

Two or three times a week I used to go to the Brit. in Hoxton, or the *gaff* in Shoreditch.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail.*

(Theatrical), to *gaff*, to perform in low theatres. (Prison), a *gaff*, a pretence, imposture. In French slang *gaffe* has the meaning of joke, deceit. (Popular and thieves), "to blow the *gaff*," to divulge a secret.

One of them rushes to Smith, and demands, "Have you been ordering some sewing-machines?"

"Yes; is the *gaff* blown?" was the rejoinder.

"We have had a telegram to surround the station."—*Evening News.*

*Gaff*, in the sense of imposture, and blow the *gaff*, seem to be from *gaffe*, to chatter, or are allied to *gab* or *gag* (which see).

**Gaffer** (athletes), he who trains and "owns" primarily a Sheffield handicap runner—now he who does the same to any "ped" or pedestrian.

**Gag** (theatrical), an actor's or singer's interpolation in the text of a play.

The chorister boys in a western cathedral have been getting into trouble for what in theatrical strollers is called *gagging*—singing things that are not in the programme.—*James Payne, in Illustrated London News.*

Many a play has been saved from utter ruin by the self-possession of the actor or actress,

who, finding himself or herself face to face with failure, has emitted some bright line, some apposite *repartee*, which in one moment has converted defeat into victory.

On its first production, the comedy of "The Jealous Wife" hung fire in the last scene, and was nearly going through altogether, until the quick-witted Mrs. Clive improvised a grotesque fainting fit, which evoked roar upon roar of laughter, put the audience into a thoroughly good humour, gave Garrick time to recover himself, and ultimately ensured a triumphant success.

Similarly Frederick Lemaitre, by sheer force of genius, combined with unique and unrivalled effrontery, at a moment's notice converted a melodramatic ruffian into the incarnation of comedy, and created the character of Robert Macaire.

Paul Bedford's "I believe you, my boy," has travelled all over the globe. Chinamen and Japanese have quoted it, to prove their knowledge of the English language. Two of the most memorable *gags* of which we have any record, occurred in moments of inspiration to Macready.

The famous line at the end of the fourth act of "Richelieu"—

"Oh! for one hour of youth!"

only leaped to his lips, amidst the tumult and excitement of the scene on the night of the