Amusements

St Charles- J Wilkes Booth began his engagement at this theatre last night in Shakespeare's dark tragedy of "Richard the Third",- and the full circles and parquette attested the high expectation of the public. The role of GLOSTER is one of difficult interpretation, and in its various phases has received more diverse critical analysis than any creation of the bard, except, perhaps, that of HAMLET. The late hour to which Mr Booth's rendition detained us, precludes as specific comments as we would otherwise make, and we are therefore restricted simply to submit our impressions of the gentleman's talents, as exhibited on his debut. We are much gratified with his impersonation, for the reason first, that he readily adapted himself to the intellectual demands of each scene; secondly, that his reading seemed intuitive in its flow and emphases; thirdly, that his exultant self-repose in his first interview with Anne, (very difficult test, as it is) and his subsequent colloquy with the Mayor and citizens of London, betrayed an unusual counterfeit of subtlety; and fourthly, that the conclusive act abounded with points in the mastery of which the tragic power of a Booth startled the auditory, and conjured up the father of him upon whom we looked. His violent waking from the couch in his martial tent and the phrenzy with which he seeks to recover himself from the ghastly phastasma of slumber, was terrible for its power. Mr Booth has succeeded with peculiar felicity in investing the King on Bosworth Field with a measurable pathos, such as we might be slow to accord the mere Gloster. King by custody of crown and sceptre, he moves with a soul that bears him down to earth, and yet with a defiant eye, though with a heart sorely perturbed as to the next day's conflict, he forgets himself as the usurper, and stands forth the desperate man. Mr Booth pre-assures us of his wrecked destiny and thus wins a strange, unwitting sympathy from the observer. Suffice it to say, he achieved a triumph. In addition to the gratifications as an artist, he possesses a handsome face, and commanding presence, which of course materially assists his success. Tomorrow night Mr Booth will present his famous rendition of "Hamlet".

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