

Sam^l
Jas.
Arnold.
Remth

21268-9

Mr. Arnold the Proprietor of the English Opera established at the Theatre Royal Lyceum, in the Strand, under the express sanction & most gracious auspices of His Majesty, being about to pull down the present Building & to erect a new & more commodious Theatre; is naturally, most anxious to obtain the Patronage; & to be honored with the name of His Royal Highness The Prince Regent

To this desirable end Mr. Arnold waited upon the Right Hon^{ble} Earl of Yarmouth on Thursday 27th May, having been credibly informed that his Lordship had expressed feelings hostile to the just Interests of Mr. Arnold, & deeming it respectful to explain to his Lordship the grounds on which he established his hopes of the protection of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent -

After being favored with some conversation, His Lordship was pleased to inform Mr. Arnold in distinct terms that he should ^{not} interfere in his behalf, having been canvassed while Vice Chamberlain by His Royal Highness The Duke of York in favor of the Proprietors of the little Theatre in the Haymarket, & having given his promise to the earnest solicitations of His Royal Highness to afford every support in his power to that Theatre; & that his Lordship should certainly abide by that promise, in favor of an old Establishment in preference to a new one, which had been the ruin of the Haymarket Theatre

Mr. Arnold under this direct avowal of Hostility, which His Lordship was pleased to make, with so much frankness, feels it a duty to himself to declare that although the English Opera may be considered an Humble Rival of the Haymarket Theatre, it has not been directly or indirectly the cause of Ruin to that Property, if ruined it be.

The Proof of this counter assertion is simple & obvious.

The first Season of the English Opera, in the Summer 1809. was equal to any subsequent Season in point of attraction or success, while it is known that the same Season at the Hay Market Theatre was one of equally great profit, if not absolutely superior to any the Proprietors had experienced for some Years previous.

After that Season the Proprietors of the Hay Market Theatre attempted the experiment of opening their Theatre with an independant country Company in opposition to the Winter Theatres, & to this System in which they have since persisted & to some other obvious causes is to be attributed that ruin which the Noble Earl has been pleased to ascribe to the rivalry of the English Opera.

Mr Arnold is too well acquainted with the Character of His Royal Highness the Duke of York, to imagine for one moment, that His Royal Highness could wish to oppose his undertaking, in order to promote the Welfare of another, or to suppose that his Royal Highness would wish to effect the elevation of the Proprietor of the Hay Market Theatre at the price of Mr Arnolds ruin. Mr Arnold, however, under the powerful opposition with which he is threatened, thinks it necessary to commit to paper the following Statement, being fully, & assuredly convinced that any objections to the prosecution of his plan on the part of His Royal Highness the Duke of York can alone arise from a want of an acquaintance with the high grounds of probution under which his Plan has hitherto been conducted.

Memoranda

Mr Arnold in the Year 1808. submitted to the Earl of Dartmouth then Lord Chamberlain, his plan for the establishment of the English Opera. His Lordship very highly approved the Plan, which he considered as well calculated to promote the cultivation of the British School of Music, & consented to grant a licence to Mr Arnold, to enable him to carry his plan into effect. His Lordship was thereafter advised that such an Establishment would in all probability encounter much opposition from the existing Theatres, & therefore that it would be expedient not to grant a licence of such extent without the sanction of His Majesty previously & expressly obtained

The Earl of Dartmouth did accordingly submit to His Majesty Mr Arnolds Plan, & by His Majestys command did read the same to His Majesty, who was most graciously pleased to express His Royal approbation thereof; & more particularly His Royal Pleasure that the licence should be granted to Mr Arnold, as the Son of Dr Arnold late Organist & Composer to His Majesty.

The licence was accordingly granted in Feb^r 1809 immediately under His Majestys Royal Sanction and Authority.

Mr Arnold on the ground of this licence, so especially granted, did purchase the Lyceum, & did expend thereon in Buildings Alterations, Decorations, Scenery, Musick & Wardrobes, a sum not less than £27,000 - at the same time he sought after & obtained a Company comprizing all the Talent that could be collected in the British Empire; & at great risk, and great further

expence, opened the said Theatre to the Public, successfully
resisting the hostility of other Theatres, & eventually
succeeded to establish his Plan in a manner which
he trusts has been creditable to his exertions, which
have been honored with exalted Patronage, & encouraged
by the unqualified approbation of the Public. The
Plan and execution was approved by the Principal
Patentee of Drury Lane Theatre, & has since been recogni-
zed by the Patentee of C. G. Theatre. Mr Arnold has
continued for 4 Years to promote by his personal exertions
the success of this great undertaking in the hope of its
becoming in time, through a continuance of Royal
Favour an object of real National benefit; & has through
the medium of his Lucre, already been the means of
introducing to the Winter Theatres several highly
distinguished Performers —

Mr Arnold therefore trusting to the credit which the
English Opera has acquired — to the Industry & fidelity with
which he has discharged the trust reposed in him under
the express & gracious sanction of His Majesty, & being
about to make great further improvements by rebuild-
ing his Theatre in a Style which may do honor to
Royal Patronage & prove an Ornament to the Metro-
polis, he most anxiously seeks to obtain the Protection
of His Royal Highness The Prince Regent, to his under-
taking: & H. R. Highness's gracious permission to
announce this National object as fostered by H. R.
Highness's condescending & liberal Patronage

By
—
—
Mr Arnold