

Original Correspondence.

The Drama.

To the Editors of Bell's Life in Sydney.

GENTLEMEN.—As two or three errors, evidently the effect of misinformation given to your Reporters, who never could have been there themselves, have crept into the account given by you to the public concerning the entertainment which took place at the Gas Hotel on Wednesday evening, the 10th instant, I beg leave (though they are not of great importance) to correct them.—And first, with reference to the eulogy bestowed on Mr. Kemble's genius, habits, and capabilities, but more particularly on the latter he possesses, viz. :—those of his "raising the wind." Gentlemen, allow me to tell you, in reply to this failing, that it is but to few men, and especially in the present state of things in these Colonies, and amidst so mixed and divided a mass of people, and under the same circumstances as those in which I have been placed amongst them, as a Theatrical Company in myself and like unto Richard—"myself alone"—with "the Syrians before and the Philistines behind," and who would have devoured me (in my individual attempts, like unto Israel of old) "with open mouth" by rumours of a Professional nature widely circulated, and far from congenial either to a man's fame or feelings—by falsehoods meanly and malignly propagated, and by a spirit of opposition indicated and maintained, of divers kinds and from divers quarters—that the same high compliment which you have so paid and applied to Me—could be applied to all!

It is three years since I made my first 'debut' before the Australian Public, who have ever since approved of and supported me in a manner even to enthusiasm; and, as Mr. George Cooper Turner the other day observed to me,—“I should like, Mr. Kemble, to see you on the boards of the Victoria Theatre, for I am sure that the man who can play twenty characters without assistance could play one with it” so, gentlemen, I should inform you that the observation of that Gentleman, so shrewdly made, may be regarded as the 'sense' of all who have ever seen me, viz. :—to see me in One Character, and properly supported in a regular company; and therefore, most cheerfully would I respond to and meet the wishes of the Public in this matter, and I should much like them to have an opportunity of witnessing my performance of either *King Lear*, *Shylock*, *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *Coriolanus*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, *Brutus* from "Brutus or the Fall of Tarquin," *Sir Giles Overreach*, *Jaffier*, *Sir Edward Mortimer*, or *Sardanapalus* (from Lord Byron's Tragedy of that name—and, if only as a grateful return for the support they have always and from first to last rendered me I would play and appear in either of the foregoing characters for one evening gratuitously at the Victoria Theatre—and for the opportunity so offered to them for a single evening's performance, they would then see for themselves, and judge for themselves (for by the public alone both Actors and Theatres must stand or fall) whether the proof of a great man, and of a great actor,—of a giant in genius—of a man among a million and the very hero of his time,—I had almost said of his Profession too,—be at this very moment at the Antipodes—or not? A mighty tree covers with its shadow a large surface; its roots

deep-stricken, stretch out afar. "The day of small things" should not however, be forgotten, nor yet the period when it was no more than the tender plant! But, gentlemen, I am in no hurry to be better known. A single drop of water is, as you know, an epitome of the whole ocean. The most superlative diamond, unless brought out from the dark recesses of its native mine into something like a contact with the light of day, will, in vain endeavour to emit the dazzling lustre of its rays; and a leaf, insignificant as it may be deemed, and regarded by itself, is nevertheless a part of the majesty and beauty which adorns the forest monarch; but every thing in time, gentlemen, finds a level for itself!

But to return, gentlemen, to the second part of the subject I set out with, touching the Entertainment at Mr. Davies' and my recitation of *Othello* there. No music, I beg to inform you accompanied it, and if it had done, I do not see (as you have 'over facetiously' set it down) what law existed or why—in his address to the Senate which was the part of that character I did recite—poor 'Othello' should have accompanied it with "repentant groans"; and finally, that "a pound of fresh beef, cut off the choicest part of the rump, should be applied to the dextral ocular" or to either ocular, whether of the Satellite or of the Star in the very middle of a boxing bout, is so ridiculous and nonsensical, that the couplet of the Poet in such common use, is perhaps, the better comment of any other that can be made upon it:—

"Lest men suspect the thing untrue
Keep probability in view."

But it was doubtless penned with an eye to business, and to the producing of a hearty laugh, which is better than business done to no good purpose for thirty years.

Relying on your candour to publish this letter, which you received too late for your last week's publication,

I remain, gentlemen,
Your obliged and obedient servant,

HENRY KEMBLE,

Sydney.
Jan. 24th, 1849.

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