bably induced Shakeſpeare to make ſo few of his plays de­pend upon female characters, as they muſt have been per­formed to great diſadvantage. The principal characters of his women are innocence and ſimplicity, ſuch are Deſdemona and Ophelia ; and his ſpecimen of fondness and virtue in Portia is very ſhort. But the power of real and beautiful women was now added to the ſtage ; and all the capital plays of Shakeſpeare, Fletcher, and Ben Jonſon, were di­vided between the two companies, by their own alternate choice, and the approbation of the court.

The king’s ſervants ſeem to have been allowed to be the beſt company ; and when the variety of plays began to be exhauſted, they drew the greater audiences. Davenant, therefore, to make head againſt them, firſt added ſpectacle and muſic to action, and introduced a new ſpecies of plays, since called *dramatic operas;* among theſe were, *The Tempst, Psyche,* and *Circe* ; which, with many others, were ſet off with the moſt expenſive decorations of ſcenes and habits, and with the beſt voices and dancers.

ln 1684 the two houses united, and continued together for ten years. In 1690 the play began at four o’clock; and, we are told, the ladies of faſhion uſed to take the even­ing air in Hyde-park after the repreſentation ; by which it appears that the exhibitions were in ſummer too. The principal actors were, Betterton, Montfort, Kynaſton, Sand­ford, Nokes, Underhill, and Leigh, commonly called *Tony Leigh;* the actresses were, Mrs Betterton, Barry, Leigh, Butler, Montfort, and Bracegirdle ; and to this company, in this year, old Cibber was admitted as a performer in the loweſt rank. It was a rule with the patentees, that no young perſon, who offered himſelf as an actor, ſhould be admitted into pay till after at leaſt half a year’s probation ; and Cibber waited full three quarters of a year before he was taken into a ſalary of 10s. a-week.

In 1695 a new theatre was opened with Mr Congreve’s comedy of Love for Love, which had ſuch extraordinary succeſs (ſays Cibber) that ſcarce any other play was acted there till the end of the ſeaſon ; but when the ſeaſon end­ed, which appears to have begun in June, he does not tell us, and it is indeed difficult to gueſs ; for though the com­pany acted in ſummer, it ſeems improbable that they ſhould shut up the houſe in winter, as it is difficult to conceive any reaſon for ſo doing. Congreve was then in ſuch high repu­tation, that this company offered him a whole ſhare (but into how many ſhares the whole was divided Colley has not told us) upon condition he would give them a new play every year. This offer he accepted, and received the advantage, though he never fulfilled the condition; for it was three years before he produced the *Mourning Bride,* and three more before he gave them *the Way of the World.*

It is not neceſſary that we give in detail the remaining hiſtory of the Engliſh ſtage : thoſe who are anxious to be acquainted with it may conſult Cibber’s hiſtory of the ſtage, continued by Victor, under the title of *A History of the Theatres of London and Dublin from the year* 1730. We ſhall only mention a few facts reſpecting the ſalaries of the players about that period, and the rise of the price of play­tickets.

A difference having ariſen in 1733 between the mana­gers and actors, moſt of the actors ſet up for themſelves at the little theatre in the Haymarket. Upon this the mana­gers published the following account of their ſalaries, to ſhew the public how little room they had to mutiny. To Mr Colley Cibber, from the time of letting his ſhare till he left the ſtage, 12l 12s. *per* week@@. Mr The. Cibber 5l. and his wife's whole salary till her death, without doing the company any service the greateſt part of the winter ; and his own alſo, during the time of his being ill, who per­formed but ſeldom till after Chriſtmas. Mr Mills jun. 31. under the ſame circumſtances with regard to his wife. Mr Mills ſen. 1l. *per* day for 200 days certain, and a benefit clear of all charges. Mr Johnſton 5l. Mr Miller 5l. paid him eight weeks before he acted, beſides a preſent of 10 guineas. Mr Harper 4l. and a preſent of 10 guineas. Mr Griffin 4l. and a preſent. Mr Shepard 3l. Mr Hallam, for himſelf and father (though the latter is of little or no ſervice) 3l. Mrs Heron 5l. raised from 40s. laſt winter, yet refuſed to play ſeveral parts assigned her, and acted but ſeldom this ſeason. Mrs Butler 3l. *per* week. By theſe and other ſalaries, with the incident charges (beſides clothes and ſcenes), the patentees are at the daily charge of 491. odd money, each acting-day.

Till about the ſame time, the prices at the theatre were 4s. the boxes, 2s. 6d. the pit, 1. s. 6d. the firſt gallery, and 1s. the ſecond, except upon the firſt run of a new play or pantomime, when the boxes were 5s. the pit 3s. the firſt gallery 2 s. and the ſecond 1s. But Fleetwood thought fit to raiſe the prices for an old pantomime, which was revived without expence. This produced a riot for ſeveral nights, and at laſt a number deputed by the pit had an interview with the manager in the green room, where it was agreed, that the advanced prices ſhould be conſtantly paid at the doors, and that ſuch perſons as did not chooſe to ſtay the entertainment ſhould have the advanced part of their money returned. This was a very advantageous agreement for the manager ; becauſe, when the audience had once paid their money, and were ſeated, very few went out at the end of the play, and demanded their advanced money ; the few that did it at firſt, ſoon grew tired, and at laſt it ſettled in the quiet payment of the advanced price, as at this day.

It has been frequently a ſubject of debate, whether the ſtage be favourable to morals. We do not mean to enter into the controverſy ; but we ſhall make an obſervation or two. It will be allowed by all, that the intention of the players in acting, is to procure money ; and the intention of the audience in attending the theatre, is to ſeek amuſement. The players then will only act ſuch plays as they believe will anſwer their intention. And what sort of plays are theſe ? They are ſuch as correſpond with the opinions, manners, and taste, oſ the audience. If the taſte of the audience be groſs, therefore the plays will be groſs ; if delicate and refined, they will be the ſame. And if we go back to the time of Shakeſpeare, we ſhall find that this has been uniformly the case. The conclusion, then, which we draw, is this, if the taſte of the audience be pure, free from licentiouſneſs, the plays will be the ſame, and the ſtage will be favourable to virtue.

THEBAIC Powder. See Pharmacy*-Index.*

THEBAID, a celebrated heroic poem of Statius, the ſubject whereof is the civil war of Thebes, between the two brothers Eteocles and Polynices ; or Thebes taken by Theſeus.

THEBES, the name of a celebrated city of ancient Greece. It is ſuppoſed to have been built by Cadmus, about the year of the world 2555. This Cadmus, according to the Greeks, was the ſon of Agenor king of Sidon or of Tyre ; but the Sidonians allow him to have been of no higher quality than his cook, and tell us that his wife was a muſician at court, with whom he ran away into Greece. The Greek writers tell us, that being commanded by his father to go in ſearch of his daughter Europa, whom Jupiter in the ſhape of a bull had carried off, and forbid to return without her, he built, or rebuilt, the city of Thebes, after having long fought her in vain. He was at firſt oppoſed by the Hyantes and Aones ; the former of whom he defeated in battle, and forced to retire into Locris:

@@@[mu] Gentleman's Magazine for 1733.