

the best actor that ever came upon the stage, she understanding so well. That they are going to give her 30*l* a year more. That the stage is now by his pains a thousand times better and more glorious then ever heretofore.¹ Now, wax-candles, and many of them; then, not above 3*lb.* of tallow. Now, all things civil, no rudeness anywhere; then, as in a bear-garden. Then, two or three fiddlers; now, nine or ten of the best. Then, nothing but rushes upon the ground and everything else mean; and now, all otherwise. Then, the Queen seldom and the King never would come; now, not the King only for state, but all civil people do think they may come as well as any. He tells me that he hath gone several times, eight or ten times he tells me, hence to Rome to hear good music; so much he loves it, though he never did sing or play a note. That he hath ever endeavoured, in the last King's time and in this, to introduce good Musique; but he never could do it, there never having been any music here better then ballads. "No", [he] says "*Hermitt poore* and *Chivy chase* was all the music we had – and yet no ordinary Fidlers get so much money as ours do here, which speaks our rudeness still." That he hath gathered nine Italians from several Courts in Christendome to come to make a consort for the King, which he doth give 200*l* a year apiece to, but badly paid, and do come in the room of keeping four ridiculous Gundilows – he having got the King to put them away and lay out the money this way. And indeed, I do commend him for it, for I think it is a very noble undertaking. He doth intend to have some times of the year these Operas to be performed at the two present Theatres, since he is defeated in what he intended in Moore Fields on purpose of it. And he tells me plainly that the Citty Audience was as good as the Court – but now they are most gone.

Having done our discourse, we all took coaches (my Lord's and T. Killigrew's) and to Mrs. Knepp's chamber, where this Italian is to teach her to sing her part. And so we all thither, and there she did sing an Italian song or two very fine, while he played the bass upon a Harpsicon there; and exceedingly taken I am with her singing, and believe she will do miracles at that and acting. Her little girl is mighty pretty and witty. After being there an hour, and I mightily pleased with this evening's work, we all parted; and I took coach and home, where late at my office and then home to enter my last three days' Journal; and so to supper and to bed – troubled at

1. sc. before the Civil War.