being prepared in the under-space, with all its scenery fixed, and when the curtain falls the first stage rises into the upper regions and the second floor goes up to take its place. These floors are accurately balanced by heavy counterpoise weights, so that the whole of these enormous masses are moved with comparatively little force.

On the whole, for magnificence of effect and mechanical ingenuity the great London pantomimes are unrivalled. Their transforma­tion-scenes are marvels of the mechanist’s skill, and are often devised with very high artistic talent. Unhappily much danger and suffering have often to be undergone by the women who act the part of fairies and the like, suspended high in the air by almost invisible supports, and by the young children who have to squeeze themselves into pasteboard shells representing insects or reptiles.

In addition to the above-mentioned parts of the theatre, which are reserved for the mechanical working of the performance, much space is occupied by the “green-room” for the actors, and rows of dressing-rooms. An immense deal of storage room is also required, and some of the Parisian theatres have large magazines for this purpose in the suburbs. In many cases also the atelier for the scene painters is far removed from the theatre, and thus far better space and lighting for the work can be provided. Fig. 5 shows the plan of the Drury Lane theatre, in many respects the best arranged in London.

The painting of theatrical scenery has frequently been the work of artists of very high talent, such as Raphael in Rome, Watteau, Boucher, and Servandoni in France, and Stan­field in England. Paintings of very high artistic merit and wonderfully decorative effect are now produced for theatrical purposes, especially in France, Germany, and England.@@1 In England especially great histor­ical and antiquarian knowledge are brought to the aid of this branch of art. The landscapes in particular are sometimes works of great beauty, and very beautiful effects of lake scenery with trees and mountains reflected in the water are got by set­ting great sheets of plate glass over the stage floor, slightly inclined, so that a real reflexion is thrown by the landscape painted on the scene be­hind. Another ingenious device, used by Wagner at Baireuth and also in England for magical scenes, was to form a thin and semi­transparent curtain of vapour, which was sent up by a perforated steam-pipe concealed in a groove in the stage.

The various methods of lighting used are an important item in the production of striking effects. The old system of a row of “foot-lights,” with their unpleasant upward shadow, is now almost obsolete. Dip candles were used till 1720, when moulded candles were introduced into French theatres. The next improvement was the lamp of Μ. Argand, with its circular wick. In 1822 gas was first used in a Parisian theatre, next came the oxyhydrogen lime light, used for special effects, and now electric lighting is rapidly superseding all other kinds.

The old way of producing lightning was to blow lycopodium or powdered resin with bellows through a flame, and this is still used in realistic effects of conflagrations. More effective lightning is now made by flashing the electric light behind a scene painted with clouds, in which a zigzag aperture has been cut out and filled with a transparent substance. Thunder is made by shaking large sheets of iron, by rolling cannon balls above the ceiling of the auditorium, and by clapping together a series of planks strung together on two ropes. Wind is imitated by a machine with a cogged cylinder, which revolves against coarse cloth tightly stretched. The sound of rain is produced by shaking parched peas in a metal cylinder.

The orchestra is now usually arranged either below or above the proscenium, so that the musicians are not visible. The prompter is placed at one side, in the wings, so as to avoid the disfigure­ment of the hood-like box which formerly used to cut the front line of the stage into two halves. This is, however, less convenient for the actors.

Till the middle of the present century little trouble or expense was laid out on dresses aud accessories. Certain conventional costumes, made of cheap stuff, were used for each part, with but little regard to historical correctness. Armour and weapons were

made of pasteboard covered with metal foil, and stage jewellery was made of small cup-like pieces of tin formed with many facets. Now, however, no trouble or expense is spared to get the costumes and various properties archæologically correct : real jewels and the richest stuffs are often used for the dresses, as well as real furni­ture of the most costly sort for the furnishing of the scenic rooms. As much as £20,000 is sometimes spent before the play can be presented. All this splendour and realism is very hostile to the true interests of the drama ; magnificent scenery and costly accessories are expected by the audience, rather than good acting. In some scenes, such as the ball in the first act of Romeo aud Juliet, as recently represented at the Lyceum, the words and acting of the chief performers were almost lost in the general bustle and splendour of the scene. Frequently, too, the noise of setting up some elaborate scene behind almost drowns the voices of the actors in front of the drop scene.

Another serious cause of the present low state of acting in England is the fact that a popular play sometimes runs for several hundred nights without a break, thus reducing the performers to the condition of machines. The modern system of expending large sums on dresses and decoration naturally prevents that frequent change of subject which is so desirable, and which in France is provided for by the rules of the Théâtre Français, where acting of a very high order of merit still survives.

The present system, aided by the enormous size to which London has unhappily grown, has completely changed the character of the audience. Instead of an audience largely composed of *habitués,* who by their constant attendance at the theatre had gained some knowledge of what acting ought to be, and were prepared to show their disgust at clap-trap or ranting, we have now practically a fresh and ignorant audience every night, who, by their applause of what is worst and their coldness to real refinement of acting, do much to lower the dramatic standard and demoralize the actors.

For further information the reader is referred to Donnet, *Théâtres de Paris,* 1821 ; Salomons, *Construction des Theatres,* Paris, 1871 ; Garnier, *Le Nouvel Opéra de Paris,* 1876-81 ; Coutant, *Principaux Théâtres Modernes,* Paris, 1870; Moynet, *L'Envers du Théâtre,* Paris, 1874; Pougin, *Dictionnaire du Théâtre,* Paris, 1885. (J. H. Μ.)

Law Relating to Theatres.

The regulation of the theatre by legislation can be traced back to the time of the lower empire, in which it depended almost wholly upon constitutions of Theodosius and Valentinian, incor­porated in the Theodosian Code (tit. xv. 5, 6, 7), and a century later to a large extent adopted by Justinian. In the whole of this law there is an evident attempt at a compromise between the doc­trines of Christianity and the old Roman love of public spectacles of all kinds. It deals less with theatrical representations proper than with gladiatorial contests and chariot races.@@2 The Theodosian Code provided that the sacraments were not to be administered to actors save where death was imminent, and only on condition that the calling should be renounced in case of recovery. Daughters of actors were not to be forced to go on the stage, provided that they lived an honest life. An actress was to be allowed to quit the stage in order to become a nun. There were also numerous sumptuary regulations as to the dress of actors. None of the law which has been mentioned so far was adopted by Justinian, but what follows was incorporated in *Cod.* xi. 40 (“ De Spectaculis et Scenicis”), which consists entirely of extracts from the Theodosian Code of a very miscellaneous nature. Provision was made for the exhibition of public games and theatrical spectacles by magis­trates, practically confining them to exhibiting in their own cities. Statues of actors were not to be placed in the public streets, but only in the proscenium of a theatre. A governor of a province was entitled to take the money raised for public games for the purpose of repairing the city walls, provided that he gave security for afterwards celebrating the games as usual. In *Cod.* iii. 12, 11 (“De Feriis”) is a constitution of Leo and Anthemius forbidding dramatic representations on Sunday. The *Digest* (iii. 2) classed all who acted for hire (“ omnes propter pecuniam in scenam pro­deuntes”) as infamous persons, and as such debarred them from filling public offices. A mere contract to perform, not fulfilled, did not, however, carry infamy with it. By the 51st of the *Novelise,* actresses could retire from the stage without incurring a penalty, even if they had given sureties or taken an oath.

In England, as in other countries of western Europe, theatrical legislation was of comparatively recent introduction. Such legisla­tion was unnecessary as long as the theatre was under the control of the church and actors under its protection (see Drama). The earliest regulations were therefore, as might be expected, made by the church rather than by the state. The ecclesiastical ordinances were directed chiefly against the desecration of churches, though they sometimes extended to forbidding attendance of the faithful as spectators at plavs of a harmless kind.@@3 Sacraments and Christian

@@@l Scene paintings are usually executed in distemper, frequently in an atelier formed in the roof of the theatre ; the artist partly works with his canvas laid upon the floor, or, where space allows, the painting is hung against a wall and the artist works from a scaffold, with tiers of boarding arranged so that he can reach to any part of the great canvas.

@@@2 The word *ludi* seems sometimes to include, sometimes to exclude, dramatic performances. Its meaning in a particular instance depends on the context.

@@@3 A large number of such ordinances will be found cited in Prynne, *Histrio∙ mastix;* Bossuet, *Maximes et Reflexions sur la Comédie;* Mariana, *De Spectaculis;* Smith, *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities,* arts. “Actors” and “Theatre.”