

G. Colman to L.R.K.

18643

3<sup>d</sup> October. 1811.

Sir,

The Memorial, a Copy of which I have already had the Honour of conveying to Your Royal Highness's hands, will be sent to Colonel MacMahon this evening, who has kindly promised to present it immediately to The Prince Regent; and I wait the issue with the utmost anxiety, - for my future "daily bread" will depend upon it.

I had flattered myself that I had, some time ago, arrived at the most frozen latitudes in distress; but I find there is, still an "ultima Thule"; - a ruin beyond St. George's Fields; - and that without relief, I shall touch the very North Pole of embarrassment. Should my Case appear peculiarly hard, (which I presume to be evident upon the face of it) allow me, Sir, most respectfully to solicit Your Royal Highness to assist me so far as to communicate some points to The Prince Regent, which I know not how to insert in a Memorial, unavoidably too long, already. The points

are as follow:—

I do not mean to be querulous against the Winter Managers; but to obviate, if possible, the ruin in which their protracted seasons threaten to involve me. In respect to the Lyceum, I am confident, from experience, that no two Summer Theatres can go on in London, for several years, and each of them prosper. They must either divide the comparatively scanty number of Play-goers, in the Dog Days, so equally, that it would scarcely pay them for their labour, or one must ruin the other. How Mr. Arnold has now, the pull, is explained in the Memorial; and how Mr. Sheridan gave him that advantage, how Mr. Sheridan gave him that advantage, against his own interests, and in forgetfulness of me, is a little surprising. The two Winter Theatres pledged themselves, with me, that we should all three, as regulars, join our forces to repel any invasion that might happen to any one of us.— Soon after the Lyceum started up, (which was an invasion upon all of us) Mr. Sheridan not only deserted me, but mingled his interests with those of the Invader. Possibly, he might not have been able to help this, at the moment; and, therefore, I do not complain of any murder;— but if he is killing me by a kind of Chance-Medley, it is time to call out for

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18644 assistance. From the best information I can gather, it is likely, a City Theatre Bill may pass through Parliament. Mr. Sheridan has done me the honour to state, in the House of Commons, that, if a third Theatre were allowed, I have the strongest claim to an interest in it. This is a handsome & generous declaration; & "laudari à laudato viro" is very flattering: But if an extension of License were given to me, it would supersede one grand argument of the City Speculators; namely, a want of competition; and would, probably be the means of putting their project at rest;— which project, if carried into execution, upon the extensive scale intended, would produce a much more formidable rivalship to Drury Lane than any plans I could ever enter into in the Haymarket. At present, should my License be extended into the Winter, the Haymarket and the Lyceum will not give more accommodation to the Town than the late Old Drury, when it was open against Covent Garden.

I respectfully request pardon for this intrusion; to which I have been impelled by the hope that, through Your Royal Highness's great goodness, the above explanations may meet The Prince Regent's consideration much above

the first time as the presentation of the  
Memorial:— the effecting of which (so that  
a favourable impression upon all points might  
be obtain'd at once) is a most material  
object.

I have the Honour to be,

Sir

Your Royal Highness's  
very dutiful & much obliged servant,  
J. Colman