

OPENING OF HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE  
and Opera House, Glasgow.  
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

This magnificent Theatre, which has been in the course of erection during the past seven months, was opened to the public on Saturday evening, 28th December, 1878, under the management of Mr J. F. M'Fadyen. The event is one of more than ordinary importance in the theatrical annals of Glasgow, inasmuch as the new house is on the south side of the river, where, hitherto, no place of dramatic entertainment has ever existed. Within the last few years several schemes for the erection of a south-side Theatre have been proposed, and in one instance endeavours were made to promote a joint-stock company with that object in view. Plans were even prepared, and a prospectus issued pointing to the purchase of an eligible site in Carlton-place; but there the matter ended, and our fellow citizens "across the water" were yet without a dramatic retreat of their own. That state of affairs has now, however, been altered by the enterprise of Mr John Morrison, the Proprietor and builder of "Her Majesty's," which for elegance, comfort, and completeness is unsurpassed in Scotland. The building, which also comprises a commodious suite of assembly halls, is situated in Main-street, Gorbals, one of the most populous districts of the city. The frontage is in the Doric style, with a row of six fluted columns supporting an ornamental entablature, which is surmounted by six large figures. At the two extremities are capital statues of Shakespeare and Burns, the figures between them representing Tragedy, Comedy, Music, and Burlesque. The general effect of the façade is at once graceful and imposing. The principal entrance from Main-street is 12 feet wide, and leads first of all into a vestibule 30 feet by 25 feet, from which access is gained to stalls and dress-circle, the former being fitted up with luxurious chairs in crimson velvet. The circle is also upholstered in the same rich material. A separate door, 11 feet wide, in Hutherglen-road, leads to pit and gallery, the latter being reached by a substantial stair, and being seated for 750 persons. The pit is seated for the same number, and the house can accommodate in all 2,500 persons. The circle and gallery above are both constructed in horseshoe shape, and rise gently to wards the rear. There is a corresponding incline from the stalls to the back of the pit, and a clear view of the stage can thus be had from all parts of the house. From the stage to the back of the pit the distance is 60 feet, with a width of 55 feet, while the measurement from foot-lights to middle of circle is 30 feet.

The roof is covered to the height of eight feet with ornamental ribs rising to the circular ceiling in the centre, from which depends a large sunlight, having a ventilator shaft above, communicating with the various air openings throughout the structure. Smaller sunlights are introduced in other parts of the house, and serve the double purpose of lighting and ventilating. The decorations, which are of the most chaste and elegant description, were designed by and executed under the personal supervision of our clever local artist, Mr Joseph Sharpe, on whom they reflect a world of credit.

The prevailing tints are maize, pink, and green, picked out with gold. The embellishment of the balcony consists of alternate scrolled panels, with puffings of crimson satin, and ornamental trusses bearing miniature caryatides, which support the coping.

All the doors in the building are made to open outwards, and special modes of egress have been provided in case of emergency, while hydrants are placed at convenient stations throughout the building ready for immediate use. All parts of the house are provided with well-ventilated lavatories, &c., stalls and circle having additional accommodation in the shape of cloak and retiring rooms for both ladies and gentlemen. Altogether, the arrangements for the comfort of the audience are thoroughly satisfactory and complete in every respect. The proscenium opening is 27 feet wide, and on each side are two fluted pilasters, surmounted by emblematical figures, which, as well as those on the façade, are the work of Mr Young, Dumbarton-road. Behind the curtain the stage has a depth of 42 feet, with a width equal to that of the auditorium, while the depth of the cellar is 28 feet. The usual galleries are run along the side walls at a height of 25 feet above the stage, and on this level also, but at the very back of the stage, is a spacious painting room. The stage itself is fitted up with all the most modern machinery and appliances that money could procure. The comfort of the artists, too, has received the most careful attention. The dressing-rooms, of which there are a great many, have each a fire-place and a plentiful supply of water. There is also a green-room, band-room, large supers room, property-room, and wardrobe, all of which, as well as the dressing-rooms, are in the rear of the stage, while on either side are a scene dock and carpenter's shop. The lime-light tanks—the finest in Scotland—and gas-meter are in a shed outside the main building; so that, should any accident occur, the audience will be beyond danger. No cost has been spared in the construction of the Theatre, the end in view being completeness in all departments, and that end has certainly been attained. The architect is Mr George Douglas West, George-street, Mr Morrison (Proprietor) himself being the builder. The woodwork was executed by Mr James Morrison, the gas-fitting and ventilating by Messrs D. and G. Graham, the machinery of the stage by Mr Farrel (resident carpenter) and assistants, the upholstering by Messrs F. and T. Smith, Union-street, and the painting by Mr Edgar. The splendid act-drop is the work of Mr John Connor, and when disclosed excited great admiration. It may be added that the walls of the building and also the staircases are constructed of stone.

The Pantomime of *Ali Brba; or the Forty Thieves*, was the opening attraction. Previous, however, to the commencement of the performance the National Anthem was sung by the entire strength of the company. As might have been expected, the house was crowded in all parts.