morton, aided by a full chorus. The group which surrounded the gentleman during the singing of the Hymn presented a picture which an artist would not fail to gaze admiringly on. There

115 These are the opening and closing lines of the prize winning "Inaugural Poem" written by Henry Timrod. The poem appears in the Southern Illustrated News, The Magnolia, and the Southern Literary Messenger (February 1863, XXXVII, No. 2), as well as in several collections of Timrod's published poems.
stood the maiden of "sweet sixteen", blushing and laughing — the "lamb of many summers", with the pristine smile yet hanging upon their lips — and towering head and shoulders above them all, in theatrical knowledge, stood the Queen of the party, Mrs. Baker — all joining in the chorus with a hearty good will. The singing was succeeded by a tableau representing the Virginia coat of arms.

Then came the play — Shakespeare's "As You Like It," but not as we like it. The principal female character, that of "Rosalind," was sustained by Katie Estelle, in a manner which did the lady no credit. Her manner and voice were at times by far too tragic for a comedy part. The lady evidently is a believer in unintelligible cadences; the last part of every sentence was pronounced in a gutural, indistinct manner, rendering it impossible even for those in the private boxes to catch a single word.

The "Celin" of Miss Wren was a better performance, though this lady was, throughout the entire play, guilty of the very bad practice of playing to the audience. Half, if not the whole of her speeches, were addressed to the audience instead of her vis-a-vis. This same error was also committed by the young ladies and gentlemen who rendered the choruses during the piece.

At this point the News digressed to describe in detail the stage directions given by Schlegel for the performance of the chorus in this play. According to Schlegel, the actors should be grouped informally about the stage rather than lined up in a straight row as was evidently done in this performance. The News, returning to the criticism of "As You Like It," continued:

What a beautiful picture, if the players would only study it. How much more natural would it be to see the players throw themselves down under a tree and warble their songs, instead of marching up in a stiff manner, and taking their places in line like soldiers, and singing directly to the audience. But we have digressed. We were speaking of the "Celin" of Miss Wren. It was a spirited performance, yet full of grave errors. One great fault of this lady's was the outre manner in which she dressed the character.
The shepherdess dress was very bad. We candidly ask the lady if she ever saw, heard or read of a shepherdess weaving diamonds, and that in a forest, too. Miss Wren was dressed prettily and looked well, but was not in character. The same may be said of Miss Patella, though she displayed less taste than Miss Wren. What excuse can these ladies offer for this indiscretion. The blockade certainly had nothing to do with this.

Mr. KIRKLE as "Jacques," Mr. OGDEN as "Orlando," and Mr. HARRISON as "Oliver," were not rendered with as much spirit as we had expected. We learn that the two first named gentlemen were severely indisposed, and played against the advice of their physicians. The exiled Duke of Mr. THORPE was a commendable piece of acting, Mr. MORTON as "Touchstone," and Mrs. DE BAB as "Audrey" were particularly at home, and au fait in dress. Mr. BATES as the old man was a little too old and shaky. He, however, did very well for a young actor, who never should have been cast for the part.

As a whole the performance passed off with entire satisfaction to the large audience. . . .

After a lengthy comment on the good behavior of the audience which seemed to indicate that rowdyism was not going to be tolerated, the News expressed the hope that the theatre might "prove a temple where the wife, the mother, the sister and the sweetheart may pass some of their leisure hours pleasantly, in defiance of the sickly sentimentality and hypocrisy of the present day is the desire of all lovers of the legitimate drama."117

There was a great deal of criticism over the opening of a new theatre during war times as suggested by remarks just quoted from the News. The Examiner commented more specifically on the disapproval which had been expressed by some:


117 Ibid.
There are some who look with an evil eye on this theatre. Some contend that all amusement is improper for times like these, and for people so pressed as ours. But we concur entirely in the opinion of Mr. Sle(ar)y, recorded in Hard Times, to have been as follows-

'Squire' shake hands firht and laht.
Don't be cross with uth poor vagabonds.
People amuht be amuht. They can't always be a working, and they can't always be a fightin'. They ain't made for it: You amuht have us Squire! Do the wise thing and the kind thing and make the betht of uth, not the worthless.
If "people amuht be amuht" sometimes, listen­ning to the poetry of Shakespeare is certainly better amusement than bluff poker, and rot-gut whisky.\textsuperscript{118}

The new theatre prospered as far as the attendance was concerned, for the papers reported "large and fashionable audiences" every night, but the plays were done with only "passable success."

Shortly after the opening of the New Richmond, the actors held a meeting in which they passed a number of resolutions "for the purpose of preventing the inroads of Yankee actors into the Confederacy."

Plans were made for a permanent organization of the actors, but no further mention was found of their activity.\textsuperscript{119} This action seems unusual, for it was not customary for "Yankee actors" to come into the South during the war. Perhaps they were planning with a view to the end of the war when the Confederacy would be an independent nation.

After the newness and excitement attendant upon the opening of the New Richmond Theatre had worn off somewhat, the criticism of

\textsuperscript{118} \textit{Examiner}, February 10, 1863.

\textsuperscript{119} \textit{Southern Illustrated News}, February 28, 1863, I, No. 25, 8.
NEW RICHMOND THEATRE.

R. D. OGDEN, ACTING AND STAGE MANAGER

This popular resort of amusement, the manager is happy to announce, not withstanding the many difficulties which the Management have had to contend, still continues to offer nightly, brilliant and attractive programmes, diversified by choice selections from the most sterling productions of the Dramatic Repertory; such as

TRAGEDIES, COMEDIES, PLAYS, DRAAMS, FARCES, BURLETTAS, OPERAS, &c., &c.

CHARACTERISTIC AND FANCY DANCES, SCENES, BALLADS AND DUETTES

All presented in a manner unequalled in any other Theatre in the Confederacy.

The Management have directed all their efforts to the composition of a Corps Dramatique, second to none in the Confederacy, and takes pleasure in introducing to the public the following leading Artists:

Miss Kleiser Bridges, the superior and unrivalled Tragedienne.
Miss Sally Partington, Comedies, Burlesque and general actress.
Miss Mary Partington, beautiful and charming Danseuse.
Mrs. C. DeMar, "Queen of the Drama".
Miss C. Crystal.
Lens Pettico Lewis and Jackson.

WITH AN EFFICIENT CORPS DE BALLET.

Mr. J. S. Charles, the Nestor of the Southern Stage.
J. W. Thorpe, Old Man and general actor.
J. Wells F. Banker, F. Brown and Struthers.
R. D. OGDEN, Acting and Stage Manager.

THE ORCHESTRA

Is composed of the best Musicians in the Confederacy, under the direction of
Prof. A. Rosenburg and M. Loebman, who are conceded to be the best musical caterers in the Confederacy.

[THE THEATRE IS OPEN EVERY EVENING.]

The Management beg leave to call attention to the entire audiences that nightly crowd the Theatre, as an evidence of the correctness of the performances, and popularity of the plays selected.

R. D. OGDEN, Acting and Stage Manager.
the productions became exceedingly harsh. Perhaps the expectations aroused by the opening of the new theatre had been greater than was warranted and thus the disappointment was keener. The News criticized Eliza Wren's performance of the role of Romeo in the following:

To criticise the acting would be sheer nonsense; suffice it to say, that the entire performance was abominable. The young lady neither looked the character nor spoke the lines. That she would have made a creditable "Juliet," we honestly believe; but the idea of so young an actress undertaking to personate so difficult a character is simply ridiculous, and at once converts one of Shakespeare's most impressive and pathetic tragedies into a farce.120

* The Magnolia also vented its rage at the actors and the audience in its weekly review.

On Saturday night of last week the soldiers took the house by storm — and had a "Soldier's benefit" — certainly the performance was no benefit to anybody else. "Ireland As It Is," was rendered hastily and carelessly. Ireland as it was, or wasn't, or what not, but certainly not "Ireland As It Is," should have been rendered. Mr. Morton as Ragged Pat, and Mrs. De Bar as Juddy O'Trot (the two prevailing characters in the piece) were both at home in their Irish element; the others floundered a good deal. The play proper called but for one tipsy Irishman, and he upon the boards, but there were a great many tipsy Pats in the parquet and galleries, who whipped and drank from their canteens the health (and confusion) of their representatives before the foot lights, in knee breeches, and cork soles.

A performance later in the week pleased The Magnolia no better:

Tuesday evening Jack Cade, one of Forrest's monstrosities, was given, with Mr. Keable as Jack Cade, and repeated on Wednesday evening.

120 Ibid., March 7, 1863, I, 26, 8.
This play, manufactured to order for Forrest by Mr. Conrad of Philadelphia, Mr. Keeble tried with some success to adapt himself, but his physique was hardly equal to it. The mind of the spectator was constantly conjuring up the burly form and voice of Forrest, with his expansive calf, thunderous eyebrows, and tufted chin, shaking, hesitating, deep guttural, yet powerful vital, exclaiming "Avault Keeble! Look at me." 1

Harry Macarthy and Lottie Estelle were still holding forth at the Broad, but the opera troupe had gone and a panorama of the war painted by George Crain, scenic artist at the New Richmond, was being exhibited in connection with the personation concerts. Buckley's Nightingale Troupe had finally given way to Lee Mallory's War Illustrations at the Metropolitan.

One of the most important events which occurred at the New Richmond during the month of March was the production of the Virginia Cavalier a new drama written by George W. Alexander. The criticism of the play and its performance by the two weeklies was not complimentary. The Magnolia thought that the "play went off as well as new plays usually do, afflicted with breaks and stoppages." The literary merit of the play was of no consequence, and its success was dependent upon the effectiveness with which the actors rendered the "songs, local hits and accidents scattered through it." Apparently the play was a mere stringing together of songs, and bits of dialogue expressing the sentiments of the times. One of the songs, which was sung to the air of the witches in Macbeth, was "weird-like" and most effective, thought the Magnolia.

1 Magnolia, March 7, 1863, I, No. 22, 88.
"Come and revel imp and devil,  
Curse all ye rebel powers,  
For the fairest and dearest  
Of all the land shall be ours."

Although the play did not go too well, the Magnolia expressed the hope that it would be allowed to run for a few nights, because "a first representation didn't damn it, and a second or third need not;" however, the News was more severe in its criticism of the new play and termed it "the sorriest sight of all." The audience that witnessed the play was described as "miscellaneous," and bored with the performance. The plot, according to the News, "contained nothing striking or original—'twas the same old story of virtue rewarded—villainy foiled—interspersed with singing and dancing." By comparison, The Guerrillas was much the superior play. 123

Nevertheless, the audience must not have been as bored as the News seemed to think, for The Virginia Cavalier ran for a week, from Monday, March 16 to Monday, March 23, which was quite a long run.

In spite of the abuse from the papers, the New Richmond, apparently undisturbed, went about the business of presenting the legitimate drama night after night. Among the plays produced were Rob Roy, Guy Mannering, The Hunchback, The Iron Chest and the like. The latter play came in for some very harsh criticism by The

122 Ibid., March 21, 1863, I, No. 24, 104. According to The Magnolia, George W. Alexander was assistant Provost Marshall of Richmond.

NEW RICHMOND THEATRE.

AMUSEMENTS.

GrAND OVERTURE. (Chardilla—Romantic)

When will be presented the elegant Comedy of
SAINT IRRANT NEVER WENT FAIR LADY,

The performance will commence with a
GRAND OVERTURE, (Chardilla—Romantic)

The performance will conclude with the new
Military Drama, in three acts, by Capt. —-

VIRGINIA CAVALIER.

Capt. Roland........................ Y M Bates
Eph Rooke............................ J H Brown
Joe Folk......................... B D Ogden
Jim Thomas.......................... W Durand

Soldiers of Capt. Roland's Company, by fifty auxil-

arians, engaged expressly for the occasion

Samantha Ashton.................... Miss bliss Wren
Mrs Ashton.......................... Mrs C Butler

Hammond White..................... Miss Sally Parlin

FEDERALS

O W Wynn............................ J W Thorpe
Capt. Winsted...................... J Wilborn
Provost Marshal.................... J J Brown

Col. W....J T Warren
Judge Advocate...................... Davey Warren

NCOs: J Wiles

Sergeant............................ H Bourne
Corporal.................... W Davis

Nadirah, Villains in Windham's part / F Jackson
Coquette: McElroy

Jane Chapman...................... Miss H Piercy

FEDERAL SOLDIERS, &c., by auxiliaries.

RICHMOND DISPATCH

March 18, 1862
Magnolia; however, before commenting on the performance the critic
gave a vivid description of the scene in the auditorium, before the
rise of the curtain.

... The auditorium is flooded with gas light, the
parquette, dress circles and boxes are full—full of
uniforms, and glittering with metal buttons. All
eyes, drawn to a focus, rest upon the crimson drop
curtain. The foot-lights flash up, and there is a
rustling of expectancy among the audience. The
orchestra members appear one after another from
their subterranean retreat.—There is a strumming
of violins, and uncertain growling of the bass viol,
and an adjusting of manuscript music. Prof. Loebman
nods his head twice; once to his right, and once to
his left, and the instruments begin to play. It is
an air from the Opera "William Tell." "Splendid!"
"Capital!" go round the audience when the music
ceases, and another rustle, this time of satisfaction.

Now for the play.

"The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king."
The bell tinkles, and up slowly lifts the curtain,
and the mimic world is before us. We don't remember
ever having seen a better play more wretchedly
rendered than was Coleman's great play of the Iron
Chest on Saturday evening, and we take that evening
as an index, and average of all the performances
of the week. Mr. Bates, who stood in Keeble's
boots as Sir Edward Mortimer, had plenty of action,
but no voice or fire; he was no more Sir Edward
than was Mr. Wells as Sampson Rawbold, the new
footman, who did the running in and out of the
play. We will attribute Mr. Bates' failure to in-
disposition, for while he was far removed from Sir
Edward, he was not himself, not anything like what
we have seen him in characters requiring similar
exertion. Miss Estelle as Sir Edward's Secretary,
did not make the excellent Secretary we have seen
her; she appeared to pout at herself and her part.

The afterpiece, Black-Eyed Susan, met with even harsher criticism:

The play was cut down to less than one half we
should judge; but that was too much; speaking in
the sense of its merits it was not half played.—
It was actually without merit, and worse rendered
if possible even than the Iron Chest.
Whether the play was "cut" before putting upon the stage or afterwards, or whether affairs behind scenes rendered it imperative on the part of the Management to stop it, we know not, but we know the curtain fell upon an unfinished performance.124

Apparently there was discontent among the actors at the New Richmond, for the News reported rumors that the "stars" were leaving. It rather suggested that the discontent was due to Manager Ogden. Just what the trouble was, if there was trouble, cannot be determined. As will be seen later, some of the "stars" did leave for other engagements, but their going may not have been due to any ill feeling between the company and the manager.

The News was so unhappy over the conditions of the stage that it even went so far as to express the hope that the history of the theatre in the Confederacy would never be written.

There are two things which we humbly trust the future Sir William Wraxalls who shall write the historic gossip of the great Revolution, will fail to hand down to an intelligent posterity, viz: the unartistic verses sung around the country as patriotic songs, and the real condition of the drama in the Confederate Capitol and other important cities.—Posterity should not blush for our enthusiasm for the one, nor our patronage of the other. We must revise our song-literature, and elevate the moral and intellectual mind and heart of the stage, or even the literatures of the South will hereafter laugh at our boasted taste and civilization.125

The press throughout the South made an earnest effort to promote the development of the drama. Many newspapers sought to

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124 Magnolia, March 21, 1863, I, No. 24, 104.
125 Southern Illustrated News, March 21, 1863, I, No. 28, 8.
encourage dramatic efforts in their separate communities by puffing. These papers dealt gently with the actors, always complimenting their efforts and making excuses and allowances for their shortcomings. In Richmond, on the other hand, the press was generally more critical than complimentary of the drama in that city. It would seem that the press, particularly the Southern Illustrated News, sought to correct and improve dramatic standards by caustic criticism. Not only was the Richmond press, as a rule, more severe than that in other cities, but it also devoted more space to theatrical activities. The one notable exception was the Southern Literary Messenger, which ignored the Richmond stage, except to comment, "we could wish its editors would pay less attention to the Theatre and more to illustrations." 126

Not only was the condition of the stage deplored by the press, but the degenerate condition of the neighborhood about the theatre was blamed on the bad influence of the theatre.

Beelzebub, like the vendor of cakes and beer at a fair, or camp-meeting, always follows the theatre, and squats down under the booth within convenient distance there of. Verily, he has tracked the New Richmond Theatre from its Franklin street obscurity, up all the way to its present elevation on Broad street, and has planted his stand, pitched his booth, and spread his wares and fine cordials under a dozen covers.

Such a neighborhood near the theatre was blamed for the disorderly conduct within the theatre:

No wonder then those little rows occur in the temple now and then, that his honor the Mayor feels compelled to keep in check by an "ample

126 Southern Literary Messenger (Richmond), April 1863, XXXVII, No. 4, 252.
police force" of more than a dozen stout policemen, kept nightly within its sacred precincts, to the neglect of private and public property elsewhere, and to threaten offenders with a personal introduction at the Mayor's office in his official capacity.127

The production of Pocahontas sometime late in March proved to be much more interesting and exciting than the mere announcement of the bill might have indicated. The News had been printing rather dreadful likenesses of Confederate generals on its front page, and, as just noted, had been most harsh in its criticism of the New Richmond and particularly vituperative toward Ogden. But Ogden had his revenge. In the play, Pocahontas, Powhatan offers Captain Smith a choice of deaths. At this point Ogden had some lines interpolated, and Smith chose his death with these words:

I have a plan I'm sure you can't refuse,—
Just put my picture in The Illustrated News.
No hero bold has e'er been pictured there
But has been murdered foully, I declare.

The house was packed with soldiers who richly appreciated the well aimed thrust and the lines were greeted "with a roar of laughter that shook the building." A few friends of the News attempted to hiss the lines, but the soldiers "drowned the hisses in shouts of approval."128 The News paid the production of Pocahontas the dubious compliment of saying that it did "credit to the mountebank manager." In fact, the editor was so indignant that he threatened

127 Magnolia, March 21, 1863.

to expose Ogden by writing a biography of him and publishing it in the News. 129

Early in April there was a rumor that Mrs. Magill was sending to England for a dramatic corps, and the press applauded, especially The Magnolia. According to this paper, the whole fault with the Richmond Theatre was the poor company and the indiscretion of the manager in trying to "cut heavy plays" to fit their capabilities, and the bringing out of "flashy and impure blood-and-thunder sentimentality of the exaggerated school." The Magnolia gave a critical analysis of the leading members of the company. Katie Estelle was dealt with first:

In the person of Miss Katie Estelle, we recognize an actress of fine pantomimic powers, when restricted in motion; but as a reader, her modulation is so frequently defective, that we often wish she would go through her role without saying a word. She has an excellent appreciation of the expression of indignation involved in grief; of the graceful mobility of the arm; and in the low, strong, deep language which swells up from the heart torn by sorrow, passion or crime. But for the subordinate sentiment of the play — that part which may be really termed the plot, — she has either no taste or no appreciation; and in scenes in which rapidity or energy of action is essential, nature or a bad habit has divested her of one of the greatest charms an actress may possess.

Having thus disposed of Miss Estelle, Eliza Wren was considered:

Miss Eliza Wren, who seems to be the second lady on the list, has thus far succeeded in eliciting more applause for her pretty way of going through her impersonations, than for any real histrionic power she is supposed to possess. Her manner is usually "winning," — in melancholy scenes it never gets higher than "interesting," for, while she performs

129 Southern Illustrated News, April 4, 1863, I, No. 30, 8.
with spirit, she never loses sight of her identity, and the audience is kept in the same semi-agreeable predicament precisely. In such cases it is well to look frequently at the cast in the programme to keep reminded of the name of the character she assumes.

James Harrison was treated briefly:

Mr. Harrison, the leading male actor, is undoubtedly as full of promise as one comparatively so young might aspire to be, especially at a time when the circumstances of war have so far been adverse to facility in its development. A crowded house may inspire, but the stage supports must mould the actor into excellence. The partial support which the new theatre, has afforded, has enabled him to display a praiseworthy conception of dramatic art.

Ogden made a better manager than he did an actor:

We have on several occasions spoken of Mr. Ogden's capacities. Stage managers rarely make good actors, and vice versa, and Mr. Ogden, whether from the importance he attaches to his position or from an inherent manner, we cannot tell, not being sufficiently acquainted with him personally, has a way of offending good taste and pleasing the bad, by a bravado manner, which as we have before said, suits him very well for a combat. We have scarcely seen him in any character, not even comic, in which the bravado would not bulge out, in some way or other, as if he could not comprehend how an actor could possible (sic) be natural without being tame.

Morton was only passing fair:

Mr. C. H. Morton, the comedian of the new theatre, has talent, but little originality, a virtue possessed by very few in fact who have ever appeared upon the Richmond boards. He is, however, "passing" good, and at times makes an admirable hit. He is soon to leave his present situation, and join Mr. Walter Keeble, in a new dramatic enterprise.

There was nothing but praise for Mrs. De Bar:

Whenever we think of Mrs. De Bar, the best "old woman" in the world, we cannot help saying "God bless her!" Be it on the stage or off, under roof or in the streets, the same disposition springs up to greet her and wish her a thousand joys and blessings — boons that one who has known her in days gone by, would think
rarely fell around her, even in imagination, in the midst of her stage play in the richest of her scenes of the comique and grotesque.\textsuperscript{130}

**The Maiden's Vow; or, The Capture of Courtland, Alabama**

—another one of James D. McCabe's "literary sins"—was presented April 13. The notice described the play as "a new local drama." In a news item the *Examiner* explained that

> In preparing this drama for the stage, it was the design of the author to show in its true light the condition of the affairs in the Northern portion of Alabama. Our enemies have discarded every feeling of pity and humanity, and have carried death and desolation wherever they have been. It is the design of this play to picture some of the horrors fortunately unknown to us, and show the Yankee in his true light, and to hold him up to the execration (sic) of the civilised world.

For fear that the play might arouse the audience to some demonstration against those taking the parts of the "Yankees," the *Examiner* took the precaution to warn the theatre-goers that

> There are no truer hearts in the Confederacy than those that beat in the breasts of the ladies and gentlemen who to-night will endeavor to increase, by their faithful rendition of their respective parts, the hatred of our foes, which is now so deeply felt throughout the South. The author would particularly press upon the audience that those actors charged with personating our enemies are not uttering their own, or his sentiments, but those of the characters they represent; and he would most earnestly request the audience to be so unjust as to confound the actor with the part he plays. If by their efforts to show the Yankees in their most odious forms, the members of this company shall increase your patriotic zeal and your stern resolve to be free, they will ask no greater reward, but will feel that you leave these walls, to-night, their debtors. The play is founded upon actual fact.\textsuperscript{131}

\textsuperscript{130} *The Magnolia*, April 11, 1863, I, 27, 128-29.

\textsuperscript{131} *Examiner*, April 13, 1863.
This is an excellent example of the use of the drama to foster Southern patriotism; however, plays of this type were not as numerous as one might have expected.

There were a few changes on the theatrical front during April. The Varieties, which had been reopened in February by Ogden for burlesque and minstrel shows, apparently did not prosper. Sometime during the last of February or early in March the notices disappeared from the daily papers. The notice of performances at the Broad Street, where Macarthy had been holding sway for so long, disappeared late in March. On April 10 the Dispatch announced that the Varieties would reopen as a playhouse for the legitimate drama under the management of T. P. Strider. The building had been renovated and the proscenium had been enlarged. Among the members of the company were Lottie Estelle, Walter Keeble, Charles Morton, Mrs. De Bar, Helen Mayne, and Jessie Warner. The Mews, still smarting over Ogden's revenge, was most enthusiastic over the opening of the Varieties.

This temple of the Drama opened for the season on Saturday night last, under most favorable auspices. At an early hour in the evening every seat and every foot of standing room was occupied by citizens and soldiers anxious to witness a performance which promised to be legitimate. After much difficulty we succeeded in elbowing our way into the private-box which had been specially set apart for the use of the members of the press, (not for one night, but for the entire season,) where we had an excellent view of the stage. To say that we were pleased with the entertainment would but poorly express our gratification in beholding a play, during the performance of which no

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132 Dispatch, April 16, 1863.
actor or actress indulged in "gagging," nor the thousand other abominable clap-trap tricks usually resorted to by wooden-headed players, to win favor with the audience. We were not only pleased, but delighted.

Mr. Keeble was the embodiment of "John Hildmay."

The tremendous reception given Mr. Morton on his entrance as "Hawksley," threw him off his guard, and had the effect of causing him to render his first act with less coolness and nonchalance than he otherwise would have done. Some of the scenes in the other two acts were rendered very finely, and with great skill.

Mr. Macarthy as "Mr. Porter" surprised us.—He surpassed himself. Let him stick to the legitimate, and he will be the "John Drew" of the South.

The young ladies of the establishment bid fair to become great favorites.133

While complimenting the Varieties, the News took the opportunity to cast several disparaging remarks at the New Richmond. The actors were treated with unaccustomed gentleness too, even Keeble and Morton, who had been rather severely criticised while they were at the New Richmond. The resentment which the News felt towards the New Richmond for "gagging" the lines in Pocahontas undoubtedly accounted in some measure for the unusual enthusiasm shown for the Varieties.

As far as has been possible to determine, this was Macarthy's first attempt at straight dramatic work. He appears to have been a very versatile young man, and he certainly seemed to take well with the public.

Mrs. De Bar apparently did not appear in the cast on the opening performance, for the News spoke of her appearance on the Monday following the opening, when she was "received with round after round of applause." Mrs. De Bar was unquestionably one of

133 Ibid., April 25, 1863, I, 33, 8.
the best liked actresses on the Southern stage, for not even the

Newt criticised her adversely—even when she was at the Richmond.

The Varieties, in the main, seemed to cater to those whose
dramatic taste ran to the lighter pieces. Such plays as Toodles,
Rights of Woman, Ireland as It Is, The Swiss Cottage, and the like
were presented, and of course, singing and dancing rounded out the
evening's entertainment. The bill presented on April 25 was typical
of theatrical fare offered at the Varieties. The program began
with The Momentous Question, then The Swiss Cottage followed by
singing and dancing, and finally, to conclude the program, The Limerick
Boy.134

On April 25 the New Richmond also presented an all comedy
program which included Little Treasure, announced as a new comedy;
and More Blunders Than One, evidently a farce. However, the New
Richmond usually presented the heavier or standard dramas. Camille
was presented on April 24,135 Macbeth136 on April 27, and Pizaro on
April 28.137 There was always a farce and singing and dancing to
send the audience home happy and light-hearted.

The performances at the Varieties and the New Richmond and
the War Illustrations at the Metropolitan, which continued to draw
large crowds, went on with unvarying regularity, and with little or

134 Dispatch, April 25, 1863.
135 Ibid., April 24, 28, 1863.
136 Examiner, April 27, 1863.
137 Dispatch, April 28, 1863.
nothing worthy of special note, until one is inclined to agree with The Magnolia when it lamented:

The amusements of the city have become a decidedly dry theme to write about. In the dramatic line, all the merit of the main actors and actresses have been discussed until thread-bare; and other amusements present no new points of criticism worthy of mention. All, however, seem to enjoy a lively run affording a continual source of recreation to tarrying soldiers and variety loving citizens.138

Early in May the War Illustrations at the Metropolitan were either supplanted or augmented, the notices do not make clear which, by Tableaux Vivants which were described by the notice as the "greatest attraction of the season." The Tableaux Vivants were composed of "twenty-five young and lovely ladies of Richmond, representing in the chaste manner, the true, the beautiful, in Scriptural, Classical and Domestic Statuary."139

In the meantime, the armies had left their winter quarters and had begun again the ugly business of war. It was during the first days of May that General Lee hurled the Confederate forces against the superior Federal army at Chancellorsville and in the vicinity of Fredericksburg. Stonewall Jackson at Chancellorsville, May 2, 1863, succeeded in causing the Union troops under the command of Howard to retreat. Jackson was wounded during the battle by his own men, who mistook him for the enemy. By May 6 Lee had pushed back the numerically superior Federal forces under Hooker. But the joy over

138 The Magnolia, April 23, 1863, I, 29, 144.

139 Richmond Sentinel, May 5, 1863.
the Confederate victory was dimmed by the death of Jackson on May 10,
which was a great blow to the Confederacy, and there was much sorrow
throughout the South at his passing.

The theatres closed in honor of Jackson for at least one
night, and possibly longer. Jones records:

May 12th.—The departments and all places of busi-
ness are still closed in honor of Gen. Jackson,
whose funeral will take place to-day. The remains
will be placed in state at the Capitol, where the
people will be permitted to see him. The grief
is universal, and the victory involving such a
loss is regarded as a calamity.141

The Varieties announced on May 11 that "owing to the melancholy
intelligence which every good citizen of the Confederacy must view
in the light of a national calamity—viz, the death of STONEWALL JACK-
SON, and as a token of respect to the illustrious dead, there will be
no performance at the VARIETIES to-night." Metropolitan Hall announced
that in compliance with the request of the authorities it would be
closed in "honor of the wounded and dead in the gallant army now
arriving in the city."142 The New Richmond announced a performance
as usual, but very probably it was not given.

Although Jackson's funeral was during the day of May 12,
apparently the theatres resumed their activity that evening. The New
Richmond announced Hamilton, who had returned for an engagement, in
Metamora; Ella Wren was scheduled to make her first appearance at the

140 J. G. Randall, Civil War and Reconstruction, 513-515.
141 J. B. Jones, A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, 1, 321.
142 Dispatch, May 11, 1862.
Varieties in Broadway; and Metropolitan Hall announced a program of Tableaux Vivants. 143

The News, still in a feuding mood towards the New Richmond, commented on the return of Wren and Hamilton in the following:

Two stars are glittering in the Dramatic firmament— one in the person of Miss ELLA WREN, an acknowledged favorite, at the "Varieties;" the other in the person of Mr. THEO. HAMILTON, the Charnel House on Broad street. . . . Miss WREN has greatly improved since we last had the pleasure of seeing her. She retains all of her natural vim and power, polished with more than usual grace and artistic skill. She has appeared in a variety of favorite characters during the present week — is ably supported by Messrs. KEEBLE, and MORTON, and Misses HELEN MAYNE and JESSIE WARNER, assisted by numerous auxiliaries, making quite a "goodly company."

Here (at the New Richmond which the News now refers to as the Charnel House) we have Mr. HAMILTON, who is well known in this city, doing the leading business, supported by a company made up of all the "odds and ends" of goodness knows how many broken down theatrical companies — truly, "A thing of shreds and patches!"

Hightly the "offering of the brain" of some departed author is brought before the foot-lights, and made to whine, until it finally "Tires the sad gallery, lulls the listless pit!" 144

It was customary to close the theatres for a short time at the end of spring and then reopen for a short summer season, but the season of 1862-63 ran well into the summer without a break. The News commented that "our Richmond places of amusement continue open, notwithstanding the approach of the dog days, and contrary to the usual custom, we are to have no intermission — no respite to the

143 Ibid., May 12, 1863.
144 Southern Illustrated News, May 23, 1863, 1, 37, 8.
poor player who struts his brief hour upon the stage." The Varieties was reported as "doing a brisk business." The Tableaux Vivants at the Metropolitan had been supplanted by the Mammoth Burlesque Opera Troupe. The departure of the Tableaux Vivants was regrettable because, in the opinion of the News, "nothing can be more calculated to refine popular taste than these marbelized groups, reminding us of the glorious art of Praxitiles (sic) and Canova.".

Early in June Ogden was presented a complimentary benefit sponsored by some of the leading men of Richmond, including General John S. Winder, and the Governor of Virginia. The News indignant over the benefit, and especially the sponsorship, quoted the following from the Examiner:

... It is, indeed, refreshing at this crisis of our great national struggle with a dastard foe, when the Commonwealth is convulsed to its centre, while thousands of her sons lie slaughtered on the fifty fields, or writhe, wounded and wasted in Richmond's hospitals, while fire and death and desolation sweep the land, we say it is indeed refreshing that the chief Executive the State, and the official guardians of a beleagured capital, find heart, inclination and time for indulgence in the silly theatrical rhapsodies of stage sycophants. . .

The News continued with its own views on the benefit.

Notwithstanding the "unkind out of the Examiner," the benefit did come off, and the house was crowded, whether with leded tickets or bona fide $1.50 individuals, "deponent saith not." The dignitaries who signed the call,

145 Ibid., June 7, 1863, I, 39, 8.
146 Ibid.
147 Ibid., June 13, 1863, I, 40, 8. Quoted from the Examiner.
however, were absent, with the exception of a few
gilt braid gentry, who occupied the private boxes,
and took peculiar delight in bringing their opera
glasses to bear upon the "great unwashed."

The play selected for the benefit was The Marble Heart with Ogden
in the role of Raphael. According to the News, Ogden was dressed
"entirely out of character, and had not the slightest conception
of the part he was assuming." The role of Raphael, said the News,
should be played passionately and with spirit and energy, but Ogden
played the role "more after the style of the dull, insipid school
boy, going through with a dialogue at the annual commencement of a
country school."

At the end of the performance Ogden made a curtain speech in
which he said that he had been requested to appear in the title
role in Hamlet. The News, reporting the incident, exclaimed, "(Ye
Gods! where is Ned Booth?)."

Unfortunately no other criticism of Ogden's benefit was
found, hence it is impossible to say whether the News was unfair in
its review.

The Varieties closed on June 8 with a benefit for the entire
company. The bill included State Secrets and The Happy Man. This place of amusement only a short time before had been reported as
having been doing only a "tolerable business" for some time. Ella
Wren went to the New Richmond, while James Harrison and Katie Estelle
closed their engagements at the New Richmond and went to Petersburg

148 Ibid.
149 Dispatch, June 8, 1863.
The New Richmond and the Metropolitan were now the only places of amusement open during the remainder of June. The Metropolitan continued until the end of the month with a variety of entertainment in the burlesque opera troupe and the War Illustrations. The New Richmond presented good bills, including such plays as Camille, The Marble Heart, Still Water Runs Deep, and Armand. The latter was a new play by Anna Cora Mowatt Ritchie in which Ogden played the role of Armand and Ella Wren played the role of Blanche.¹⁵¹

Finally the New Richmond and the Metropolitan closed for a few days. There was no notice of a performance at the New Richmond after June 29, and none for the Metropolitan after July 2. On July 4 the Dispatch printed a note from Ogden in which he thanked "a generous and indulgent public for the unparalleled success" which the company had met. "The season was over, but the public was promised an early reopening with a new dramatic company, but with the "most prominent of the old favorites" included in the new troupe.

In Richmond the 1862-63 season had lasted longer than usual and had been a real theatrical season in the fullest meaning of the word. Truly, despite the battles which raged around the Capital and which crowded the city and the hospitals with dead and wounded, the drama flourished. There was seldom a day during the season when there were not at least two places of amusement open to the public,

¹⁵⁰ *Southern Illustrated News*, June 20, 1863, I, 40, 8.
¹⁵¹ *Dispatch*, June 22, 1863.
and more often there were three and sometimes even four. There was a
great deal of variety in the entertainment offered. Anyone could
find amusement to suit his own taste, for everything—panoramas,
tableaux, minstrelsy, burlesque, light comedy, and legitimate drama—
was to be had.

Viewing the season for the Confederacy as a whole, a number
of observations may be made. The Queen Sisters had developed from
an obscure troupe of amateurs to a professional company of importance
in the lower Southeast. Hewitt became associated with the group as
director and playwright. W. H. Crisp made his "re-appearance" in the
lower South as manager and actor; and E. R. Dalton began to show promise
as a manager and leading actor. Certain actors and actresses began
to assume places of importance on the Confederate stage: Walter
Keeble, Theodore Hamilton, and James Harrison, in the department of
heavy drama, and Charles Morton and Harry Macarthy in the field of
comedy; and among the women there were Ella and Eliza Wren, Katie
Estelle, Ida Vernon, Mrs. De Bar and Mary and Sallie Partington.
Another important event was the completion and opening of the New
Richmond Theatre, which was destined to be the most important play-
house in the Confederacy. And finally, it became increasingly evident
that, despite the war and all that war meant, the theatre, instead of
going into retirement, was more in evidence than it had been even in
the days of peace.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMER SEASON 1863

In the summer of 1863 the military fortunes of the Confederacy were at a low ebb. The armies, both in the east and in the west, suffered several irreparable defeats which forecast the ultimate collapse of the Confederate States of America. The first catastrophe to befall the South, after the triumph of Chancellorsville early in May, was the death of Stonewall Jackson, which served to destroy the salutary effects of that victory. In July the heartbreakying battle of Gettysburg was fought and lost by Lee's gallant army.

Meanwhile, during May and June, the Confederates suffered serious defeats from Grant in Mississippi at Fort Gibson, at Raymond, and at Jackson, which was captured on May 14. The siege of Vicksburg began on June 1 and lasted until July 4, when General Pemberton finally surrendered the city. Later in July, Jackson, which had been retaken by the Confederates, was reoccupied by the Union forces.

Mobile

The military activity in Mississippi during the summer of 1863 brought the war very near to Mobile. With the final fall of Vicksburg and Jackson in July, Mississippi was now Federal territory,
and Mobile was thus placed in a precarious position. Nevertheless, with the optimism, or opportunism, characteristic of theatrical people, the Mobile Theatre opened for a summer season under the management of John Davis, who, it will be recalled, had been associated with Crisp during the previous season. Some of the actors and actresses who had been with the company during the fall and spring remained with Davis, and Mrs. Jessie Clark and Miss Cecilia Crisp were "secured for a brief engagement." The bill for the opening night included The Roll of the Drum and A Pretty Piece of Business.¹

The increasing inflation was reflected in the increased price of admission for the summer season. Seats in the parquet and dress circle were one dollar, seats in the "second circle" were fifty cents, and boxes were seven and eight dollars, depending on the location.² Not only was the cost of entertainment high, but the cost of more essential items had risen correspondingly; the newspaper made the following amusing comment on the price of bacon:

"Mobile is not improving in the price of living. Bacon (the result of the pen that is mightier than the sword,) is now at the nice figure of $2 per pound."³

Apparently the summer company was inadequate; some of the members had been in Mobile for some time and the patrons had grown

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¹ Mobile Advertiser and Register, May 21, 1863.
² Ibid., May 23, 1863.
³ Ibid., June 15, 1863.
tired of them, and consequently there was a lack of interest in the theatre. The press, always as long-suffering towards the efforts of the theatre made excuses for the company.

The new management is getting along very well; and when the company is complete, there will be a corresponding interest in its patrons. During these times we do not expect perfection—but there is room for improvement, and we have every reason to believe Mr. Davis will spare no pains to make it. To-night we have "Raphael, the Reprobate," and "Slasher and Crasher," and Mrs. Jessie Clark sings a song. . . .

The plays selected by Manager Davis did not come up to the standard set by Crisp in the previous season, despite the optimism of the press. On June 2 it was announced that the stage would present a novelty in the appearance on its boards of some "real Indian warriors," among them the "celebrated Indian Warrior, Teahhanchepha." The press by this time had become a bit out of patience with the quality of the summer season and did not think much of the "novelty."

The theatre had a tribe of Indians on the stage last week—literally "native talent;" they drew well—but we think they do better drawing a bow than crowded audiences. "Jack Sheppard" was also on the bills, and excited the imagination of some juveniles we overhead the other evening. This is an improvement on the morality of Crisp's "Caille" (sic), which is no doubt relished by the critics of the latter. Sic vitæ! Now we should think would be a good time to play "La Tour De Meale"—just change the title; call it "Less Moralties" or "Button on the Brain;" it would have a tremendous run. When will the Manager give us something new in the shape of farces and pieces.

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4 Ibid., May 26, 1863.
5 Ibid., June 2, 3, 1863.
6 Ibid., June 7, 1863.
But there were no new faces and no new pieces, and after a few days
the press ventured to offer the following gentle rebuke:

This institution, so necessary to a centre of
commerce, has been neglected a little by us, owing
to other and more pressing engagements. Whether it
has suffered by this we know not. At all times we
have felt disposed to touch it lightly—never speak-
ing ill of it, and readily excusing its shortcomings
from the difficulties the Manager has to surmount to
procure an acceptable company. We notice it now for
the same reason. But with all due deference to the
company, we think it might be greatly improved. We
have some good actors here—men of talent, who would
do well anywhere; but they have been here a long
time, and the people want something new. We were
led to believe, not long ago, that Miss Bridges would
come here, also Miss Annie Deland, and last though
not least, that Ida Vernon was to appear. We have
waited patiently for these lights, and they glimmer
not in the distance. Our population just now would
relish a first-rate performance, and we wonder that
this Manager, if he intends it, does not announce
the advent of superior talent. We are glad to see
that Miss Brown is being brought prominently forward
in the bills. If she will listen to our advice,
and allow a good musical director to train her,
she will become a very popular singer. We are also
glad to see that ions. Gilles, the leader of the
orchestra, does not relax his efforts to keep up the
interest of the music. He is one of the cards of the
Manager's that will do to play at all times. . . .”

It will be recalled that Annie Deland had appeared on two occasions
during the previous season in supporting roles to Ida Vernon. Miss
Brown was a young lady of Mobile who had apparently begun her career
with the Mobile theatre during the winter and spring. Hamilton was
with the company and he and Davis made two good leading actors; but
perhaps the supporting cast was weak, and too, as the paper said,
they had been in Mobile a long time and the people wanted some “new
faces.”

7 Ibid., June 11, 1863.
Late in June an effort was made to supply at least a new play, if not new faces, and so a piece was presented entitled *Life in Mobile; or The Upper Ten and Lower Twenty*, which had been adapted, according to the paper, by Mr. Hamilton from the French *Les Pauvres de Paris*. Apparently the production made a hit with the public, for it ran from Monday, June 22, through Thursday, June 25. Walter, a slave, went to see the performance and got twenty lashes for being at the theatre without a pass. Let us hope Walter enjoyed the show.

Some of the plays presented during the latter part of June were *The Golden Farmer*, *The Drunkard*, and *The Guerrillas*. There were complimentary notices from the press, as there had been in previous seasons but the file of newspapers now surviving does not go beyond June 30, hence it cannot be determined whether the season improved, nor how long it lasted. At any rate, the first two months of the summer season were a great disappointment to the press. Perhaps the fault was not altogether with Manager Davie and his company; it would probably have taken a very superior troupe to lift the gloom of the summer of 1863.

8 According to Odell (Annals of the New York Stage VI, 351), a play entitled *The Upper Ten and the Lower Twenty*, written by T. De Walden, was introduced November 16, 1854, at Burton's Theatre. It had a "notable success." The plot concerned "the fortunes of a debauched wife, a smooth and oily deceiver, and a trusting, deceived husband, who steals and ill-treats the child of his false friend and faithless wife. Much death along the path." Whether the play adapted by Hamilton was the same as the one described by Odell has not been determined.

9 *Advertiser and Register*, June 21, 23, 24, 25, 1863.