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DALY'S INITIAL DECADE IN THE AMERICAN THEATRE, 1860-1869

by

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is generally recognized that Augustin Daly (1838-1899) was the major transitional figure in almost every facet of American Theatre from pre-Civil War days to this century, the most important transitions being its orientation from romance to realism and from star to director. Even George Bernard Shaw, the most devastating of Daly's critics during the 1890s, conceded that, "Mr. Daly was in his prime an advanced man relatively to his own time and place, and was a real manager, with definite artistic aims which he trained his company to accomplish."[1] Yet, no one else--with the sometime exception of his paid biographer E.A. Dithmar--ever thought of Daly as a man of ideas. The prevailing image is that of one big theatrical animal, using hit-and-miss instinctual attempts at creating theatre, as though he were a Darwinian beast evolving as he clawed his way in the theatrical jungle of the late nineteenth century. Shaw had the sense to realize that Daly had a mind capable of forming ideas and then implementing them.

The aim of this study is to investigate the source, evolution and practical application of Daly's ideas. His aesthetics were seeded in the social and theatrical ferment of New York before the Civil War; they were watered during the conflict and flowered shortly thereafter.

This important decade, the 1860s, has been given short shrift by the Daly scholars. They have concentrated,

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[1] Our Theatre in the Nineties (London: Constable and Company Limited, 1932), II, 208.

almost exclusively, on his productions beginning in late 1869 and in 1879.

It was in 1869, shortly after his marriage to Mary Duff and his dismissal from the New York Times, that Daly leased the Fifth Avenue Theatre which James Fisk Jr. had built for John Brougham. Daly put up six weeks rent in advance, $3,000, and took a two-year lease on the building. He published the following prospectus: "The production of whatever is novel, original, entertaining and unobjectionable, and the revival of whatever is rare and worthy, in the legitimate drama." Some of the actors he hired for the first season were E.L. Davenport and that actor's 19-year-old stepdaughter, Fanny; William Davidge and Mrs. Anne H. Gilbert, both established stock actors; George Holland, J.B. Peck, Clara Jennings, all from Wallack's Theatre, and Agnes Ethel, whose debut Daly had reviewed the previous season with advice to her that she should punctuate her sentences properly. His first production in the new house was T.W. Robertson's Play. It was followed by 21 productions in six months. Fanny Davenport was tried in leading roles, but was evidently not quite ready and, for the most part, played secondary parts. Holland, unable to take the strain of constant rehearsals and performances, suffered a breakdown. Daly's first success came with Agnes Ethel in the title role of Frou-Frou; it ran for 102 performances. He prepared a new play for Miss Ethel to open the second season. She refused the part and Clara Morris was suddenly thrust into fame as Anne Sylvester in Man and Wife. The new play ran for ten weeks and was followed by Saratoga's more than 100 performances. Miss Morris was acting in Saratoga, playing a comic role, and rehearsing days in the title role of Jezebel. This is the way she remembers Daly's method of conducting rehearsals for Jezebel:

> There were a number of characters on in the scene, and Mr. Daly wanted to get me across the stage, so that I should be out of hearing distance of two of the gentlemen. Now, in the old days, the stage-director would simply have said: "Cross to the Right," and you would

have crossed because he told you to; but in Mr. Daly's day you had to have a reason for crossing the drawing room, and so getting out of the two gentlemen's way--and a reason could not be found.

Here are a few of the many rejected ideas: There was no guest for me to cross to in welcoming pantomime; no piano on that side of the room for me to cross to and play on softly; ah, the fireplace! and the pretty warming of one's foot? But no, it was summer-time, that would not do. The ancient fancy-work, perhaps? No, she was a human panther, utterly incapable of so domestic an occupation. The fan forgotten on the mantel-piece? Ah, yes, that was it! You cross the room for that--and then suddenly I reminded Mr. Daly that he had, but a moment before, made a point of having me strike a gentleman sharply on the cheek with my fan.

"Oh, confound it, yes!" he answered, "and that's got to stand--that blow is good!"

The old, old device of attendance upon the lamp was suggested; but the hour of the day was plainly given by one of the characters as three o'clock in the afternoon.

These six are but few of the many rejected reasons for one cross of the stage; still Mr. Daly would not permit a motiveless action, and we came to a momentary standstill. Very doubtfully, I remarked: I suppose a smelling-bottle would not be important enough to cross the room for?

He brightened quickly--clouded over again even more quickly: "Yesss! Nooo! at least, not if it had never appeared before. But let me see--Miss Morris, you must carry that smelling bottle in the preceding scene and--and, yes, I'll just put in a line in your part, making you ask someone to hand it to you--that will nail attention to it, you see! Then in this scene, when you leave these people and cross the room to get your smelling bottle from the mantel, it will be a perfectly natural action on your part, and will give the men their chance of explanation and warning." And at last we were free to move on to other things.[1]

What we have here in 1871 is probably the first recorded instance in American theatre when a director stopped a rehearsal and spent at the very least one hour trying to motivate a cross, trying to get this much appearance of reality on stage. This attention to detail was a standard practice in Daly's rehearsals. Among the successes which followed Jezebel were Divorce and Article 47, in which Miss Morris earned her title,

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[1] Life on the Stage (New York, 1902), pp. 326-27.

"Queen of Spasms." American actors weren't quite ready to submit to Daly's kind of direction yet. Among those who quit his company during this phase of his career were Miss Ethel, Miss Davenport, Miss Morris, Lewis and Davidge.

Daly's final phase in the theatre began in 1879 when he returned from a trip to Europe, where he had seen Irving perform as Louis XI and sent the following impression to his brother Joseph in September 1878:

> In his frenzy--for it appears to be a frenzy with him--to be realistic or Natural--he descends to farceur's tricks. The peculiarity of his voice, which we have heard so often referred to, consists of sudden and unexpected and sometimes absurd rises and falls--and I can only compare it to a man speaking half of a long sentence while drawing in his breath and letting the other half fly out while he expels the breath.[1]

Daly also saw Zola's L'Assomoir in France and didn't care for the acting or scenery, but was enthused about one of the stage effects, writing Joseph in January 1879 that "the only novelty was in the lavoir scene where two wash-women...throw pails full of warm water (actually) over each other and stand dripping before the audience."[2] Margaret Hall, a friend of Mrs. Daly, had written that when she saw Daly immediately upon his return, "he looked years and years younger...talkative in the extreme...a new, an unknown Augustin Daly."[3] This had been his first trip abroad. He plunged into the opening of his new theatre by hiring actors with little or no experience for minor roles and chorus work. He hired well-trained and experienced actors who were not stars for leads. He set out to teach the inexperienced players to act and treated them like factory workers. (He once had his theatre compared to one of Andrew Carnegie's factories and at another time compared himself to a general leading an army.) His experienced players were John

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[1]Lincoln Center Library for the Performing Arts, Daly Correspondence MSS, I.

[2]Ibid.

[3]"Personal Recollections of Augustin Daly," Theatre, 1905, V, 153.

Drew and Ada Rehan (both had acted together at the Arch Street Theatre in Philadelphia under Drew's mother), Mrs. Anne H. Gilbert and James Lewis. They were to become the "Big Four" at Daly's Theatre and although only Miss Rehan, his mistress, remained the full 20 years that he ran the theatre, they stayed together for the bulk of the time, creating the ensemble work for which Daly became famous.

From 1869 until his death in 1899 were years of enormous success for Daly; he had already worked out his ideas, both in theory and in practice, and was enjoying the fruits of them. But it had been in 1867 that Daly, then 29 years old, wrote and directed his most famous work, Under the Gaslight. And during the 1860s he had been drama critic for five newspapers, the Times, Sun, Express, Citizen and Courier. This crucial decade in his development has not been studied; his more than 1,000 critical pieces have not been reexamined.

There have been three dissertations written about Daly in the last ten years. The most recent, The Nature of the Scenic Practices in Augustin Daly's New York Productions: 1869-1899, was completed in 1968 by Ronald Michael Reed at the University of Oregon. The other two are Realism in Augustin Daly's Productions of Contemporary Plays by John Valjean Cutler, 1962, University of Illinois, and The Management of Augustin Daly's Stock Company, 1869-1899 by Marion Victor Michalak, 1961, Indiana University. The only other recent study is David Schaal's "The Rehearsal Situation at Daly's Theatre" in the March 1966 issue of Educational Theatre Journal. Marvin Felheim's The Theatre of Augustin Daly, 1956, is primarily a study of Daly as a dramatist; it was published from the only other dissertation on this subject. Joseph Daly's biography of his brother was published in 1917. None of these works make more than passing mention of the critical writing. None of them credit Daly with having evolved an aesthetic which he then pursued. Cutler, on the contrary, found no existing evidence that Daly consciously aimed at a realistic style, but that he only wished to be theatrically effect-

ive. Daly is partially responsible for this image. After he became a producer in 1869, he threw a net of secrecy about his work and his ideas. He thought of theatre as magic and to talk about the process was to destroy the effect. One must go to the critical writings for an articulation of his theories.

The ideas came as a reaction to the standard practices he detested in the theatre of his time. The manner in which a play was prepared then is comparable to the way in which a production is thrown together today at most of the leading opera houses of the world. Lines of business, in which performers play only stock roles, become the necessary and established method. W.B. Wood, who retired as an actor in the 1850s, wrote in his memoirs that it was not unusual for a star to arrive at the theatre on the same day as performance. This is how he described the chaos that prevailed at rehearsals:

> The rehearsals, therefore, so indispensible towards the production of entertainments worthy of an audience, became the strangest exhibitions that can well be conceived. Instead of a quiet and orderly exercise of memory and judgement, and a careful observation of the effects, trial of power, situations and machinery, preparatory to the performance of the piece, it was not uncommon to hear even the principal parts read for the first time on the very day of performance, amid the lounging about and picking up what they chose or could for their duties in the evening. The star of the night, if present at all, sitting at the prompter's table, either writing or affecting to write letters of vast importance, or gossiping with some visitor, to the utter destruction of silence and discipline.[1]

Such rehearsal conditions were the norm when Daly entered the theatre. There were, however, some significant exceptions. From these exceptions Daly learned much, taking the first steps toward the formulation of his own theories and his theatre practice.

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[1] Personal Recollections of the Stage (Philadelphia, 1855). pp. 391-92.

CHAPTER II

EARLY IDEAS

Shortly after Daly turned 21 on July 20, 1859, he decided he had had enough of clerking. For the past five years, he had been working for "one concern after another."[1] Now, sometime in the late fall or early winter of 1859, he headed for Printing House Square, the city's publishing district from which the bulk of New York City's 160 newspapers emanated; he went to 15 Spruce Street, just east of City Hall. There, he presented himself and samples of his writing to James L. Smith, the editor of the Courier,[2] the first Sunday newspaper in America, one which at this time featured the sensational and detailed aspects of the news and of life in the city. Daly's younger brother Joseph, remembering this crucial incident some fifty years later, briefly described the interview:

> As James Smith...sat in his sanctum preparing his next issue, there appeared to him a remarkably handsome and ingenuous youth with brilliant eyes and dark curling hair, whose demeanor was modest, notwithstanding the burning eagerness with which he announced his business...
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> The result of young Daly's visit was his immediate engagement upon the Courier at a small salary as general writer.[3]

New York in 1859 was becoming a metropolis. Its growing population had passed the 800,000 mark and the city was

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[1]Joseph F. Daly, The Life of Augustin Daly (New York, 1917), p. 12. The obituary notice in the Herald (June 8, 1899, p.2) noted that Daly started work in "a house furnishing shop in Maiden Lane to learn business."

[2]The name of this newspaper changed during the decade from Sunday Courier to Saturday Evening Courier.

[3]Joseph Daly, Life, pp. 31-32. The salary was $8 weekly.

pushing northward to Madison Square where the Fifth Avenue Hotel had just been constructed in white marble and was being praised as the most magnificent hotel in the world. The Courier wasn't interested. Its main source of news was in Five Points, an area off Broadway along Worth Street with narrow, crooked roads bearing such colorful names as "Cow Bay" and "Murderer's Alley." The front pages of the weekly during 1859 informed its readers about "The Gamblers and The Gambling Dens"[1] or "Tiger Mill, The Chain-Gang Operator."[2] A short article which appeared in the paper during 1859 indicates the type of story Daly was covering as a cub reporter:

> A German lad of seventeen, named William Spennale, although himself a baker, could get no work, and consequently was without bread. In his desperation, on Friday night, he took a large dose of arsenic at No. 174 West Thirtieth street, of which he died about midnight.[3]

The newspaper catered to the working classes and was considered to be radical, but the editors preferred to call it an "independent journal." Daly continued to write general news, features and serialized fiction during his employment, which lasted until 1867. But this aspect of his journalism became secondary to his overwhelmingly predominant interest in the theatre. Within a few weeks after he was hired, the position of dramatic editor was vacated and Daly stepped into it, according to his brother.[4] His first theatrical piece, unsigned, apparently appeared in the February 12, 1860 issue of the Courier. The column was titled "The Cricket." After an apology for his age and inexperience, Daly attacked one of the leading actors of the time, George Vandenhoff. The Clipper, the predecessor of today's Variety, had a number of articles during 1860 condemning the way critics were hired, their lack of training and the self-serving manner in which they performed their duties. One of the articles on "indiscriminate praise" includes a sentence from one of Daly's re-

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[1]March 13. [2]April 10. [3]Feb. 13, p. 5.
[4]Joseph Daly, Life, p. 32.

views. The Clipper scolds the Courier for printing that "Mr. Peters, as Mr. Blenkinsapp, 'could not have been surpassed by the late Mr. Burton himself.'"[1] There is little doubt that Daly was selfserving as a critic and that he fell into the position by luck, but was he properly trained for the post? Judging by the prevailing yardstick, one would have to say he measured better than most. It should prove interesting to inspect his qualifications before examining his first published utterances on the theatre.

"When he began to write theatrical reviews for the old Sunday Courier...he had ideas and the power to express them," E.A.Dithmar wrote in 1896.[2] Dithmar, who was then a critic for the Times, was moonlighting for Daly and the remark appears in a commissioned biography. Dithmar names the four plays Daly had written before his first produced (December 8, 1862) and extant work, Leah the Forsaken.

The first of these plays, a one-act farce called A Bachelor's Wardrobe, was written in 1856 when Daly was 18 for W. E. Burton, whose theatre Joseph Daly credits along with Wallack's Theatre as being a major force in his brother's theatrical training.[3] Dithmar wrote in an article for the Times that "Mr. Daly used to say that he felt more strongly the influence of Burton than that of any predecessor," adding that Burton's productions were "less formal and more life-like than those at Wallack's."[4] Burton (1804-1860) came to New York the year before the Dalys moved there from Norfolk. He opened Burton's Chamber Street Theatre in 1848. He managed for eight years to resist the prevailing star system and be successful both artistically and financially. Newspapers of the period wrote of him with respect and praise. The Chamber Street Theatre seated only 800. When he moved in 1856 to

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[1] Oct. 27, 1860, p. 222.

[2] Memories of Daly's Theatres (New York, 1897), p. 9.

[3] Life, p. 19: "Here Daly learned his art."

[4] June 18, 1899, "Illustrated Magazine," p. 5.

the new Metropolitan Theatre on Broadway and Bond Street, he found that quality and ensemble playing was insufficient to fill what was called one of the largest theatres in the world, probably seating about 5,000. He tried to bring in stars to attract the necessary larger audiences, but failed and retired from management in 1858. The type of plays produced on Chambers Street, whether classical or contemporary, were satirical, extravagant, topical and included native humor. Burton was especially noted for maintaining strong elements of realism in his burlesque characterizations. Daly's first play was apparently an attempt to approximate these qualities. Joseph Daly called it "an effort wholly original and boyish."[1] Nothing else is mentioned of this first try at authorship except for the following description of Burton's rejection:

> Nothing could exceed the graciousness of the veteran's reception of the youthful visitor. He promised to give the play a reading. It was returned without loss of time, accompanied by a note pointing out its unsuitableness for production, but adding that it evinced a sense of humor that gave promise for the future.[2]

While Burton was in his prime, James W. Wallack (1795-1864) purchased the Lyceum Theatre (1852) and introduced his own reforms against the star system. Both men were English-born actors who managed their own stock companies. Wallack paid greater attention to scenery, costumes and other details on both sides of the curtain, as Daly was to do when he formed his own stock companies. A further influence was to emanate from Wallack's Theatre in 1863 when the manager's son, Lester, continued in his father's direction. This was to be the production of Rosedale, which Lester wrote, acted in and managed. But it was during the elder Wallack's management that Daly saw Mrs. John Wood becoming the rage as a burlesque actress during the 1856-1857 season. It was for her and this company that Daly wrote his next farce, Master and Man, and had his second rejection.

Joseph Daly and Dithmar are both oddly negligent about

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[1] Life, p. 22. [2] Ibid.

the next company to which Daly was attracted and for which he wrote his next two plays. Laura Keene (1820-1873) also came from England. She had acted with Mme. Vestris there and was brought to New York by Wallack; she left him to manage her own theatre in New York from 1855 to 1863. She conducted rehearsals under such strict discipline that she earned the sobriquet of "Duchess." She did not follow lines of business, casting actors in varied roles. She was sued by an actor, George H. Jordon, because, he claimed in court, she tried to force him to play a role not in his line.[1] Joseph Jefferson, who was hired by Miss Keene sight unseen and introduced to New York in her company, refused to play Puck in Midsummer Night's Dream, insisting on his line and playing Bottom; Miss Keene herself then played Puck. He bridled under her rule and left the company to become a star. His autobiography describes incidents in which "she was most indefatigable in her rehearsals and spared neither time nor pains in planning her effects." He was furious though when "she insisted upon arranging the business and conducting the rehearsals" of a play he had co-authored.[2] It was for Jefferson that Daly wrote his third rejected farce, Joe's Wife, during the 1857-1858 season. He was later to write about Jefferson that seeing him perform was like peeping through a window and watching a man in his own home. It was not only Jefferson's acting which attracted Daly earlier, but the stock company itself. He wrote his fourth play, Napoleon III, for the company with a special role for Miss Keene, Empress Eugenie. Joseph Daly wrote that "within a week after news of the attempt by Orsini and his confederates upon the life of Napoleon III reached New York, a play on the subject was in the hands of Laura Keene."[3] The Associated Press had the news to the New York dailies in time

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[1] Herald, Jan. 6, 1860, p. 8.

[2] The Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson (New York, 1890), pp. 189-90.

[3] Life, p. 47.

for their January 29, 1858 issues. Napoleon III with the empress was attending the Italian opera when Count Felice Orsini and three other Italians attempted to assassinate him, hoping to remove an opponent to the liberation of Italy. Eugenie was described as a strong-willed and attractive woman, a type of heroine Daly would use again and again in his plays. The theatrical columns of the time noted frequently that Miss Keene's judgement in selecting plays was bad. Jefferson, in his autobiography, wrote that "she invariably allowed herself to be too much influenced by their literary merit or the delicacy of their treatment" rather than "a sympathetic story, containing human interest, and told in action rather than in words."[1] On the evening of the assassination report, Miss Keene was playing Louisa de Lascours in The Sea of Ice. The next evening was her benefit; she played Josephine de Beaurepaire in White Lies. It was only natural that Daly, 20, would think she would be flattered with the role of an empress of France. She wasn't. The manuscript was lost and Daly despaired of playwrighting again until 1862.

There is a slight contradiction inherent in using the four plays Daly wrote before becoming a drama critic in conjunction with the "stars" of "ensemble companies" he admired. Burton, Mrs. Wood, Jefferson and Miss Keene were certainly "stars," but not in the sense of the word as it applied to the theatre during the 1850s. Stars travelled from one company to another or formed companies primarily to show themselves off. The stock companies of Wallack, Burton and Miss Keene were different in that production elements and the other actors were afforded as much attention as themselves. And this is what attracted Daly to them and formed the basis of his early theatrical training.

Daly's other experiences in theatre prior to 1860 can be summed up briefly. The first play he saw as a child in Norfolk was Rockwood with James E. Murdoch playing "a dashing

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[1] Autobiography, pp. 184-85.

highwayman." As a youth in New York, he joined a number of amateur theatrical groups, managing and playing the title role in Julius Caesar for one of them. In 1856, after his play was rejected by Burton, he rented a theatre in Brooklyn for one night and managed a varied program which included the second act of Macbeth and Toodles, John Brougham's adaptation of Dombey and Son by Dickens, a play made famous by Burton during this decade. He was to have played the porter in Macbeth, but was busy elsewhere at his entrance cue; he played a small role in Toodles, that of George Acorn. Joseph Daly wrote that these two roles, Caesar and Acorn, were the only ones Daly ever played on a stage.

Two roles as an actor, two productions under his management, four plays authored and a good deal of theatre attendance--this was the equipment Daly brought to bear upon his first column as a dramatic editor. The springboard for his professional theatrical plunge was a book by Vandenhoff, Leaves from an Actor's Notebook.

The memoir is a rather tedious justification and puff of the actor's life. Vandenhoff is probably best remembered today as the actor who coached the ex-Mrs. Forrest for the stage. He acted with Charlotte Cushman, but the only incident he relates is to complain of her saying "kill" instead of "murder" as the Queen speaking to his Hamlet in the line: "What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?" He concedes that her acting improved after her association with Macready, but found her Lady Macbeth "too animal...wants intellectual confidence ...relies too much on physical energy." He was horrified by her Nancy Sykes in Oliver Twist: "Too true, painful, fearfully natural, dreadfully intense."[1] Once, while playing in Lady of Lyons, someone in the audience shouted, "Kiss her! by____, Kiss her!" He refused to go on until the man was thrown out of the theatre. His comment: "We must regulate our feelings

[1] Leaves (New York, 1860), pp. 195-96.

or at least, the inopportune expression of them!"[1] He acted with Macready and found a review which implied that he was the better actor. His advice to anyone considering the theatre as a profession: "Go to anything, or anywhere, that will give you an honest and decent livelihood, rather than go on the stage."[2] This was not the advice Daly wanted to hear at this juncture in his life. Vandenhoff had decided to leave acting and go into law: "An actor is great, or nothing."[3] His professional reputation among other actors was not too high. Lester Wallack, in his memoirs, recounts that Vandenhoff was to play Iago to the Othello of Lester's cousin, James W. Wallack Jr. Five minutes before curtain time, a note was delivered to the manager, William Rufus Blake, stating that Vandenhoff would not perform because his name did not "appear in the bills in equal type with Mr. James Wallack's." Blake read the note in front of the curtain, announcing the new Iago and adding: "We leave it to you to give Mr. Vandenhoff his just deserts whenever he shall appear before you again."[4]

Daly may have had Blake's admonition in mind when he sat down to review the Leaves from an Actor's Notebook. After an awkward and self-conscious beginning, Daly's Cricket tore into Vandenhoff:

> My dear V., you speak and act as though something else were at the foundation of all this sorrow for the decline of the stage and the standard of public demand. Mayhap, you did not receive your full share of public approval, according to your own ideas, or perhaps "greater were coming." Oh! I don't know. I say, that rant is not appreciated, or, I should put it, desired. Can you tell me where rant is tolerated in a first class theatre? Does it not with us constitute that which is scornfully denominated "old school?" You are called of that class, and you will soon stand alone in the glory. All you can say, all you can prove to the contrary, the actor has improved in his calling, and nature cries today from the stage, as she never cried before...[5]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 212-13. [2] Ibid., p. 330. [3] Ibid., p. 331.
[4] Memories of Fifty Years (New York, 1889), pp. 140-41.
[5] Courier, Feb. 12, 1860, p. 5.

Daly went on to praise three stock companies in this column, those of Laura Keene, James W. Wallack and W.E. Burton. He praises the acting of Edwin Booth, Joseph Jefferson, James E. Murdoch, E.L. Davenport, Matilda Heron and Fanny Davenport and the promise of Sara Stevens and Jane Coombes. He defended melodrama, saying that at the least, it inspired "a love for good and appropriate mise en scène." He wrote that the present theatre could not subsist on Shakespeare and the classics alone, praising An American Cousin and Uncle Tom's Cabin as being healthy for the theatre.

The article is on the whole studied, unnatural, studded with trivial quotations and apologies. The manner does not suit the matter. He is praising nature in an unnatural way. The taste is being formed, but not the expression. There are fragments in the review, particularly in the passage quoted above, in which Daly does sound the note of his future writing. But the bulk of it is rendered in the style of the following sentence:

> I acknowledge all that may, perhaps, be said in regard to the retired actor's benefit of experience--I cannot pretend to deny that 'knowledge is power'--I admit that generally youth should study silence, award acquiescence, cherish reverence before the words of sober years; but, nevertheless, youth, silence, consent, respect to the contrary, I am quite certain that, in this present case, Mr. Vandenhoff is at loggerheads with the right side of the question.[1]

The question was not all that clear in Daly's mind. He was on the side of "nature." He did not care for the school of acting which placed diction above feeling, or presented craft for its own sake. Just how closely should the stage approximate real life?

What was "real life" itself like in 1860? Theatre, of course, does not exist in a vacuum. New York City that year before the Civil War was in a state of fantastic excitement, more dramatic than any of the plays being presented

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[1] Ibid.

on its stages. On the political scene, hearings were being held on Harper's Ferry while the debate on secession raged (even New York considered seceding from the union). While the jobless and hungry roamed the streets and immigrants crowded into the teeming tenement houses, a conspicuous display of wealth was being paraded by the rising business class. Yet, more than a full third of the city's population was interested primarily--and for a short time, it seems, only--in the announced visit of the 19-year-old Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, King of England. The rumor of the first visit of royalty to America was reported in March, 1860. Reports of letters from Edward's mother, Queen Victoria, and President James Buchanan, were being circulated in the press. Then the official word was out. He would be travelling to Canada and then America and would enter New York City on October 12. He would travel "without royal recognition" under the name of Lord Renfrew. Nonsense--three hundred thousand persons lined Broadway from Bowling Green to the Fifth Avenue Hotel where he was to stay on the afternoon of his arrival. That evening he would be feted with a torchlight parade and then introduced to "high" society at a grand ball at the Academy of Music. A committee of 400 was selected to arrange the ball; each member was given 10 tickets to distribute. Each of the 4,000 invited had to be screened by a smaller and more select committee. Every detail of the visit was reported on the front pages of every newspaper in the city.

This ambivalent state--a yearning for royalty coupled with a celebration of free individuals working together--was reflected in the theatre. Audiences and critics wanted their stars; they also wanted ensemble playing. They wanted to retain their past as they scrambled toward the future. Reality for New York City in 1860 was more glitter than grime. The rug had not been unfolded yet. The mobs were quiet and the display of wealth, pomp and rhetoric were on the surface. Soon it would change. The Civil War would begin in the same glitter of prose; mothers would be pictured sending their sons

off to fight for glory and battle would be pictured in romantic terms. Then, by mid-1863, a new consciousness would erupt and the rhetoric would dissolve in the new reality.[1]

This was the milieu in which Vanity Fair began publication in 1860 with Artemus Ward (Charles F. Browne) as editor. The magazine promoted the new force in the theatre at the same time that it satirized it. In one of the first issues, it noted the craze for stronger doses of reality on the stage:

> SOMETHING WE ARE WAITING FOR
>
> If Miss Laura Keene's Bill-Editor continues the extraordinarily copious style of advertising he had adopted in the case of "The Colleen Bawn," we shall shortly expect a pendant to Miss Robertson's song of "The Pretty Girl Milking Her Cow," in the shape of a
>
> Real Cow
> With
> Milk of the Period!!
>
> Milk of the Period.....Mr. Peters.[2]

Daly read Vanity Fair avidly and was to pattern his writing style after Artemus Ward. But before that influence was to take effect, he was to be dazzled by the greatest theatrical experience of the nineteenth century, the New York season of 1860-1861.

Young Daly was not familiar at first hand with the work of Edwin Forrest, Charlotte Cushman and the maturing style of Edwin Booth. All three had been absent from the New York stage for the past three years.

Forrest (1806-1872) was the first to return. He opened on September 17, 1860 at the gigantic Niblo's Garden, a theatre which had primarily housed opera, ballet and variety shows to

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[1] Irving H. Bartlett, The American Mind in the Mid-Nineteenth Century (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1967), p. 114, wrote that the existing ambivalence in American society before the war was caused by the spread of business and cities with a continued yearning for pastoral simplicity.

[2] April 7, 1860, p. 232.

fill its 3,500 seats. He received half the gross for one hundred nights, performing only on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. He opened with Hamlet, then performed in Lear, Othello, Macbeth and The Gladiator. Vanity Fair criticized him for his departure from accepted texts, for example "seige of troubles" for "sea of troubles."[1] Porter's Spirit of the Times found his death scene "however truthful it may be, was not according to our taste; we can see no reason why horrors in looks and contortions should be forced upon us, simply because they are lifelike,"[2] but in the following issue states, "with all his faults, we hold him as the best actor on the stage."[3] Artemus Ward went to see Othello in December and told his Vanity Fair readers:

> Edwin Forrest is a grate acter. I thot I saw Otheller before me all the time he was actin, & when the curtin fell, I found my spectacles was still mistened with salt-water, which had run from my eyes while poor Desdemony was dyin. Bessy Jane--Bessy Jane! let us pray that our domestic bliss may never be busted up by a Iago![4]

Although Forrest added a great deal of detail in sound and gesture to his characterizations, his brand of realism did not extend to scenery and costumes, nor to ensemble in acting. Audiences came to see his muscular body, hear his thrilling voice and be in the presence of America's first great stage personality. They filled the house consistently during the season.

The audiences did not flock to the Winter Garden to welcome Charlotte Cushman (1816-1876). They apparently resented her long sojourns abroad. She opened on October 1, 1860 in a play selected more for its title than its merit, The Stranger. Then she gave her famous characterization of Meg Merrilies in Guy Mannering and starred in Henry VIII, Macbeth and Romeo and Juliet, playing Romeo. She saved for her return engagement the role of Nancy Sykes, which rattled

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[1]Sept. 20, 1860, p. 167. [2]Sept. 22, 1860, p. 404.
[3]Sept. 29, 1860, p. 460. [4]Dec. 15, 1860, p. 291.

the sensibilities of the critic at Porter's Spirit. "We cannot but wonder that a woman of her talent and experience should insist on playing not once alone, but repeatedly such a thoroughly disgusting character as Nancy Sykes,"[1] he wrote. But this critic and the Vandenhoffs were getting to be more in the minority; the bulk of the critics were ebullient.

Edwin Booth (1833-1893) followed Cushman in the Winter Garden, playing to slim houses at first until crowds filled the theatre to acclaim him one of the greatest actors who had ever appeared on the stage. He played Richelieu, Richard III, Iago--trying to avoid competition with Forrest. But the older star would have none of this; when Booth played Hamlet, Forrest brought it back into his repertory. When Booth turned to Richelieu, Forrest quickly followed suit. There was really no contest. Those devoted to Forrest couldn't see Booth as an actor and Booth's fans thought Forrest belonged in a circus, no matter how well either of them performed. Yet a good part of the critics and audiences were glad to have both. The Sunday Times saw no contradiction in calling Forrest "one of the world's greatest actors" and Booth, "the best tragedian who has trodden the American stage in our time," in the same theatre column.[2] New York was expanding and feeling expansive. The critics were overjoyed at the progress which Booth had made as an actor, praising the refinement of his style. When his first engagement of the season was over, Booth joined Cushman in Philadelphia, where they played Macbeth on the same stage but in different worlds. Cushman claimed that he was too effete. Booth wondered why her Lady Macbeth didn't actually do the murder; she was apparently the more able for the job. They returned separately to New York for new engagements, repeating Macbeth once for an actor benefit at the Academy of Music.

While Cushman and Booth were in Philadelphia, Jefferson took over the Winter Garden for his first starring venture in

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[1]March 16, 1861, p. 96. [2]Dec. 9, 1860, p. 2.

New York. He opened Christmas Eve in an early version of Rip Van Winkle with an afterpiece called The Married Rake. He played eight other pieces during his short engagement. The Times said his burlesque of Mazeppa kept the house "in a constant roar of merriment...Mr. Jefferson was truly excellent."[1] The Tribune also praised his acting, finding his Rip one of his best characterizations, but the play itself "utterly unworthy."[2] The Sunday Times (no relation then to the daily paper) thought comedians "seem slightly out of place in a metropolitan theatre as stars" and preferred Jefferson's acting when he was with Miss Keene, "a perfect part of perfect wholes."[3]

These were but four of the many stars who were creating their sensations in New York City that season. One could pay from 25¢ to $1--if tickets were available--to hear Adelina Patti sing Bellini's La Sonambula at the Academy of Music or visit Barnum's American Museum with the Prince of Wales to gape at the Siamese Twins and sit through a series of tableaux called Joseph and His Brethren. If one were to think that the stock company ideal of ensemble acting was lost in this hullaballo, one might be excused. But one would be wrong. Wallack's and Keene's were causing their own excitement and, perhaps, more directly influencing the future of theatre in America.

Wallack's opened its new season on September 13 on Broome Street (the following year it would move north to Broadway and 13th Street). It offered a new Scribe adaptation, John Brougham's new comedy, Playing with Fire, and a series of farce and comedy revivals, including She Stoops to Conquer and The Rivals. The company also had a run with a new play by Lester Wallack, Central Park, which featured a skating scene. The company, now managed by Lester, included W.H. Norton, Fanny Morant and Madeline Henriques. Wallack was toasted as

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[1]Jan. 9, 1861, p. 4. [2]Dec. 25, 1860, p. 8.
[3]Dec. 30, 1860. p. 2.

the handsomest man in New York and Miss Henriques was celebrated for her beauty, but it was the company's style and the precision of the acting that drew the young and fashionable audiences.

Keene's offered melodrama and spectacle. The season opened with a thriller, The Monkey Boy, and was followed by The Lady of Glanmire. The company offered a one-act version of The Beggar's Opera before the theatre closed briefly to rehearse its most ambitious project to date, Seven Sisters. It was advertised as a "Grand Operatic, Spectacular, Musical, Terpsichorean, Diabolical, Farcical Burletta in three acts," which would conclude with "a specimen of scenic art never before attempted on the American stage, and gotten up at a cost of Three Thousand Dollars, called Birth of the Butterfly in the Bower of Ferns." The extravaganza opened on November 26 and played for 253 consecutive performances, the longest unbroken run to that time in New York. The thin plot line involves the visit of Satan's seven daughters to New York. The stage effects drew praise from all the critics; they were created by James Roberts, formerly of Covent Garden (he was later to work at Daly's Theatre).

Daly's biographers are strangely silent about his reaction to this flurry of theatrical activity, but copies of the Courier have survived which cover the latter half of the season. They include Daly's comments about all of the stars who appeared and contain the beginning statements of his evolving aesthetic.

Of the three major stars, Forrest, Cushman and Booth, Daly had unqualified praise for Cushman's acting; his reaction to Forrest and Booth were as ambivalent as the times. He detested the system by which all three acted, as his reviews of three other stars, Joseph Jefferson, George Clarke and Jane Coombes, and of the theatres which featured stars--Niblo's and the Winter Garden--will attest. His theatrical ideals were being approximated at Wallack's and Keene's; yet he could be his harshest and most confused when writing of

these two theatres.

His review of Charlotte Cushman's personation of Nancy Sykes in Oliver Twist attacks the adaptation of the novel as "a trashy hash of incidents and words" upon which fine scenic effects and acting that offers "fidelity to nature" somehow survive. His description of Cushman's portrayal presents his ideal style of acting:

> The unbending iron of her features, stern in their resolve, but more terrible in their calmness, never once melting into a smile, but more than once crossed by so fearful a shadow of what in earlier years might have been one, as to make the beholder shudder to look upon the wreck of a girlhood before him. The tawdry material of her dress, yet its positive carelessness, is another feature of her conception of the character in the most perfect keeping with nature. Her walk--not as an auditor can sit and look upon that bold swinging gait, that half shamble, half swagger,without conceding to this wonderful student of nature an approach to reality and truth utterly beyond parallel or reach. Miss Cushman's exit in the scene on London Bridge, was really as fine a study as we have beheld upon the stage. In her first entrance, also, with the basket upon her arm, and the key swinging upon her finger, the actress was utterly lost in her great embodiment of the character she portrayed...these are the tableaus of nature which everybody ought to see. Her piteous wail "I am not fit to die" as she is dragged to her death, still echoes in our own ear, and on its utterance chills every heart that hears it.[1]

It is the portrayal of low life with external details, almost photographic copies of that life, added to a release of raw emotion which excites Daly at this point. He was disappointed when Cushman cut short her engagement in March, stating that it was probably due to the poor attendance, which he attributed to nationalistic feelings on the part of audience and critics who attacked "her snobbishness towards her national duties."[2]

During one of his rare interviews during the 1880s, Daly told a reporter that he had begun his career as a critic by comparing Booth and Forrest. Either foggy memory or wishful compensation may have produced this statement. Daly had

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[1]March 3, 1861, p. 5. [2]March 10, 1861, p. 5.

actually refused to compare the two stars. He did discuss the contest taking place though, stating that "comparisons are always 'odorous,'" that he would refrain from them simply because "there could be none."[1] In one of his truly perceptive lines, Daly defined Forrest as "more grand than great."[2] He appeared to like Forrest most in the role of Jack Cade, which Daly thought "especially well suited" the actor: "His personification of the Captain of the Commons is a picture of grandest beauty, and a study more faithful to nature than half the rest of his impersonations."[3] He complained on a number of occasions that Forrest had sacrificed his vocal qualities in an attempt to "tame" his voice. He also complained frequently about the productions in which Forrest appeared. He found the supers in Damon and Pythias, "in their running and shouting, in their absurdly mechanical motions in the senate chamber, are simply ridiculous."[4] His earlier review of Forrest's Richelieu may suggest some of the ambivalence he had about the actor:

> Undoubtedly Mr. Forrest is a great actor, and that was acknowledged twenty-five years ago, when he was nearly as young a man as his present rival, and is far from being denied now; but Mr. Forrest can do some things far better than others. At the very starting point let us say that we do not deny Mr. Forrest's Richelieu to be a most striking performance, far from that, we willingly acknowledge it, yet we do not by any means consider it the great one that not a few think it. In the very first place Mr. Forrest has a most powerful master in his possession of a voice which to him has most probably become a terror; he has tried all sorts of systems upon it to tame it, to quiet it, to make it yield soft accent and tender tone to emotions which only such should express; he has, in fact, mastered it so far, but we imagine it must be almost with a terror that he approaches such passages as require the best power of that same voice to give them due effect; this is caused by the fear that if it should only for a moment be allowed to bellow out in all its old freedom what an almost impossibility it would be to get it beneath his control again; thus he does not give certain

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[1] Feb. 3, 1861, p. 5. [2] Feb. 24, 1861, p. 5.
[3] March 3, 1861, p. 5. [4] Jan. 13, 1861, p. 5.

> lines of the text with that brilliancy, that necessary fire of tone which to us seems indispensible from the part. We cite, as an instance of this, his comparative weakness in the tremendous scenes of the fourth act. The exhaustion, also, which is so truly a sequel to exertion in so aged a frame as that of the Cardinal--as he is represented at this period of his life and in this play--is by means an artistic study as portrayed by Forrest--neither is his walk (a most ungraceful shuffle) or his bearing that which we are led to expect in one who speaks of his "whitening hairs."
>
> It is in his soliloquies, however, that Forrest redeems himself; and in these he is "entirely great."[1]

Although he wouldn't compare Booth and Forrest, he didn't find it "odorous" to compare the two productions and found Forrest's "smoother...than the one up the road" and certain actors at Niblo's Gardens "more pleasing" and "genial" than at the Winter Garden.

Daly also had no qualms about comparing Edwin Booth's acting with past performances of James Wallack. In the role of Sir Edward Mortimer in Iron Chest, Daly thought that "Wallack is without rival, and in his peculiar powers of poetic declamation, Mr. Booth does not reach him." He also thought that Booth was better than Wallack in the title role of Don Caesar de Bazan and called it "the most natural, perfect, and spirited impersonation he has yet given us."[2] Daly felt more at ease in writing about "Mr. B." than he did in dealing with the older actors. He thought the Winter Garden was unwise to bring Booth back so soon after his initial success in the fall of 1860, saying that his repertory was too limited. He called him "the best tragedian of the day," but oddly defends him against critics by stating, "who claims that Edwin Booth is now the greatest actor living?" He said that his performance as Macbeth only gave "comparative satisfaction," that it was not suited to his manner, but did have "flashes of genius."[3] Daly was especially critical of the productions in which Booth appeared, noting that the stage machinery did not work properly

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[1] Feb. 3, 1861, p. 5. [2] Feb. 10, 1861, p. 5.
[3] Ibid.

and that actors working with him were adversely influenced, that each one played his own star bit without any ensemble acting taking place. He liked Booth least in John Howard Payne's Brutus, "very possibly his weakest and most unequal personation."[1] Backstage workers on the production were "vile amateurs at their post," ten minutes late on one cue and then two minutes late on another. Daly graded Booth's roles in this manner: "Hamlet, Iago, Sir Giles and Richelieu, step by step a grade above each other." But better yet, Shylock; it was the only performance which drew unqualified praise:

> No terms of praise can picture or do even cold justice to his entire action in the "trial scene." His exit, crushed, spurned, and taunted, feeble--as if the chill of death were bursting from every pore of his skin and the finger of the Destroyer was tracing his irrevocable marks in every line of his face, was a picture of art, a study of nature immeasurably above word painting.[2]

There were four other stars reviewed by Daly during this period. In each of his appraisals, he would forcefully state what he only hinted at in his reviews of Cushman, Forrest and Booth, that the star system was destructive to talent and full theatrical enjoyment.

During this entire decade of his critical writing, Daly most admired Joseph Jefferson. His warmest applause was for "our precious Joseph." During the 1860-1861 season, Jefferson pleased Daly most in his "superb burlesque of our own popular favorites." He explained why the other critics may not have been too happy with Jefferson's work:

> Mr. Jefferson, in playing a star engagement in this city, labors under two difficulties; our people seem to have a queer idea that comedy is not standard enough, nor any single comedian (no matter how very excellent) important or deserving enough to rank as a "star"--and this is very true indeed, for comedy, or burlesque is only endurable when all the parts are personated as they merit by a company who appreciate the humors they are interpreting...the comedian must be a miracle of funniness if he can be triumphant and successful in the midst of "sich!"[3]

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[1]Jan. 27, 1861. [2]Feb. 17, 1861. [3]Jan. 13, 1861.

"Sich" for "such" he picked up from Artemus Ward. But his campaign against the star system was pure Daly. No other newspaper critic of the time was attacking it so directly. He was more explicit in Jefferson's case in another article. In commenting on the end of Jefferson's season, Daly remembers the actor's work with Laura Keene's company from the prior year and writes:

> Mr. Jefferson now leaves us, and we express a hope that he will soon return to us; but rather as a permanent institution in some good stock company, than as a "star," where the contrast of his own acting with those who surround him is so great as to mar the pleasure one feels in witnessing his comic efforts.[1]

Another comic star was hailed shortly after that, John S. Clarke, in Tom Taylor's Babes in the Wood. And Daly's appraisal was even more explicit in regard to the star institution:

> A good comedian now-a-days is a Rara-avis. Extravagant clowns, burlesque actors who hideously distort nature, and ridiculous nonentities, are plenty. But the genuine player, who photographs the fools and follies of the world as they exist, and gives us the picture without any other retouching than that which is absolutely requisite to bring out the proper colors--he is the rare bird.
>
> Mr. Clarke indeed is an example for comedians. His exits are studies, and his entrances artistic triumphs. His drunken scene was uproariously funny without being in the least extravagant, and his sober acting was remarkable for an effective quietness such as has been rarely seen upon the New York stage. We have a single objection to Mr. Clarke. He is a star. We abominate stars. Were he to settle himself into a well organized stage company--he would be one of the first favorites which our public would be glad to acknowledge.[2]

This is Daly's strongest statement on the star system; it also contains his first use of a metaphor in which the actor becomes a photographer. Both Jefferson and Clarke were relatively new and Daly felt the need to warn them about the star system before it ruined their budding talents. His next two reviews aimed to show what that system had done to talent he had praised in the past.

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[1] Jan. 20, 1861, p. 5. [2] April 7, 1861, p. 5.

James W. Wallack Jr., Lester's cousin, played Othello to Booth's Iago and incited these impatient comments:

> It is too late in the day to attack Wallack's mannerisms, and his stage trickeries, in the sudden raising and dropping of his tones...
> His elocution was full of anti-climaxes..."he culminated before he got to the top and didn't have any more pegs to let out!" In an emotional scene in the third act, wherein he throws himself upon a couch on the stage, his action was really so extravagant as to excite a few hisses and some laughter.[1]

Daly was to make the statement several times in his career that actors who "starred" with Booth suffered by competing with him, that they became unreal in their attempts to be great. With Jane Coombes, Daly was more saddened than angered at the changes which had taken place in her acting. He had admired her immensely and listed her as one of the promising modern actresses when refuting Vandenhoff's claim that there were no more good actors.

> Some while ago, when she played under Burton's management, she was an immense favorite in her way; for then she was seen to advantage in parts which, in the judgement of her manager, she could play properly. By a two year's starring tour, she has half destroyed a rather pleasant voice which she possessed before...
> She also indulges in many of the traditionary mannerisms of the past, not the least of which is the selection of some unfortunate and helpless individual in the audience to whom she speaks all her asides, pours out all her sorrows in soliloquy, and addresses generally, instead of her vis-a-vis on the stage.
> Miss Coombes can correct none of these faults until she resigns the "star" and enters the "stock."[2]

Stock in New York then meant Wallack and Keene. Unfortunately, Daly's review of Seven Sisters is not available; but from January through April, Daly carried a weekly paragraph informing his readers about its enormous success. Wallack opened two plays during this period, Central Park and Pauline. Daly predicted, accurately, that Central Park would be successful and urged his readers to see it if they wanted to be "intensely amused." Yet, he wrote, it would be a false

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[1]Feb. 24, 1861, p. 5. [2]March 17, 1861, p. 5.

success because "it gains favor only from the situations and dialogue which are unquestionably and unrelievedly funny, and never from the feelings or the judgement." He rather patronizingly called it a farce in genre rather than the advertised comedy and added, "we feel certain that the author must already be alive to what a hodge-podge of absurdities he has given to the public in this last effort."[1] What Daly wanted in a play script is somewhat better understood in connection with his review of Pauline, which he found "is so perfectly constructed that an individual anxiety is felt in every character that is presented on the scene."[2] The skating scene in Central Park was a situation he knew the audiences would like and one-liners in the play were funny in themselves, yet they did not grow out of the plot. Central Park was a "hodge-podge" because its individual parts were not motivated out of dramatic necessity.

Daly felt that the only way theatre was going to produce ensemble playing of well-written plays was through specialization. Without apparently realizing it, he was advocating a return to the times when theatres were licensed to produce comedy or tragedy. He disliked the confusion which reigned at theatres like Niblo's where one could see "horse tamers, tragedians, tightrope people." He also didn't like to see Keene and Wallack competing with each other in genres not suited to them. He would have Wallack produce only parlor comedy and Keene, spectacles and extravaganza. His advice on the subject was unheeded, even by himself when he managed his own theatres. Its only interest for us is that even at this early date, he was thinking of how he would operate his own theatre. Once can almost see the 22-year-old dreaming in these lines:

> O! for the Representative Theatre! O! for that theatre whose manager or director shall be a man whose sole taste and belief lies in one particular line of the drama, let it be, and no matter whether it be deep tragedy or

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[1] Feb. 17, 1861, p. 5. [2] Jan. 6, 1861, p. 5.

> genteel comedy, fanciful extravaganza, broad burlesque, or what not; and who shall study and labor to produce the objects of his particular passion in that grand style which his dreams must picture to him as the only correct and deserving way. To do this, he will engage a company strong in every point specially requisite for the nature of those pieces he will produce.[1]

At the same time that he was dreaming, he was using the gossip portion of his column to strengthen theatre contacts. He carried reports on the doings of Matilda Heron and a number of paragraphs on Kate Bateman, whom he apparently had not met yet, calling her in one of them "fair and lovely Kate." He may have been searching for a commission to try his hand at playwrighting again. The commission was not to come until the following year. His creative drive was being channeled at this time into another field.

One of the joys of scholarship is discovering well-kept secrets which offer an insight into the field of study. Daly somehow managed to keep hidden, once he achieved fame as a theatreman, that he had written a number of novels, short stories and philosophical essays after failing to attract attention with his first four plays. This flirtation with another muse ended after his first produced original work, Under the Gaslight (1867); his only other venture into non-theatrical writing was a biography of Peg Woffington, written late in his career. This attempt to write fiction, instead of engendering a respect for the literary aspect of his drama, led him to distrust words and to rely on structure and action. At the same time he was critizing playwrights who sought to get their effects from language primarily, he despaired within his literary works of mastering language to express either deep emotion or to describe metaphysical experiences.

Daly's first assignment on the Courier aside from general reporting had been a series of articles on the working girls of New York. From that, his speciality broadened to the working classes. By the end of his first year on the paper,

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[1]Jan. 13, 1861, p. 5.

he began a series on criminals, "Shackles and Chains; or, Revelations of the Cells." It was billed as "an unveiling of Prison Life, and of the Mysteries and Miseries of New York Society twenty years ago, as shadowed forth in the lives of some great Criminals." Daly's first series had apparently received enough notice that the byline read: "By the author of the Work Girls of New York." The series ran on page one and often in the lead position, which was then the top of the left-hand column. It began on December 2, 1860 and ended on January 20, 1861 with the eighth installment, "The adventures of a real flesh and blood Cupid--Being the life and career of James Downer, a noted pickpocket." The articles were written from the point of view of the criminals themselves. Daly's sympathetic treatment of criminals in his dramatic works, which will be dealt with later, was undoubtedly influenced by this series, and, in particular, by the attempt to get inside the criminal mind itself.

No similar attempt had been made in the fiction. The serialized novels, "The Adventures of Four Women" and "Captain Jerry, the Free Rider of the Revolution," and short stories, including "The Story of a Dead Man," probe no further than surface action will allow. "To describe the feelings that animated Captain Jerry's breast at this declaration, were a task too difficult for the pen of man,"[1] Daly confessed at one point. These works ran in the Courier under a pen name, "Augustin Daly," which was to remain his public name for the rest of the century. To his family and friends at this time, he remained "John."

During all this writing activity, Daly added a theatrical column to his duties and devoted the "Cricket" at this point to philosophical musings on the nature of gossip, friendship, sadness and society. One of the columns, "Socials and Sociables," dealt with advice and attempts at humor in describing the proper way in which members of the working class could

[1] "Captain Jerry," Jan. 20, 1861, p. 2.

present themselves in society. The examples were drawn from Brooklyn "society" where Daly resided at the time.

Each issue of the Courier during this short period carried at least fiction, feature, "Cricket" and three full columns of theatre news by Daly. He may have written more, pouring out thousands of words each week, with little or no time to reflect upon his craft itself. This time was to come shortly. He would soon assign pieces to be written and would spend as much time in formulating his ideas as in expressing them. His brother Joseph would be the first to write for him. Their collaboration included both critical and creative writing. Generally, the ideas were generated by Augustin, who was specific many times to even the tone of the writing.[1] Daly considered himself an editor at the Courier, rather than a writer. During their early years of collaboration, after the theatre column became "The Dramatic World," when the writing was by Joseph, it was left unsigned; when Augustin wrote it himself, the signature "Le Pelerin" was added. This collaboration, attested to by many letters, has tended to cloud Daly's worth as a playwright, especially among critics with a literary bent. It is the ideas in his journalistic work and the construction of the plays, with language serving in both instances as only one element of the whole, which should be used to judge him as a newsman and as a theatreman.

The ideas were only partially formed at this point. They vaguely expressed his appreciation of the management of Burton, Miss Keene and the Wallacks and the acting of Forrest, Booth and Jefferson. His attempts at fiction, philosophy, criticism and general reporting in the Courier and his four aborted plays were all timber in the mill for Daly before he turned 24 years of age and constructed his first produced and commercially successful play, Leah the Forsaken.

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[1]The following request was written by Augustin to Joseph on Dec. 3, 1861: "I want you to write me your best feuilleton on "Sesesh" today...emphasize in it Stuart's remarks about being pestered...include Mathilda Heron's remarks concerning the author ...make it as Artemus Ward says 'sarcasticul.'"

CHAPTER III

TRIAL BY FIRE

Shiloh, the Seven Days, Second Bull Run, Antietam and Fredericksburg: from April through November of 1862 the Civil War became increasingly bloody. During these battles, Daly met Kate Bateman and wrote for her his first produced work, Leah the Forsaken.

Kate Bateman, along with her sister Ellen, had been a child prodigy. The girls had become famous playing opposite each other in such roles as Kate's Lady Macbeth to Ellen's Macbeth. After Ellen retired from the stage, Kate began a new career as an adult actress at the age of 17 in her mother's adaptation of Evangeline (1860). Kate then made her New York debut as an adult on April 21, 1862, in James Sheridan Knowles' The Hunchback. She followed this with Romeo and Juliet and then School for Scandal. The critics were charmed by her beauty and natural playing.

Kate's father, who used the initials H.L. to avoid the absurdity of Hezekiah Linthicum, not only managed his daughters, but a number of other stars, including Matilda Heron. Daly's reviews undoubtedly ingratiated him with Bateman; Miss Heron probably brought them together, and the commission followed. Daly's adaptation of Leah was completed sometime before November 14, 1862, when Mrs. Bateman wrote to him, congratulating him on the new title and saying his script would be sent out for duplicating within a week. The play opened at the Howard Atheneum on December 8, 1862.

In an interview with E.A. Dithmar of the Times in 1888, Daly's version of how Leah came about was created out of imagination rather than fact:

> Bateman called on Mr. Daly and asked him to see a play which was being done on the German stage under the title of "The Woman and The People" with a view to adapting it. Mr. Daly recognized the play as an old French piece called "Madelaine, the Belle of the Faubourg," and told Bateman that it was of no use to his purpose. Bateman then invited him, if he ever came across a good play, to adapt it for his daughter, and Mr. Daly thereafter saw "Deborah" at the German Theatre and confronted his opportunity. The book had been translated and printed in England, but it had never been adapted to the American stage. Young Daly drew from it his play of "Leah the Forsaken"... The author went to Boston to see it, and was surprised to find that Mrs. Bateman had introduced what is technically known as a "carpenter's scene" between a comic barber-doctor and a comic peasant...it was nonsensical and commonplace, and Mr. Daly begged Bateman to allow him to replace it before the play was done in New York. Mr. Bateman insisted on retaining the scene, and the critics fell upon it...and abused it mercilessly. The next day Mr. Bateman told Daly to go ahead and see what he could do with the objectionable episode, and that night the strong remorse scene for Nathan the Renegade was written.[1]

Dithmar repeated much of this story in his obituary of Daly.[2]

Deborah had been written by Dr. S.H. Mosenthal in 1848 and was being revived in Vienna in 1862. It had played in New York at the German-language Stadt Theatre in 1858, 1859, 1860 and then not until December 25, 1863, months after Leah had opened. Daniel Bandmann, whom Daly had befriended after seeing him perform in German in 1862, was in the Stadt Theatre cast. Daly could not have seen the play in 1862; he could have read about the revival in Vienna, discussed the play with Bandmann or, very likely, seen an earlier production. Joseph's biography offers another clue: "A German friend mentioned this play to Bateman and he suggested it to Daly, who procured a copy, had it hastily and roughly translated,perceived at once its theatrical value and adapted it for performance in English."[3] If, as this suggests, there was another intermediary friend involved, he was more than likely J. Guido Methua, the husband of the German actress, Marie Methua-Schiller, and a patron of

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[1] Times, April 22, 1888, p. 2.

[2] Times, June 8, 1899, p. 2. [3] Life, p. 48.

the German arts in New York. Methua shared a town-house with the Dalys in 1863 in St. Mark's Place. Daly's third commission was for Methua's wife. The extant correspondence indicates a warm friendship between them. Methua was also Kate Bateman's tutor and adviser. Methua was credited with being a co-adaptor, but he publically denied it in both the Sunday Mercury and the Programme. The Daly brothers shared the royalties from Leah and one must suppose they co-authored it without a third party.

Almost all the critics who reviewed the play when it opened in New York accused Daly of vulgarizing a fine work. Modern scholars who also had not bothered to read the Mosenthal text suggest that the verdict was proper. While it is true that Daly's work is clumsy in many respects, especially in his attempts at humor, the characterization and structural elements were good. Their merit is upheld by the adaptation's long popularity; it remained in Kate Bateman's repertory for some thirty years. Another adaptation, Deborah of Steinmark, with Catherine Seldon and Laurence Barrett, did not survive its opening night, May 30, 1863, at the Winter Garden. A comparative analysis with the original will show Daly attempting to practice the lessons he had learned during the preceding decade and give some truth to Dithmar's statement that "when the chance came to him to write a play that was needed ...he found he had acquired the needful facility."[1]

The basic plot line was retained by Daly: a Jewish girl and a Christian boy are in love; their romance is foiled by an apostate Jewish schoolteacher; the boy marries a good Christian girl and the Jewish girl goes off to suffer alone, after at first cursing, then accepting fate.

Mosenthal's Deborah, written in a combination of prose and verse, is in four acts. It is serious throughout. There is little action in the melodrama. Sentiment is all important. Qualities are discussed rather than shown. Mosen-

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[1] Memories, p. 9.

thal thought he was writing a tragedy; Daly, as his new title should indicate, saw that the success of the German play was not due to its classic elements, but rather to the melodrama inherent in the heroine's plight. So Deborah became Leah the Forsaken in five acts. Another indication of Daly's attempt to place the work in its correct genre is the change in character names. Mosenthal identifies only the main characters by name; the rest are the schoolteacher, the pastor, the hostess, the tailor, etc. Daly changed the names from Deborah to Leah, from Joseph to Rudolph and from Hanna to Madalena; the other characters become Nathan, Father Herman, Mother Groschen, Fritz, etc. The three name changes take the Biblical and lofty and make them modern and romantic; in every instance, the abstract is made specific.[1]

One glance at the opening sequence in both versions immediately reveals how well grounded Daly had become in the theatre at this time. Mosenthal has the pastor tell Hanna: "Du gutes kind!" Daly has Madalena bursting out of the church, fired by the sermon, desperately wanting to be good: "Would that I could suffer for humanity." Father Herman scolds her for misinterpreting his sermon. She is good, but she is also young and silly. The audience discovers this fact for itself rather than being told.

A unique Daly touch seeded in this play is the creation of a specific type of villain. Mosenthal had nothing but contempt for the Jewish schoolteacher; he is both weak and petty. Listen to him reveal the secret of the young lovers:

> Wichtige Entdeckung! Alles gefunden! An mir könnte der Staat eine Acquisition, d.h. einen Fund machen. Alles herausgebracht, die ganze Bagage beisammen. O der gottlose Bube!
>
> A most important discovery! I have found out everything!

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[1] Deborah is included in a collection of German plays which contains an English translation side by side with the German, Classic Dramas as Performed by Fanny Janauschek (New York, 1867). The quotations and translations which follow are taken from this edition. Those from Leah the Forsaken are taken from Daly's edition (New York, 1863).

> What an acquisition I should be to the government; I may say a treasure. I have ferreted it all out. I have turned out the whole nest of them. Oh, the wicked young scamp.[1]

Daly's Nathan could never be translated in that manner. He carries a fear and hatred so well grounded into him that his villainy surges and infects all about him. The Daly villain is a victim of a cruel society, a Frankenstein monster taught to hate and corrupt. In one of the really fine moments of Leah, Nathan reveals his background to the audience while he describes what happens to Jews in other cities:

> Do you know what a wretch a Jew is? Why, in Prague they burn his eyebrows! In Stockholm they tear a rude cross upon his back with iron teeth. Hum! Good father, a cross we should be loath to bear. Do you know what it is to declare yourself a Jew in Gratz? It is to be cast headlong into the nearest dyer's vat, if no other cauldron be handy. I saw a pitiful Jew once running through the streets of Gratz with howling devils at his heels. He flies—they pursue—foam streams from his mouth—he turns and doubles, until at last he sinks exhausted—they are upon him—they lift him up. A sturdy dyer cries out, "Boil him in my shop!" They toss him into an indigo vat —he writhes a moment—then cries out, "Mercy! I will become a Christian!" They dragged out the converted, half-scalded wretch—drenched him with water, and he lives a good Christian for many years after.[2]

Daly enters the criminal mind and finds the specific motivations for its villainy. He deplores, but he attempts to understand that which he condemns. His journalistic work, particularly the series he wrote on famous criminals, has added a dimension to his writing. Mosenthal has his apostate disrupt the lovers and disappear. Daly brings him back for the final scene to confront Leah and be exposed.

The Christian lover, in Mosenthal's hands, is a stiff and boorish character—one wonders why Deborah and Hanna love him. When confronted by Deborah, Joseph answers:

> (in Thränen ausbrechend)
> Zieh' hin, sei glücklich, ich verzeihe Dir!
> Dass Du so arm, so elend mich gemacht,
> Dass Du mit einer Seele Spiel getrieben,

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[1] Deborah, p. 12. [2] Leah, pp. 9-10.

Die harmlos Dein war, ich verzeihe Dir's!
Du thatest recht und das Geschäft war gut.
Ob auch ein Christenherz darüber brach,
Du handeltest ja für Dein Volk.

Und dass Du nich umsonst zum Abschied Kamst,
Nimm dieses für den Weg!—
(Er lässt einin Beutel Geld zu seinen Füssen fallen, wendet sich um und erreicht die Thür.)

(bursting into tears) Go, be happy! I pardon thee my misery. I pardon thee that thou didst traffic with the highest, the most divine of earthly things. That thou didst make merchandise of a (Christian) heart in which thy image was enshrined.

For this leave-taking thou hast my thanks and for thy pains in coming hither take this. (Throws a purse at her feet and turns toward the door.)[1]

Daly, in the same scene, softens the edges, makes the lover sensitive, confused and almost childlike:

(In tears) Go, and be happy. I forgive you that you have toyed with a heart that was wholly yours, that you well nigh wrecked the peace of this happy household for ever. I forgive you, I forgive you all! You did right to make merchandize of my deep love. What if a Christian's heart did break?

Hypocrite! you are no longer masked! I loved you, you sold me for money. I see the avaricious devil in your eyes laugh at my agony, and mock my pain. This night, aye, an hour ago, I was prepared to sacrifice all and follow you, believing in your love, your wild, untutored honor, your fair, young womanhood, and your maiden oath. I would have sacrificed all I held most sacred, I would have faced the lightnings of heaven to have called you mine!

(Vehemently, and increasing in passion as he speaks.) But when I learned that you, too, like all your race, held honor, love and faith less than the pettiest coin, and had sold me, Judas-like, for a few pieces, when, had your greedy soul been patient, I would,myself, have give you hundreds, I tore away the silken sinews of your love, struck down your image from its altar here, and forgot you as if your treachery and my love had been a dream. Go, cheat other men, your avarice does not spoil your beauty. Farewell! (Runs to door, but returns.) Yet, stay, huckster of those maddening charms; you shall lose by me, and that you may not come for nothing to say farewell, add this to thy gains today...[2]

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[1] Deborah, p. 23. [2] Leah, p. 39.

Where Mosenthal excelled, Daly had the good sense to let well enough alone. He was attracted to the Jewish maiden and his Leah puts into prose Mosenthal's iambics. In both, she is a woman of large passions, extreme in love, hatred, revenge and, finally, forgiveness. The title role, both in German and in translation, attracted stars and audiences for most of the late nineteenth century.

But Daly did more than create acting roles in his adaptation. As could be expected from his schooling at the theatres of Burton, Wallack and Keene, his additions to the play included humor and physical action.

Unfortunately the humor is dreadful. He created the role of a doctor only mentioned in the Mosenthal play. The doctor has such unwitty lines as: "Tailor! Remain with your goose! Seek not to penetrate the secrets of Materia Medica! What! Apoplexy? Vulgar and barbarous! An apoplexia sanguinosa, I say. For that are we doctors."[1] "For that are we doctors!" is appended to each speech the character mouths. Instead of mounting humor with repetition, one gets mounting irritation with stupidity. The attempt for humor is heavy-handed at this moment of his writing career.

For physical action, Daly resorted to what has become the cliché of the early horror movies. Instead of Mosenthal's pastor warding off a crowd with the admonition that whoever has not sinned could throw the first stone, Daly's Father Herman lifts a cross silently and forces the crowd to cower and back away from the crouched Leah. Again, in the final scene, created by Daly, Nathan attempts to strangle a prostrate Leah, with Rudolph rushing across the stage to stop him in time--again, the heavy hand that will lighten with more experience.

It is not difficult to imagine Daly at 24 waiting for his first production to take place. He was terrified. Five years of struggle to be produced were finally reaching a cli-

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[1] Leah, p. 19.

max. He must have been aware of the inadequacies of his adaptation. He was certainly aware of the critical hostility which awaited him. He not only stayed away from rehearsals and performances in Boston, he tried to keep his authorship a secret. On November 12, 1862, Mrs. Bateman wrote him: "Mr. Bateman desires me to say that he has not and if you desire will not mention the paternity of Leah to Mr. Arnold or any other person."[1] Bateman himself reassured Daly on December 3, 1862, "So far not a soul out of our little lot (Mrs. B, Miss B and myself) know anything of the authorship. Nor shall anyone have the secret until you desire it."[2] The program and advertisements stated: "Written expressly for Miss Bateman, by a gentleman of distinguished literary ability." Most of Daly's fears were well grounded. He had written the role of Nathan for James W. Wallack Jr., who refused it, changing his mind after the Boston success and appearing in the role later in New York. His play would have to compete with Edwin Booth, who was then appearing in Boston. There was also another play similar in style opening at the same time at the Boston Museum. Bateman promised to telegraph Daly how the piece went and what its prospects might be. Bateman also accurately predicted that the play would succeed.

The critics in Boston were mixed about the play, but were enthusiastic about Kate Bateman's performance. The adaptation was called "new and beautiful" by the Journal, "a finely written production" by the Courier and "a fine opportunity for Miss Bateman to exhibit her wealth of talent" by the Express. The Advertiser found it "unequally composed" and the Gazette deplored its "atrociously bad parts—stereotyped, trite and uninteresting" and its "melancholy attempt at low comedy."[3]

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[1] Folger Shakespeare Library, Daly Correspondence MSS.

[2] Ibid.

[3] The Boston reviews are contained in the first volume of the Daly Correspondence, Lincoln Center's Library for the Performing Arts.

It was given 11 performances in three weeks and played to full houses. The decision was made to bring it to New York.

Daly still insisted that his name be kept secret when it opened in New York. Joseph Daly wrote that his brother was afraid of the New York critics. They would pounce on him if they knew he were the adaptor, not only to avenge their pet actors and writers he may have slighted, but to downgrade the competition in theatrical criticism and adaptation. He had good cause to be afraid. The critics would be devastatingly cruel to each other unless they were fellow Bohemians, a group of artists and writers who met informally evenings after the theatre in Charlie Pfaff's cellar restaurant on Broadway north of Bleeker Street. Critics in the group headed by Henry Clapp Jr. included S.R. Fiske, Edward H. House and William Winter. Daly would get no breaks from the Bohemians.

Leah the Forsaken opened in Niblo's Garden on January 19, 1863 with two important cast changes: Wallack Jr. as Nathan and Mrs. F.S. Chanfrau as Madalena. Edwin Adams continued to support Miss Bateman as the Christian lover, Rudolph. The attempt to keep the authorship secret failed. A number of the weeklies identified Daly as the adaptor. The morning papers after the opening confirmed Daly's worst fears. If he had quickly scanned through the Herald to see what Fiske wrote, he would have plucked out these barbs about his work:

> ...language is often poverty-stricken and the effects mangled. The idea of the translator seems to have been to manufacture a melodrama out of Mosenthal's materials. The result is a dramatic hash...the piece is wretched, except when either Miss Bateman, Mr. Wallack or Mr. Adams is on the stage...The play must be cut and trimmed, remodeled and rearranged before it deserves criticism, except in certain detached and disconnected passages.[1]

If Daly had decided he wanted to read the worst and get it over, he may have picked up the Tribune next, read and reread House's review in vain to find one comment about his work; House ignored him completely, this time around. (House would devote a full column of attack when the play was repeated later in

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[1] Jan. 20, 1863, p. 4.

the year.) That left the Times and the World, Charles B. Seymour and Paul Nicholson, both non-Bohemians. Seymour's comments may have sent Daly to the dictionary: "The literary merits of the play are not of the highest order. There is a pleonastic scope in the language which one cannot tolerate without yawning, and to this may be added an extremely soporific attempt at fun."[1] Nicholson identified Daly as the author; the review may have confused him, one minute calling the language turgid, the next comparing him with Shakespeare:

> It is not, by any means, perfect as a work of art; it lacks compactness and symmetry, and the interest wanes in places; the language is sometimes turgid--sometimes preachy--and there are reminiscenses of old saws and commonplace stage expressions which mar the the current of the dialogue. But with all these imperfections, "Leah" is a play of remarkable power, and here after form one of the leading roles of Miss Bateman.
>
> The play is full of powerful scenes. The rage of the mob in the first act, the curse of Leah in the fourth act, and her pathetic forgiveness of her injuries in the fifth are as powerful scenes as any out of Shakespeare.[2]

And this was the most perceptive review of any of the daily newspapers. It accurately predicted the success of the play and pinpointed its major faults.

These four reviewers wrote their opinions within an hour or so after the first performance. Daly read them on Tuesday morning, reworked some of the dialogue adding the already quoted speech by Nathan. He then waited to see what the Saturday and Sunday press would say, hoping that the weekly critics would return after opening night. The afternoon papers, relatively unimportant, would have been anticlimactic. James Otis wrote in the Express that the play "will bear a little abreviation which the manager will see is necessary."[3] The Post commented: "In the original the play, we hear, is very fine but it owes none of its success here to the translator, but to the acting."[4]

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[1] Jan. 20, 1863, p. 5. [2] Jan. 20, 1863, p. 8.
[3] Jan. 20, 1863, p. 2. [4] Jan. 20, 1863, p. 3.

Clapp may have expressed himself in stronger terms at Pfaff's after the performance, but in the following Saturday's edition of the Leader, he dismissed the play in one sentence: "Its literary qualities are not such as to provoke enthusiasm, while neither its general plot nor leading situations are such as to give a tragedienne of Miss Bateman's peculiar organization a fair chance for the exhibition of her powers."[1] William Winter picked up his cue and his hatchet. In the Albion, he delivered the worst blow of all to Daly's ego, calling him an illiterate and unskillful dramatist:

> The original play is much admired among the Germans. In its present form, however, it is destitute of literary merit, and lacks, to a considerable extent, its rightful dramatic vigour and effect. It is written in redundant, tame, unsuitable, and often incorrect language, and is darkened with puerile attempts at humour; while its movement is embarassed, and its spirit deadened, by dreary interludes of trivial incident and superfluous conversation...It has been the mistake of the adaptor to convert a classic drama into a sort of popular spectacle, wherein, as it were, the taste of Barnum's Museum, and the wit of "Blondette," are mingled incongruously with the poetic fervor of Ezekiel or David. Such folly cannot be too strongly condemned. It is unjust to the taste of the public, which is thus disparaged; it is unjust to the actress, whose opportunities are thus restricted."[2]

Winter went too far. The play and Kate Bateman's acting had drawn such large audiences that he relented in the following issue of the Albion and urged his readers to see Leah. In the third week of its run, Clapp refused to be "bullied" by the play's success and wrote, "I still think that there is nothing remarkable, as a whole, in the play itself (which is one of the prosy German school and made still more prosy by its inartistic rendering into English)."[3] All but three of the weekly press followed this line. Morris Phillips in the Home Journal found the writing mediocre.[4] T. Allston Brown's long plot summary in the Clipper made no evaluation of the writing.

But critical appraisal of the playwright was not total-

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[1] Jan. 24, 1863, p. 5. [2] Jan. 24, 1863, p. 43.
[3] Feb. 21, 1863, p. 4. [4] Jan. 31, 1863, p. 2.

ly bleak. To put it in Joseph Daly's words: "A Champion arose."[1] The champion was Frank Wood, the young dramatic editor of Wilkes' Spirit of the Times and a former member of the Bohemians who had quit the group in disgust:

> Both the actress and the play have unusually exercised the critic tribe and the most varying opinions are promulgated. Having, during her brief season at the Winter Garden, every one of them become committed on the point of her talent and her greatness as an artist, they are impelled, at this time, to pour out the vial of wrath upon the play rather than the player. I will not quote, but state that pretty nearly everybody who has written on the subject has measurelessly condemned the translation of the drama, while nearly all have praised the performance.
>
> Now this is subterfuge, for the most part. They know well enough--for some of them have tried it--that the exact translation from a foreign language almost invariably makes a dull play for us; they know--one or two of them by experience--that the German mind is pleased with much dialogue, while the American mind desires action; they know that an accurate version of a German play would be to us as prosy as--all the long but magnificent speeches of Shakespeare, spoken from the stage. They know there may be too much of a good thing. But the chronic sourness of their natures must out or they will condense into jars of acid. Out of and above the narrow circle in which they move is the broad and liberal world, and in this world move men and women who have never floundered in the mire of Bohemianism.[2]

The long article delves into the possible motivations of the critics. One he cites is that they may wish to translate German plays themselves. Wood interestingly states that if Daly had just stolen the story and used his own name as the playwright, he would have fared better critically. As to the quality of the adaptation, Wood continued:

> I say the play needs no defense; it is endorsed by the people in the most emphatic manner; it plays well, is well got up, and goes off well--what more do we want?... It is in language and in effect better, much better, than the usual order of original adaptations for the stage... The most effective portions of the dialogue are those which are in the most idiomatic English, and are of course rather paraphrases than translation.[3]

Wood's article did some good. A number of the weekly

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[1] Life, p. 49. [2] Jan. 31, 1863, p. 352. [3] Ibid.

critics went back to see the play and declared that it had improved. Wood was right in one particular respect: the play really needed no defense to run. The reviews were so full of praise for Kate Bateman's acting, they would be considered "money reviews" today. It ran for five weeks, long enough for Daly to have an author's night and to collect a decent royalty for his work.

Near the end of the play's run, there was a provocative article by George William Curtis in his column, "The Lounger," in Harper's Weekly. Curtis immediately stated his pleasure in the production: "As a simple sensational performance it is remarkable. The play is wrought in bold, coarse strokes. There is never any doubt as to the meaning. But its particular fitness to the condition of our public affairs is most striking."[1] He then addressed himself to the thematic statement of the play, the cancerous effect of prejudice against a minority people, and found a contemporary parallel with the blacks in America. He found Nathan's arguments against the Jews similar to those of certain Northern leaders, "who appeal to the popular prejudice against an outcast race." The Emancipation Proclamation had just been signed and all its ramifications--was this a war to save the union or to free the slaves?--was in full debate. Curtis saw in Leah, "the loathing which was felt in Christian Europe for the Jews. It shows the deceit, the terrible crimes, the hopeless imbruting of human nature, which necessarily springs from the indulgence of such hate." This same "loathing" was being felt in America for the Negro where such questions were being posed as:

> "Is a Negro equal to a white man? Will you fight for the Negro? Do you want your daughter to marry a black man? Do you want the bread taken from your mouths and the work from your hands by Negroes? Will you have black Senators and a Negro President?"
>
> Upon this hatred of race the reaction tries to found its political power in order to abase, divide and destroy this nation. It has no other hope, no other resource,

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[1]March 7, 1863, p. 146.

> than this desperate pandering to the meanest and most inhuman prejudice. If such a course is not in itself sufficiently revolting—if its exposure in history is not appalling enough—then, whenever and wherever you can, go and see Leah, and have the lesson burned in upon your mind, which may help to save the national life and honor.[1]

There was no conscious intent on Daly's part to draw the parallel that Curtis saw. But the time and place did call for such a creative reading. Daly's political beliefs during the 1860s would be considered liberal even today. These beliefs become more evident in his major work of the decade, Under the Gaslight.

Daly was obviously pleased by Curtis and Wood and not too unhappy with Nicholson. But, he had no intention of leaving the other critics unanswered. His weapon was humor. His unsigned defense of Leah in the Courier had the satirical wit the play itself lacked. In the weekly's theatrical column, he pretends to have awakened to the morning reviews after a splendid evening at the theatre and wonders how he and the audience could have been so dense as to enjoy the play so much. He proceeds then to correct the impressions received at the performance to conform with the reviews themselves:

> The play is too exciting. This is bad, but happily a crime rare among new plays now a days. It is wrong to make your play exciting in its nature, if you do you will lower it to the range of melodrama—(as I have it on good authority).
>
> There is no extraordinary vigor in the language. The incidents are commonplace. The plot is not new. The characters are not strongly marked. It has not been translated properly. It should have been played in German, so that we might not have had any second hand work about it. It is vapid. Every scene is dull and tame unless there happens to be a good actor or actress on the stage—(I don't exactly see myself the drift of this remark, but I repeat it on good authority).
>
> The incidents are not well managed and are loosely and incongruously strung. Leah should curse Rudolph in the second scene of the second act, and keep it up to the end. The old Jew ought to be strangled in the fourth act and Rudolph married in the fifth. The little girl ought to

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[1] Ibid.

be introduced in the first—(never mind the unities). Wallack ought to bite the Jewess and hit her with a stick.

I know a tip top critic who would have made something like out of such materials as these. I would have done it myself.

Leah ought to say more in the first act and ought to have the last four all to herself. Mr. Adams should stab the schoolmaster. The priest ought to excommunicate everybody, and Leah ought to slap Madalena severely.

—N.B. This is criticism.[1]

Meanwhile, Wood, who had enjoyed Daly's rebuttal to the critics almost as much as he had enjoyed the play, saw Dan Setchell as Madame Underpants in One Thousand Nights. Setchell, Daly's review and Leah fed his creative imagination and produced a burlesque called Leah the Forsook with Setchell in the title role. All of the nonsense that Daly had parodied in his column were put into the burlesque—in iambic pentameter. Wood changed the setting from Germany to New York, "that region flowery,/Where Chatham Street is joined unto the Bowery."[2] Instead of wandering aimlessly at the end of the play, Setchell's Leah proposes to "Peddle Weis Bier, and saud the laud basson."[3] The burlesque, unfortunately, opened on July 14, 1863 and played during the week of the bloody draft riots in New York City. Only 400 to 500 persons attended opening night in the huge Winter Garden. And fewer still attended during its one-week run (It was closed one night by the authorities). The city was in a state of terror. A few of the critics did attend and their accounts are all that remain of the play. Seymour, who found the laughter "coarse and vulgar," wrote in the Times: "There is no real fun in the awkward spectacle of a man dressed in woman's clothing," but added that there was "more tact and taste than we look for, as a rule, in such productions."[4] William Winter, in the Al-

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[1] Jan. 24, 1863, contained in the first volume of the Daly Correspondence, Lincoln Center's Library for the Performing Arts.

[2] Quoted by William Winter, Albion, July 25, 1863, p. 355.

[3] Ibid. [4] July 15, 1863, p. 5.

bion, wrote the only major account of the production. He doubted, in his first article, "if the degradation of an unfortunate people be a fit theme for satirical illustration; but this is not an over delicate age."[1] The following week, he found "ample authority for making sport of Jews," citing Dickens, Thackeray and Carlyle; he particularly enjoyed the "cuss scene" and the "heart-rending interview with the infant child."[2] Daly, of course, was enormously flattered by the burlesque; the best were parodied. He also enjoyed it immensely and approached Wood to collaborate on his next venture.

Taming a Butterfly was completed sometime before January 9, 1864 when Daly signed a contract with Mrs. John Wood (no relation to the co-author) stipulating that the royalties would be $15 per night and that the play must be produced on or before the first of May, 1864. It opened at the Olympic Theatre on February 25, 1864 and was billed as an original adaptation by Augustin Daly and Frank Wood, the authors of Leah the Forsaken and Leah the Forsook. Mrs. Wood was the same actress Daly had tried to interest in his work during the 1856-1857 season when she was playing at Wallack's Theatre. By 1864 she was a major star, having toured most of the country in that capacity. Included in the cast were three men with whom Daly would work consistently in the future: William Davidge, J.K. Mortimer and George H. Clarke.

The play was "originally adapted" from La Papillone by Victorien Sardou. The French comedy was first performed in Paris at the Théâtre Français on April 11, 1862. It is in three acts with seven characters, among them Champignac, a recently married man with a roving eye; his too-faithful wife, Constance; her young and widowed aunt by marriage, Camille; and the aunt's jealous lover, Riverol. Sardou's moral is that love is a game and a wife who wants to keep her husband from roving (a common malady known as the butterfly) must keep him in suspense as to her own fidelity. The play

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[1]July 18, 1863, p. 343. [2]July 25, 1863, p. 355.

opens with Constance opening her summer home in Melun. Camille, who refuses to marry Riverol unless he is sufficiently jealous to follow her (hence, "de-butterflied"), visits Constance. Camille is pursued by another man and enters laughing to recount the tale. (She was veiled and speaking Italian toma foreigner at the time.) The pursuer is Constance's husband, who arrives at Melun without realizing he is at his own summer home. Camille sets him up for a rendezvous with Constance disguised as the veiled Italian. Riverol follows. The plot is skillfully complicated and unraveled for a happy ending, a well-made piece with all the tricks of that genre.

Daly and Wood retained the three-act form, translated most of the dialog, changed the character names of Champignac to Beaujolais and Camille to Jacinthe, and added another subplot with additional characters. They also pushed the play further away from comedy toward farce with a good slice of burlesque. The added subplot, mostly burlesque, concerns the servants in the household, Polydore and his wife, Finette. They have a 20-year-old daughter whom Polydore thinks was sired by another man. Whenever he sees another man he thinks is flirting with his wife, he brings out Mignonne, the daughter, and compares her features with the man, once: "Black wig--no; dyed side-whiskers, no; a large and particularly ugly mouth, decidedly no!"[1] and then again:

> Let me compare them! Her hair is brown, eyes hazel, nose straight, mouth small (takes hold of her head to get a profile view). He has blonde hair, blue eyes, straight nose--ha! straight nose! The expression of the nose is different. Besides he has a moustache (slapping his head). On reflection, though, that is not remarkable.[2]

Polydore also has another running gag. Ever since the birth of his daughter, he has been robbed of 37¢ a day. When the daughter is about to be married and the wife produces a dowry of 15,000 francs, he moans: "Where could an honest wife get

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[1] Taming a Butterfly (New York, 1864), p. 8.

[2] Ibid., p. 7.

that sum? Oh, Lord! Oh! Oh! This is worse than the thirty-seven cents a day."[1] The connection is made with an attempt at humor by calculating 37 times 7,303 days to produce that amount and some more. The authors also had fun with the dialog, adding jokes to the translation:

> What is it that lights up our existence?
> Gas.
> This levity is degrading. No, sir, it is not gas —it is poetry.[2]

Finette uses "ain't" and can't spell, spelling can't "k-a-n-t."

Wood apparently agreed with the moral of the play. He took it more seriously than one would believe on reading the script. He was recently married himself and had this comment to make concerning Beaujolais:

> The easy tranquility of his home bores him. The fact is, that his wife, Constance, had made him altogether comfortable—as some loving, simple-minded wives will do— and what was once a happiness has become a burden to him.[3]

Judging from Daly's own review of the play, his interest in the work was purely technical. There are no further clues concerning the contributionsoof each of the collaborators to the piece.

Unlike Leah, Butterfly was a critical success and a box office failure. It closed after three weeks on March 19, 1864, and was not performed again until the next decade when Daly rewrote it under another title. The critics were unanimous in praising the work. Clapp was the most enthusiastic:

> It is the most sparkling play I have seen this season. It is one of those brilliant, fascinating, wicked (too wicked) emanations of the French brain which delights you without your knowing why...it deserves notice for the cleverness of its construction—being two plays nicely dovetailed into one—as well as for the smartness of its dialogue, the ingenuity of its "situations," and, above all, its uproarious and sustained humor.[4]

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[1] Ibid., p. 35. [2] Ibid., p. 15.

[3] Wilkes' Spirit of the Times, March 5, 1864, p. 16.

[4] Leader, Feb. 27, 1864, p. 5.

He chided Daly and Wood for not revealing the original author. The only critic to correctly state its paternity was Nicholson, who liked the play but told the authors how it could be improved:

> Had it been localized as well as translated (from "Le Papillion") and sturdy American nomenclature, with its array of Smiths, Browns, Chubbses, Joneses, et cetera, been substituted for the fanciful French names...this comedy might run a race for popularity with "Our American Cousin," although it is a more meritorious production a hundred times over that extravagant creation.
>
> "Taming a Butterfly" would be improved materially if the first act were considerably compressed and the wind taken out of some fifteen or twenty long speeches made by everybody in turn at intervals of about three minutes. The excellence of the plot, the finesse with which the scenes are worked out, the wit of the dialogue, and the comical nature of many situations combine to form one of the most entertaining comedies put upon the metropolitan stage in many seasons.[1]

If Nicholson were hinting here that he would be interested in co-authoring a play with Daly, that hint was successful. The two would shortly work on Judith. But Nicholson's suggestion that the action be localized was a lonely view. A number of other critics congratulated the authors for not doing this, including Seymour:

> Their efforts have been judiciously confined, and with eminent success, to polishing the dialogue, and adding to the popularity of scenes that, in themselves, are eminently farcial and amusing. The result is bright and uproarious entertainment.[2]

House saw it twice and urged his readers to "go to the Olympic and see the somewhat coarse though effective manner in which it is done."[3] Winter agreed with House. Although he found the play well-constructed and entertaining, "it sparkles with true Gallic lustre," he also found a "taint of indelicasy... mars the texture."[4] The coarseness and indelicacy referred to are Beaujolais' attempt at adultery and Polydore's doubts

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[1] World, Feb. 27, 1864, p. 4.

[2] Times, Feb. 27, 1864, p. 6.

[3] Tribune, March 1, 1864, p. 5.

[4] Albion, Feb. 27, 1864, p. 103.

as to the paternity of his child. Otis pointed this out most clearly, perhaps explaining its short run:

> We should be derelict to our duty as critics, did we not put on record our protest against much that is reprehensibly broad, in many of the situations, suggestions and inuendoes which this piece contains. The main feature of the part which Mr. Davidge has to sustain in it, for example, is obnoxious to this rebuke. The incident of dragging in a girl on the arrival ofeevery newcomer to the house in which he is servant, to compare her features with the stranger's, for the purpose of discovering her paternity, may be sufficiently funny to excuse its indecency; but we confess we do not see it in that light.[1]

Both Daly and Wood reviewed the production. Wood meticulously praised and faulted the actors according to their individual merits: one didn't know his lines, another applied his makeup badly. Daly, signing his column "The Native Dramatists," had nothing but praise for each of them, saying that it was understandable they were nervous on opening night and that while the play could have been better, it could also have been worse. He was more than satisfied. He interestingly called the original work, "the fountain or source whence this, our piece, was adapted,"[2] refusing to name its author or title, adding that he would pay for the rights should the play run. He apparently had the odious comparison with Mosenthal in mind and didn't wish a repeat with Sardou.

Daly's next play was an adaptation of Dorf und Stadt by Charlotte Birchpfeiffer, who based her play on Die Frau Professorin, a tale by Berthold Auerbach. Unfavorable comparisons were to follow. The play opened under the title Lorlie's Wedding on March 28, 1864 at the Winter Garden with only "Aug. Daly, Esq." listed as the author. It was written for and starred Marie Methua-Schiller, who was making her debut in the English language. She was already familiar to the German theatre audience in New York. So was Mrs. Birch-

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[1] Express, Feb. 26, 1864, p. 2.

[2] Courier, Feb. 28, 1864, p. 5.

pfeiffer, one of the most popular German dramatists of the time, probably best known then for another play, Fanchon. Dorf und Stadt was first performed in New York at the Altes Stadttheater in 1854. Mrs. Methua-Schiller had performed it in German on a number of occasions. As early as January 29, 1863, the Programme reported her intention of playing it in English. The Methuas were sharing a townhouse with the Dalys in 1863. At what point they agreed to commission Daly is guess work. Mrs. Methua-Schiller gives no hint of it in a birthday note to Daly on July 21, 1863; her husband may have attempted the adaptation himself before turning it over to Daly. At any rate, Daly's version was given two performances in Boston on March 2 and 6, 1864 before opening later in the month in New York. His version was never printed and the manuscript is lost; it ran only one week in New York. The reviews make it plain that the adaptation was constructed to fit Mrs. Methua-Schiller's looks and abilities to the detriment of other character and plot elements in the piece.

The play was billed as a musical-pastoral drama. Daly used both elements, music and the rural scene, as integral parts of the plot. The daughter of an innkeeper in the Black Forest, Lorlie is beautiful, warm-hearted, but simple. An artist, Reinhardt, wanders into her village and falls in love with her. They marry. He takes her out of her natural setting into town and fashionable society where her artlessness bores him. Reinhardt is attracted there to his former love, the Countess Ida, who rejects him. He turns to drink. Lorlie wins him back with a song. They leave the evil city and return to the Black Forest to live happily ever after.

The Bohemian critics were angry that Daly didn't credit Mrs. Birchpfeiffer for the original work. Winter retaliated by not mentioning Daly's name in his review:

> The play...invites but little remark. It is peculiarly German, and peculiarly tedious. It is descriptive rather than dramatic, and is needlessly spun out through five acts. Its incidents are commonplace, and so are its characters, and--not to be out of fashion--so is its language. Yet, it conveys a pleasing picture of life in

> a German Principality...In the original German of Madame Birchpfeiffer, it is, I dare say, neatly written, and well calculated to affect a Teutonic audience. In English translation it seems bald and tame.[1]

House called the German version "a touching little domestic drama" and then attacked Daly:

> The name of the original play as well as of the original author is of course carefully suppressed in the interest of the American adaptor, who is announced as "Aug. Daly, esq." The motive for the suppression, in this case, may have originated in a vague consciousness on the part of the adaptor that in undertaking to improve his original by engrafting upon it a scene or two from a totally different play (another case of dramatic miscegenation) he had only succeeded in producing a wretched abortion.[2]

Fiske had written much the same, adding:

> Stupid is too mild a word to use in criticizing it. The audience were so bored by it that toward the close they amused themselves by indulging in ironical applause and laughter. The actors also extemporized a little fun in the vain hope of giving point to what was irreparably dull. The acting of the stock company was nearly as bad as the play.[3]

The only major critic to analyze the play was Seymour:

> The story is natural and simple. It reveals itself in a purely narrative way, delineating character and ignoring "situation" and climaxes, but the revelation is not dramatically exciting. There is no distinct issue, no positive triumph between, or on the part of, any of the characters. It never rises to the attitude of passion, either in the matter of words or the expression of feeling. It is, in fact, what it claims to be, a purely pastoral drama, conveying, in a somewhat lengthy form, the rustic idea of love and suffering devotion. There are hundreds of such dramas in the German language, and all of them wordy. The special merit of the present play is that it contains one delicate characterization. The part of Lorlie is prettily conceived, and the "filling up" is generally good.[4]

Frank Wood was fatally ill and Daly had no defender this time.

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[1] Albion, April 2, 1864, p. 163.

[2] Tribune, March 30, 1864, p. 5.

[3] Herald, March 29, 1864, p. 4.

[4] Times, March 29, 1864, p. 5.

Nichèlson, who was already at work with Daly on their adaptation of Judith, gave one paragraph to Lorlie. He found it "meager in incident and...dialogue" and "tolerably clever." This comment serves more as an insight into their collaboration than to the play under review.

Judith, the Daughter of Merari took the Winter Garden stage immediately after Lorlie closed. It opened on April 4, 1864 starring Avonia Jones. Miss Jones also offered another Daly play, The Sorceress, on April 26 during her short season at the Winter Garden. A third play which Daly adapted for her, Garcia, was not performed in New York. The two had never met and Daly had never seen her act when Miss Jones first wrote to him on November 26, 1863:

> I am aware that you arranged, and adapted the drama of "Leah," and if you are not too much occupied I should be much pleased if you would arrange several plays for me. I have one German play roughly translated, but never arranged, also several very fine French dramas. Are you at liberty to sell a copy of "Leah?" I do not care much to act a play which is already a specialty of another, preferring for myself original parts, but I must have a good drama to fill up the time until I have several written expressly for me...[1]

Within a month of this request, Daly had a complete adaptation in her hands. Miss Jones wrote to Daly on December 25, 1863 to acknowledge receipt of the fifth act of Garcia. This was a Friday. She had only studied one act of the play which would open Monday night in St. Louis. She complained to Daly of the producer, who wouldn't spend money on sets (he didn't have a staff artist), and of the actors: "The company is very bad." She had been ill and was still feeling unwell. She also complained of the press, which only printed copy sent it from the theatre, and of the constant need to act new works. She had received a copy of Leah, but it had already been badly produced there and she decided against it. (She would later act Leah for both Lincoln and General Grant.) Her only cheerful note in the letter was that her Philadelphia engagement

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[1] This letter and the others following from Miss Jones to Daly are part of the Daly Correspondence MSS, Folger Shakespeare Library.

had been put off until March, "so that will give you plenty of time to get the pieces done for a rehearsal of them preparatory to New York." There was no contractual agreement at this point, and Miss Jones thought it was time they discussed terms. Only two performances of Garcia were given in St. Louis. They weren't reviewed. Although she wrote that she liked the play, she decided it wouldn't draw and discarded it from her repertory. She reminded Daly that he "did not think much of the subject when I proposed it" and, as a consolation, noted that it gave her "pleasing proof" of his ability. She was now in Cincinnati, thinking of New York: "I wish you would tell me when it is time to begin working for New York, and what I ought to do. I will be guided by you in all matters." Daly had already started work on The Sorceress with his brother and sent her his ideas on the adaptation. Miss Jones realized that she was premature in entrusting herself so completely to Daly and wrote him on January 11, 1864:

> In regard to the "The Sorceress," pardon me if I say I do not think you are right in making such wholesale alterations. If "Mellitor," who as he stands is a fine light comedy part, is made the leading one, "Lesbain" must degenerate into an upper walking gentleman, which will have to be played by the juvenile man, who in every theatre generally kills any part entrusted to him, and with him I should be compelled to come in constant contact through the piece. I wish you would send me a plot of it, for I can't make out how you intend transforming "Jeanne" into a "daughter" and yet keep the powerful interest which in the original is entrusted in the "mother." I always think the latter phase of life the most powerful and I am most fond of portraying such emotions. Daughters I care little about, especially if it means love for father; I have never felt it, and cannot act it.
>
> I don't mind playing middle aged women, for I have so long been accustomed to it, in "Lady Macbeth," "Lady Constance," etc. As you have never seen me act, I must tell you that my style is passionate. When I love, it must be madly, not the tender, gentle love that shrinks from observation, but love that would sweep away all before it and if thwarted would end in despair, madness and death. In fact in acting, I am more fond of being bad than good. Hate, revenge, despair, sarcasm and resistless love, I glory in; charity, gentleness, and the meeker virtues I do not care for...

Daly relented and retained the character as a mother. On Jan-

uary 26, 1864 Miss Jones sent him further instructions after having received the plot outline:

> I want Mr. Stoepel to write the music for the "Sorceress." I enclose a note for him, which please send at once. You had better see him yourself and tell him what is required, asking him to do it as quick as possible. I had rather wait a little longer for the play than not have the music. Put in just as much as you can, as it is always attractive. I remember there is a chorus in the wood scene near Jeanne's hut. I like the idea you speak of retaining the mother, etc. I think it will be powerful.[1]

Meanwhile, Miss Jones went to Washington where she played Leah, sending Daly $10 for each performance. Daly had sent her a complete version of The Sorceress by February 13, when Miss Jones wrote him that she was unhappy with the script and decided not to do it until she could meet with him and offer "several suggestions." She wrote that she expected to be in New York by the first of March and hoped that he would have Judith "pretty well done, for I want to study it leisurely." A final rewrite of The Sorceress was not completed until April 19 when Daly wrote his brother, "I am so very much obliged to you for having finished up the Sorceress for me so finely and in such good time last night."[2] Judith was more acceptable to Miss Jones and she opened with it at the Winter Garden on April 4, 1864. The Sorceress followed on April 26.

A four-page publicity release advertising Judith and announcing Miss Jones' New York debut in the play was put out by the Winter Garden without mentioning Daly's name. It summarized the plot:

> The tale of her visit to Holophernes, of her encounter first with the fury of her own people, then with Holophernes' wild passion, her perilous situation in the hostile camp, her jealous enemies there, and the denouncing voices of her elders--and lastly, her tremendous deed of patriotism, make a succession of incidents which no other play can boast. The result is that a drama founded on that tale, and representing Judith as the simple words of her historian picture her, must powerfully appeal to the hearts of the people.[3]

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[1]MS, Folger. [2]MS, Lincoln Center. [3]Ibid.

It also announced new scenery for the piece, music by Stoepel, jugglery and magic "of that simple and superstitious age," and "an experiment in natural chemistry producing the most Startling Dramatic Effect ever witnessed." The Bohemian critics attributed the play to Daly, Nicholson and to the music critic of the Herald, De Lisle or De Lille. Winter, in the Albion, traced the origin of the play to Friedich Hebbel's Judith as adapted by Paolo Giacometti in 1857 for Ristori as Giuditta. Joseph Daly merely says that it was an adaptation by his brother and Nicholson, who denied co-authorship publicly, but demanded his share of the royalty in a letter to Daly on June 16, 1864.

Winter found the play "so over-burdened with superfluous details and turgid language, that it sinks by its own weight." Yet, he thought the subject was a good one:

> The patriotism of Judith, her daring, and her splendor, are constantly present to the imaginative spectator, notwithstanding the puerilities of Ramses and Macrobius, Agraele, and Othoniel, and the purposeless howlings of the "full and powerful chorus of Hebrews." Divested of this superfluous rubbish—and that is the gentlest term that I can conscientiously employ to describe, for example, the second act, and the second scene in the fourth—the piece might be condensed into three acts...As it stands, the play wearies by its prolixity, and vexes the mind by its elaborate preparation for a catastrophe that is too long deferred. Nor is the weariness essentially lightened by the prospect of the really fine scenery that has been painted for the piece...or by the quiet intensity of the acting of Miss Avonia Jones.[1]

Clapp, who reported earlier that "Mr. De Lisle furnished the plot (from the opera), that Mr. Nicholson furnished the words; and that Mr. Daly furnished the balance,"[2] later told his readers: "Mr. De Lille and Mr. Nicholson...now decline any responsibility, except for some portions of the second and last acts. They are wise."[3] Of the play itself: "I have never seen anything more atrocious even in the Bowery."[4] House

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[1] Albion, April 9, 1864, p. 175.
[2] Leader, April 2, 1864, p. 5.
[3] Leader, April 9, 1864, p. 5. [4] Ibid.

dismissed the play as "tedious and ineffective."[1] Fiske, who compared Miss Jones with Edwin Booth as a great artist, did find some good in the work, "but altogether Judith is the most unequal of literary efforts. There are scenes of positive puerility, and it is freighted with a great deal more trash than any new play can carry."[2] If Daly thought that putting Nicholson on the payroll would help him critically, the review which finally appeared in the World was a poor bargain:

> The passionate invective with which "Leah," remodeled from the German, for Miss Kate Bateman, by Mr. Augustin Daly, was assailed by two or three critics has been redirected against "Judith," adapted and rewritten for Miss Jones by the same gentleman's active pen. The new drama, though bearing the marks of very hasty writing, and including some commonplace scenes, has nevertheless a substantially made plot, the leading incidents of which are worked out with fidelity to art and a just regard for historic statements.
>
> The piece possesses the requisite amount of interest so far as the action is concerned, but the cast embraces so much sluggish talent that many scenes are rendered tedious.[3]

The only seemingly objective review came from Seymour:

> Subjects of this peculiar kind need terseness in the dialogue; the file can hardly be applied too much. The dialogue of "Judith" is copious and fluent enough, but it frequently lacks directness and point. The authors would have done well had they placed themselves under the restraint of blank verse, instead of trusting the seductive colloquialisms of ordinary writing. It is due to them to say that considerable ingenuity is displayed in the construction of the piece, and the situations are as good and as picturesque as they well could be with such a tradition for a groundwork. Indeed they have been too ambitious in this respect, and might readily omit the conjuring and magic lantern business of the second act, or at all events all the long and rather cheap philosophy that precedes it. With extensive pruning we can see no reason why "Judith" should not be a favorite with certain classes of the community.[4]

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[1] Tribune, April 7, 1864, p. 5.

[2] Herald, April 5, 1864, p. 4.

[3] World, April 12, 1864, p. 4.

[4] Times, April 5, 1864, p. 4.

The worst was yet to come for Daly. Only the Sunday Times would find merit in The Sorceress. That paper is the only source for a synopsis of the plot:

> A decidedly sensation drama, entitled "The Sorceress," was produced here on Tuesday evening, introducing Miss Avonia Jones in the weird character of Black Janet, the Sorceress. The piece is evidently of French origin, but seems to have been exceedingly well translated. The language is never puerile, and there is a terseness and vigor about it which is not characteristic of the French drama. The piece is replete with interest, the subject being that portion of French history in which the Duke of Guise plots against the king of France. Black Janet has been subject to persecution; her child had years before been stolen from her and killed, as she supposed, but instead, had become a distinguished soldier, whom the niece of the Duchess of Nemours is compelled to marry, though secretly in love with the Duke de Guise. The Sorceress has a secret enimity against Delaval (her son) and in various ways endeavors to compass his death, and the secret of their relationship is only revealed to her when she causes the signal for his murder to be given. He, however, escapes, and Janet is now as anxious to save him as she was to sacrifice him. Knowing the secret of his wife's love for the Duke de Guise, and that her son's honor was not safe, she urges him to fly with his wife; he does so, but they are about to perish by a fearful inundation, when Janet arrives with a boat, in which they are saved, but she perishes in the water.
>
> Miss Jones does not make up well for the part—her appearance is much too youthful—but she plays it quite effectively.[1]

Winter thought the role of Black Janet was the worst part in which Miss Jones had appeared, but he did analyze the character:

> Janet is a woman, half crazed by terrible outrage, pursuing the vanishing shadow of her lost child, and aiming at a deadly purpose of revenge. That type of character, or rather of lunacy, is common in old romances. Sir Walter Scott has illustrated it, to the very best advantage, in everybody's acquaintance, Meg Merrilies. But Sir Walter has given to Meg a graphic existence and scope of action which the authors of "The Sorceress" have entirely withheld from Janet. In their play, she is fettered by undramatic circumstances, and almost drowned in verbiage. At least, that is her situation in the English translation, whatever it may be in the French original of Messers. Bourgeois and Barbier. Miss Jones struggled with

[1] Sunday Times, May 1, 1864, p. 2.

> this overwhelming pressure of syntax, and testified at once to the power and delicacy of her art, by making the character impressive despite its clogs. But she exhibited little genuine feeling, and entirely failed to create for the Sorceress the illusion of nature or probability. I do not care to rehearse the experiences of Janet as exhibited in this play, because they are very much mixed, and very uninteresting. Enough to say that this tragic melodrama in which she figures, involves Paris, under Charles IX, the assassination of the Duke de Guise, and the popular tumults of that bloody historic period—the whole culminating in an inundation. It will be seen that the piece affords scope for striking theatrical effects.[1]

Clapp, Fiske and House did not even bother to review the production. Both Seymour and Nicholson were definite in their disapproval. Nicholson disliked the sentiment, character and experimental quality of the piece; he thought it too similar to the opera, Il Trovatore, and explained why it would not succeed:

> To be a success the play needs scenic beauties and mechanical illustrations such as are known to the boards of the French theaters, but are seldom witnessed in New York. The tableau formed at the end of act third, a barricade scene in Paris, is well managed, and obtains applause, just as does the famous apparition of the Lancers around the gipsy camp in "Rosedale." But the foundation business of the last act lacks in artistic skill. The action of the piece is extremely slow, and the incidents of insufficient interest.[2]

Seymour was even more damning:

> The role of the Sorceress is long-winded, verbose and monotonous. It has no relief. From the opening to the close it presents nothing but words. There is but one phase of emotion—maternal solicitude—and but one passion—revenge. Properly handled, these grand elements of human life and struggle might be made effective; but they are not properly handled. They are word-drawn to the utter-most tenacity of human patience. If a good sentence occurs, it is immediately marred by a dozen sentences that are bad. In two words, the play is dull, and the leading parts are monotonous.[3]

The play closed and with it closed a phase of Daly's career.

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[1] Albion, April 30, 1864, p. 211.

[2] World, April 28, 1864, p. 4.

[3] Times, April 28, 1864, p. 4.

In two short months, from February 25 to April 26, Daly had four adaptations open and close in rapid succession. It was time to pause and see what went wrong. "Pause" is hardly an accurate word; it would be more than two years before New York would see another of Daly's plays.

CHAPTER IV

A PRIVATE WAR

It would appear that Daly in the first phase of his long theatrical career was saying one thing, and saying it awkwardly, while he practiced something quite different.

His critical writing strongly attacked the prevailing star system. He grew up on the best of the stock companies, those of Burton, Wallack and Miss Keene, and from them knew the potential of the stage to present a more integrated work. He announced in his very first feuilleton that he sided with the new theatre, the theatre which he believed did away with tradition. He had vague ideas for a more naturalistic and technically-expert theatre, a theatre of specialization in which one house would perfect the art of comedy, while another concentrated on melodrama and all did away with dependence upon stars. It was the star system itself he blamed as the primary cause for the decadence that allowed such neglect of ensemble acting and scenery while it stifled imagination by its dependence on traditional or rather hackneyed methods of acting. He was begrudging in his praise for the great stars, following the general adulation of Forrest and Booth, while picking away at the milieu in which they acted. He felt freer in pressing his ideas while reviewing the works of lesser stars. But these ideas seem petulant and hastily written. And they were ignored. Henry Clapp Jr. was quite right in advising Daly to improve his style and find an influential outlet for his writing.

Even if the ideas were ill-expressed and buried in a relatively obscure Sunday paper, one would have at least expected Daly to implement them in his creative work. The five

plays he co-adapted and presented in New York in 1863 and 1864 seem to be the very antithesis of the new theatre he was espousing. His subject matter was highly romantic—the five plays take place in Steirmark, Melun, the Black Forest, Biblical lands and in a long-ago Paris. The borrowings were all from the French and German with no attempt to update or to transplant their characters or situations to American soil. The plays are preoccupied with the exotic; they are basically romantic stories of far-away or long-ago with huge passions or grotesque characters. On them were imposed some realistic details—sometimes in language (where the attempt was made to duplicate dialect), most of the time in characterization. These plays were cut and pasted together to wrap around stars. Kate Bateman, Mrs. John Wood, Marie Methua-Schiller and Avonia Jones demanded and received roles tailored to their particular specialities. The touches of realism and the addition of comic moments which matched his theories were overwhelmed by the concentration on the star role.

If Daly had not attempted to interest the stock companies in his earlier works, failing to get them produced with each effort, one could easily conclude that what seemed ideas in his early critical writing were really a fumbling in the dark for an aesthetic.

The most damning evidence against Daly is probably his relationship with James W. Wallack Jr., who played Nathan in Leah the Forsaken during its initial New York run. There is no recorded evidence that Daly objected to his playing the role. On the contrary, H.L. Bateman's letter to Daly notifying him that Wallack had refused the part in Boston suggested that the refusal was a setback for the play and a disappointment to the author. Whatever Daly's feelings about Wallack's acting ability, they did not interfere with his strengthening the role when Wallack accepted it for the New York opening. In 1861 Daly was disgusted, in print, with Wallack's stage trickeries, mannerisms and extravagant style. In reviewing Wallack again after Leah opened, there is only a

hint of sarcasm after seven paragraphs of praise for Miss Bateman:

> Never was an artiste better supported. Mr. Wallack as the Apostate Jew, with his quaint puritanical dress and walk, his subtle, meaning visage stood paramount as the evil genius of the play. His rhetorical powers were never more finely exhibited than in the description of the persecution of the Jews...No other actor could have invested such a repulsive character with such feeling and interest as does Mr. Wallack.[1]

The adjective "repulsive" hardly describes the character of Nathan as written, but Daly accepted that characterization when he accepted Wallack to play the role. "Accepted" may be misleading. Bateman did the casting and Daly didn't even attend a rehearsal. He "accepted" Wallack only in the sense that he accepted writing for the star system rather than remain unproduced.

Daly did not give up trying to work with strong managers after his initial failures. He repeatedly submitted his work to Laura Keene. After his commercial success with Leah, he sent her another work while she was on tour. He received this rejection from Cincinatti written for Miss Keene by William Brough on October 15, 1863:

> Miss Keene has received your Polish play and read it attentively. We have discovered (unhappily) that this theatre (Pikes) is the worst for the production of any piece needing actors, scenery and other adjuncts and consequently she returns it as you may want to let other artists look at it.[2]

The Polish play was apparently a non-extant work called The Red Ribbon. One cannot read too much into a rejection, but the indications are that the play depended on ensemble acting and scenic excellence rather than a star. What is even more noteworthy is that Daly wanted to write for a manager who enforced discipline and cared for detail. One can infer

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[1] Courier, Jan. 24, 1863, Lincoln Center, Daly Correspondence MSS, I.

[2] MS at Folger Shakespeare Library, Daly Correspondence.

that he was forced to follow the prevailing star system if he wished to continue to write for the theatre. The only other alternative was for him to manage his own productions. He was nowhere near ready for that in 1863 or 1864.

Daly had worked out his ideas about the theatre as an amateur practioner before he set them down as a critic. The ideas were not realized in his first ventures, partially because they did not grow out of any creative necessity; they were imposed upon a system of theatre that was foreign to them. More fatal to his works, Daly himself was not in command of the productions in any phase of them. He worked from weakness as a young and unknown playwright catering to the demands of the stars, still unsure of his own worth and unable to make his own demands.

The Civil War, when it finally became a reality for Daly and the nation, would change his catering attitude and his indecision. The changes would come in the same way that other changes came about in America at that time. Merle Curti's astute diagnosis on the effect of the conflict holds true for Daly:

> The war sharpened many ideas and brought others to the fore. The impressive opportunities for gain did much to advance the business class and to publicize its values--a factor of moment in the nation's intellectual life.[1]

At no point during the Civil War did Daly allow himself to become ideologically involved in the struggle. It was not his war. He tried to maintain a neutral, almost pacifist stance. Yet, of course, he could not help but be shaped by the struggle anymore than the most involved partisan. His ideas, in Merle Curti's expression, would be sharpened and brought to the fore in an almost Hegelian dialectic.

Daly's background up to the Civil War had inevitably shaped him for the outsider role. He was born of Irish immigrants, had spent his first ten years in the South, was educated in New York City and was working for an independent

[1] The Growth of American Thought (New York, 1964), p. 444.

weekly. The Irish immigrants, about a fourth of the city's 800,000 population in 1860, had their own problems of establishing themselves and did not wish to become involved in the national issues. Daly's memories of the South were those of a happy childhood and the North was offering him abundant opportunity for material success. There was no real conflict between the people of the North and the South as far as he was concerned. The conflict had been manufactured for political reasons. In New York City, the political reasons were embodied in Fernando Wood, a Tammany Hall Democrat defeated for re-election as mayor in 1861, and his successor, George Opdyke, a wealthy importer, banker and Republican. The Copperhead press, led by the Daily News, which was owned by Wood's brother, Benjamin, was telling its largely Irish readership that it had not crossed the Atlantic to free the slaves. Fernando Wood had even proposed in January, 1861 that New York secede from the union and become a free city associating itself with the South.

Daly's first published statement about the impending conflict was sandwiched in his review of the two productions of Richelieu by Booth and Forrest:

> En passant, however, of these performances of "Richelieu," at either house, we beg leave to observe that the constant intrusion of this evanescent union enthusiasm which springs forth on each evening upon the utterance of the lines,
>
> —"Put away the sword;
> States may be saved without it!"
>
> is getting ridiculous, besides interrupting the current of the play. The idea of stopping an actor in the midst of his speech, to give three cheers, because he happens to utter a few words, and these written by a "bloody Englisher" and referring to a despotism, and at the same time not at all applicable to this time, (no matter what it might have been a month ago), is childlishly absurd. Let the union be preserved, if it may be, but for Heavens sake don't mix our amusements up in politics.[1]

By the time Daly had written this, seven states in the South had voted to leave the Union. The Northern reaction, even in

[1] Courier, Feb. 3, 1861, p. 5.

the Republican newspapers (Times and Tribune among them), was ambivalent on how to deal with secession. The firing on Fort Sumter in April ended the debate among Republicans. On the front page of its April 15th issue, the Times printed that the firing had made the North "one unit" and that its response was "one intense, inspiring sentiment of patriotism." Lincoln asked for 75,000 men to enlist in the Army. About one million volunteered.

It was not until the Draft Riots of 1863 in New York that Daly would be confronted with any adverse aspects of the war. Lincoln's Conscription Act, following on the heels of the Emancipation Proclamation, gave fuel to the anti-war sentiment in the city. The Copperhead press, led by the Daily News, was not only covering the "peace demonstrations" in which orators were telling their listeners, primarily the working class, that they were "reduced to the level of slaves by Lincoln when you submit to be seized by Provost Marshalls and dragged off to the Army,"[1] but these same papers were editorializing against conscription and were urging their readers to resist it. The Republican press refused to heed these sentiments. The Tribune of July 11 saw no danger, stating that the people generally appear to consider the draft as a matter of course and that the paper had been unable to learn of any undue excitement in regard to it. This was a few days before the eruption. The riots began on Monday, July 13, lasting for four days, during which time about 1,000 civilians and 50 of the militia were killed and millions of dollars in property damage was caused. Daly covered the riots for the Courier.

Daly had not only protested the unfairness of the Conscription Act, he had also predicted the results of its enforcement. During the first week of March, 1863, after the passage of the bill, he conducted a series of interviews with workers in New York. On the front page of the March 8 issue

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[1] Daily News, July 10, 1863, p. 8.

of the Courier, he printed his warning:

> ...it is universally detested among the classes who have hitherto given to the cause of the Union the immense armies already sent to the field...any attempt at conscription will provoke a feeling and an opposition, the consequences of which we really dread. But, as journalists we are bound to note the signs of the times, and give warning of "coming events"...
>
> That any man worth $300 can avoid the conscription, rankles in the heart of the poor man, and he believes himself the victim of "class legislation."
>
> Where ever the bill was discussed it excited anger and detestation, expressed in language in too many instances which I cannot bring myself to transcribe.

Daly quoted a number of interviewees. Among them was a father who had already lost a son in the Army: "Harkee. If any man comes to my house to take any one from me to fight, because I have no $300, I'll blow his brains out—I will." Daly was among the first of the journalists to realize that the $300 payment for a substitute was the canker that festered in the minds of the poor and would erupt in the violence of the riots.

During the riots, Daly was involved in an incident which almost cost him his life. Joseph Daly's description is not wholly accurate, but, along with a comment from Kate Bateman, it is the only extant reference to his involvement:

> In company with Joseph Howard, Jr. (then a reporter on the Tribune) young Daly found himself surrounded by a mob on Second Avenue near a beleaguered fire-engine house. Both the journalists wore broad-brimmed black soft felt hats known as "wide-awakes," much affected (together with flowing locks) by the litterateurs of the period, but unfortunately associated in the minds of the mob with a lately defunct anti-foreign faction called "Know-Nothings," and with the anti-slavery newspapers which were supposed to be responsible for the war and all its consequences.
>
> When therefore our adventurers were descried, the mob, which had been threatening the engine-house after looting and burning in every direction, shouted "Know-Nothings!" "Tribune reporters!" Howard, who was a resourceful youth, sought to pacify the crowd by explaining that he was simply deputized by Ben Wood of the News to give that friendly paper a truthful version of the facts. As Mr. Benjamin Wood and his paper, the Daily News, were known Southern sympathizers, it was an ingenious fib; but the mob derided the speaker, and might soon have made an end of both young men if members of the fire company had not sallied from their house, dragged the imperilled youths inside, and locked

> the doors. This act redoubled the rage of the mob against the rescuers.[1]

Daly escaped by pretending to be one of the mob, leaving Howard behind in the fire house. The true irony of the incident, which took place on 46th Street from Third Avenue to the safety of the fire house on Second Avenue, was that Howard, who was 30 years old at the time, was actually in the employ of the Daily News and not the Tribune; he had written most of the inflammatory articles which were partially responsible for the riots. That, coupled with Daly's sympathetic portrayal of the working man in the Courier, should have made them heros to the mob rather than its intended victims. Judging from the tone of Joseph's reporting of the incident and from a letter by Miss Bateman written in Paris on August 8, 1863 ending with "strict orders that you do not permit yourself to be taken for a Tribune reporter again,"[2] Daly apparently wished to make light of the incident. How serious it was can be judged better from Howard's version dictated to a rewrite man at the Daily News the same afternoon it happened, Tuesday, July 14:

> On the same corner Mr. Howard, a well known member of the press, was standing when the same gang commenced encircling him. One of them attempted to pick his pocket but was detected in the act by his intended victim, who said, "There, I recon that will do, stand off." The reply vouchsafed was a severe slap in the face, a kick in the shins, a yank by the hair and a punch in the ribs from the whole set who at once cried out loudly and with cheerful emphasis, "Here's a d - d Abolitionist." "Down with the Lincoln Spy." "Hang him, hang him." The crowd by hundreds rushed toward the group and seeing Mr. Howard struggling with his assailants sprang in, and with all the chivalry of their natures beat him, kicked him, threw him down, pulled him up, turned him around, tore out his hair and proposed to hang him. In the meantime the skillful pickpockets had relieved him of his gold watch and chain, a breast pin, his pocketbook, his hat and cane, after which they vigorously shouted in favor of the process of immediate elevation of his person from an adjacent lamp post.

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[1] Daly, Life, pp. 34-36.

[2] MS Folger Shakespeare Library, Daly Correspondence.

> It was in vain that the unfortunate individual attempted to speak or struggle; his voice was drowned by a thousand shoutings and his arms were held by the group of an angered multitude. "Away with him" shouted the infuriated mob, who neither knew or cared what he was, what he had done, or what he proposed to do. Fortunately at this juncture, certain whole souled members of Liberty Hose came along, and they with assistance of some strong armed and otherwise potential foundry men succeeded in making a small space way in front of him and gradually got him away from the crowd and started him for the truck house...

Unfortunately the Daily News made no mention of Daly's presence or of his reaction at the scene. It is understandable, taking into consideration the press rivalry and sensationalist viewpoint at the time, as well as the paper's bias toward the cause of the riot. It was important for the Daily News to show that such incidents were not caused by those protesting the draft, but by young hoodlums. It would have diluted the story to have two reporters under attack; Daly's version would be printed later in the week. Howard and Daly were close friends during the decade. In 1867 they would co-author a play; in 1868 Howard would be city editor of the Times while Daly was that paper's drama critic. They both may have become somewhat more cynical or self-serving after the riots. Howard became the author of the Bogus Draft Proclamation in May 1864 and Daly hacked out four plays with little regard for the theatrical ideals he had espoused during the past few years.

The Bogus Proclamation was a scheme devised by Howard to raise the price of gold and make a killing on the Stock Market. Howard, described by the Tribune in 1864 as "of medium height, has dark eyes and hair, is rather bald, is pale and slender, with regular features, and wears a moustache," had checked with a broker from the firm of Kent and Clapp on the effect of a huge draft call on the market. He learned that the price of gold would skyrocket. He was intimately familiar with the workings of the morning press in New York. He was at first a reporter, then city editor of the Times, a correspondent of the Tribune and a reporter for the Daily News; at the time of this scheme he was city editor of the

Brooklyn Eagle. He was also familiar with the style of writing put out by the Lincoln administration and forged the proclamation calling for a draft of 400,000 men with a recommendation of a day of fasting. Howard had copies sent out as a release from the Associated Press during the late afternoon of Tuesday, May 17, when the editorial staffs were dismissed and the print shop foreman took over on the morning newspapers. The World and Journal of Commerce did print it and were closed down by the government; within a week Howard was arrested. He was imprisoned at Fort Lafayette for 14 weeks to the indignation of fellow journalists: "Bogus reports, intended to effect the price of stocks, are every day set afloat in Wall Street...If all the individuals who have made illegal gain out of the war were sent to Fort Lafayette..."[1] Lincoln not only forgave him, he hired Howard as official recorder of the Department of the East's military headquarters. From that position, Howard soon returned to the Times, becoming its city editor.

Both the Daly brothers were interested in the price of gold. Daly may have realized enough royalties from the productions of Leah and his four other plays to have invested in the market. "Gold here has fallen to 200 and will go still lower but the damned shopkeepers still put their goods up to the 285 per cent standard and pretend not to have felt the reaction,"[2] Joseph wrote to Augustin on September 21, 1864 and then again, on November 17, 1864, he reported a conversation with their stockbroker, a man by the name of Carleton: "He had expected that gold would have come down by this time to 150 and the price of stereotyping have proportionately decreased but that things remain quite as unfavorable as when you spoke to him in the summer."[3] Daly's experiences with the market would be employed in 1867 when he wrote Under the Gaslight.

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[1] Brooklyn Eagle, May 21, 1864, p. 2.
[2] MS, Lincoln Center. [3] Ibid.

If Daly had wanted to get rich quickly by buying gold on Tuesday to sell on Wednesday, literally or theatrically, he was sadly disappointed. By the summer of 1864, all his plays but Leah had done poorly. He was hired in June by Noah Brooks to replace James Otis as the dramatic critic for the Evening Express at $10 a week, a position he maintained along with his duties at the Courier until 1867. But a more importantly influencing event was to take place for him that year.

From September 1864 through January 1865, Daly toured Union-held areas in the South with Avonia Jones, getting his first professional experience in stage management. It would also be his first contact with the fighting conditions of the war. He would taste the harshness of life, suffering physical pain and discomfort, rejection in love, and an almost total lack of morality! Reality would take on a new definition for him. The romantic gloss of life would be dimmed. When Daly returned from this tour, his ideas would not only be solidified in the direction they had earlier taken but he would be able to express them more clearly and have a more important outlet for them.

His letters to Joseph during this period are, for Daly, an extraordinary revelation into his personal life. It is probably the only period when he revealed himself so fully on paper. He was sick, tired and lonely and the correspondence with his brother seemed to fill a desperate need for him. Not all his letters have survived. Joseph mentions destroying two of them. In one letter he warns his brother to be more careful in what he writes. Pages are missing from some of them and there are references to other letters which no longer exist. Yet Joseph saved more than enough of them to piece together a revealing insight into Daly's mind at the age of 26 years. These manuscripts are contained in the first of eight boxes or volumes of letters and clippings at the Lincoln Center Library and Museum of the Performing Arts. Hundreds of these letters, written during the second half of the nineteenth century, are full of affection and protesta-

tions of love and need, advice and concern. Joseph was slow, methodical, retiring, homely, peevish much of the time, cautious and hero-worshiping—the complete antithesis of his older brother. Their difference even extends to their handwriting—Joseph's penmanship is neat and precise; Augustin's hand whipsaacross a page carelessly, not finishing words, leaping from one idea to the next. This tour with Miss Jones was their first long separation. While his relationship with Joseph is the most revealing aspect of these letters, the most interesting for this study is his method of work and his approach to the theatre. His unsatisfactory affair with Miss Jones would provide him with source material for his characters in later plays. There is also a great deal of material here of historical interest; Daly's journalistic and dramatic qualities provide fresh details, not only on the conduct of theatre, but on medicine, travel and general living conditions during the Civil War.

The tour, in which Miss Jones was to be the star playing with local companies, was a rather interesting phenomenon to be occuring during a war. Here she was a "Northern" star, with her agent-manager, entertaining the Southerners whom the Northern soldiers had recently defeated—they entered Memphis on the verge of its being "liberated." The tour had been partially planned in New York after Miss Jones' re-engagement in this city with Wallack's company, where she played from July 5 through July 25, 1864, in The Winning Suit, Romeo and Juliet, The Lady of Lyons, Love's Sacrifice and Camille. There was the month of August in which to make plans: The tour would start in Daly's home town, Norfolk, on September 12 for a two-week stay at Glenn's Theatre opening with a play the company had performed before—Matilda Heron's version of Medea, to give Daly time to rehearse the group in Leah the Forsaken and Gamea the Jewish Mother. The next stop would be Nashville for two weeks at the New Theatre, opening with Romeo and Juliet and playing Leah, Gamea and The Sorceress. This was to be followed by a shorter stay in St. Louis, October 17 to October

24; the longest stand of the tour was to be in Memphis, where they were to open on October 31 (the opening was delayed until November 7). During the tour, Daly added engagements for Rochester, Washington and Baltimore. The plan was to open in each city with a play the resident company had performed to give Daly and Miss Jones time to rehearse it in the new works. Daly not only helped rehearse the companies, he made the rounds of the newspapers and saw influential members of the communities; he planned publicity stunts, such as having Miss Jones serenaded by bands or feted at parties; he also managed the circulation of promotion bills.

Sailing from New York with a stopover in Baltimore, Daly and Miss Jones arrived in Norfolk on Saturday, September 10. That same evening he sent his first impression to Joseph, playfully signing his letter "Gustibus." He remembered an incident from their youth when he stole fruit and forced Joseph to be his accomplice, and described familiar faces, events and structures he saw in passing. He was so busy on his first day that he described the hours as seconds. The following week he described some of the changes taking place in Norfolk:

> My room in the hotel...is exactly opposite our old house in Dodds Lane.
>
> It is now occupied by Darkies; indeed there are very few places in town not filled with the black vermin. They are two thirds of the foot passengers; they are storekeepers, barbers, market men, ferrymen, omnibus drivers, coachmen, ticket takers, soldiers, provost guards, waiters--everything. They are cheap and "sassy." You can have a dozen to run a single errand, and the one selected falls down and thanks you for giving him the job, and charges you nothing for doing it!
>
> We had a riot in town between the Negro provost guard and a lot of tipsy sailors yesterday--in broad day. It was a big fight and finished up several sailors and a few darkies. The "bracks" in consequence are bigger than ever.[1]

He made one final mention of his Southern childhood in his next letter:

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[1]September 15, 1864. The letters are filed chronologically and are cataloged under Daly Correspondence, I.

> In my perambulations the other day I searched out the circus camping ground. It is a Darkey quarter now and the spot where the ring used to be raised, and the horses run, the clown say his old jokes, and the ring master snap his long whip, is covered with dingy two story Negro habitations. The spot where the old Avon Theatre stood is now covered by the town jail. Think of it![1]

The relationship betweenthe brothers, touched earlier, can be expanded upon here. During this five-month period, Joseph not only substituted for his brother on the Express and Courier, handled the sales of their plays, tracked down unauthorized productions of these plays, wrote additional dialogue for the plays when needed, wrote short skits with his brother by mail, handled Augustin's correspondence and other affairs in New York, he also undertook the responsibility of supervising his brother's physical and emotional life during the tour.

Daly was in Norfolk only three days when, not receiving his first letter from Joseph, wrote his brother in tones abusive enough for Joseph to have destroyed the letter. Daly makes reference to it the following day after hearing from Joseph:

> Your poor "sick" letter today makes me very, very sorry for my ugly curt one—sent away to you yesterday. But think of the misery of a poor devil travel-dusted an inch thick, no clean clothes since Saturday, no brush—a borrowed comb, one handkerchief—and in a civilized community! And then I had not heard from you, and you know that you are the solitary soul that I shall expect letters from while I am away. For all these causes —forgive me. The trunk too has just come...Hoey deserves thanks. A good occasion to repay will be on the reopening of Wallack's Theatre, and noting Mrs. H's absence from the company, say as much and as nicely as you can for her, and send the paper marked to H with compliments.[2]

John Hoey was employed by Adam's Express and his wife had just retired from Wallack's; the puff was repayment for the free delivery of his trunk. On the following day, Augustin sent Joseph further instructions for puffs:

> I believe "Martin Chuzzlewit" is to be produced at at the Olympic Monday—As I told you in New York it is

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[1] Sept. 21, 1864. [2] Sept. 14, 1864.

> by Fiske (S.R.) of the Herald. In Saturday or Monday's paper announce the authorship sure, and in writing of it speak as flatteringly as you can, so as to please his vanity. I want to try the effect of soft words on these gentlemen.[1]

The following item in the Express was as "flatteringly" as cautious Joseph could bring himself to write:

> The author is said to be Mr. Stephen R. Fiske, dramatic critic of the Herald, and a well known literary gentleman of this city. He has attempted a difficult and delicate task in dramatizing this novel, but we have no fear of his not making an interesting play from the material at his command. We look forward with pleasure at his success, and predict a crowded house tonight to witness "Martin Chuzzlewit."[2]

Fiske acknowledged the puff but "soft words" didn't work long. Fiske continued to attack Daly in the Herald and later in the Leader. Not suprisingly, the frequent orders to Joseph to write puffs were mainly for Miss Jones, commenting onthe "tremendous" success she was having--once before she had even performed: "Also write a good notice of Miss Jones in Nashville. We promise to take it by storm as we did Norfolk. Magnificent and fashionable house tonight to see Juliet."[3] Daly went about wooing the press wherever they played and was successful in getting good notices for his star, even if he had to pay for them, as was the case in St. Louis:

> The papers there (in St. L) are swindles. They pay no attention to theatricals or art, and write nothing that is not paid for by the line. Anyone can become (in their columns) the purest, greatest, and handsomest "Artist" in the world at the rate of 35 cents per line. Of course when one goes to Rome (or roams) one does as the roamers do. Therefore I bought Miss Jones $8.25 worth of greatness during her short stay.[4]

Daly was not devoting all of his time to Miss Jones during this period. He contacted Maggie Mitchell during a stopover in Washington, where she was performing, and sold her a play called Andree, probably an adaptation of The Glory of Columbia (1803) by William Dunlap. The collaboration between the brothers and the business aspect of Daly's career

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[1]Sept. 15. [2]Oct. 24, p. 2. [3]Oct. 3. [4]Oct. 26.

at this time are illuminated by tracing the history of their now-lost work. Daly first mentioned the sale on the evening of October 2 after arriving in Nashville:

> I have a bit of good news. I have sold "Andree." Maggie Mitchell is immensely delighted with it. I saw her in Washington after I wrote you and also found a letter from her waiting me here. She will produce it in Cincinatti in December--I have bargained for $400 to be paid in nightly performances of $10 and for a benefit in the 75th night...I reserve the right to sell other copies.
>
> I want you to send me by Adam's Express (through Hoey) my copy of it (among my MSS rolls)--(If it can reach here by the 15th)--that I may mark certain alterations which you are to write in her copy to be sent you in N.Y. in a couple of weeks.

The next day, October 3, Daly wrote: "I want you to write a neat notice of Maggie Mitchell (she commences at Niblo's Oct. 26th)--and send her a paper to Washington, marked with my compliments." Not receiving the manuscript, Daly, from St. Louis on October 19, demanded: "Where is 'Andree?'" It arrived, and on the 24th, Daly wrote to Joseph again:

> I return you, too, by this mail "Andree" with my alterations marked in ink in the second and fourth acts. I think you will see their propriety at a glance. By the transpositions in the fourth act we give the climax to Andree, and yet preserve (in good places I think) the "blind" episode of the old man. Write them nice and plainly in Miss Mitchell's copy when you receive it. Then return it--as I told you to 18 or 26 W. 5th St. Preserve a copy of your "lines."

Joseph's puff in the Express statedtthat Miss Mitchell would be playing Fanchon, "a memorable role which has made her famous."[1] Daly's response: "You are not kind (liberal) enough with Maggie Mitchell. The receipt of money for Andree may depend on your treatment of her. If not too late..."[2] The rest of the instructions are lost. The money had not come by December 14 when Joseph wrote his brother that Miss Mitchell was "playing a guessing game about Andree." Augustin became concerned and suspicious. On January 1, 1865 he asked Joseph to watch the Cincinatti papers to see if she had performed it there,

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[1] Oct. 24, 1864, p. 2. [2] Nov. 6, 1864 (from Memphis).

as he still had not heard from her yet. Joseph wrote him on January 2 that he had finally received some money and new terms: $100 down and $10 a night to be paid for 50 nights with a half benefit on the 50th night. That $100 was probably all the Daly brothers received for their work on the play. Miss Mitchell had delayed her engagement in Cincinatti until January 16, 1865. If she had intentions of doing Andree there, the reception she received for her Fanchon was so great she dropped Andree and added more performances of The Cricket. She never performed Andree in New York and there is no published mention of her performing the play elsewhere.[1]

All this energy expended over Andree was relatively minor compared to other activities of the brothers during this five-month period. Included in his instructions on the rewrites to Andree, Augustin asked Joseph in his letter of October 2 from Nashville: "If you have time after doing the war episode for Matilda Heron (a sketch for which I will send you) —I want you to get at that love story in "Love Letters." It will be most profitable." Joseph was todo all this while he was in the process of once more moving himself and his mother to a new address.[2]

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[1]It may have been about Andree that Miss Mitchell wrote to Daly on March 21, 1866: "I fully expected to produce your piece during my present engagement, and submitted the same to Mr. Vincent to read and cast. In sum the piece did not please him and after giving it (as he says) considerable attention, transferred it to Mr. Wheatley, who returned it to me in the most indignant manner, calling it trash—absurd—improbable and that he could not allow any such piece to be produced at Niblo's Garden. He was exceedingly ungentlemanly during the interview. Speaking in the most uncomplimentary terms of your piece and endeavored to impress me with a due sense of his importance and of the honor he conferred by allowing anyone to play in his theatre." MSS at Folger Shakespeare Library, Daly Correspondence.

[2]The Dalys moved at least once a year from the time they arrived in New York until this period. They moved from Brooklyn to Manhattan in 1851 to 22 Ridge St., returned to Brooklyn the following year and than back to Manhattan in 1853 to 79 Suffolk, 55 Suffolk, 117 Norfolk, 135 Orchard, 132 Or-

The trip with Miss Jones from Washington to Nashville, recounted in the October 2, 1864 letter, left with Daly a deep hatred of trains which would manifest itself when he wrote Under the Gaslight. It also weakened him sufficiently to cause severe illness while in Nashville. The journey lasted about five days, from Tuesday, September 27 until the Sunday morning of October 2:

> What a rough job we had coming. A railroad accident, too, to add to the enjoyments. It occured on Thursday night between Columbus and Cincinatti. The baggage car' and two rear cars ran off and tore up a portion of the track. No one hurt, although had it occured twenty five feet farther on we should have had a tumble down an embankment. We were detained four hours in the wilderness while the locomotive ran to the next station for repairing stuff—a new track was laid down at three o'clock in the morning.
>
> The railroad accomodations out here are horrid. The night-trains especially so. Low narrow seats, dirty floors, no ventilation, brutes and blackguards in the so-called ladies car!—no water—dim lights; filthy stations and long waits for "connections" are a few of the evils. We waited for two hours in the cold night air (between 11 and 1 o'clock) for a train at a town called Seymour, between Cincinatti and Louisville, because the ladies saloon stank so badly, and the "gentleman's" (?) ditto was crowded with noisy, blasphemous and filthy soldiers and "conscripts." We spent five hours in Cincinatti...

Daly was reticent about informing his family of his illness. He first mentioned that all was not well in a letter on October 9, when he wrote: "I have a mountain on the outside (under right ear) about as big as a baby's head, as hard as the heart of a melodramatic cruel uncle and as painful as love's parting." The doctor he saw said it came from a change of latitudes and gave him "some 'fissic' to take every two hours." Two days later, Augustin wrote to say he was getting well and

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chard Streets and back to Brooklyn in 1858. They returned to Manhattan in 1860, residing at 362 Sixth Ave., then 133 Allen, 135 Allen and 156 E. Houston Sts. until April 1863 when they shared a townhouse with the J. Guido Methuas at 109½ St. Mark's Place between Ave. A and First Ave., paying $200 of the $500 annual rent. Then they moved to 128 W. 53rd St in 1864, quickly moving again to 72 Horatio St., where they stayed for three years, their longest residence at one address in New York to this point.

was advised in return by Joseph to change his socks and coat when weiland to buy a certain kind of shoe. As playfully as he could put it, Joseph began his campaign to separate his brother from an entanglement with Miss Jones: "If you get sick or anything happens to you, mother desires me to say that she will blame Miss Avonia for it and wishes you to say to Miss Jones that she is to consider herself held accountable for your safe delivery home again." This was written on October 15; four days later, Augustin was confessing to his brother just how seriously he had been ill:

> Had you given me up, again! and were you consulting the "widely circulated and universally read" Western journals to see which and which trains were gobbled up—that might have borne as passenger this distinguished dramatist! Well, as you may perceive "I'm not did yit"—nor have I felt any gobble—not a bite. I reached here, safely enough, on Monday—after a day and a half's precarious travelling from disgusting Nashville. I shall never remember the place but as a city of mud and affliction: It rains mud there—and it poured affliction on me. I suffered much. It was from the throat which (when I wrote you last) I thought was getting well. At first the doctor thought it was merely "swelled throat" (what a "swell" I was, too)—but he finally concluded that it was enlargement of the glands. That was nice. I took medicine every two hours in the day and as often as I was awakened in the night (that was about every half hour)—for the purpose of preventing it "seperating" and humus "gathering." No go. It separated and gathered. It did just as it pleased. I was nowhere. There was no one of the name of Daly about—there was only a large throat (Bull size) which neither ate—slept —or talked. I tasted well of agony for a week. I couldn't lie down—I couldn't sleep. I sat up in bed with the pillows at my back—sighing for home, and counting the hours—even the minutes till daylight. The good sun generally brought me a short respite from the pains. All this till today. Endurance then ceased to be either a virtue or a penance. I learned of a Homeopathist (Dr. Walker) as an expert—in St. Louis—and called on him. I was in his office but twenty minutes—but in that time he had examined me, had pronounced an "abcess" formed, had lanced me—I had fainted—recovered—lost an ocean of blood and a river of matter—and felt almost cured. I have new medicines-taking and Flakseed poultices-applying. I shall be cured in two days. The operation of lancing was very dangerous—for the gathering was above the large artery on the right side of the neck. I feel very well now—as I write. No longer stiff—no longer in the acute pains of the past fortnight. I have hopes of a good sleep.

The doctor's fee was $8; Daly did get a good night's sleep and recovery. When he wrote the letter, he must have been under medication; he inadvertantly signed it "Jones" rather than "John." One can only speculate that Miss Jones had been constantly by his bedside, his nurse and only companion.

If the danger of illness in the Southwest held terrors for the traveller then, what of the dangers of the war itself? The trip for Daly and Miss Jones on the Mississippi from St. Louis to Memphis was to have taken three days; it lasted for a week and a half. He felt there would be no danger, writing to Joseph on October 24: "There is no fear of my being fired into, although that 'fuss' is frequently practiced, for I go on a private steamer, and it is only the U.S.M. boats that are molested." Two days later, on a Thursday afternoon, he had mixed feelings about the trip, looking forward to "my first 'sail' down the 'Papa of Waters'" with apprehensions about "this impatient spirit being cooped up all that time." He had anticipated arriving on Sunday when he wrote that; Sunday came and he was still somewhere on the Mississippi:

> We have had an eventful passage. We have struck snags, have run on bars and gotten off again, and we have been fired into by guerillas. This last "item" transpired today while we were at dinner. The shots--about a dozen--came from a masked battery--and although we had an entire regiment of U.S. soldiers on board there was not a musket to reply. No injury was done--as the boat is a pretty fast one and took to her heels for safety.[1]

The next day the boat ran on a sandbar about 80 miles above Memphis and Daly and Miss Jones were stuck on it for some 60 hours before a passing ship was hailed and they continued the journey aboard it, until it got stuck. The passengers remained on the second ship for three days before they were allowed to board yet another ship, the St. Patrick ("Howly boat") and finally arrived in Memphis on November 6. Joseph Daly paints an almost plastic picture of his brother as an upright and highly moral individual. Daly's comments on the passengers aboard the ship and thenoon the people he first met in Memphis may

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[1]Oct. 26, 1864. MS, Lincoln Center, Daly Correspondence.

correct that picture:

> We had a very stupid passage—otherwise; for the passengers were all staid, moral and upright people. They were all of the church. Very little smoking and chewing ...and no tippling. The barman was in despair. He was almost ready to give away his drynkkes to anybody who would take them—only to keep his hand in. Even the sailors were moral. I didn't hear a swear sworn by any of 'em. Not even a little damn. The Captain too was the mildest sort of man. I became so impressed that I was becoming "a chosen children" myself, and would have joined the tabernacle of grace if I had remained off shore a day longer. I reformed so much indeed that one old cove to whom I was relating an "experience" or two of my travels, deceived by my churchly manner wanted to know if I was on a journey in missionary interest! When I told him that I was not, but on a tour in the interest of drama, he gave a spasmodic shudder and fled to the secret recesses of his berth to pray for my sinful, depraved and lost soul.
>
> The immoralities of the town however make up for the sainted character of the boat and its passengers.
>
> Such wild devils, such drinkers, such smokers, chewers, such gamblers and uproarious fellows generally I never saw—
>
> I was whirled into the maelstrom immediately. Of course, you understand that I look, listan, but partake not. All these people—the wildest are the influential ones that I must get interested in the theatre. I am on the warpath—to conquer, or die.[1]

Daly places himself somewhere between the "devils" and the "saints." He preferred being with the "devils," of whom, on November 12 he wrote, it "costs a good deal to keep up the acquaintance—but I must do it for the good of the cause." In this letter he recounts the rumors that the Confederates are preparing to take Memphis and tells how he and Miss Jones had been playing both sides: "If Memphis is taken I shall be quite safe from my intimate acquaintance with the Secesh powers (in private) here, or if it is held I shall be equally safe from my friendliness with the other powers." The next day, November 13, he is more specific:

> As you can judge, and as you have learned by this time from me—I have not been captured, shot, or imprisoned, so your queries on those heads are answered. I have to have a permit to walk about the city though, and exempt me from arrest and imprisonment for "desertion" from the Militia

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[1] Nov. 6, 1864.

duty of the place. In such good odor am I with the authorities though, that I could get a dozen permits if I needed them.

I am almost like the man in the fable who sat between the two stools—only in this instance, the Federal officers seek me, while it is I who seek the confederates—of whom there are a number in town in disguise.

I introduced a Rebel captain to Miss Jones the other evening and we had quite a treasonable feast of "reason" together. He is one of the most noted guerilla leaders of the west.

The war for Daly was no more than a game, an accompaniment to and an opportunity for his theatrical endeavors. One need only think of Walt Whitman during this same period tending to the wounded and to the dying and of Stephen R. Fiske safely at home writing for the Herald that "New York has never been so gay, so extravagant, as in these days of war"[1] to place Daly's experiences in their proper "middle" sphere. One might wish him at this point to be committed to something other than success, but he was just 26 years old and had not yet realized that success would not come until commitments were made and kept.

There was another kind of war going on for Daly during this five-month period—a war more real for him than the actual fighting around him. This was his unrequited love affair with Avonia Jones.

The first reference to a non-professional relationship between Daly and Miss Jones is contained in a letter dated November 4, 1864 from Joseph to Augustin in which the younger brother reported denying a rumor circulating in New York that Augustin was going to marry Miss Jones. It took ten days for a letter to get to Memphis; Joseph's probably arrived the day after Augustin wrote this to him: "Miss Jones is about as disappointed as I am when the report of the Post Office is that there are no letters from you. By the way if you have time after you get this write her one of your best style. It would tickle her immensely."[1] Joseph was more in the mood to strangle

[1] Nov. 13, 1864. MS, Lincoln Center, Daly Correspondence.

rather than "tickle" Miss Jones. He destroyed all of Augustin's letters to him after this until one dated January 1, 1865. He saw Augustin briefly between the Memphis and Rochester engagements in New York City and wrote to him on December 14, 1864:

> I have nothing more to say to you when you come home upon the topic you wish to avoid. It was with heartfelt joy that I read your announcement concerning the rupture of the engagements you had made as an agent. I felt a new man because I knew that the coming year should be devoted by both of us to herculean labor in the field of dramatic literature, because with the new year we should work for new successes; because I would not find my ideas going to seed, my best drop of imagination wasted, your skill unemployed and your time spent in other pursuits than those you had chosen for a profession. For one whole year almost we have been slipping away from our foothold and may perhaps have to work our way all up again.
>
> ...you have given everything you had—your time, your talent and yourself—to a service which I deemed beneath you.
>
> I felt for the first time the horrible feeling of jealousy. Yes: that feeling which I have so often caused you and which you have borne so long without a murmur... found to my mortification that you had learned to do without me...
>
> I take a pleasure in dramatic writing, but apart from you I would not touch it for an instant, so if you desire to use me you must feed the incentive to action. I can't have you running around as an agent while I sell plays. That's too strong.

If Daly had promised his brother that he was finished with Miss Jones, he hadn't yet informed her. He went on to Washington with her, leaving open the possibility of his continuing with her at a later date to New Orleans. His last letter of the tour to Joseph was written from Washington on January 15, 1865:

> I finish this, the last Sunday which I shall spend from home—rather less dreary than most of my Sundays have been of late. Besides the good sun which is shining brightly in my room, there is a better sunshine still —that of Hope, shining in my heart. Penetrating that, I sorrowfully confess that it has gone into a very dark place, where doubts, disappointments and retaliatory feelings have taken up their abode.
>
> I feel that in returning to New York I shall be ready for stupendous efforts. I shall be tied to no likes outside of our own charmed ties (or quartette) and with strength, experience and the will and disposition to ride over every puny obstacle that our kind literary friends may oppose to our progress.

In continuing, he discussed future plans, among them, "an episode which might be called 'A Dead Man's Handwriting!' —Think of one in a trance, being coffined and prepared for the grave—without watchers—veins opened—wakening up—bleeding to death again, but leaving behind a writing in his own blood." If this bloody story expressed his mood at the time, the next outline he offered his brother in the letter may explain why:

> I want to tell the story of a woman, self willed—beautiful—passionate—independent—careless of conventionalities—selfish—vain—thoughtless of others' feelings—one who is inately good—but whose pride of Virtue has made mad—To cap all she is a baby—She is a woman, too, who would not when cupid would, and could not when she would.

Augustin left for home Friday evening, January 20, while Miss Jones went to Baltimore, expecting to be with him shortly in New Orleans. She wrote him from Baltimore on February 2, 1865 addressing him as "My dear Brother" and signing the letter, "Your affectionate Sister."

A photograph and a drawing of Daly, both made during 1864, carry a bewildered look. His hair is short, cut apparently after the Draft Riot episode. His moustache is full and his features are even and blandly good-looking. Photographs of Miss Jones, who was a year younger than Daly, all portray the same kind of even-featured looks—they could really have been brother and sister in appearance, except for the eyes, which, with Miss Jones, were intense and pained in expression. A biography of Miss Jones is yet to be written; its theme would come from a number of references to her in letters and memoirs concluding with the expression, "Poor Avonia."

Daly was to discover her secret love-hate relationship with her father and her father-surrogate husband, translating them into the character of Byke in Under the Gaslight. Her father was George Jones, the bogus Count Johannes. Just as Byke was to take Laura to court to gain control over her, so did the "count" on a number of occasions. Her husband was

the English tragedian, Gustavus V. Brooke, 21 years her senior, an alcoholic constantly in debt. Avonia herself was too complex for one character and Daly divided her into Laura and Pearl Courtland. This would be Daly's secret. He had offered half a dozen explanations about the origin of Under the Gaslight, each with a grain of truth, but never this one. A short sketch of Avonia Jones at this point may suggest more parallels when the play itself is studied later.

Miss Jones was born in Richmond (July 12, 1839), where her father managed the Avon Theatre (hence, Avonia), and was taken as a child to Boston, where she was educated. Her mother (Melinda) was also an actress and Avonia was used on the stage as a child by her parents. She made her first adult appearance at the age of 16 in Cincinatti in the role of Parthenia in Ingomar. Her second appearance was in Toronto during June, 1856, and in the following years she toured Canada and the United States, playing five months from March through August 1859 at Maguire's Opera House in San Francisco before leaving for a two-year stay in Australia. It was there she met Brooke. She made her Australian debut at the Princess Theatre in Melbourne on October 31, 1859 in Medea, completing her engagement there on November 19. Brooke had completed his engagement at the Royale Theatre in Melbourne and had announced in the press that he and his wife, Elizabeth (Polly), were returning to England. Before meeting Miss Jones, Brooke had written to his mother and sister from Tasmania on June 9, 1858: "It is probable you may not recognize me when you see me, as I have grown a tremendously big fellow. Polly is also stout and preparing herself for Fat and Forty which, with the addition of Fair, I was on the 25th of April last." By the end of the year he and Miss Jones were touring Australia and remained there for a year and a half, leaving for England together without Mrs. Brooke on May 30, 1861 aboard The Great Britain. Meanwhile, in Boston, her father had gone to court in early February of 1861 asking to be appointed her agent in a libel case he was bringing against a clergyman there.

Brooke arranged for her debut at Drury Lane on November 5, 1861, again in the role of Medea. He played Othello on alternate nights and the two of them performed for a week together in Love's Sacrifice opening on November 19. The reviews were not ecstatic. They toured, playing Belfast in December, then Glasgow the following February. Brooke, whose drinking was noted in the Australian press, again found himself in trouble, not only for his drinking but for his debts. He was jailed in Warwick during May 1862 and Miss Jones wrote a number of letters pleading for money to get his release. She also put up her jewelry as security for his solicitor. She returned to London alone in August for an engagement at the Adelphi and then rejoined him. They were married in Liverpool on February 23, 1863, shortly after the death of his mother. Within a month after their marriage he was in trouble again, appearing drunk during a performance of Hamlet in Cork.

Miss Jones left him in England and returned to America, opening her first engagement of her new tour on October 16, 1863 at the Chestnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia. She kept her marriage a secret. It was during this tour that she first wrote to Daly for permission to play Leah and to secure his services for new works.

After Daly had informed Miss Jones that he would not continue the tour with her, he received a letter from her sister, Mrs. Emma Bonney, written on February 1865; Mrs. Bonney expressed regret that Daly would not accompany her sister to New Orleans and then mentioned another incident in which her father had gone to court to gain something from Avonia:

> By-the-bye, the "Count" libels both you and I in his trial; he says he adapted several plays for Sis which she played in New York, thereby leaving you out and he says I told him she would play for him, when I think I never spoke more decidedly in my life, to the effect that it was no use to apply to her to grant his request as it was unbecoming in him to ask it.
>
> Well! strong words could be applied to that gentleman's actions, but I wish he would leave us alone, it annoys us all, me privately as it does Sis publicly, but we shall all live it down if time is given us.

The last puff Daly gave Miss Jones in the Express appeared on February 13, 1865. He didn't mention her again in his columns until the following year, and then harshly. Miss Jones continued her tour of the States, then returned to London in the fall of 1865. Daly carried a short paragraph on January 6, 1866, commenting on her buying a critic, John Oxenford, by having him readapt a version of East Lynne. Brooke had settled in with another woman when Miss Jones arrived in London. He decided he had better leave for Australia again and died en route when his steamer sank on January 11, 1866. His New York obituaries did not mention Miss Jones. In Daly's notice of his death, the following reference is made to his marital state: "Mr. Brooke was unhappily married, and to that union, early and impulsively made, must be charged varying bad results to him."[1] The reference could only apply to Brooke's earlier mistress, Marie Duret, with whom Brooke lived for eight years; they were billed—when they acted together—as Mr. and Mrs. Brooke. Lester Wallack had acted with Brooke at that time, during the 1840s, and the information might have been supplied to the New York press by him. Daly learned the truth shortly thereafter when the English papers arrived in New York. Avonia was ill at the time. Her reviews in London were bad. She toured the English provinces, decided to return to America, advertised in the Clipper that she had Charles Reade's own adaptation of his Griffith Gaunt and was available to tour in the South. She returned home to die of consumption on October 4, 1867, two months after Under the Gaslight had opened. Daly's obituary noted that she had been married to Brooke, left out her father as a survivor, and assessed her worth as an actress:

> ...her chief excellence was to the force and fire of her personations; the representation of delicacy and girlishness was not so agreeable to her as that of a hardy and vehement nature. She was tall and robust in frame, with piercing black eyes and disagreeable features. Her voice was attuned to a key, which, though powerful and distinct,

[1] Express, Feb. 1, 1866, p. 2.

> had a tinge of monotony. Her understanding of mimic character was quick and thorough, and her intellectual attainments of a high order. Few actresses at the recent day have had so much experience and received so much praise at so early an age.[1]

Although he may not have realized it at the time, the most important events occuring for Daly during the five months with Miss Jones were the times he sat before the actors and managed their rehearsals of his scripts. He wrote little about these experiences to Joseph. Yet, the few mentions he makes of them strongly indicate that he worked intthe traditional manner of stage management during the period. He was not in charge of all the productions. Miss Jones herself managed some of the rehearsals and, when he was in charge, he directed the others for her benefit. The visual elements of the theatre were beyond his control at this time. He made do with what the stock companies had available. But his eye was sharp to scenic qualities. Passing through Cincinatti, he stopped over for three hours and took a look at Pike's Opera House:

> It is built something on the Academy and Laura Keene's style mixed. It is about as large as Niblo's Garden, but the actual stage is very small. More than half of the height of it being taken up with ornamental and useless drapery painting. The scenes therefore are low and squatty.[2]

In describing Miss Jones' performance in St. Louis, he also commented on the condition of the scenery there:

> She plays Gamea pretty strongly, and sings well, but her Leah removes the dilapidated linen off the shrubbery!!! We are going to try "Judith" in Memphis. Poor Judy! "The Sorceress" fizzled the first night in Nashville. The second night however, when I took the prompter's desk it went well. The last scene was encored three times. But it is too costly to get up out here. The managers are "scary" with their "greenbacks" as you call 'em. With canvas at 60 and 70 cents a yard they don't see getting up that "Tournelles tableaux!"[3]

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[1] Times, Oct. 8, 1867, p. 5.
[2] Oct. 2, 1864. [3] Oct. 26, 1864.

His comments on the Nashville rehearsals of The Sorceress were brief: "I am rehearsing the 'Sorceress.' Much work. Stupid actors. The last scene will be good—but the French language has been knocked over."[1] An incredible amount of work was expected from the actors then. We can piece together the rehearsal schedule in Nashville and see just how much time they had to mount these plays. Daly and Miss Jones arrived on Sunday morning there and met with the company the following morning, probably at 10 a.m. They would open with Romeo and Juliet that evening. Since it was a part of the company's repertory, not more than a walk-through was required. Parts for Leah would be distributed. Miss Jones would have probably read the play to the cast and blocked them while Daly was visiting the newspapers and fulfilling his function as her agent. A second rehearsal of Leah would be held on the following day and it would be performed that evening. Two days to memorize and rehearse a play new to the company! Daly probably conducted the second rehearsal. While Leah was being performed on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights of this week, the daytime rehearsals on Wednesday and Thursday would be used to correct mistakes in Leah while another play new to the company, Gamea the Jewish Mother, would be under rehearsal. On Friday, parts for The Sorceress would be distributed, the play read by Miss Jones and then Gamea rehearsed for atthird time before its opening that evening. Saturday would be devoted to correcting Gamea and rehearsing The Sorceress, which would receive another rehearsal on the following Monday for its opening that evening. The Monday performance of The Sorceress "fizzled" in Daly's word and he had to take over the prompter's desk to rework the play on Tuesday before its second performance in the evening. By the time the company had come to The Sorceress its actors had memorized and performed in two other new plays in less than a week. When Daly would next direct a play (Griffith Gaunt), he would spend as much time in the staging as it took to write.

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[1] Oct. 11, 1864.

Daly returned home in late January 1865 a different man than he had been five months earlier. His writing for the Express during the year became chastened and bitter for the most part. He returned to be attacked as a critic by Fiske, now "Ariel" on the Leader, whom Daly considered his chief rival. The only comments on the five months he wrote for the Express were put into a paragraph in his "waff" column:

> Those who remember, in the years that have passed, how delightful was a trip on the Mississippi, can hardly realize the sad change in the present. Years of war, of fraticidal war, have done their work well; and the cities in embryo, with their thriving commerce, and pretty villages that once dotted the banks of the great river, are now in ruins, their once happy peoples dead or in the army (which is but another name for death), and desolation utter and profound reigns over nearly all of the great valley. There is not an exception below Cairo to the Gulf--all have shared a common fate.[1]

Lincoln's assassination only prompted the anecdote that Kate Bateman had been so pleased with John Wilkes Booth's Romeo that she had considered asking him to tour with her in London. The defeat of the South also found him silent. A part of him had also been defeated. He was an outsider at the victory celebration.

Daly's first-hand experience with the Civil War, from the draft riots and bogus proclamation to the tour with Miss Jones, would be followed by a fallow period after which his ideas would take root and grow. Beginning in the fall of 1866 to the early part of 1869 he would be expressing his ideas forcibly in influential journals and would be implementing them in his work as a playwright-director.

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[1]March 27, 1865, p. 3.

CHAPTER V

FIRST VICTORY: GRIFFITH GAUNT

Griffith Gaunt; or Jealousy, dramatized and directed by Augustin Daly, was presented by Mark Smith and Lewis Baker at the New York Theatre on November 7, 1866 with themselves in the cast and with Rose Eytinge as their leading lady. It was, indeed, what Joseph Daly called it in his review the following morning, "an event in the theatrical world."[1] Within a year, Daly would not only write his major work, Under the Gaslight, for the same theatre with the same actress, but would also produce and direct it. Between the two productions, he would publish the bulk of his theatre aesthetics as critic for five newspapers. The year 1867 would be his annus mirabilis. His theory and his practice would be in tune and the melody would bring artistic and financial success. The basic pattern would be set for his long career, which lasted until his death in 1899.

The production of Griffith Gaunt was the culmination of several separate events occuring in New York from December 1865 over which he had no control but which found him ready. These events would center about the novel which he adapted, the theatre, actors, producers and himself.

The novel of the same title by Charles Reade was serialized in America, beginning in the December 1865 issue of Atlantic Monthly. Daly announced the first installment "just out" on November 26, 1865, and the final chapters "out" on October 20, 1866. His literary column, which usually ran on the front page of the Express, contains only one other notice

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[1] Express, Nov. 8, 1866, p. 2.

of the work during its magazine release:

> Charles Reade, the great I Am of modern authors, is a tremendous sort of fellow! he has written a letter to the Round Table (the Editor of which he calls a Prurient Prude!) defending the morality of "Griffith Gaunt," and attacking that of his editorial opponent for presuming to question the purity of the great Charles' purpose, matter and method in that story. The letter is simply amusing through its absurd egotism. Listen to Charles:
>
> "The case stands thus. I have produced a story called 'Griffith Gaunt; or Jealousy.' The story has ever since December 1865 floated (sic) the Argosy, an English periodical, and has been eagerly read (sic) in the pages of the Atlantic Monthly. In this tale I have to deal as an artist and a scholar (sic) with the very period Henry Fielding has described—to the satisfaction of prurient prudes—a period in which manners and speech were somewhat blunter than now-a-days; and I have to portray a great and terrible passion, Jealousy, and show its manifold consequences, of which even Bigamy (in my story) is one, and that without any violation of probability."
>
> This paragraph might be extended into a phamplet, and entitled "A Handbook for the critics of Mr. Charles Reade's story!" But because Mr. Fielding lived in the midst of "filth," Mr. Reade, having a fellow feeling, must go and keep him company.

This was printed on the second page of the Express in Daly's column on October 6, 1866. There are three important points to notice about it: Daly gives no indication of having read the serialization one month before his dramatization was produced; it was becoming highly controversial and well-publicized; Daly's official attitude toward its morality was extreme. Each of these points would contribute to the production's success.

What Daly had not read monthly with the avid and scandalized subscribers to Atlantic Monthly was a highly skillful and romantic cliff-hanger set in mid-eighteenth century rural England. The first installment introduced three of the major characters and the theme of the novel. Cool, lovely and Catholic, Kate Peyton is desired by Griffith Gaunt, the brave, handsome and Protestant heir to Bolton Hall, for two years her suitor and now deadly jealous of his rival, George Neville, young, also handsome, rich and Miss Peyton's co-religionist. Both propose. Both are rejected (she prefers going to a convent). But father needs money and she must choose. Matters

worsen in the next installment. Neville and Gaunt both make out their wills,leaving their wealth to Miss Peyton, and meet for a duel to the death. This portion ends with Miss Peyton arriving at the duel site and hearing a shot. Readers of the February issue were relieved to find out that Griffith was only wounded and that Kate reconciles the two rivals: she will marry neither and if one dies, she would hate the survivor. There is still the convent to consider, but her confessor refuses to allow her this consolation; she must wed. Meanwhile, old Mr. Charlton, Kate's cousin and Griffith's benefactor, had died and all gather for the reading of the will. This section ends with Kate, rather than Griffith, receiving the bulk of the estate and her poor suitor left with a total sum of 2,000 pounds. She is now mistress of Bolton Hall and all its lands. To shorten matters (Reade does not), Kate marries Griffith and they live happily for a year and some until Kate, in the April issue, is given a new confessor, Brother Leonard, young, pale, handsome, delicate, brilliant; at the same time, Kate takes on a new maid, Caroline Ryder, a dark and sensual beauty. Brother Leonard and Kate, in spite of their fervent efforts, fall in love, abetted by Caroline, who has her own designs on Griffith. Then, following a series of sensational incidents, Griffith discovers Brother Leonard and Kate in a compromising situation. He strikes the priest to the ground, but decides to leave before he kills the pair in a rage. Griffith flees, near to death from drink, exhaustion and fury, into the arms of Mercy Vint. Changing his name to that of his bastard brother, Tom Leicester, who incidentally is in love with Caroline, Griffith commits bigamy by marrying Mercy. He already had a child by Kate; he has another by Mercy. Tom, who left Bolton Hall because of his unrequited love for the housemaid, meets Mercy and reveals Griffith's true identity and earlier marriage. Tom returns to Bolton Hall and tells all. Mercy sends Griffith back to Kate, who, in a pique, threatens to kill him with Caroline present as a witness. He leaves Bolton Hall in the middle of the night. So does Tom, who incidentally has a mole on

his forehead just like his half-brother's. Tom leaves after Griffith, stopping first in the kitchen where he gets drunk. There is a scream heard from the nearby pond. A shot is fired. Rumor spreads that someone has been killed. It develops that Griffith inherits a fortune from a distant relative and is sought. Foul play is suspected; the pond is dredged and a body disfigured by hungry fish is found. Only a mole on the forehead of the body is distinguishable. Kate is jailed on suspicion of having had her husband murdered by his missing brother. Kate defends herself brilliantly at the trial, but, because she refuses to reveal Griffith's bigamy, her case is weakened. Mercy enters with a note from Griffith stating that he is still alive. Kate is freed. Griffith later returns to their home, then her bosom. George, now Lord Neville, is smitten by Mercy's purity; her baby by Griffith dies and she is freed to become Lady Neville and have nine other children.

The book was published immediately after the last installment and the Atlantic Monthly quite rightly criticized the ending of the novel it had serialized: "The work, up to the conclusion of Catharine Gaunt's trial, is in all respects too fine and high to provoke any reproach from us; after that, we can only admire it as a piece of literary gallantry and desperate resolution."[1]

It seems reasonable to doubt Joseph Daly's assertion that the adaptation of this complicated story had to be done in a week.[2] The doubt remains even after reading E.A. Dithmar's statement, presumably from Augustin Daly himself, that the work was done in four days.[3] Yet, two newspapermen of the period, S.R. Fiske of the Leader and Herald, who was a friend of the producer Mark Smith, and Paul Nicholson of the World, who had worked with Daly on Judith, both criticized Daly for the speed with which he adapted the play, both mentioning in their reviews that he took four days to do it.[4]

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[1] Dec. 1866, p. 768. [2] Life, p. 71. [3] Memories, p. 20.
[4] Leader, Nov. 10, 1866, p. 5 & World, Nov. 12, 1866, p. 4.

Daly had worked on The Sorceress for more than a year; Leah and Judith both took months to adapt. The speed with which it was necessary to complete Griffith Gaunt forced Daly to rely heavily on Reade, who wrote the novel with plans to dramatize it himself. The incidents and the dialogue were already dramatic. There is only one scene in the play which does not exist in the novel. It was the most highly praised scene in the production. The ending of the novel was its worst part, long and unbelievable. Daly's ending, eliminating the Neville-Vint marriage and bringing Griffith into the courtroom itself was superior to the book's ending. The only other changes Daly made were in its "morality." Brother Leonard and Kate are not in love in the play; that is a misunderstanding brought about by Caroline. Mercy and Griffith do not consummate their marriage; his identity is revealed just after the ceremony. Daly may have been more faithful to the book for other reasons than speed and its quality: it was too well known and he would be held accountable for any change that was not for the better. His changes answered the only criticisms of the novel. His addition, the Lancashire fair in Act III, served as an entertaining interlude within the play as well as a focal point for many of Reade's incidents to conjoin.

Daly's method of adaptation is suggested in a signed column he wrote several months after the production. He explained, in passing, how dramatizations were usually done and then how they should be undertaken:

> As a general rule these dramatizations, i.e., plays constructed wholly from the plot and dialogue of the novels—are abominable affairs.
>
> For the most part they consist of slashing out of the books whole pages of matter, and pasting them on sheets of writing paper, with here and there bits of original composition in the way of stage directions...
>
> There is only one proper way to dramatize a novel...
>
> First: Read the book on which you have dramatic designs. Then make a brief memorandum of the plot of the story sketched into scenes and divided into acts. Then—(this is indispensible) forget all about the whole matter for several weeks.
>
> Meantime write a farce or a couple of tragedies.
>
> Second: When complete forgetfulness has supervened,

> have somebody put the aforesaid memorandum under your nose; you then read it, and detect in an instant the obscurities of design and incoherence of purpose, which with a full remembrance of the story you would not notice. Add to your sketch the missing links in your chain, —and write your play.[1]

His actual method with Griffith Gaunt probably fell somewhere between the "general rule" and the "one proper way." He may have read the back issues of the serialization after October 6 or the book itself somewhat later during the month. If he had outlined the novel for dramatization and put it away, when the commission came he most certainly found the paste pot indispensible.

A second element in this successful production was the New York Theatre itself. Daly would not only lease it for his production of Under the Gaslight and pattern his own theatres on its model after 1869, but would return to it for a full year after the first Fifth Avenue Theatre burned down in 1873. Daly's five earlier plays were produced in the large Olympic and Winter Garden theatres. The New York Theatre had a seating capacity of approximately 900.[2]

The New York Theatre, located at 728-30 Broadway opposite Waverly Place, had been a church prior to December, 1865. It was purchased from Dr. Samuel Osgood's parish by an actress-manager, Lucy Rushton. Daly was among the press invited to preview the auditorium:

> This place will be opened to the public tonight. It has been fitted up in sixteen days. A private view was afforded the members of the Press last evening, which revealed in the new theatre one of the prettiest and most charming interiors to be met with in any place of amusement in the city.[3]

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[1] Citizen, July 20, 1867, p. 3.

[2] There were 27 performances, including two Saturday matinees of Griffith Gaunt, when Daly boasted in the Express, Nov. 30, 1866, p. 2, that 24,000 persons had seen the play. A number of critics commented that the performances up to this point had full houses.

[3] Express, Dec. 23, 1865, p. 3.

This was Daly's first comment about the theatre. He makes two references to its intimate nature when he criticizes Miss Rushton's selection of plays:

> She has been advised to avoid ponderous comedies, and to devote the limited stage of her charming little theatre to the presentation of pieces of the Vaudeville class...An elephant in a parlor would not seem more out of place than do the heavy antique comedies which Miss Rushton has given in her opening bills at her petite boudoir.[1]

The "ponderous comedies" included School for Scandal, the opening play. Miss Rushton produced Douglas Jerrold's comedy, The Prisoner of War, which Daly thought was her only excellent choice for the theatre. Her company was forced out by the Internal Revenue Service on April 9, 1866; Daly thought that Miss Rushton's management had made failure inevitable and that she would have folded soon under any circumstance.

S.R. Fiske urged Mark Smith, who was a member of Wallack's company, to form his own group and star. Smith joined with another actor, Lewis Baker, and they leased the New York Theatre in August 1866 from its new owner, A.T. Stewart. They planned to take down the church steeples and continue Miss Rushton's remodeling, but the house reopened with only minor alterations on September 3, presenting a farce called Old Phil's Birthday. Fiske's review of the opening contains a description of the house:

> I always feel good when going to see the New York. The edifice used to be a church you know, and there is an odor of piety about it yet. I think the church might have been built out of the exterior a little more completely, but the interior is delightful.
>
> Imagine a cosy and elegant box of a place, which looks as if you could fill it with a hundred people. The tiny balcony gaily decorated and gracefully over-hanging the miniature parquette. Every seat comfortable, and all the uphostering in excellent taste.
>
> Then imagine a neat stage, supplied with first rate scenery. Before it a bit of an orchestra...Upon it the jolliest company that I have seen at a theatre this many a night.[2]

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[1] Express, Jan. 6, 1866, p. 1.

[2] Leader, Sept. 8, 1866, p. 5.

The house was perfect for the kind of theatre Daly espoused. During the last week of the standing-room-only run of Griffith Gaunt it would be enlarged with the addition of a new family circle seating perhaps 300 more persons, but the theatre would remain intimate and suitable for a more realistic kind of theatre than New York was seeing at the time. All that was needed now was a company capable of acting in this kind of theatre with someone capable of directing them.

There were 18 actors in the New York Theatre company headed by Smith and Baker, including Mr. and Mrs. Gomersal, Mr. and Mrs. Humphrey Bland, A.A. (Dolly) Davenport and Saidee Cole. They had worked together for two months on, primarily, burlesques and farces before Daly was hired to direct them. Jules Eichberg was the musical director and composed an opera in English, The Doctor of Alcantara, for the company, but Harold Tissington would be hired to compose special music for Griffith Gaunt. Richard Farren was the company's scenic designer, but he would also be helped for the Daly production by J.E. Hayes, whom Daly thought "the best scenic artist of America." Some of the titles of the works which the company performed might give an idea of the kind of actors Daly would supervise: Fine Old English Gentlemen, Rum-ti-foozle, Lola Montez and War to the Knife. (The last play mentioned, accomedy, concerns a woman's attempt to retrieve some old love letters.) The company was consistently praised, but the selection of plays was deplored by the critics. Franklin J. Ottarson was back on Wilkes' Spirit of the Times as "Bayard" and seems to have been instrumental in getting Smith and Baker to hire Daly to write and direct for their company:

> As a general rule I am opposed to actor-managers—the most successful enterprises are those conducted by unprofessional or non-playing directors. The managers who plays usually takes the best part—at least, his company thinks he does and that leads to disaffection. Manage or play, but don't mix your liquors.[1]

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[1] Oct. 6, 1866, p. 96.

This piece of advice to Smith and Baker was followed in subsequent issues by dissatisfaction with "somewhat stale pieces" and the triviality of War to the Knife.. The managers took the advice in desperation; they not only hired Daly to dramatize Griffith Gaunt, they gave him complete control over the production, most importantly over casting.

Daly brought in three additional actors to the company: W.L. Jamison as Mercy's bumpkin suitor, Paul Carrick; John K. Mortimer, who had already acted at the New York Theatre with Lucy Rushton, for the title role, and Rose Eytinge, for the leading part of Kate Peyton. Members from the company cast in key roles were Mrs. Gomersil as Mercy, Baker as Tom Leicester, Smith as the judge at Kate's trial, and George Metkill as Lord Neville. While all the cast was praised for its acting, it was Miss Eytinge who shared credit with director-writer Daly for the production's success. Her casting was a combination of fortuitous circumstance and Daly's ability at this time to capitalize upon his luck.

Rose Eytinge was married young to a reporter on the New York Times by the name of David Barnes. She met her husband's editor-in-chief, Henry J. Raymond, and they carried on an affair, simplified by her lover's ability to keep Barnes busy as night editor of his paper. Barnes discovered his wife's infidelity and brought a suit against them in court during March 1866. Daly had not yet met Miss Eytinge though he had seen her act. He reported the lawsuit in his "Waif" column on the front page of the Express on March 17:

> A newspaper and theatrical scandal threatens a city editor, until recently connected with one of the morning papers and the husband of one of our leading actresses —lately playing at a Broadway theatre, has brought a suit for damages against his Editor in Chief for unlawful familiarity with the former's wife.

Raymond, who was also a member of Congress, rushed in from Washington to hush up the scandal, missing a key vote on a Civil Rights Bill he opposed. His wife and four children had left him the previous year for Europe to avoid gossip. Although Daly was not aware of it, this affair proved another

vital link in his career. Miss Eytinge, from the initiation of divorce proceedings in March, did not act on stage until Daly approached her for Griffith Gaunt, at which time she was immediately available and eager to perform. She was not only eager and rested, but had a wealth of experience with the finest actors in America and the finest company in New York.

She had made her New York debut in the summer of 1865 at Wallack's Theatre with E.L. Davenport and James W. Wallack Jr., with whom she had previously been touring. She had played Nancy Sykes in Oliver Twist that season, against the wishes of Davenport and both James and Lester Wallack, and remembered the incident in her autobiography:

> When my position in the matter forced them to view the question seriously, they each in turn, and each in his own way, placed before me the absurdity of my attempting to play such a part, and they pointed out to me how, in every particular—physically, mentally, and tempermentally—I was wholly unequipped for it. The more they argued, the more positive I became. At last an appeal was made to Lester Wallack. He simply pooh-poohed my wish and and also laughed me out of court...
>
> When we were rehearsing, both Wallack and Davenport never wearied of impressing upon me the necessity for me to make a fierce, realistic struggle to break away from Bill Syke's restraining arms, when I should trytto attack Fagin...
>
> The scene of the fight, which ended the second act, began, and I had seized the stick with which Fagin had been about to beat Oliver. Davenport, flinging his arms around me in a close grasp, kept whispering in my ear: "Try to break away from me! Try! Try!" I tried, and, lo! I succeeded. With a vigorous wrench I broke from his arms, flew across the stage, and with the stick struck poor Mr. Wallack a sounding thwack on the side of his head; he went down like a shot, and then he rolled and rolled—almost into the footlights.[1]

Such realism was appreciated by the audience and Miss Eytinge and the role of Nancy were the success of the season. She not only had broken her line of business by playing the role, she also offered a variety of types in subsequent performances and she played these roles with a high degree of realism. This

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[1] The Memories of Rose Eytinge (New York, 1905), pp. 86-87.

was the kind of actress Daly would appreciate. Her comments about Wallack's Theatre are worth reporting:

> What a school of acting was Wallack's Theatre! With the business portion—the front of the house—under the able control of Theodore Moss, and the stage-management in the hands of Lester Wallack, courtesy and kindness ruled on both sides of the curtain...
>
> The rehearsals were conducted in the same spirit. True, Lester would occasionally "let out" if some one or other were unusually stupid, but the outburst was pretty sure to be followed by some little gracious act or word that effectually removed the sting...
>
> I was fortunate enough, while at Wallack's Theatre, to have an opportunity to play a variety of parts, embracing at times three lines of business...[1]

Miss Eytinge, in her "memories," chose not to recall her early marriage and divorce or the affair with Raymond. She did not stay with Wallack's after that summer season as she stated in her book that she had. She went immediately from there to a full season at the Winter Garden, playing there from September 1865 through March 1866. Her roles that season, in consecutive order, were: Mrs. Swansdown in Everybody's Friend, Florence with George Clarke in Our American Cousin, May Edwards in Ticket of Leave Man, Mrs. Waverly and Alice Devereux with John Brougham in his Playing with Fire and Flies in Web, Zoe with George Clarke in The Octoroon, and her final performances, Marianne in Ruy Blas and Julie in Richelieu, both opposite Edwin Booth. In discussing her relationship with Booth, Miss Eytinge vaguely recalled this season, abruptly cut off by her husband's lawsuit:

> This engagement does not seem to be marked in my memory by any striking events, but to have covered a placid period of duty done and salary drawn,—a usually satisfactory state of things, but possessing no hooks upon which to hang a narrative. I may, however, mention one incident that occurred while we were rehearsing "Richelieu." Up to that time it had been the custom for Francois to be dressed as a courtier...I always felt that the dramatist's intention was that Francois should be an acolyte and dedicated to the priesthood, and therefore his costume should be in accord with that idea.[2]

Booth readily accepted her idea and dressed the character ac-

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[1] Ibid., pp. 88-89. [2] Ibid., pp. 30-31.

cordingly. She also recalled another incident during a performance Richelieu:

> Booth, patting my head with paternal tenderness, whispered to me: "There's a smudge of black on the end of your nose: be still while I take it off." And while Julie, convulsed with anguish, lay sobbing on the Cardinal's breast, he, with a corner of his Eminence's ermine, removed the offending smudge.[1]

These then were the directors and actors with whom Miss Eytinge had worked before her first rehearsal with Daly in Griffith Gaunt.

There is mystery and a certain hint of duplicity in the manner with which Rose Eytinge was cast in the role of Kate Peyton. Her version of the incident follows:

> Daly, having his own fixed ideas of just what sort of actress he wanted to personate this heroine, had experienced great difficulty in finding her. His offering the part to me, or rather his suggesting to me the possibility that I might be induced to play it, was accidental, and occured at our first meeting.
>
> One of the actresses whom he was considering for the part was visiting me, and Mr. Daly called to see her. At her request I received him. We discussed the story and character of Kate, with the result that with one of those gusts of sudden resolution to which he was addicted, he asked me if I could play the part.[2]

Miss Eytinge erroneously stated that she had been under contract to Lester Wallack, "but I was greatly taken with and interested in the serious-eyed, intensely earnest young manager" and promised to consider playing the role if Wallack's consent could be obtained. "In an incredibly brief time this man, young, unknown and without influence...returned to me armed with a note containing the desired permission."[3] She agreed to play the role for six weeks: "There was no talk of terms between us. Indeed, at this stage of the negotiation there could not very well have been."[4]

What appears closer to the truth is that Daly had already contracted with another actress to play the role and

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[1] Ibid., pp. 31-32. [2] Ibid., p. 113.
[3] Ibid. [4] Ibid., p. 114.

needed her release. That actress appears to have been Kate Reignolds. A letter from Joseph to his brother, dated November 3, 1866, just four days before the opening, indicates the seriousness of the problem:

> The matter is so involved that you must send no answer till I think it out. First—you ought to have copyrighted yours in four acts and not in five because you mean to play it in four and as Reignolds has made her copyright in four the play at the New York Theatre will be a violation of her copyright and not a playing of yours. This is of course apart from the abstract question of right.[1]

That letter may have preceded or followed this undated note from Augustin to Joseph: "Kate Reignolds proposes to take a copy of Griffith Gaunt and pay me $100. What shall I do? Her lawyer says this shall settle all!" Another undated note to Joseph, presumably written after the production had opened, has Daly complaining of the action of a theatrical agent by the name of Rivers, to whom Daly had notified that Kate Reignolds had his version of Griffith Gaunt. Rivers had the following card printed and Daly attached a copy of it to his note to Joseph: "Managers are most respectfully apprized that the copy of Griffith Gaunt, owned by Miss Kate Reignolds, and offered in her repertoire, is the very successful dramatization of Mr. Augustin Daly." So, Miss Reignolds appears to have been placated—she received rights to all performances of the play in which she performed for a flat fee of $100. The agreement was similar to that contracted earlier with H.L. Bateman, who owned a copyright of Leah the Forsaken for $250 plus a benefit performance which netted Daly an additional $225.

At this point, Daly had all the elements of success going in his favor: he had a leading actress whose background was in ensemble and realistic playing, the perfect theatre for his work, the play itself and a company of actors who had worked

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[1] The play was first announced as "four acts," World, Nov. 6, 1866, p. 5, then as "five acts," World, Nov. 7, 1866, p. 6. MSS to this this letter and the following quoted between Joseph and Augustin Daly at Lincoln Center's Library of the Performing Arts, Daly Correspondence, I.

together consistently for two months. All of these strands met on the first day of rehearsal, Saturday, November 3, 1866. And Daly was equal to the gift being offered him. The question now is why was he so ready for this moment. His return from the tour with Avonia Jones had found him at the lowest ebb of his creativity, craftsmanship and feelings of personal worth. He wrote no plays during 1865; his journalistic work during that year contains little worth repeating; his letters and other writing echo a bitter and disappointed note. A change in attitude can be detected in December 1865, a change toward mounting confidence culminating in the production of Griffith Gaunt.

One can almost hear Daly trying to force himself out of a depressed mood in his notice for the Express on December 23, 1865 of a circus which had just come to town:

> ...'tis Ho! for the Circus! for the sawdust ring! for the graceful Mademoiselle Sympre! for the elaborately oiled ring-master! and O!--above all!--'tis Ho! for the merry, merry clown!
>
> Clowns of our childhood! how we linger on memories of you!
>
> ...Give us and our young friends the old clowns again--that bring back memories of the oil-lamp days...[1]

His love of and early memories of the circus (noted earlier during his visit to Norfolk) would account for the best scene he would stage in Griffith Gaunt, one not in the novel, the Lancashire fair. But this dour attitude he was trying to dispel had been noticed by the other critics, among them Fiske, who commented in the Leader on Saturday, January 13, 1866: "Daly...is about to be happy once more, for "Leah," with the great Bateman as the heroine, will be revived at Niblo's Garden on Monday."[2]

The revival of Leah with Kate Bateman would indeed make Daly "happy once more," but would also stir him to action against the Batemans. More than 200 performances of Leah had been given in England. Miss Bateman returned to New York with

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[1]P. 3. [2]P. 4.

London's acclaim for her in his work. The reviews for the play were as full of praise in 1866 as they had been full of condemnation in 1863. "Daly's Leah...comes back to us like a new drama, after its English success," Fiske explained in the Leader.[1]

Daly could not share in the monetary gains—he had sold the rights to Bateman—but for the past two years he had been trying to get Bateman to pay him for expenses incurred during the 3½ weeks of public relations work, including the writing of a memoir of Kate, which Daly undertook in Philadelphia after Leah's initial run in New York. Daly filed a lawsuit against Bateman in early February; it came to trial on the morning of April 21, 1866. Daly was represented by A. Oakey Hall, a playwright who was then district attorney and later mayor of New York. Hall attacked "Shylock Bateman" for making "hundreds of thousands of dollars" from the play, while Daly only received $475 for royalty and from the benefit and a meager $25 a week for his services in Philadelphia. Among those testifying for Daly was Frank Ottarson. Daly won the case and was awarded $410 to cover, among other things, an oyster dinner he hosted for the Philadelphia critics. Daly took careful notes at the trial and then rushed to the Express office to publish them on the front page of the paper's evening edition under the headline: "The Author, the Actress, and the Manager." Daly was immediately sued in turn by a M. Bienville for translations of Leah and Taming a Butterfly; M. Bienville was awarded $9.

Meanwhile, Daly had learned the truth about Avonia Jones. He printed one short paragraph, which gave as reasons for her separation from Brooke, "his 'convival' and other habits."[2] How vindicated Daly must have felt. He was receiving delayed acclaim for his writing of Leah and financial reward for his efforts in promoting the play. And he now understood why Miss Jones had rejected him: she was married at the

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[1] Jan. 20, 1866, p. 4. [2] Express, Feb. 24, 1866, p.1.

time, even though her husband had been a drunkard and they were separated. From this point on, Daly was in rare form. His journalistic pieces sparkled and his actions all carried a sense of self-confidence. And he was to become a more important force in the theatre as a critic. In September, Moses S. Beach, publisher of the cheapest (2¢) and the second oldest newspaper in New York, the Sun, doubled the size of that evening paper and added a new lightning press with a capacity for printing 25,000 copies per hour, with a second press ordered to double that capacity. Beach claimed a readership of 250,000 (probably based on an estimate of four readers per copy). Daly was a part of the expansion plans and was hired as the dramatic critic, adding a third and more influential outlet for his views.

All these factors engendered a self-confidence and exuberence, already noted when Miss Eytinge described her first meeting with Daly. This vital energy, bursting from print in his journalistic writing, becomes even more evident and bounding in his actions as playwright-director. A partial reconstruction of these actions, the writing and rehearsal schedules of Griffith Gaunt, can be gleaned from a variety of sources, including correspondence, memoirs and newspaper items.

After their initial success at the New York Theatre, Lewis Baker and Mark Smith had begun to feel the effect of "friendly" criticism against their choice of works, as well as their management of them. They had spent a considerable amount of money and effort in a production of H.L. Byron's War to the Knife, hoping for a run at last. Late Monday night, October 29, 1866, after the opening performance, they knew that the work was a fiasco and did not need to wait for a verdict from the morning press. The evening and weekly critics who remained behind after the show would have erased any doubts which the general audience may have left. Daly was at that performance, as his review for the next day attests; he had no deadline to meet that evening and may have remained behind

to talk to the company. If so, his commission probably came out of that conversation. They would be desperate, needing a new work to replace the failure as soon as possible. Remembering Ottarson's advice in the Spirit of the Times to bring in a non-acting manager (Ottarson was now a good friend of Daly's and having no deadline to meet that evening may have been there to urge them to consider his fellow critic), the two actor-producers would see in Daly their possible salvation: the critical and financial success of Leah's revival was impressive and the series of "advice to stage managers" in the Express and the Sun for the past two months exuded a positive air of ability in that field. They entrusted not only the writing, but the selection of leading actors outside of the company and the direction of the play to Daly. This was Monday night. By Wednesday he felt secure enough with the progress of the dramatization to have the play announced for production "shortly" in the newspapers on the following morning. He contemplated remaining anonymous as he had done with Leah, reporting the coming event as a quotation from Thursday morning's Tribune to hide the fact that he was connected with it. During these few days, Daly offered the leading role to Kate Reignolds. The play would be copyrighted separately under both their names for a flat fee if she would undertake the initial performance. Friday must have been the busiest day of the year for Daly. It was the only time during 1866 when not one of his many columns were printed in the Express. Final scenes of the dramatization must have been delivered to the copyists for reproduction by hand and final copies for both him and Miss Reignolds certified for copyright before he would meet Miss Eytinge for the first time, decide that she must play Kate Peyton, notify Miss Reignolds and the producers of his change and return to Miss Eytinge to prepare her for the first rehearsal on the following morning, Saturday, November 3.

Even if the play had been completed earlier, the company would not have been available before Saturday morn-

ing for rehearsal. The actors were preparing another play, Perdita; or the Royal Milkmaid by William Brough, during the daytime on Thursday and Friday; they presented it on Friday night, along with War to the Knife. Only Miss Eytinge, John K. Mortimer and W.L. Jamison would have been free before Saturday.

The four days of rehearsal given to Daly for Griffith Gaunt was longer than the company had spent on any production since it had banded together two months prior. The group had all day Saturday to rehearse before their evening performance and all day and night Sunday to mull over their parts and memorize their lines. The company would not have rehearsed on Sunday. On Monday, after half a day of rehearsal with the entire cast, Daly worked with his leading actors while the company prepared a familiar burlesque, Old Phil's Birthday with Baker in the title role, which they then presented in a double bill that evening with Perdita. All day Tuesday and probably after the evening performance as well as all day Wednesday could have been devoted to rehearsal for the opening at 8 o'clock Wednesday night. The company had changed bills so frequently they seldom had more than two days to prepare a new work; on War to the Knife, they had three days. And the two leading actors had only their parts to be concerned with during this time. A second scenic designer was brought in especially for the play.

Daly may have had more time than usual, but the pace was certainly not leisurely. Miss Eytinge has left a brief recollection of the first rehearsal:

> Mr. Daly interrupted me from time to time, to give me instructions as to this or that bit of business. But I was feeling my way through the part, and these interruptions, though undoubtedly judicious and necessary, made me quite nervous and uncertain in my work; so I went quietly to him, where he sat at the prompt table, reminded him that this rehearsal was only a trial, and begged that he would allow me to struggle through the part uninterrupted. I suggested that he should make notes of any changes which he wished me to make, and if I played the part we could incorporate these changes in future re-

> hearsals. To all these suggestions he promptly and amiably assented.[1]

Miss Eytinge gives us a clue to the exact date of the first rehearsal. She said it was a trial; she had not been contracted for the play yet and would not be advertised in the role of Kate Peyton until the following Monday. During that Saturday rehearsal, Daly would receive a letter from Miss Reignolds' lawyer, shoot off a note to his brother for advice and receive a note back from Joseph stating that he would take care of the legal matter and for Augustin to do nothing about it until he heard from him again that day.

It is especially interesting to note that this first rehearsal had the actors on their feet working out business. The company should have been familiar with the story, having read it serialized in the Atlantic Monthly or in book form or at least knowing about it from the many newspaper articles concerning the novel. Daly's approach with an unfamiliar work was for him to read the script to the entire company, then to distribute the parts. This was the procedure followed by Mrs. Wood's company when it produced his Taming a Butterfly[2] and would be true of his own company after forming it in 1869. But now, November 3, 1866, on the first day of rehearsal, he blocked the entire play and added business.

Miss Eytinge also indicates that Daly sat at the prompt desk through the first rehearsal. If he really took notes as she suggested to him, he didn't make a habit of it. Hers is the only reference to notetaking found in sources referring to his more than 30 years of directing. Daly's style of working with actors was to really work with them, on the stage, pushing them into positions, running to the back of the auditorium for an overview, demonstrating what he wished and feeding off them rather than spooning out planned business and actions.

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[1] Memories, pp. 114-15.

[2] J.H. Stoddart, Recollections of a Player, p. 143: "I remember his reading the play to the company."

A look at the stage directions gives us further clues to his work as a director on this his first major venture:[1]

> Is going into the house, looks back pityingly; then runs to gate, represses impulse and returns slowly. (p.6)
>
> Goes off angrily, but stops at the gate, turns and smiles wickedly. (p. 7)
>
> She comes from curtain—he rushes to her—they embrace. (p. 15)
>
> Enter Gaunt vivaciously, talking as he enters; he goes to settee and puts his hat and whip; mistaking Ryder for Kate, her back being turned to him. (p. 16)

They indicate "how" an action was performed in general and in strong terms such as "pityingly" and "vivaciously." They also indicate the energy employed in the movement as the characters either rush or run. Most importantly, they tell us that Daly wished to convey to his audience a sense of life beyond the immediate stage setting. Gaunt enters talking. The first major crisis, occuring in Act I, is staged without dialogue and was carefully blocked by Daly. This is the duel scene in which Griffith is shot in the arm and is about to continue the duel with Neville when Kate enters to stop them:

> She tries to speak—totters toward Neville, appealingly, and faints in his arms. Griffith drops his pistol, staggers and falls to the ground. Doctor and Leicester run to him. Seconds in C. Scene closes in on picture. (p.11)

This same scene in the novel is handled with dialogue, with Kate appealing to both men and stopping the duel, fainting only after she sees that Griffith had been wounded. The timing necessary to make Daly's scene work calls for a certain amount of control from a director. Each of the act endings is excitingly staged. The curtain to Act II must have had the audience breathless as Gaunt knocks a priest senseless and is about to strike his wife before dashing out and leaving her to faint in the arms of a servant. But his most unusual effect, outside of the Lancashire Fair, is the ending of the play itself. Daly used what became a cinematic tech-

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[1] Augustin Daly, Griffith Gaunt (New York, 1868).

nique. The scene is a crowded courtroom. Griffith has rushed in to save Kate from being found guilty of his alleged murder. As the judge addresses the spectators, his words suddenly become inaudible and that portion of the scene continues in "dumb show" as Griffith and Kate have the last two lines. If he used this technique only in the last scene, it may have called too much attention to itself and broken the orchestration of the play at its ending. Daly used it earlier in the fair scene, Act III, Scene 3.

The fair scene was admired by all the critics and literally stopped the show at each performance. It did not exist in the novel and was created (most of it in the rehearsal period) out of Daly's circus experiences. It was not only exciting in itself, but served as a focal point for the action within the play, much as the fair scene in Woyzeck was used by Büchner. The following is a description of the setting:

> The flat is a perspective of open country, filled with booths, tents, vans, crowded with people, etc. Gay flags, bright colors, etc. Stage set with booths showing transparency of giants and living wonders. Punch and Judy show, Gipsy tents R. Booth for Melodrama, Thimble-Rigger's stand. Refreshment and Drinking Booth L. Greased pole, with ham at top, C.
>
> At opening of scene the stage is full of knots of country people, men, women and children. Some are drinking at booth L. 2E. A wretch is playing a drum at the players booth, and another has a horn at the living wonder show. A thimble-rigger is plying his trade at a stand. A gipsy is telling a pack of no-such-things to a bumpkin and his lass, L. All the people are bawling, or laughing, while lively music is played. (p. 28)

Daly had written a set speech for each of these characters, the thimble-rigger, touter, second touter and gipsy. One of them, that of the thimble-rigger, will give an idea of his accurate and comic sense of dialogue while it describes the physical action:

> Now then, come up, all you near-sighted, far-sighted, quick-witted lads, and tell me under which thimble the pea is. I don't know myself, and I want you to tell me. If you tell me true you'll win a shillin'; all the chances are in your favor. Only a penny! I won a shillin' from myself the other day, guessing at it, and you can all do the same. Step up and try! Only a penny! (p. 28)

The character immediately comes to life; the humor brings a smile. One has only to remember his attempt at humor in Leah ("For that are we doctors!"), to fully appreciate the improvement Daly had made in his writing craft. But that improvement almost pales when one considers what he did as a director with his four set speeches:

> The scene opens with all this spoken at once. Then each speaks solo aloud, while the others mutter and the crowd rushes from one to the other. They all shout: "The Sack Race! The Sack Race!" and make a space for the men in sacks to pass across. They tumble on each other and pass off from L. to R. Then the crowd shout "The Pole Climbers!" and the crowd look at the men climbing the greased pole and as the last one after reaching the top comes down, with leg of mutton after him, shouts and laughter. The touters repeat their jumble in chorus with fair music playing merrily in the Orchestra. Suddenly all is quiet, the lively music sinks to piano, the actors stop talking, but keep up gestures, the whole of the preceding scene being enacted in dumb show. Then the orchestra take up Leicester's song, to which Tom enters R. 1E with peddler's pack, singing.
>
> Song. Tom Leicester.
>
> Tom (after song)—aside then to crowd: Now then, lads and lasses, all that want to buy stand by me. Ahem! First of all the ugly girls will keep at a distance. (The girls crowd about him) I knew there were no ugly ones here...

Tom makes his pitch, then the climax of the fair scene follows:

> Crowd shouts: "The pig race! The pig race!" Pig chased by bumpkins who tumble over each other trying to catch it. Touters resume their calls loudly again and then all piano, with soft and pretty music for Mercy and Griffith's entrance, L1E. She is in wedding dress. (pp. 28-29)

Daly has placed the upper class in context with the people. The personal love and jealousy of the Gaunts seem to diminish in the sheer energy and joy displayed by the peasants in the play. The pig race—the live pig used took his curtain call with the actors—was taken by some critics as a metaphor of Gaunt, swinishly trying to escape from society's grasp. Gaunt enters the scene after the race, a visible bigamist: Mercy is wearing her wedding gown. Still married to Kate, he has taken vows with Mercy. The wedding party comes from the church directly to the fair, where Tom, Griffith's bastard brother, is peddling wares. The drawn-out discovery scene in the novel

is made direct and immediate in the play. The costumes alone tell us the wedding has not been consummated. But, enough of the social and comparative qualities. The scene was a joy for the spectators—as much fun as the circus Daly remembered from his youth. This was not a scene which could be thrown together by a "traffic manager." It was created by a director from all the available elements. Baker, who played Tom, was noted for his singing voice; hence, Tom's song. The company had cut its teeth on burlesque and farce and were capable of the stunts called for, i.e., climbing a pole and chasing a pig.

What separates this particular scene from other spectacles in the theatre of the time was its highly functional place in the unity of the production. Animals were used in the Bowery theatres, at Wallack's and in Maggie Mitchell's Fanchon at this time, but their use was purely decorative and sensational. Songs, dances, games were common stock in the theatre, but none had the control which Daly imposed on his particular scene. His use of mime when he wished to highlight an important entrance or action and his use of song to create suspense (the audience is focused on Tom during the song, enjoying his voice and knowing that Gaunt and Mercy will be coming to the fair shortly) are but two of the methods he used to keep the "circus" in focus with the action of the play.

The impression may be left that Daly gave all his attention to the actors, particularly in the fair scene and the ending of the play. Rose Eytinge's recollection and the stage directions should indicate that he was concerned with the acting in the whole play. Another recollection by Morris Phillips of the Home Journal reveals that Daly did not ignore the scenic elements: "Mr. Daly asked me to aid him in decorating the walls. I remember that I loaned him two or three of my own pictures, and I borrowed some art works."[1] The normal

[1]From a clipping in a Daly scrapbook at Lincoln Center's Library for the Performing Arts. The article was written after Daly's death in June, 1899. It vaguely recalls that the art works were for a drawing room scene in Griffith Gaunt.

approach at the time would have been for Daly to allow his scenic designers to paint pictures on the wall. The care with which he realistically furnished his sets when he had his own theatres had already begun in this, his first directorial venture.

Four days of rehearsal were not enough for the complexity which Daly devised. He continued to rehearse the company and to rewrite dialogue for a few days after its opening. All but one of the major critics went back to see the play after its initial opening. Even that one critic, Nicholson of the World, acknowledged that it would be a success because of the acting of Miss Eytinge. Nicholson, who was an early defender of Leah and had worked with Daly on Judith, complained:

> We presume that a compliment is expected for the celerity shown in the dramatization and representation of a work which left the presses of Messrs. Ticknor and Fields scarcely a month since, but in conscience this cannot be accorded to the extent desireable...a task that to be well done should have occupied weeks instead of days.[1]

In his usual style, Nicholson then told Daly how the play should have been written and, in commenting on the ending, wrote: "It is surprising that the author of the American "Leah" should have contented himself with such a paltry display of farewell pyrotechnics."[2] A few months earlier, Daly had praised Nicholson as "a sparkling and valuable writer on musical and dramatic affairs, who is also one of the lively wits of the metropolis."[3] The flattery did not work, but Nicholson was a minority of one.

Seymour of the Times could not be bought by flattery or money and--if one excepts his over-praise of his publisher's mistress, Miss Eytinge--his two reviews can be counted as honest reflections of an intelligent man's response to the play:

> Made hastily it went slowly last night. Curtailed and pruned it will become, we think, a powerful drama. In its present shape it possesses the merit of culmination

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[1] World, Nov. 9, 1866, p. 4. [2] Ibid.
[3] Express, Jan. 27, 1866, p. 1.

—the trial scene being especially strong and good. The performance was careful in all respects.[1]

Four days later, after seeing the play once more, Seymour wrote another rather lengthy review full of praise for all connected with the production, calling Miss Eytinge "the leading actress of the American stage."[2] He had high praise for Daly both as a playwright and director. William Winter, who had been fired and rehired on the Tribune in a few short weeks, was being cautious. He thought the book was better, but praised Daly for his dialogue and stage effects. A third of his review was concerned with the depth and psychological significance of the novel.[3] Fiske's reviews were more to the point. The following morning after the opening he wrote; "The play is well brought out and the actors generally thoroughly prepared" and Miss Eytinge was "life-like, natural and carefully avoided over-doing her part."[4] His careful analysis followed in successive issues of the Leader:

> The chief fault of his dramatization is also its chief excellence—hurry. He has made a good acting play out of a novel that, with more time and study, might have been transformed into an exceedingly powerful play...a decided success.
>
> One of the best scenes in it, as all the critics agree, is that of the Fair, and this was invented by Mr. Daly without any aid from the novelist, which proves that Mr. Daly is capable of better things dramatically than "Leah" or "Taming the Butterfly" or "Griffith Gaunt," although all of these are clever.[5]
>
> "Griffith Gaunt" is a managerial success. The costumes, the scenery and the tableaux are excellent. The attraction of the piece is the Fair scene. The real hero is the pig that runs about with a greased tail and upsets everybody. When the pig is brought out to make its bow to the audience the thing is complete. There could be no neater satire.
>
> Mr. Daly's work is rough and somewhat ragged. His scenes are not connected by ties of dialogue. The adapt-

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[1] Times, Nov. 8, 1866, p. 4.

[2] Times, Nov. 12, 1866, p. 5.

[3] Tribune, Nov. 10, 1866, p. 5.

[4] Herald, Nov. 8, 1866, p. 4.

[5] Leader, Nov. 10, 1866, p. 5.

> ation is too strong; the play too weak...Never was a play more completely produced in four days! Would it had been rehearsed four months.
>
> I am so certain of the necessity of frequent rehearsals...[1]

Joseph Daly wrote the reviews for both the Express and the Sun and both are puffs which do not add any insight to what took place on the stage. Daly, overwhelmed by the favorable critical reception, published large exerpts from the reviews in his column for the Express, including one from the Post which called the play "a marval of dramatic construction... mixture of sadness and satisfaction, of pain and pleasure, which convinces us we have seen a page from nature, and read a story of human life, human passions and tears."[2] Daly invited all the critics to a dinner at the Westminister Hotel. Fiske thought the article quoting thecritics "not in as good taste as his dinner."[3] By November 20, Daly couldn't contain himself any longer and wrote a piece in the Express as the author of the play:

> It is to some extent a sad thing for a dramatist to sit out the first representation of his play...As to the play—we can conscientiously inform the World that there is more in it than was immediately perceptible on the first performances.
>
> The clever artists who played in it were all—Bless their souls! so anxious to make the piece a success that they sometimes became nervous, and—But who would not forgive such zwal!
>
> And who can blame an author dissolved in tears of gratitude at one moment, and dancing a pas d'un ofnervous rage at another.
>
> However, as each successive performance smoothed away the ruggedness from the new piece, and as time permitted the author to add a line here, and round a speech there, which the actors accented with a kind of grace...[4]

It is important now to look at the performances of

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[1] Leader, Nov. 17, 1866, p. 4.

[2] Express, Nov. 10, 1866, p. 2.

[3] Leader, Nov. 24, 1866, p. 1.

[4] Express, Nov. 20, 1866, p. 2.

two of the actors, John K. Mortimer and Miss Eytinge. Both would be important in Daly's next and major venture, Under the Gaslight. In his second review for the Herald, Fiske gave the best of all the descriptions of Mortimer's acting:

> He is entirely free from stage traditions and the bluster, mouthing, strutting and false readings so common now-a-days to men and women claiming to be dramatic artists. He appears like a passionate, excitable, jealous man, not like a person employed at a paid salary to counterfeit nature abominably. He has not much physical power, but his quiet, long, yet intense, manner recommends him highly, and we are glad to see him once more upon the boards.[1]

Of Miss Eytinge, Fiske snidely continued, "She is very popular and always finds friends." One of these "friends," of course, was Seymour:

> Miss Eytinge plays the part to perfection...In the entire conception of the character Miss Eytinge displays the well-read and cultured artist; the actress who has studied not only her lines and the necessary business that they involve, but the full intent and scope of the author's meaning...Miss Eytinge's style in repose is eminently natural and unconcerned; in excitement it is defiant, sacrificial, but not violent.[2]

Of Mortimer, Seymour wrote that "he is quiet and manly, without overdemonstration, but with self-possession that does not touch tameness."[3] Winter found both of them "two of the best players in comedy that now grace the New York stage."[4] After Miss Eytinge left the cast on December 8 to appear with George Jordon at the Olympic in Master of Ravenswood, Daly reviewed her in that play and analyzed her acting style:

> Miss Eytinge's acting is more emotional than imaginative. It springs from the heart, and goes to it...apparent spontaneity. It has no semblance of artifice or study...deserves praise for never appearing to court it. Nothing is more injurious to dramatic illusion than the performers should seem to be cognizant of the presence of spectators.[5]

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[1] Herald, Nov. 10, 1866, p. 5.

[2] Times, Nov. 12, 1866, p. 5. [3] Ibid.

[4] Tribune, Nov. 10, 1866, p. 5.

[5] Express, Dec. 11, 1866, p. 2. (Eliza Newton replaced Miss Eytinge in Griffith Gaunt.)

Daly released Miss Eytinge from her contract one week before its expiration date so that she could play the new role. Griffith Gaunt had to vacate the theatre the following week, "cut off in the flower of its youth by arrangements previously entered into,"[1] to put it in Daly's words. During the play's six-week run, Daly announced that his version was being produced in Washington, Buffalo, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, Brooklyn, Albany and Pittsburgh. The final performance in New York on December 11 was a benefit for him as author. Fiske publicly congratulated Daly for his success: "He is becoming a very notorious man is gathering in a little money," and warned him: "Let him take my advice and save his cash. 'Griffith Gaunts' do not turn up every day."[2]

Thus far we have seen Augustin Daly seemingly give the truth to the current image of him as an opportunist without ideals, whose success came by chance rather than direction, feeding off the creativity of others rather than from his own depths--indeed, were there depths to him? The immediate question to be answered is now posed. If Daly had convictions about life and a theory of the theatre with which to express them, what were they? We must turn to his next and first original work, Under the Gaslight, to see if an answer to the first part of the question exists, and then to his critical writing to see if a definite theory had been stated by him.

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[1] Ibid., p. 3. A production of Cinderella had booked the theatre, beginning Dec. 12, 1866.

[2] Leader, Dec. 8, 1866, p. 4. As an indication of how successful Daly had become, Joseph Howard, his companion during the draft riots and the author of the bogus proclamation, wrote a bogus biography of Daly in the Citizen, Jan. 19, 1867, p. 8. Howard, who got drunk at Daly's dinner for the critics and fought with another critic, Robert Holmes, was probably a bit high when he wrote it.

CHAPTER VI

CULMINATION: UNDER THE GASLIGHT

On Thursday, August 7, 1867, the daily newspapers in New York began carrying a mysterious advertisement in their classified sections. It contained two lines only and simply stated: "The Coming Surprise! Under the Gaslight."[1] It was not until Sunday that readers learned the surprise was "a totally original and dramatic arrangement of picturesque probabilities, with a contemporary love story, in five acts, by Augustin Daly." and that the "arrangement" would open Monday night, August 12, at the New York Theatre, containing such wonders as: "A view of basement life in New York, Delmonico's, the Tombs Police Court, the piers of the city and Hudson River by starlight, a villa at Long Branch and the Shrewsbury R.R. Station."[2] Even in his own columns, Daly revealed nothing more than was stated in the ads. One of the basic tenets of his theatre management--secrecy--was being established. Yet, more material is available concerning this production than any other one of Daly's; in fact, there are as many versions as to how it was written as there are tellers. Each version contains a portion of the truth and each one offers some insight into what is generally recognized as the most extraordinary American play of the 1860s, a play which drew on every innovation of the Western theatre of its time and blended them into a unified and coherent whole.

On the surface, Under the Gaslight is a series of incidents calculated to excite and to amuse an audience, a "sen-

[1] World, Aug. 7, 1867, p.6, and other daily papers.
[2] Citizen, Aug. 10, 1867, p.8, and other Sunday papers.

sational melodrama" which caused a member of its first night audience to shout: "It is the climax of sensation,"[1] after the famous railroad episode. It is also a work of serious intention, as its subtitle, Life and Love in These Times, should indicate. Joseph Daly went to great lengths in his ghost-written review for the Times to point out these intentions. The review, undoubtedly approved first by his brother, was written before the opening performance and hence is not a measure of audience reaction or the reactions of other critics. A third of the review retells the story of Sir Gawain and the princess imprisoned in an ugly body, because the moral of that story, it stated, was uppermost in the author's mind. According to the review, the play meant to show a disintegration in the quality of life and love in modern times: "In these times of sharp business prudence and foresight, Sir Gawain, if he were a Wall Street banker, would require his ugly bride to transform herself before he gave her the kiss--for we don't take anything on credit."[2]

Once the wildly enthusiastic audience reaction to the sensational qualities of the work became evident (tickets were sold six days in advance; long lines were formed for their purchase; standing room was not even available during the early part of the run), no implication of the sublimation of melodrama was printed again in reference to this work. Yet, the serious intellectual content exists even though it seems overshadowed by the outer trappings of the work.

Dourly and belatedly admitting its success, and for the first time not instructing Daly on how he should have written his play, Paul Nicholson of the World posed three questions: "Why was this play imagined? Why was it written? and Why is it produced?"[3] The "why" is self-evident; the "how" of each question is more interesting today.

E.A. Dithmar wrote that Daly told him he had been "at

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[1] Daly, Life, p. 75. [2] Times, Aug. 13, 1867, p. 5.
[3] World, Aug. 19, 1867, p. 4.

work on odd intervals for a long while" on Under the Gaslight and that he had been thinking about the creation of just such a work since 1863, after first seeing Rosedale by Lester Wallack. William Winter also mentions Daly's being influenced by Rosedale. One of the characteristics of the Wallack play which Daly admired was its psychological use of the audience's imagination to create suspense and terror, rather than the presentation on the stage of actions to induce them. Another was the interplay of characters, each possessing his own goal, each developed sufficiently to interest an audience in these goals. What Daly wanted to duplicate from Rosedale was a style of dramatization; there is no direct correlation between events or characters in it and Under the Gaslight.

The characters and their goals in the play did not suggest themselves to Daly until the end of his tour with Avonia Jones. The first statement which might be the seed of the play is that one-sentence outline he sent to his brother Joseph, which is worth repeating here:

> I want to tell the story of a woman, self willed--beautiful--passionate--independent--careless of conventionalities--selfish--vain--thoughtless of others' feelings--one who is inately good--but whose pride of virtue has made mad--To cap all she is a baby--She is a woman, too, who would not when cupid would, and could not when she would.[1]

As Daly's intense feelings about Miss Jones softened with the discovery of her prior marriage to a drunken and insolvent older actor and of her trials with a fradulent and bizarre father[2] he became freer in his ability to write that play.

But Daly was interested in more than a dramatization of a modern love; he wanted to transmit his feelings about the quality of life in the late 1860s, the early years of reconstruction including the impeachment of President Andrew Johnson and the radical control of Congress in implementing reforms.

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[1] Jan. 15, 1865. MS, Lincoln Center, Daly Correspondence.

[2] The father wrote an obituary of "My Avonian daughter" in the Clipper, Oct. 26, 1867, p. 288, under the headline, "The Death Bed of an Actress."

The problems of that period which Daly commented on were law and order, the displaced veterans of the war, poverty and unfair taxation, the mechanization of society and the class system. Indeed, Daly wanted to pour his life and lifetime into his first original work, in both content and form.

Although he may have kept a notebook and thought about it much earlier, Daly did the actual writing of the play during the winter season of 1866-1867. James Howard had jokingly commented that Daly was writing a new play in the January 19, 1867 issue of the Citizen. Daly himself had written during the first week of its run that he wrote Under the Gaslight "last winter" while Griffith Gaunt "was having its season of prosperity."[1] Rose Eytinge's memory in 1905 is remarkably clear about certain details which give her version some veracity:

> During its run my serious-eyed young manager told me of an original play which he was writing, and which he wished to produce at the close of the run of "Griffith Gaunt." This piece was "Under the Gaslight."
>
> At his invitation I went to his home in Horatio Street, where he lived with his mother and brother, and he read me the play. Even then his artistic aspirations and longings were struggling for expression. The walls of the conventional little room, which was fitted up as a sort of den and writing-room, were coloured a dark blue, and there were little plaster casts and small pictures scattered about; and everywhere there were evidences of his reaching out after a literary and artistic atmosphere.[2]

The story which Daly read to her in his "writing room" at 72 Horatio Street is best outlined by the Daly brothers in the Times review mentioned earlier. Knowing Daly's conscious intentions may help in understanding how he went about writing and directing it.

> The plot gives us a picture of a young girl who was found in the streets at a tender age by a wealthy lady, who adopted her, reared her and introduced her into the best society. The young lady, who is conscious of her lowly origins is wooed by Ray Trafford, a wealthy young gentleman of the true New York stamp, who professes to adore

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[1] Citizen, Aug. 17, 1867, p.8. [2] Memories, p. 115.

her. Just before their marriage is to take place, by a most unfortunate incident, he learns her history and resolves to break off the match; his resolution fails in presence of her beauty and intelligence, and he concludes at every hazard to keep his faith. This excellent intention would be carried out but for his own imprudence and negligence, which discover to a crowd of fashionable society people the secret, and in the fear of the world's sneers, and through his own weakness, he abandons the beautiful Laura. She is proud enough to quit forever the scenes in which she cannot but be insulted, and enters upon a lowly and hard-working existence. But she is not suffered to rest. A depraved ruffian named Byke, who knows her history, boldly claims her as his daughter, assisted by a drunken wretch named Old Judas, a sort of mother thief. Laura, terrified by the prospect of going with this man as he demands she shall, refuses, and he applies to a police justice for assistance. This brings all the parties before Judge Bowling at the Tombs where the squalor and misery of New York life, the comic and tragic side of police trials, and the rigid decrees of law, are fully shown in a new and sensational scene. Byke's ingenuity, for he is an accomplished creature, gains the day; but Trafford, assisted by Snorkey, a returned veteran who has taken up the calling of "soldier messenger" and is an eccentric genius, are resolved to follow Byke and rescue Laura. Peachblossom, a wild girl of a pattern not uncommon in New York, but whom Laura has tamed by her kindness, lends her assistance as well. The efforts of Byke and his pursuers bring the scene to a novel and exciting locality—the end of a pier on the North River at night, which is the home and rendezvous of sundry dock boys, juvenile notion venders, etc. Here the youthful geniuses, led by an amateur pug, Bermudas, have nightly "banjo soirees" to the great disgust of the police. In this place occurs a scene of intricate construction, in which, by the aid of the River Police and the heterogeneous dock companions, the heroine is rescued and Byke demolished for a time. This scene, with its starlight, ferry-boats in the distance, noiseless police boat, and midnight dances and songs of the dock population, is replete with incident of an unusual character. At last Laura is restored to her friends, who have gone to Long Branch for the hot season and with whom she lives in retirement. She discovers, however, that Trafford (during her voluntary exile) with the inconstancy of New York youth, and mankind in general, has made love to and is engaged to Pearl, her reputed sister, a lovely belle who is supposed to have "no heart." Trafford, on Laura's return, would renew his old love, and is in a very pitiful state, indeed, but that young lady teaches him a gentle but excellent lesson on the way women should be treated by men, which lesson comes with double force from her who has been deserted herself. But Laura, for Pearl's sake, resolves again to leave their home, and to do so in sec-

ret; this resolution, acted upon in the impulsiveness of fear and love, is exceedingly fortunate because it leads her to a scene where she has an opportunity to relieve from awful peril her old friend Snorkey. This poor fellow, bent on following Byke up, has tracked him to Long Branch, whither the former is going to finish with murder the work in which he failed before. But at the railway station at Shrewsbury Bend, Byke detects Snorkey's pursuit, lays a trap for him and with fiendish malignity condemns him to an awful fate, leaving him bound and helpless to count the moments he has to live. But help is near in the form of Laura, who is, however, shut up in the way-master's hut. By her own heroic exertions she frees herself and Snorkey and they then both wait for the Down Express Train to Long Branch, in order to forestall Byke, who is bent for that destination to rob and murder. The dreadful disappointment that ends this scene and the mechanical effects introduced belong to the thrilling incident of modern plays. After all the physical persecutions of the heroine are surmounted, there are still left her deeper misfortunes to be alleviated--the loss of lover, home and station; and this is accomplished, we imagine, to the satisfaction of the audience.[1]

The reading of the script to Miss Eytinge took place sometime in February when it was completed. She agreed to play the part of Laura and Daly proceeded to attempt its production. He offered the script to Mark Smith and Lewis Baker, "but they could see nothing in it."[2] Contrary to the then current press opinion, they were having financial difficulties; the New York Theatre potential gross was apparently not equal to the expensive productions they were mounting. Daly had said he offered it then to another manager who also refused. This was probably his future father-in-law, Duff, owner of the Olympic Theatre. Duff was in the process of looking for a lessee and had half-promised the theatre to Hayes, who was only interested in producing English pantomimes there. Daly even considered leasing a theatre of his own at this period and had his brother negotiate with other attorneys on his behalf. Smith and Baker had decided to relinquish on their lease and the New York Theatre was available; the asking price,

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[1] Times, Aug. 13, 1867, p. 5.

[2] Times, April 22, 1888, p.2.

$22,000 a year plus license fee and watchman hire, was more than Daly could consider at this time. The New York Theatre was leased to the Worrell sisters and they, in turn, rented it for a short period in August to Daly.

During this period of waiting, Daly dashed off The New Leah to avoid copyright difficulties with the Batemans and an adaptation of Sardou's Nos Bon Villageois as Hazardous Ground, both for production in Brooklyn at Mrs. Conway's Park Theatre. He also accepted the position of music and drama critic for the Times and the Citizen and he managed out-of-town productions for Miss Eytinge in Newark and Washington as well.

Daly not only took more care and time in writing the script for Under the Gaslight, he was also determined that the rehearsal period would be more sufficient. Indications are that he had the full cast for day rehearsals over a period of at least two weeks. Miss Eytinge and C.T. Parsloe, who was to play Bermudas, were both in another original production at the New York Theatre called Black Sheep. Miss Eytinge withdrew suddenly from the cast of that play, effectively closing it, on Wednesday, July 24. Kate Reignolds, with 24 hours notice, mounted her production of Antony and Cleopatra to fill in the rest of the week while she rehearsed her company, including J.K. Mortimer, for the following week's production of Nobody's Daughter. Miss Eytinge and Parsloe would have been ready for rehearsal on July 25; Mortimer would be available to play Snorkey in rehearsal on July 30, when the morning reviews and the previous night's audience reaction to Nobody's Daughter indicated that it would hold the stage evenings for the next two weeks while Under the Gaslight was being prepared. A.H. (Dolly) Davenport, whom Daly had cast as Ray Trafford, was available at any time; he had not acted in New York for the past three years. Davenport was nervous at the prospect of appearing again before the metropolitan audience and critics; he tried to excuse himself from the production during rehearsals. He sent the following letter to Daly on August 7, 1867:

> I am much worse, indeed so ill that I cannot leave my bed--and I fear I shall not leave it for some time. I am more than sorry to disappoint you, and my sickness is the occasion of a much greater annoyance to Dr. Spalding...with regard to our own matters I send you the part with great regret but trust it will not cause you great trouble as there are five days yet and the only trouble will be new rehearsal--[1]

Daly would have been better off if he had accepted this poor excuse and let Davenport off the hook, but he persuaded or threatened him out of his "sick bed" and back into rehearsals.

The only backstage incident connected with the production, as reported by Miss Eytinge, concerns Davenport. The incident will give us an idea of what Daly had to contend with in rehearsal before we turn to the script itself for an indication of how he conducted these rehearsals:

> I confess I do not remember the story. I only remember that the situation of the piece is where I break down a door with an axe which I opportunely find, and rescue somebody who is lashed down on a railroad track, and that this "business" was preceded by my frantic exclamation, "The axe! the axe!"
>
> The exclamation became a sort of catchword, and Davenport, who was an incorrigible guyer, used to serve it up to me on all possible and impossible occasions, with the result that there was a great deal too much giggling and guying during the performance.
>
> Mr. Daly, who was then the same watchful ubiquitous manager he always was, tried every available means to check us, with, I am sorry to say, very little success.
>
> One night, in sheer desperation, he threatened Davenport, upon whom--with how much justice I will not say --he looked as the ringleader, with immediate discharge if he did not on the following night and at every performance thereafter play the part seriously.
>
> The next night Davenport made his appearance dressed completely in black, even wearing black kid gloves throughout the entire performance; and he played the part throughout without a smile, investing it with unbroken, lugubrious gloom. The result was that every scene in

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[1]MS, Folger's Shakespeare Library, Daly Correspondence, which erroneously dates it 1864, because of the similarity of another letter dated 1864 in which Davenport asked Daly to correct an impression, in the Courier, of his professional behaviour. He was being accused of drinking and performing; he claimed his bad performance was due to illness.

> which he appeared, even the most serious ones, went with shouts of laughter; and the more the audience laughed, the more solemnly serious Davenport became.
>
> When the final curtain fell, Daly appeared and fairly and frankly gave up the fight. He begged Davenport to doff his suit of solemn black and play the part as he had always played it.
>
> The magnanimous action of our young manager had the effect of making us all feel heartily ashamed of ourselves, and from that night, by unanimous decision, there was no more guying.[1]

The guying did not take place during performance as Miss Eytinge remembered, but at rehearsals. Davenport wore his black outfit and serious mien on opening night, one of the three things to happen that evening, each which would have killed most other plays. The other two occurences on opening night were the falling apart of the railroad after the climactic moment on stage and the drunken behaviour of the actor playing Judge Bowling, Ben Baker.

The audience present opening night included A.T. Stewart, owner of the building, and the Worrell sisters, who had subleased it to Daly. What they saw when Davenport and Baker were on the stage must have set their minds to thinking about the next tenant. This is how the critic of the Spirit of the Times commented on Baker's drunken behaviour:

> His hopeless attempts to carry on his dialogue were received with shouts of laughter by the house, and it is a matter of extreme wonder that such a maudlin exhibition did not thoroughly damn the piece at the outset. I have seen nothing more humiliating since the inauguration of President Johnson.[2]

and on Davenport's guying:

> Dolly Davenport, as Ray Trafford, had about as much idea of the character he is called upon to represent as Ristori has of the Albany lobby. In dress, manner, gesture, and tone of voice he was utterly and painfully at fault. Had he been billed as a young orthodox preacher, he would have been heralded the following morning as a triumphant success. There was not the faintest scintillation of the old fire in him, and his many friends in the audience wondered at the change which had come over their favorite of the past.[3]

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[1] Memories, pp.116-17. [2] Aug.17,1867,p.480. [3] Ibid.

Joseph Daly reported the mishap with the train sequence: "The intensely wrought feelings of the spectators found vent in almost hysterical laughter when the 'railroad train' parted in the middle and disclosed the flying legs of the human motor who was propelling the first half of the express."[1]

The opening night should be considered the first dress rehearsal in modern terms. Most of the critics then considered the difficulties in the first performance and returned a second time if the production they were reviewing seemed promising.

It is time now to look at the script and study the stage directions for examples of what inspired the critic on the Leader to praise Daly's "most perfect familiarity with managerial details...extracting the most perfect climaxes out of every extension of his plot."[2] Even a perusal of the directions reveals an amazing attempt to create the illusion of reality, not only within the stage picture, but outside in the environment beyond what the audience can see.[3] All the physical actions of the characters reveal their psychological motivations.

In Act I there is a visible street lamp which is lit and seen beyond the window of the Cortland parlor. Dialogue is carried on with those outside the stage picture. Sounds of sleigh bells, laughter and "good nights" are heard. Byke is first sighted by the stage characters through the window by the light of the street lamp. In the following scene at Delmonico's, characters enter carrying umbrellas and shedding outer garments, brushing their hair and arranging themselves in the lobby before entering the dance hall. In both scenes, the terror lurking outside is brought within, creating fear in the audience before it is actually seen. The final scene and the act end with a civilized waltz stopped, with society's veneer stripped as the dancers group together away from Laura and Pearl and from Ray to isolate and condemn them.

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[1] Life, p. 75. [2] Aug. 17, 1867, p. 5.

[3] Samuel French still has in print the 1867 Wemyss acting edition, which is used in the next few pages for quotations.

The second act opens in Laura's basement apartment, which also contains a window looking out into the street. The scene opens with Peachblossom (the young prostitute whom Laura has reformed with her kindness) singing as she polishes the stove. The stage direction describes her as "a slip-shod girl a la Fanchon."[1] Daly's description of Maggie Mitchell's Fanchon will show us how he directed Mrs. Skerrett in the part:

> Have we not all seen just such a little witch? Do we not recognize the untied shoe, the headlong run, the making of ugly faces? To play the cricket is easy. Many actresses could perform it with spirit and whimsical force—but Maggie Mitchell does more—She is a child with the character, an impudent little soul, a tearful girl, a sauey minx, a noble heart. You have to look at her with a little bit of your soul before you can appreciate it as it ought to be regarded.[2]

The song she sings as she works "a la Fanchon" is about a knight and his fair lady. Old Judas is seen at the window before she enters. When Laura comes home from work, she takes off her shawl and outer garments, opens a package and reads her mail. Peachblossom gets clothes and basket from wall hooks and closet as Laura digs into her purse for shopping money and the details of her new home life are sharply contrasted with that at the Cortland house. The act contains only the one scene so the "humble" furniture can include a stove and other accessories to depict her new daily living conditions. The ending of this act is truly exciting. Daly has been careful of his stage time, so when Laura tells Peachblossom to rush and open the door, thinking Ray is there, the audience senses it is too soon for him to return. Byke's entrance is a shocking surprise, but one which has been carefully planned.

A crowd is buzzing, talking all at once, when the curtain opens on the third act, depicting the Tombs Police Court. The crowd is silenced. A policeman is handling people roughly and his action is commented upon. Sam is carried off screaming. Ray is sent for and asked to bring an ebony box with him. Stage time is motivated again by Ray rushing in

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[1] P. 15. [2] Sun, Oct. 17, 1866, p. 4.

without the box, explaining his haste. Laura writes in a notebook items which Byke has to describe accurately. Ray is held back by a policeman as Laura is led off by Byke. The scene shifts to the exterior of the Tombs and business is motivated by a peddler's stand supporting a string of sheet music. Snorkey inspects the music, then later helps take down the songs and pack up the cart. The third and final scene of the act is at the foot of a pier projecting into the North River. There is a view of Jersey City in the distance and space for boats to be taken across the stage or fastened there. Old Judas enters the scene smoking a pipe. Byke takes out a flask and drinks. A police sergeant enters the scene in a patrol boat. There is an actual fight on stage with Snorkey striking Byke with an oar. Laura is actually thrown off the pier and Ray leaps into the water after her. But the most exciting piece of stage business in this scene is the banjo music and dance by Bermudas and the boys, effectively contrasting with the waltz scene at Delmonico's. The stage direction is rather simply stated: "Music, and dance by boys, ensue--given according to capacity and talent. At the end of it, a general shout of jubilee..."[1] Of course the audience is expected to join in on the "shout of jubilee" and Daly managed to keep the flow of the show moving by having a policeman shout from offstage for quiet.

Low life in a police court, music and dance, a struggle and water rescue--where could Daly take the action of the play from here? The fourth act moves very quietly, first to an elegant summer place at Long Branch depicting society at play for another sharp contrast. The second scene is almost a hush, taking place at night in a wooded area near the Shrewsbury Station. The final scene is the railroad station and the wait for the 10:30 p.m. down express train, the most sensational of all nineteenth century stage effects. Daly was not the first to put railroad tracks on stage. This had been done in an un-

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[1] P. 31.

successful English play, The Engineer, at the Victoria Theatre in London, 1863. But the physical train itself on stage was not the great effect Daly had created. His effect, the one which caused such fantastic excitement and terror in the audience, was created in the imagination by sounds. Snorkey, a thoroughly likeable character who had suffered without self-pity, is tied to the tracks. Laura is nearby in a shed, trying to get out to free him while the sounds of the train get progressively nearer:

> Laura. (In agony) O, I must get out! (Shakes window bars) What shall I do?
> Snorkey. Can't you burst the door?
> Laura. It is locked fast.
> Snorkey. Is there nothing in there?--no hammer? no crawbar?
> Laura. Nothing! (Faint steam whistle heard in the distance.) O, Heavens! The train! (Paralyzed for an instant) The axe!!!
> Snorkey. Cut the woodwork! Don't mind the lock. --cut round it! How my neck tingles! (A blow at the door is heard.) Courage! (The steam whistle heard again --nearer, and rumble of train on track. Another blow.) That's a true woman! Courage! (Noise of locomotive heard--with whistle. A last blow; the door swings open, mutilated--the lock hanging--and Laura appears, axe in hand.)
> Snorkey. Here--quick! (She runs and unfastens him. The locomotive lights glare on scene.) Victory! Saved! Horray! (Laura leans exhausted against switch.) And these are the women who ain't to have a vote!
> (As Laura takes his head from the track, the train of cars rushes past with roar and whistle from L. to R.H.[1]

It was the fear of the metal animal bearing closer and the hopes of Laura's getting out of the shed in time--yes, in the nick of time--that caused "thrill running up and down my spine" to be written by James L. Ford remembering the moment as a boy in the audience.[2] Joseph Daly, after commenting on the near disaster on opening night, also pointed out: "Had the effect of the scene depended not upon the suspense and emotion created by the whole situation, but upon the machinery the piece had

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[1] Pp. 42-3.

[2] Forty Odd Years in the Literary Shop (New York, 1921), p. 92.

been irretirevably lost; but the real sensation was beyond the chance of accident."[1]

The final act is really a very short scene, one filled with silent action. The staging could have been--and probably was--lifted and used in the manner of a silent movie. The setting is an elegant boudoir in the Cortland cottage in Long Branch. Pearl "en negligee" is brushing her hair. She reads a letter and then another one, turns down the lamp and settles herself on a love seat for a nap. Daly calls for a "pause" at this point. Then, moonbeams fall on Byke who appears above the balcony. He gets over the rail and enters. He goes to a table inside, picks up a delicate handerchief and wipes his face. He sees Pearl in the seat and looks down on her, takes out a phial of chloroform from his pocket and saturates the handkerchief with it, then applies it to Pearl. He goes through clothes hanging nearby and finds money in the pockets; he finds jewelry on the boudoir table. He puts them into a bag and hands them to someone over the balcony. He is breaking open a drawer with a small crowbar when a shout and the sound of a wagon is heard from outside. He jumps, catching the bureau as it falls over. Pearl is awakened. He pulls out a knife. She runs; he pursues. The door bursts open. Ray and Laura enter. Byke runs to the balcony. Snorkey and Bermudas are there to stop him. He is seized and bound in a chair. Later, the cords are unbound and Byke exits.

This, then, is the play as Daly staged it. It now reads somewhat differently from the synopsis offered earlier in which Joseph tried to tell the story from a literary point of view.

The questions about how it was imagined, written and produced can best be approached further by turning to an article which Daly wrote within five days after the play opened. In it, one is impressed at the same time by the implications of a deeper significence in the play. After all, there may

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[1] Life, p. 75.

be more here than the exciting series of events just depicted. The seed of the play may have been Daly's traumatic experience during the Civil War; the flowering came during a time of great upheaval for the nation, the reconstruction period in American history. Was Daly really able to ignore the life and problems about him and devote himself to such a thing as pure stagecraft? He didn't think so. The play held the stage for several decades as a serious work, satisfying audiences for all that while. Perhaps there is more to it than sensational melodrama alone.

The most obvious key to unlock the play is the railroad sequence. It is important to note again that it was not the physical railroad on the stage, but the psychological use of it which made the scene important. It was this use of stage machinery that was original with Daly and the courts recognized the fact when he sued Dion Boucicault for employing his effect in After Dark.

Where Daly got the idea for this scene has concerned critics unduly. Joseph Daly merely says in his biography: "As we walked home one night, discussing the need of a culminating incident, my brother said: 'I have got the sensation we want—a man fastened to a railroad track and rescued just as the train reaches the spot.'"[1] Edward A. Dithmar called it an after-thought.[2] T. Allston Brown indicated that Daly stole it from The Engineer.[3] Marvin Felheim sees it primarily as a topical capitalization of the expanding railroad system in America.[4] Marion V. Michalak says it's impossible to tell from available sources.[5]

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[1] Life, pp. 74-5.

[2] Memories, p. 20. Dithmar wrote that Daly was looking for "a perfectly simple yet unexpected device" when the idea came to him.

[3] History of the New York Stage (New York, 1903), p.384.

[4] The Theatre of Augustin Daly (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956).

[5] The Management of Augustin Daly's Stock Company, 1869-1899 (Indiana University, 1961). p. 32, an unpublished doctoral dissertation.

Daly tells us himself how the idea came to him. Since he had to sign his column in the Citizen, he was unable, he confessed, to write a puff of his play under an assumed name, so he devoted one particular piece to "how it came to be written and how it grew from a little seed to a big five act plant." He continued, explaining that he was working at night trying to get an idea for a new play when...but let's read it in his own words:

> As I live near an abominable railway terminus, my thoughts were continually disturbed by the screaming whistles, clanging bells and thundering echoes of the great iron monsters coming and going in endless succession.
>
> I tried to close my ears--vainly.
>
> I began to hate the crashing engines and the lumbering cars; my fancy grew morbid; I seemed to bring little innocents of ideas into being only to see them run down, caught up, whirled and dashed to pieces by the grim enemy swooping down its iron road! Oh! for the power to stay the inevitable death! to cheat the senseless executioner of its prey! to see its victims bound to the track, condemned to die, and then to snatch them from the fearful doom!
>
> I gloried in the victory! I--well!--I tied Snorkey to the track, and untied him,--as you see it done in my play.
>
> That was how I revenged myself on the railway depot and its abominable noise.[1]

After revealingly telling us that the play grew from the incident rather than, as his brother stated, finding a central incident to finish the play, Daly went on to show where the other incidents came from and how the play developed. They were, of course, waiting in his mind or notebook to be developed.

What makes this piece of writing even more interesting is the light it pours on the meaning of the play. Byke is the villain only in the conventional sense. In the climactic scene, no one thinks of Byke. The villain is, as Daly intended it to be, the train and what it represents. We will see other villains like the train as this study progresses. And, the intent here explained may also serve to clarify the ending of the play in which Byke goes free.

Perhaps we are supposing too much based on one short

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[1] Aug. 17, 1867, p.8.

article. We know Daly was capable of telling an untruth or at least shading facts to suit his purpose. There were some 35,000 miles of railroad lines laid out and in use during the Civil War in America. Daly and Miss Jones traveled a good portion of them during their five-month tour. As his letters to Joseph reveal, he came to dispise railroads (in American literature, they have evoked both blame and praise as subject matter). He did not have to go beyond his own experience for the climax as well as for the "seed" of his play.

But, of course, the play as a whole does not represent Daly's frustration with the railroads of America. The idea would be ludicrous to suggest. The railroads were only one part of the whole system of life in 1867 that disturbed him. They are more likely representative, though, of his criticism of American society. It may prove interesting to see what he had to say about another facet of that society; namely, law and order.

In the same article explaining how he came to write his play, Daly also notes that one incident does not make a play, adding:

> I turned my thogghts on things about us which we see every day and pass over without special notice; for I always felt that the most thrilling romances were enacted and re-enacted daily in the simplest concerns of city life and municipal existence.
>
> Howoften we pick up the paper to read of the hundreds who struggle, who fall, who find a miserable rest in the cells of a prison! The crime is committed; the free man is a prisoner; the stern judge interrogates—
>
> Come to a full stop there!
>
> Visions of the placid but stern Police Justices deal-out the hourly dooms of guilt rose.
>
> I rose up, collared my vagrant fancies, and arraigned them before the Tombs Police Court.
>
> I have often seen the remark, when a particularly daring criminal metthis just deserts, that "had his talents been turned in the right direction, he would have been an ornament to society and a very great man."
>
> In the same spirit of comparison it has occured to me frequently that some of our novelists would have made extraordinary criminals if they had not become brilliant romanticists.

He clearly indicates a somewhat unusual sympathy here with crim-

inals. He asks that we look at root causes, at crime as the result of environment or society. Perhaps his years as a newspaperman gave him greater insight into the criminal mind and into the possibility that he, himself, could have made a wrong turn without a piece of luck or help. A few biographical notes might be in order here. His father, Captain Denis Daly, died when Augustin was three years old. He was raised by his mother, first in Norfolk then in New York. There are a number of references in Daly's letters to his brother in which he calls himself a "little rapscallion" and refers to their "little pilferings." Their mother had refused aid from relatives and took lessons in sewing to earn money for the family. Augustin also helped support the family, working as a clerk while attending night school until he was 16 years old. It was not until 1859, by sheer luck, that he walked into the office of the Courier and was hired as a general reporter. There, he wrote the sympathetic series on criminals, "Shackles and Chains," and a feature article, "A Ghost in New York," which dealt with "the revolting reality in city life" and described the horrors in a tenement building where a ghost was claimed to be wandering (the horrors though were not the supernatural but the living conditions there: "Who can wonder that here disease and death... vice and crime find permanent abode?").[1]

These experiences early in life help to explain Daly's attitude toward crime as expressed in Under the Gaslight. The nominal villains in the play are Byke and Old Judas. Their crimes include baby-snatching, bribery, theft and attempted murder. Snorkey, over-hearing them plot their next dastardly deed, comments: "What's to be done when you're hard up? Steal! What's to be done if you're caught at it? Kill! it's short and easy, and he lives up to it like a good many Christians don't live up to their laws."[2] In short, Daly connects the process by which crimes grow with the hypocrisy of society which feeds

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[1] Courier, March 17, 1861, p.1. [2] Gaslight, p. 39.

that growth. He does the same thing earlier when he has Bermudas, caught at selling mud for polish, rotten shoe strings, etc., exclaim: "Well, how am I to live; it ain't my fault, it's the taxes. Ain't I got to pay my income tax and how am I pay it if I gives you your money's worth? Do you think I'm Stewart--Sa-a-y?"[1] The obvious attempt is for humor, but the exaggeration only points up the difference between a petty thieving merchant and Alexander T. Stewart, founder of the largest dry-good business of the time as well as owner of the New York Theatre building.

The most vivid account in the play on the breeding of criminals comes in Pearl's description of how Laura came to be adopted. It is not so much in the following speech: "Stop! said my mother. What are you doing? Trying to steal, said the child. Don't you know that it's wicked to do so? asked my father. No, said the girl, but it's dreadful to be hungry."[2] The impact is stronger in the casually tossed line said earlier by Pearl: "The usual crowd of children accosted them for alms."[3] When Ray, shocked at the story, says: "Laura, an outcast--a thief!" Pearl answers for Daly: "No, that is what she might have been."[4]

The scene in the Tombs Police Court shows how Daly handled the meting out of justice in a number of cases before Byke enters with Laura to get the court to abet him in his villainy.

In the script, Judge Bowling is immediately presented in a sympathetic light. He was patterned, according to Joseph Daly, after Judge Dowling, a personal friend. When the scene opens, an officer is roughing up the people arrested and the judge orders him to "treat those poor people decently."[5] The officer drags the first "defendant" to the judge and tells him the boy was caught pickpocketing. The boy, Peter Rich, makes no defense and is sentenced. Rafferdi, a comic Irish-

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[1] p. 17. [2] p. 9. [3] p. 8 (my italics). [4] p. 9. [5] p.23.

man pretending to be Italian, is next brought up to the dock. A petty, unscrupulous lawyer gets to him first, gouges him for all the money he has, 50¢, and wins his client freedom by amusing the judge. The third character brought before the judge is Sam, a Negro accused of drunken behaviour.

How Daly handled the short episode with Sam not only indicates Daly's feelings about law and order, but also his view of the place of the black in American society. The two questions were connected then; that is, law-and-order meant put-the-black-down, as it obliquely does even today.

Daly describes the character in the cast list as "a colored citizen, ready for suffrage when it is ready for him." Sam appears earlier in the play in Act I, Scene 2 (the coat-room at Delmonico's) as coat attendant, boot black and general menial. Sam is contrasted favorably in that scene with the other characters who appear: Demilt, "one of the rising Wall Street generation;" Windel, "his friend, 'sound on the street';" and Ray, one of the New York "bloods." During the short scene, Demilt reveals his plans to commit adultery with Mrs. Van Dam. Ray has already revealed his cowardice as a Union deserter and his weak character in the prior scene by his wavering attitude toward Laura. On entering the coat room, Demilt is rude and uncivil: "Sam! Where the dickens is that darkey?" When letters fall accidently from the pocket of his coat being taken off by Sam, Ray called him stupid. Sam is conscientious about his work. He utters only one complaint: the inclement weather is bad for business. We next see him in court on the drunk charge and are to infer that he picked up the "vice" from the gentlemen at Delmonico's.

Splinter, the lawyer who amused the judge into letting Rafferdi off free, takes Sam's pawn tickets as payment to represent him. He appeals that if Sam were white the charges would not be brought up and that since the Negro has gained equality he should not be treated any differently than a white man. The immediate response from the judge is a verdict of ten days in jail. Sam protests, citing the Civil Rights Bill

and his status as "one of the Bureau niggers." He accuses the court of corruption and delinquency and calls out for Thaddeus Stevens as he is dragged out of court.

It is of more than casual interest that the charge against Sam was "drunk and disorderly," both in the context of the play and in the United States of 1867.

The villain Byke is intoxicated throughout the play and, needless to say, disorderly is an understatement for his conduct. He makes his first entrance in Act I drunk; his condition is commented on three times during the first scene. After Byke leaves the courtroom, getting a favorable verdict from the judge, we next see him on stage taking a flask out and drinking as he plans his next foul deed. Daly must have meant for his audience to infer even more than this contrast between Sam and Byke. Impeachment investigations of President Andrew Johnson had been initiated by Congress earlier in the year. Two of the charges which prompted the proceedings were drunkeness and disorderly conduct. Known as the "drunken tailor," Johnson could be a frightening figure on the platform when he was crossed. During a speech in the fall of 1866 in Cleveland, he had been heckled by a spectator and piled invective on the unseen man in a steady flow. Daly makes note of this behaviour when he has Peachblossom say that, if she were as good and pretty as Laura, she wouldn't be frightened by anyone, not even the president. Thaddeus Stevens, a radical Republican, was one of the more vocal opponents of Johnson. Their major disagreement concerned the place of the free Negro in American society. Johnson thought the blacks were an inferior race which had shown less capacity for government than any other race of people and he tried to halt the efforts being made to integrate them into American society. These efforts were best expressed by Stevens, who contended that every man, no matter what his race or color, had an equal right to justice, honesty and fair play with every other man. Stevens wanted the law to secure these rights: "The same law," he once said in a typical speech on the subject, "which gives

a verdict in a white man's favor should give a verdict in a black man's favor on the same state of facts."[1]

It would be helpful before going further to keep in mind Daly's private rather than his public opinion about the Negro as expressed in his letters to Joseph from the South in 1864, using such terms for them as "black vermin." Either a major conversion took place within the three years to justify Daly's sympathetic portrait of Sam (needless to say, played by a white actor) or we must look elsewhere for an explanation. Daly was very clear in his letters that he took no sides during the war and even boasted that he was welcome in both camps. The explanation may be an economic factor. Stevens had warned that the Northerners would be "the perpetual vassals" of the free trade South without Negro suffrage. Another radical, Elizur Wright, was more specific: "I could easily convince any man, who does not allow his prejudice to stand in the way of his interests, that it will probably make a difference of at least $1,000,000,000 in the development of the national debt, whether we reconstruct on the basis of loyal black and white votes, or on white votes exclusively."[2] There are a number of references to Daly's complaints about high taxes, not all delivered with the humor of the already-quoted complaint by Bermudas.

If Under the Gaslight speaks out for Negro rights, it shouts a cry for woman's suffrage. Snorkey only articulates a point of view which the whole play demonstrates when he says of Laura's bravery in freeing him from the menacing train: "And these are the women who ain't to have a vote!"[3] Giving women the vote was a controversial subject raging at the time. It had been sparked by the participation and bravery of women in the war, principally as nurses.

Daly seems to have married a docile woman for her money, but the women he loved and admired--from his mother

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[1] Quoted by Kenneth M. Stamp, The Era of Reconstruction (New York, 1965), pp. 96-7.

[2] Ibid. [3] P. 43.

to Avonia Jones and Ada Rehan—were strong and independent women who could defy society and hold their own. The roles of the sexes seem reversed from the norm of nineteenth melodrama in Gaslight, reflecting Daly's admiration of strong women. The only occasion given to Ray to perform an act of heroism is, oddly, not depicted. Laura is thrown off the dock by Old Judas and the scene ends with Ray leaping into the water after her. A completed rescue would have shown him as a hero, if Daly wanted to depict him as such; for all we really know, Laura may have had to save him from drowning. The major heroic action of the play, the railroad incident, is performed by Laura, who not only wields an axe and chops her way out of a locked door to untie Snorkey and take his head off the track, but she is only "exhausted" by the effort, not using the occasion to faint. Ray is a prisoner of society. Laura doesn't hesitate to reject society, go out on her own, find new lodging and work. She sees through falsehoods, is quick to understand a situation and capitalize on it. She survives without self-pity—making a joke of her inability to cook and being proud of her achievements in earning a salary—a characteristic she shares with Snorkey.

To mention Snorkey is to lead into the next problem of the times which Daly touched on: the returning veteran and his place in society. We first see Snorkey working as a messenger, barely eking out an existence, but ready for any kind of work offered him. He is hungry, yet can joke about "taking a light supper off a small toothpick."[1] He remembers others when he is offered food and drink. His arm had been cut off during the war and yet his reference to it is in the form of light humor. He remembers having seen Ray in the service on the occasion when Ray decided to desert the Army and Snorkey still understands why Ray left: "Real fighting wasn't funny, you thought, and I began to think so too at Fredericksburg."[2] The obvious intent of this moment in the play is a criticism

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[1] R. 6. [2] R. 6.

of the government, which had not given the veterans a proper mustering-out pay, help in rehabilitation or finding work.

All these issues are treated like newspaper headlines. If one searches for more solid matter, one must turn to the play as a whole and see how these issues, i.e., poverty, justice, equal rights, all meet at the railroad station at Shrewsbury Bend. Consideration of the characters might suggest a pattern of thought. A clue was given by Daly to his readers in the Courier article cited earlier:

> Do you ever try to think who and what they were: the homeless who desire no home; the happy, who never understood the true meaning of the term; the myriads of human beings capable of good and desiring good, but working out obscure ends in the obscurity which philanthropists and missionaries never care to penetrate?
>
> If you have done all these, you will understand why I gave the Lost Tribes of New York form, voice and individuality, and set them before their refined and gentle brothers and sisters as subjects for contemplation.[1]

The members of high society in the play—Mrs. Van Dam, whose husband has lost his money, but continues to spend and not pay, is the high priestess with Sue Earlie and Lizzie Liston described as her echoes and Ed Demilt and Windel as their male counterparts—are compared to a devouring pack of Siberian wolves by another member, Ray Trafford. Ray, himself, is characterized as lazy, frigid, easily led and not really very bright; all he seems to have in his favor is a yearly income of $60,000 and, one must assume, a modicum of good looks.[2] The "undercrust" is represented by Bermudas, whose main occupation seems to be selling newspapers and getting ready to be a boxer, but

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[1] Aug. 17, 1867, p. 8.

[2] Daly's characterization of high society comes from a novel, Delmonico, which was serialized in the Courier early in 1866. Daly may have written it. He mentions the novel and quotes a paragraph from it in the March 3, 1866 issue of the Express in the literary notes on the front page. He called it "a vehicle for photographing Society in New York as it exists (or is alleged to exist) in the present season of 1865-1866." He quotes: "Lovely Mrs. Van Dam...gifted to attract dangerous eyes...Happy in the attention of many young men who would not love her if there were no Mr. Van Dam."

who sells useless pins and polish, sheet music, plays the banjo and dances, gets the good guys to Pearl's rescue on time and helps capture Byke. He is allied with Snorkey and Peachblossom, who are paired off by the end of the play. The others on the lower scale of society are also sympathetically represented and include the signal man, Peanuts, Sam, Peter Rich and Rafferdi. The judge and two police officers are delicately balanced. Old Judas and Byke and then Pearl and Laura make up the rest of the cast.

Before the end of the play we learn that Pearl is the daughter of Old Judas and that Laura is the real Cortland, the two having been exchanged as infants by Old Judas. Laura, six years later, is adopted by the Cortlands without their knowledge of her real birth. Should one really take this seriously? Is it simply "birth will tell" and Laura is the genetic heroine? If this were the case, what do we make of other blue-bloods in the play, Ray and Mrs. Van Dam? We are led to believe from the very first scene that Laura is born from the under-crust of society--that is the strong impression we receive, nobility having nothing to do with birth. The following quote from Stevens might further clarify Daly's thinking for us: "Strip a proud nobility of their bloated estates, reduce them to a level with plain Republicans; send them forth to labor, and teach their children to enter the workshops or handle the plow."[1] Stevens was talking about the Southern aristocracy; but he states what Daly does to Laura in the play. He sends her forth to labor in the streets until the age of six, then once again in her adulthood. Might not that be the point, that it is good for the blue-bloods to labor and to see life? Pearl, who is the "base-born" of the two, has led the aristocratic life and her unhappiness during the play would tell us that joy has little to do with birth, but more with having an occupation and a purpose other than pleasure. Pearl must fall into the camp of the high society idlers, rather than with that

[1] Quoted by Stamp, Era, p. 108.

of Snorkey, Bermudas and Peachblossom, who find their happiness in industry. At the very end of the play, Ray realizes what his past life has been and becomes despondent: "It is always night for me." But Laura immediately tells him there is hope. There is hope in this play, not only for Ray, but for Byke, who will emigrate to start a new life.

Why is Byke allowed to go free and Old Judas to die after a pang of conscience? The last time we see Old Judas we hear her express concern for Pearl and then, alone, regret for her evil: "I begin to shiver. But it must be done or we starve."[1] From the moment Old Judas' death is announced to the final curtain, Pearl remains silent. While Byke is a frightening figure most of the time, he is equally witty and clever--using the law to abet him in his villainy being the prime example. If he had turned his resources to good, he would have had a great deal to contribute to society--if society would have helped him. In the end, the new society formed --Snorkey, Peachblossom, Bermudas, Ray, Laura and Pearl--gives him that chance.

If we want to use the train as the symbol of the old society crashing in on the new, keeping it tied to the tracks for its destructive purposes, we have a metaphor which can hold the play together in its social, economic and political implications. If we wish, we can infer one possible meaning from this metaphor, that Daly believed the old society was bent on destruction, that its wolfish ways would destroy itself as well as the sturdier members of the lower class unless it was stopped by members of its own class, the only people with the money and power to do so. A new society must be formed, one based on industry rather than inherited wealth and name. These ideas formed quite a radical doctrine in 1867.

The views inherent in Under the Gaslight and the methods Daly used to write and direct the work were the culmination of the personal and professional observation and ex-

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[1] P. 79.

perience which began in 1860.

His feelings about life of course stemmed from childhood, but they were forcibly impressed on his mind as a journalist reporting the sharp contrast between a conspicuous display of wealth and an appalling poverty in the working class, a poverty his family had escaped by stubborn hard work. Every newspaper he had worked for (except the Times, where he was employed after completing the play) had catered to the working class and expressed a politically independent stance and a radical viewpoint on most economic and social matters. The folly of the war, for both Daly and his newspapers, was only surpassed by the madness of reconstruction. Life in America was dangerously close to meeting the 10:30 p.m. down express train.

The tools which he used to express these ideas were also schooled in the press. Daly saw the changes taking place in Western theatre almost nightly in New York City as a critic. Whatever was being produced in Germany, France and England was duplicated in America with astonishing speed. His taste was developed by observation, but his appetite was only increased by the unfulfilling productions he had participated in until Griffith Gaunt. After that production, he knew that what he wanted was possible. Under the Gaslight satisfied the possibilities, not by chance, but--in each step of the way--by deliberate choice and execution.

CHAPTER VII

CRITICAL THEORIES

In the thousands upon thousands of words Augustin Daly wrote for the five newspapers where he was employed during the 1860s, one would hope but not expect direct statements of a theoretical nature. After all, he was covering not only plays but opera and concerts and wrote not only criticism but fiction and general reportage. Yet, in fact, such statements do exist; not in abundance, mostly in asides to the productions he was reviewing. From these asides and several "philosophical pieces" or "feuilletons," Daly's vision of the theatre, his dramatic theory, can be constructed.

It is important to restate that Daly considered the script to be only one element of the theatrical experience and most of his critical writing reflects a form of theatre in which each part had its importance. As an introduction to his theory, the following excerpt attempts to sum up a dispute about what can be classified as high art and includes his views on management (producing and directing) as well as on acting and playwrighting:

> The authors who, by tact, discretion and invention, present novel and ingenious productions on any subject, and the actors who give life-like representations of any character, all maintain that their efforts illustrate the highest reach of art.
>
> While good critics positively assert that unless the themes of the writer and the personations of the actor are confined to the lofiest emotions of the soul or historic existence, and the most remotely classic periods and events, they are not entitled to be deemed creations of High Art. This narrow idea must be false.
>
> If the stage presents us a picture of Antony addressing a mob over Caesar's remains, and a picture of Snooks haranguing a mob at one of our social elections, the first

> of these productions will be called a specimen of high art, and the latter will be condemned as a low bid for popularity; and if the author gives us a tragedy on the subject of Virginius, and a drama of everyday local life, the first will be declared a high art creation, and the latter a jumble of sensations, manufactured to suit an assumed low state of public taste.
>
> Yet the condemned plays may alike reach the true standard of art—faithfulness to nature—while the extolled productions are at best but guesses at scenes, the truthfulness of which can never be determined.
>
> The truth would seem to be that all art is lofty which most nearly resembles what is natural and that there is no art where nature is imperfectly portrayed.
>
> Judged by this standard, where are the stilted and impossible declamations and allegories, fates, furies and divine machinery of the classic tragedies, compared with the easy flow of language, the natural and varied incidents in the local scenes of modern plays.[1]

One can sense that Daly here is feuding with another critic; the guess could be accurate and the critic, no doubt, is William Winter, now (1867) safely perched on the Tribune for the rest of the century. Winter had attacked Under the Gaslight as well as The Black Crook and other works which he deemed bastard art forms. In an earlier article, responding to Winter, Daly had defended The Black Crook and added: "Theatrical performances aim, and ought to aim, at the amusement of the public, not at an inflexible conformity to certain arbitrary theories of what is 'legitimate drama.'"[2]

From his very first feuilleton in the Courier in 1860 to his last piece of the decade in the Times, Daly presented himself as the champion of nature and the foe of tradition. These two words, "nature" and "tradition," are the keynotes to his critical writing. That which adhered to nature was good; that which blindly followed tradition was bad. If his earlier pieces were vague in definition, they became less so during the Civil War and, after the conflict, they became as specific as they had been loose.

Just what did Daly mean by "nature?" Was theatre to

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[1] Citizen, Aug. 24, 1867, p. 8.
[2] Citizen, Aug. 17, 1867, p. 1.

be a slice of life, a photograph in motion? No, this is not what Daly meant at all. He quoted Shakespeare's definition and appended it for his own when he stated: "The end and aim of stage representation is 'to hold as it were the mirror up to nature.' No play constructed on another principle can live."[1] Theatre was then an illusion of reality, not reality itself. A play that was a false illusion, one that distorted the image of reality too much, was doomed: "Fine scenery, dashing dresses, slang 'humor' and fast talk, may lend it attractiveness for a brief time, and to a limited class of people, but it cannot endure...As no architectural decoration can make a house substantial which is built of bad materials, so no skill of actors can give strength or vitality to a drama which is built of bad stuff."[2]

"Tradition" was responsible for a good deal of the "bad stuff" and the conventions of the stage had become so rigid through constant repetition that, he said, it would take a revolution to dislodge them. Daly welcomed the revolution. "In nearly all plays of any pretension to merit, and in every drama of inferior order, there are to be actions and incidents which are strained, artificial and commonplace; a succession of unnatural phrases that the dramatist employs in fault of ability to give a correct idea of human manners."[3] The "unnatural" was so commonplace on the stage that writers and artists no longer questioned them, but observed them with respect. In playwriting, three conventions which he cited were "The Start! The Aside! and The Sudden Pain!" His many examples of the three are fun, but a brief selection from each will entertain and elucidate his complaint:

> Have you seen a romantic drama in which the high-born Lady Percy is introduced at a ball to the Unknown --who is no other than her long abandoned husband?

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[1] Express, May 27, 1867, p. 4.
[2] Times, May 22, 1867, p. 5.
[3] Citizen, Aug. 10, 1867, p. 8.

"Allow me," says Lord Percy (her second husband) "to present to your ladyship the distinguished traveler, Sir Crumpled Horn!"

Lady P. (with a start)—"Great Heavens!"

Sir C.H. (with a start)—"'Tis she!"

Lord P. (with a start)—"Ha! They know each other!"

Sir Rogers (regarding the child for a moment, then aside)—"Her very image!"

Or take the right royal "go to" style of acting, such as: "Prince Edward (eyeing the fearless hero, then aside) —"The rascal's boldness pleases me!"

Deceived Wife—"You say you saw my husband?"

Faithful Domestic—"Yes, ma'm—walking on the cliff with Lady Lyle."

Deceived Wife—"Ah!" (staggers.)

Faithful Domestic—"You are ill! You are faint! I will call for help!"

Deceived Wife—"No, no! 'Tis an old complaint—a Sudden Pain; 'tis gone!" (Aside), "Oh, Henry, Henry, etc.

In actual life it is probably that the Deceived Wife would have hurried after her gay deceiver and inflicted the Sudden Pain on him, instead of enjoying it herself. But in plays there must be Agony, and it is a popular idea that the choicest kind of that material is produced by smothered grief.[1]

The actors were as bad as the playwrights, exaggerating the absurdities instead of trying to make them lifelike.

The bulk of Daly's criticism centered about the art of acting, or rather, the lack of that art, "the slovenly manner in which native actors prepare to represent characters wherein the public expect to see nature photographed, and not roughly sketched."[2] His early complaints were against the personality actor who played himself, rather than the character he was supposed to portray. If the actor had whiskers, each character he portrayed would have whiskers. If an actress was praised for her dialect or beauty, each character she essayed would have the same dialect and the same beauty. The whiskers would remain even if the actor were portraying a boy and the beauty would shine through the role of a hag. Writing in March 1863 after his debut with Leah, Daly likened this situation with a plague that had reached epidemic proportion.

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[1] Ibid. [2] Courier, March 15, 1863, p. 5.

He then explained:

> The Nature we are given on our stage, however, is merely the nature of the actor or actress who stalks before us.
>
> If they have been praised for their Force, in a forcible part, they will disjoint a sentimental part to retain that estimable quality. If they have been lauded for peculiar Piquancy, they will afterwards burlesque tragedy. If for Elegance, they will afterwards blunt the edge of passion. If for Beauty, they will make Apollos and Venuses of Tyrants and Hags. If for Grace, they will limp becomingly for you in everything they do...
>
> And all to preserve what, perhaps, they are aware is their only recommendation.
>
> I am not disposed always to attribute this to too much vanity, but to a lack of Sense. A Sensible actor never seeks any end but identification with his part, and is content to have the public recognize him in each new character by his genius alone.
>
> The fault among us...is the want of study and preparation. Your grace sir, and your beauty madame, as your moralists have told you--must soon pass away. It is better to write yourselves down for Posterity not as the Elegant, the Beautiful, the Stern, or the Comic, but as the clever embodiment of these creations of the Dramatist which were made for you to illustrate and not to illustrate you.[1]

Daly consistently lamented the lack of a school of acting, an academy in which the art could be examined and studied. Without such a school, the successful actors looked at life about them and attempted to duplicate that life on stage, while the unsuccessful actor looked to other actors and imitated their means of portraying emotions. It was the latter, of course, the traditional actor, who had to be schooled and tradition itself overthrown before the new age of theatre could blossom. The traditional use of gestures and interpretations of certain types of roles was as deadly to "identification" as the actors who played themselves or that portion of themselves which they thought would please a public. The traditional method had become so ingrained in the theatre of the time that it was looked upon as an inevitable evil perpetuated primarily

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[1] Ibid.

by actors of the stock companies. The great actors freed themselves from what he called their fetters, while the enslaved actors were no more than puppets doomed to a senseless and lifeless role re-enacting another age. Daly gave several detailed examples of what this breed of actors had been doing on the stage. His account is so vivid, it brings that aspect of the nineteenth century theatre to immediate life and throws into relief the magnitude of his own efforts to change it:

> Take, for instance, the actor who has been enslaved for years in the hands of custom; Let us look at him as he appears in the character of Sir Suttel Fawn and makes his treacherous overtures to the young (and high-minded) Percy Arlington--"A-ah! Percy! a-ah-come hither--I a-ah have a word to say!" and the traditional Sir Suttel advances hesitatingly (traditional steps)--and looks at his fingernails--then glances at Percy smilingly, and then at his fingernails again.--Again, let us look in upon the same actor as he personates Mr. Fopley Fop--a fashionable exquisite. He wears a traditional wig of curly light hair, and traditional gloves of bold yellow. He walks with the traditional swagger, with short steps taken very wide apart, (suggestive of a brace between his legs keeping them asunder,)--He holds his head so high that it falls over his shoulder, and he says from his stomach:--"Aw!--yaws! Box jauve!" When our traditional friend plays Harry Halfheart, the hero of light comedy, he puts his hands in his pockets, rocks up and down on his toes, stands with his legs stretched two feet apart near the footlights, combs all his hair on to the top of his skull and drops it over one eye, makes love by winking an eye at the audience and one at the lady, and never hurries no matter what the haste of the scene may require--But more traditional than ever is our traditional friend in the character of Sir Gouty Gruff--the comedy father as guardian. See how traditional is his spasmodic steps as he gets over about two inches at each pace and is an imitation of no natural human walk. Behold his distended paunch, belying the physiological certainty that bad temper decreases corpulency! Witness his guttural exclamations, his boisterous tongue, which roars in a drawing room as if it were on a deck, which bawls at friend, foe and daughter alike! Listen to his multitudinous damns and his legion of devils! The traditional actor in the part of "a polished villain" is indeed traditional. The "studied" ease of the fashionable monster is depicted by an habitual shake of the entire frame while walking, a swinging of the eye-glass with the elbow crooked constrainedly into the ribs, raised eyebrows and shrugged shoulders. But our traditional friend in the character of Peter Plumbago, the first comic man in the glorious farce, reaches the height of triumph. Not a step

> not a sound, but what is the echo of what hundreds of comic men, in similar glorious dramatic works, have said and done before. He blows out his cheeks to express rage; he steps back, lifting one foot like a sprained horse, to express terror; he wears large patterns in clothes, always pretends that his breaches are too tight to permit him to sit in them; opens his mouth wide enough to swallow an apple to express astonishment; keeps the lady on the scene waiting in embarassed suspense, while he pretends to be at a loss where to put his hat; slaps every person, except, for a wonder, the ladies, in the back; evinces his suspicions as to what Old Dobbs was saying to That Pretty Girl by poking Old Dobbs in the side. He always holds a stage baby as if had never seen a natural one, and, after bearing it a few minutes, runs about the stage in great apparent distress, trying to get rid of it; gets drunk in exactly two minutes after drinking colored water out of a small wine glass; when drunk runs after the waiting maid, makes love to the married ladies, and staggers up and down before the footlights; gets sober in a second, when the farce comes to a close and steps down to the front, hopes "our kind friends before us will," etc., etc.
>
> All threadbare, stale and stupid![1]

What a marvelous study Daly has left for a modern actor wishing to burlesque such roles!

The above represents one extreme of what was happening in the theatre during the decade of the 1860s, which reflected the major transitions taking place in almost every facet of American life. The actors and playwrights enbalmed in tradition were no more reprehensible to Daly than those who leaped helter-skelter at any novelty or fad and used it in the theatre for its own sake, for mere sensationalism. It was not the actors and playwrights so much who were guilty, but the manager-producers who were lured more by cash receipts than by art. Daly did not object to the novelties such as circus features and what was then considered nudity, but to the exploitation of these features:

> The managers of our first class theatres have always had a hankering, as they say in Vermont, for circus features --and they have introduced horses and donkeys into their pieces, upon the most absurd excuses--while a fair scene or merry-making never failed to provide the engagement of half a dozen gymnasts.[2]

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[1] Sun, March 11, 1867, p.4. [2] Sun, Jan. 16, 1867, p.4.

His sallies against the "skirtless ballet" or "drama en dishabille" or "the naked plays," as he called them at various times, were not against the nudity itself. After all, "the exhibition of women's limbs" was "the most profitable theatrical business of the period," he wrote in his summation of the theatre during 1866.[1] It was only when the ballet was introduced without any effort to integrate it into the work that he objected. Vulgar language also did not disturb him—he wrote out the word "damn" in his columns. Again, it was the use of language for shock value only to which he objected, as his review of Chloroform; or New York in 1967, a burlesque of life one hundred years later, might indicate: "Occasionally the dialogue goes beyond the limits of modesty. However, a public which is not 'shocked' at indelicacy of dress upon the stage will not we suppose, be squeamish about a little freedom of speech."[2]

There seems to be a contradiction in Daly's defense and attack of sensational melodrama; these seeming contradictions disappear if one remembers that it is the excess and not the form being rebuked. Nature and tradition are still the ruler with which he measured the theatre of his time. As with any aesthetic guide, definitions tend to be personal with the user. To what degree Daly meant for the theatre to reflect nature and divorce itself from tradition is partially ascertained by his non-theatrical life. Daly was a political centrist and a moderate in almost all his personal endeavors. He was very careful in his reviews of specific productions to state the degree of reality needed to give a performance or production artistic validity. His review of E.L. Davenport in St. Marc at the Olympic Theatre stated: "There is heart and soul in his part, and to each, like a true artist, holding the mirror of nature, he gives full play." Of Kate Newton in the same play, he wrote that her performance "would be improved if she would throw a little—only a little—more feeling into the emotional

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[1] Sun, Dec. 31, 1866, p.4. [2] Sun, Jan. 4, 1867, p.4.

passages--so as to enable one to forget the actress, at times, in the soldier's wife."[1] Davenport gave the exact amount called for in the part--enough so that one could at times forget one was in the theatre, but not so much that the theatre itself was ignored. His most specific and detailed piece on the subject of realism followed a performance he saw at Wallack's Theatre of It's Never Too Late To Mend. He mentioned in his review that there were "real gems of stage illusion" in the production: "A real pump and real water--a real horse eating real hay--and a real dog staring at everything about him with real surprise--a real prison with real prison discipline--and a real cascade of water--these are the novelties presented."[2] He was disturbed by the production. After some reflection, two weeks later, he sat down and wrote a rather lengthy essay on the subject and headlined it, "The Vincent Crummles Drama." It is his most important theoretical piece of the period. (More than a year later, he would reprint portions of it in the Times.) It is worth quoting in full:

> There seems to be a growing tendency on the part of theatrical managers to introduce into the mimic scenes presented at their theatres certain Realities, which in our judgement, might be dispensed with. That this propensity has never been foreign to the managerial disposition, we may gather from the satirical notice it attracted from Dickens in "Nicholas Nickleby," wherein the Real Pump and Wash Tub of Mr. Crummles forms a theme for quiet but caustic hits at the folly of players who think that the more of common every-day life they present on the stage, the more delighted the audiences will be. It was always a favorite trick of the Bowery managers to produce an actual donkey in any piece that would permit it, and the Broadway managers, deeming the standard of theatrical taste to be the same in all parts of the city, are now enthusiastically following the original lead Maggie Mitchell, in "Fanchon," first hazarded a real chicken, which tied to a string, flopped about the stage, until, obedient to the guiding hand, it fluttered on the clock in the corner; then, in another piece, she exhibited a large collection of live fowl, in order to make the audience realize the truthfulness of her delineation of a

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[1] Express, Jan. 16, 1866, p. 2.

[2] Express, May 8, 1866, p. 2.

poultry-dealer. Then Mr. Wallack in "Never Too Late To Mend," brings out a real pony which munches real hay at a real rock, a real dog which crouches in a corner, and half a dozen real pigeons, which appear to be perching on the roofs and caves of out-buildings, but which, being cruelly tethered by the leg to a fixed spot, flutter about occasionally in an agony which is only too real indeed. Then Mr. Wheatley in "Belphegor" exhibits a real horse and cart, for no other purpose than to show that such an animal, and such a conveyance may be had for money.--(Reality has gone so far at the Olympic that two of the characters in "David Copperfield" come upon the stage in naked feet, and with their legs naked to the thighs!)

This mixture of the real and the unreal on the theatrical scene is degrading to art and only serves to confuse the people instead of pleasing them.

We know that the houses on the stage are only painted cloths, the golden goblets are gilded paste-board, and the sorrows and tears and passions and merriment are only false and simulated counterfeits! Why then are the real dog, and the real chicken introduced?

Is it to persuade us that all the other items of the scene are real?

To our mind since the art of acting is to make what is not actual seem so, it would be more artistic to carry out the effort in all particulars and try and make counterfeits of nature appear like the reality. At best the sensation produced in any audience by these Real Introductions, is only that of surprise, and the genuine feeling is that they are designed for practical jokes.

No pleasure certainly is experienced by a sensible man in beholding an unwilling brute tortured before glaring footlights in pursuance of this new theatrical idea. All dumb creatures have their alloted part to perform in life, and Heaven knows that they do it willingly enough, without being degraded--(and it is degradation)--for the slight amusement of mankind whose will they obey so implicitly, whose power they acknowledge, and whose mercy and love they piteously solicit. The Christian slaves who were forced to perform for their pagan masters in the amphitheatre were not a bit more cruelly used than the dumb animals who are thus led out to raise a laugh or a gesture of surprise from us!

The objections we urge to this growing practice do not exist to such an extent in those performances wherein the dumb creation have some allotted duty to perform in which extraordinary sagacity and the fruits of long tuition are exhibited--(though these latter may not be altogether commendable) but what we think deserving of special reprobation is the mere introduction of a horse--because it is a live horse, or a chicken because it is a real chicken.

For in such cases we hold it to be in keeping with the theory of theatrical representation to produce cunningly

contrived imitation of the original—so that we should have to admire both in the acting and the accessories of the scene the same ingenious counterfeit.

We know of course that in any play which professes to give an idea of prison life, the public would be loathe to see the introduction of real convicts who should have to suffer tortures in the sight of the audience! Yet, why not that reality—if the real horse and the real bird? And it would be as monstrous to replace the blunt dagger and the simulated wound by the real weapon and the deadly thrust, as it.

Indeed theatrical managers ought to consider that in this march of improvement (?) they must stop somewhere and that the best proof that their effort is futile and ridiculous is to be found in the fact that it can never culminate in a legitimate way, i.e. in a scene wholly real!

Therefore, since this new and reprehensible practice must be confined to the lowest realities of Nature, it ought to be discontinued altogether.

Theatrical clouds must always be muslim and flights to heaven always be accomplished by rope and pulleys.

The pleasures a theatrical manager feels when the mimicry of his stage is hailed as life-like, is far more genuine and deservedly so, than it is at the silly laugh induced by the appearance of the terrified horse, the shamefaced dog.

The character of recent plays and the success of the age is to abhor any ideality in the drama itself. Blank verse or rhythmic prose in being adverse to the realistic spirit of the day, and strongly indicative of "boredom," would appear to be especially distasteful to managerial ears and the popular palate, save when recommended by a time-honored name. And yet it is not improbable that, if a series of strong stirring incidents were contrived, metre might also be accepted as a chip in the porridge..if no attempt is made to restore the tragic kings and queens of former time, it is not impossible that the "sensational melodrama" may sublime itself to be tragedy in a country where dramatic forms are not strictly prescribed.[1]

Daly has carefully defined his aesthetics here—the creation of a lifelike art and the elimination of all that calls attention to itself and away from the thematic statement of the production. His phrase in the last paragraph, "that the 'sensational melodrama' may sublime itself to be tragedy," should should be underlined. It sets up Daly's artistic goal. He aimed for the creation of a new form from the popular theatre

[1] Express, May 23, 1866, p. 2.

--a form more suitable to his time and place. It is a goal that our best theatre people have had, sanctioned in our time by such a critic as Eric Bentley in Life of the Drama, 1964.

Having examined Daly's general principles, statements stemming--but still separated--from his writing on specific performances and specific advice on how to realize these principles, we must now look at their application to playwrights, actors and, most importantly, managers or directors. This application of theory to the practice of others should even more clearly define Daly's ideas.

Daly's favorite playwrights included Douglas Jerrold, Tom Robertson and Dion Boucicault--all English. He thought the French playwrights were too immoral and the German dramatists too dull; though the works of both nationalities were highly suitable for adaptation.

During a revival of Jerrold's Black-Eyed Susan, Daly took the occasion to compare the acting version with the original work, written in 1829. All but one role had been whittled down to make it a star vehicle for the actor playing William, the sailor-hero. Daly objected to the severe cuts as well as to the motive for them. Plays that were tailored for stars ceased to present either a diversified world or a unified work of art. The audience became engaged in the actor's technique and the brilliance of the playing rather than in what was being played. Daly wrote that the stars who played the role of William "slaughtered Jerrold and deprived the public of the enjoyment of the whole play" and that if the script were restored, "it would put money into the purse of a manager."[1]

Wallack's Theatre probably had the only company in New York during the mid-1860s capable of producing the plays of T.W. Robertson. Society, Ours and Caste were put before the New York public there within months after the Bancrofts had produced them in London. Robertson's next two plays, Play (1868) and Dreams (1869) would be the first two productions of Daly's

[1] Courier, Feb. 18, 1866, p. 4.

Fifth Avenue Theatre in 1869. (The first season would also include a revival of Caste.) In a review of Caste, Daly praised the dialogue, "raised to the dignity of epigram...most agreeable to listen to," and its excellent characterizations, plot construction and believability--"spiced with just enough of romantic adventure to please the fancy of our extremely literal public, without taxing their credulity."[1] There were two other points which Daly found commendable, "its freedom from conventionality" (by which Daly meant the incidents were fresh observations from life rather than from other plays) and, "not the smallest of the many merits of the piece is the skill with which the author, without the least attempt at sermonizing, has worked out the moral of his story."[2] Daly's reflections on Caste led him to a definition of its genre:

> The object of true comedy being not only to illustrate the manners, but to expose to censure and ridicule the vices and follies of mankind, the inculcation of a sound moral is a matter of greater importance than any other description of dramatic composition.[3]

Daly continually commented on the need for the theatre to present strong moral viewpoints without being dull. One of the many faults he found with the Bowery theatres was that they attracted an audience of "eager faces of young and impressionable boys...who greedily listen to and lustily applaud" which needed "better mental food...than they get."[4]

Daly considered Dion Boucicault the major English playwright of the prior decade. In the plays written after Colleen Bawn (1860), Daly felt that Boucicault had ceased to take his craft seriously, that he was repeating himself to a good extent. Only Arrah-na-Pogue (1865) had merit:

> As a panorama of Irish characters, of some Irish habits, and of Irish incidents, "Arrah na Pogue" is an eminent success. The struggle to make a different but

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[1] Citizen, Aug. 10, 1867, p. 8.
[2] Times, Aug. 6, 1867, p. 5.
[3] Times, Aug. 22, 1867, p. 5.
[4] Sun, Feb. 18, 1867, p. 4.

as good a play as the "Coleen Bawn" is, however, painfully evident...

In preserving the unity of "time" Boucicault triumphs to a degree, in this piece, which must delight the ghosts of those ancient Grecian dramatists...in a sensation melodrama, this is a wonderful accomplishment.

...he has strung incidents enough together to make an exciting piece, and crammed variety enough in it to make a successful play, and probably that is all he cared for. Long occupation of the temple of fame has made abode in it no novelty, and further residence there no desire to him.[1]

Daly felt the play would succeed (and it did) because of its music, scenery, dancing and crowd scenes as well as its picture of Ireland. He had nothing but disdain for two other plays by Boucicault, How She Loves Him (1864) and Flying Scud (1867). Of the earlier play, Daly wrote that if Wallack's Theatre had not mangled the script, since the author was not present at rehearsal, then it was the worst play he had seen by an experienced dramatist:

There is a deplorable want of anything like art in the construction of the play. None of the characters act like natural beings. There is not a single incident in it which could have occurred in real life, and, as a necessary consequence, none of the actors knew how to represent their parts naturally...

The audience were continually bothered by seeing the dramatis personae perform actions without a cause. No rule of probability, nor of possibility even, governs the comings and goings of the characters...

Of course the piece is expected to survive all the defects of formation by the wit of the dialogue. The wit is not always of the best or cleanest sort...The only peculiarity of Vacil is that he stutters. Yes, this disgusting defect is introduced to create a laugh, and render the hero of the piece acceptable.[2]

By the time Daly reviewed Flying Scud, he had little patience with Boucicault and rejected the play as, "the kind of piece which a reckless author would put before an audience of whose intelligence he had doubts."[3] Pasteboard horses racing and jockeys dancing to a hornpipe were the two novelties for which

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[1] Express, July 13, 1865, p. 3.

[2] Express, Dec. 13, 1864, p. 2.

[3] Times, April 29, 1867, p. 5.

the play had been written and were its only recommendation, he added.

Daly maintained that the artists of the theatre should never condescend to their audience:

> Mr. Brougham has written some of the best comedies ever seen in our times; but he has never produced a melodrama that will be remembered.
>
> He seems to have bestowed extraordinary pains upon the former, and to have scribbled off the latter class of plays as though he deemed it wholly beneath his dignity.
>
> Now this thing is certain: that whatever is worth showing the public, is worth care and labor in composition.[1]

Daly had no use for critics or artists who looked with disdain at melodrama as a valid theatrical form. It has already been noted that he thought a native tragedy could grow out of melodrama. In reviewing a play at Wallack's Theatre, Pauline, he amplified this view:

> It is the crimes and mysteries of life that stir the depths of human character and bring into play all the passions, and if plays and stories turning with strong interest upon incidents of crime are to be put down as "sensational," let us bury Shakespeare at once, and burn half the romances in our language.[2]

In this same review, though, Daly found serious defects of structure and sentiment in the play under discussion: "The story of the heroine's living burial by her husband and his bethrothal within a few months with her relative, is improbable even to the verge of impossibility, and the morality of the piece is more than questionable..."

One of the many reasons Daly was so successful as a theatrical producer was that he maintained a code of ethics in his plays. He could serve up controversial subjects but he seldom was more than a half-step ahead of the morality of his times. Mothers could feel safe in bringing their children to his theatre. If Pauline's morality was questionable, that of Victor Hugo's Angelo was an "apotheosis of Illicit Love."[3]

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[1] Citizen, Aug. 31, 1867, p. 8.

[2] Times, Feb. 12, 1868, p. 4.

[3] Express, May 7, 1867, p. 2.

Hugo was guilty of excessive sentimentality and dangerous in that he "flattered the courtesans of his native land" but not its "virtuous dames."[1] Adelaide Ristori, who played the courtesan, gave Daly the impression that she was embarassed by the role. He found it awkward to praise her, considering her repertoire, especially when she played the "repulsiveness of the appalling passions of that dreadful heroine," Medea.[2] Another play in which Daly found the morality questionable was The Child Stealer by Charles Gaylor in which a mother pretends to be drunk in order to save her child's lover. It was apparently the first time a New York audience had seen "a tipsy woman" on the stage, even though the act was simulated. "The incident however painful is nevertheless natural and unforced, and has the merit of novelty,"[3] Daly concluded.

Some other flaws he found in playwriting were verbosity and lack of comic relief. Maggie Mitchell's famous vehicle, Fanchon, was far too long a piece: "The characters all preach too much. Life is too short for us to listen to the long discourses they indulge in."[4] A production of Marie Antoinette was also too long, but the "fatal defect" in it was "that it makes no allowance for the good or bad habit that an American audience has of looking for something on which to feed its appetite for the absurd."[5] He went on to theorize that even Shakespeare did not disdain the use of a fool "to break the chain of crime and terror in his plays."

There were two other plays which drew from Daly significant statements toward a theory of the drama: Rosedale by Lester Wallack and his own work, Under the Gaslight.

Rosedale first opened on September 30, 1863, running for 125 performances. Daly's review of that production has

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[1] Express, May 7, 1867, p. 2.
[2] Times, May 18, 1867, p. 4.
[3] Courier, Feb. 25, 1866, p. 4.
[4] Sun, Oct. 17, 1866, p.4.
[5] Times, Nov. 10, 1868, p. 5.

not survived. The play was revived on March 9, 1868, with Rose Eytinge in the cast. What Daly praised in this revival were the transitions of mood, the exciting climaxes that were not dependent on stage effects, and mostly that "every character is prominent on the scene at some time or other...it is thoroughly a 'character play.'"[1] In his later notices of this revival's run, he commented on how at least half the audience had seen the play already and were enjoying it as much a second or third time. Daly was later to claim that Rosedale had the strongest effect on him as a playwright and that its dramaturgy inspired his work on Under the Gaslight.

Daly signed his own name to his columns in the Citizen and spoke directly to his readers about Gaslight, which he compared to a fine meal. He wrote that if he were able to praise it under an assumed name he would have singled out these ingredients: "Characters strongly drawn--highly colored --hand of a master--fund of genuine humor--mine of invention --neat dialogue--attic salt!"[2] These tight phrases reveal Daly's intentions as a dramatist. He meant for the characters in Gaslight to be as fully drawn as in Rosedale, rather than as props for a star vehicle. By "highly colored" he meant to create an effect of reality or lifelikeness from the use of concrete dialogue, dialect and vivid actions. "Hand of a master" may have been wishful joking, but it does indicate that he aimed at a serious work, probably a "modern" tragedy "sublimed" from sensational melodrama. He wanted his humor to grow out of character and situation, his incidents to come from imagination rather than convention, his dialogue not only terse, but tasteful and clear and all this seasoned with Attic salt or delicate wit.

Daly wrote from personal experience when he criticized other playwrights; his acting experience, however, was limited

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[1] Times, March 10, 1868, p. 4.

[2] Citizen, Aug. 17, 1867, p. 8.

to the two roles he had played in his youth. When he criticized actors, he ceased being the "cook" but became the "gourmet," to continue his own metaphor. His taste was cultivated during a true golden age of acting in America. If there were few playwrights of note during the 1860s, their lack was more than compensated for by the many fine performers. Edwin Forrest and Edwin Booth were the major stars of the century. Daly admired them, but his interest was engaged elsewhere. They did not fit into his polemic. He was out to destroy tradition and make way for a more natural theatre, a concentration on the life of the play rather than the actor. The actors who best fulfilled his defense of a new theatre were Joseph Jefferson and Rose Eytinge.

While there was no real love for Forrest and Booth, there was admiration. "It is a great merit of Mr. Forrest's later acting that it takes cognizance not only of the sterner and more tempestuous but of the fonder and more tender emotions,"[1] he wrote in one review of 1867 and then a week later noted: "It is one of the marvels of the time that this actor should succeed so well."[2] Daly appreciated Forrest's originality, but had difficulty in defining it. Commenting on Forrest's style in 1868, Daly wrote: "In the desire, probably, to feel that he may make others feel, he pauses on his words too long, and the result is that he seems to act on the theory that all persons who speak under strong emotion speak very slowly, or, to be plain, drawl!"[3] Daly used the same yardstick to measure Booth: "His voice, although sorely tried, is still soft, pliable and persuasive. Without disturbing the steady march of the lines, he gives to the poetry a personal interest."[4] Booth was the greatest Shakesperian actor in the world for Daly. He appreciated the melodramatic qualities of Booth's Shylock, "sar-

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[1] Times, Sept. 3, 1867, p. 5.
[2] Times, Sept. 9, 1867, p. 5.
[3] Times, Oct. 30, 1868, p. 7.
[4] Times, April 20, 1869, p. 4.

donic, malignant--utterly unworthy of pity."[1] In other Shakesperian roles, though, Booth did not present "a distinct, well-defined form or type of an idiosyncrasy."[2] He defined his acting as "essentially pictorial, not plastic."[3]

Forrest and Booth were virtuoso artists and their style, even at its best, depended on the peculiar personality of the actor himself. Such a style was inferior to the method of realism which Daly found in the acting of Joseph Jefferson. While a good number of actors drew praise from Daly, Jefferson attracted the most enthusiasm. Daly's review of a revival of The Cricket on the Hearth in 1866 suggests the principle of the fourth wall:

> It is produced now, principally to give Mr. Joseph Jefferson an opportunity of reconquering the admiration which years ago he won in the character of the Little Toymaker. This is one of those impersonations that drive the theatre entirely out of view, and impress the lookers-on with the notion that they are invading, with too curious eyes, the sanctity of some private home. From Jefferson's first entrance, with his odd, short, half-run, he realized the little meagre, thoughtful, dingy-faced man, with the dreamy wandering eye that was always projecting itself into some other time and place, no matter what he said. There does not seem to be a solitary effort made for the unusual effect by the actor, and the triumph he accomplishes is the triumph that simple truth always conquers. While the touches of pathos in Jefferson's tones strike on the heart like a knocker and summon sympathy to the threshold, there is not a semblance of that mawkish sentimentality with which others have invested their voice in the hope to catch a stray tear or two.
>
> ...such a performance as he gives is not often to be seen.[4]

Daly's description of the audience at an earlier performance, one of Our American Cousin, reveals that he was not alone in his love and appreciation of Jefferson:

> The revival of the comedy called together last night one of those touch-and-go audiences (so hard now to find,

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[1] Sun, Jan. 30, 1867, p. 2.

[2] Times, April 20, 1867, p. 2.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Sun, Oct. 19, 1866, p. 4.

> so splendid when found), which blaze into roars of laughter at the gentle friction of a joke. Breaking into a conflagration of mirth over the illusion to "Jarsey lightning," and when Asa suppressed Lord Dundreary's hair dye, with the knowledge that it would "turn red tomorrow." The people in the theatre fairly flamed with extasy when "our cousin" lit his cigar with the will that gave him $100,000, but would have beggared the girl he loved.[1]

The following season, Jefferson opened with his familiar production of Rip Van Winkle. Daly took advantage of the familiarity to comment on Jefferson's growth as an actor since he had made his debut on Broadway, as New York professional theatre even then was called:

> He was an actor then whose force lay in exciting the risibilities of mankind to an uncommon degree. Since that time he has shown that he possesses a far worthier and greater power—that of moving the beholder to tears as well as laughter. In the "Quack Doctor," "Digory" and his wide range of burlesque parts he is comic without the suspicion of being pathetic. In Caleb Plummer he is pathetic without giving a hint of his humorous ability. In Rip Van Winkle he evinces all his abilities and sounds the gamut of all quiet and natural emotions. He is no doubt the best comedian America has yet produced...His face and body were formed to inspire mirth, and this lends additional force to his rendering of pathetic parts. In Rip, for example, the smile excited by his scarecrow figure actually forces more quickly the tear we bestow on his misery. That subtle union between the emotions of pleasure and of grief ...There is always in true delight a mixture of sadness; both feelings have a common source, and one cannot flow forth without permitting in some degree the escape of the other. It is impossible also not to be struck with the fluency and unconventional character of Mr. Jefferson's acting, and the intimate familiarity with his dialogue which he displays...in acting, the first object to be achieved is a thorough knowledge of the words. Mr. Jefferson appears to speak without the least study or the least hesitation, and as if upon the inspiration of the moment...[2]

Reading Daly's description of Jefferson's acting and the qualities for which he praises him makes it difficult to remember that the piece was written in 1867. These qualities became a part of Daly's theatrical canon: a combination of humor and

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[1] Sun, Oct. 5, 1866, p. 1.

[2] Times, Sept. 10, 1867, p. 4.

and sadness or a totality of life rather than one shaded aspect of it, a concentration on an action rather than the effect to be produced, each word spoken as if it were "the inspiration of the moment."

Rose Eytinge had similar qualities with the addition of intensity, intelligence and, of course, sensual excitement. Following Daly's first review of Miss Eytinge's qualities as an actress in Griffith Gaunt in November 1866 through to his last one in May 1868, one can sense a definite growth in her powers. As Kate Peyton in his own adaptation, Daly found her "charming" and praised her because she "caught the author's conception" and "in scenes of rage, she is never noisy, but always impressive."[1] Her next role was in Master of Ravenswood and Daly found her acting "more emotional than imaginative. It springs from the heart and goes to it."[2] He noted her "apparent spontaneity...It has no semblance of artifice or study" and added that she deserved praise for never appearing to court the audience, that is that she played to other actors rather than to the spectators. He next reviewed her in the title role of Boucicault's Jeanie Deans:

> Miss Eytinge, in this character, was at once a pretty picture and an instance of artless art. In this part was particularly noticeable her freedom from staginess. She represented what is seldom portrayed successfully--tearless sorrow--in the pathetic scenes. Her countenance, which was never hidden, in convulsive stage paroxysms, was the index of all the emotions which the heart of Jeanie might have felt; and the restless movement, the trembling fingers, the uncertain gestures which are the perfection of natural terror and dismay, were perfectly represented by this lady.[3]

In addition, her accent for the role was perfect. In the next review of Miss Eytinge in a play called Black Sheep at the New York Theatre, Daly wrote that she used "a glance of

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[1] Express, Nov. 20, 1866, p. 2.

[2] Express, Dec. 11, 1866, p. 2.

[3] Times, March 3, 1867, p. 5.

the eye, a quiver of the lip, a thrilling tone of the voice, a mere look, or even a minute gesture of the hand...giving forcible, fervid and picturesque utterance to what she has to say."[1] After her performance in Under the Gaslight, in which Daly praised her "intuitive knowledge of human nature"[2] and the simplicity of her art, Miss Eytinge joined Wallack's company. It was there that she apparently did her finest work, first in the title role of Pauline:

> ...in so finished a manner does she depict the decay of will and the flight of reason under the pressure of uninterrupted terror. Assisted by her most natural acting the revolving bookcase absolutely reveals a cavernous depth, and Pauline's fears seem neither groundless nor ludicrous. Miss Eytinge certainly possesses the gift of making her audience believe, for the time passing, the scene she may be engaged in--a reality.[3]

and then as Margaret in Love's Sacrifice:

> Miss Eytinge's capacity as an actress, and the best actress in New York, is now so fully recognized that it is hardly necessary to say that she is singularly good in these phases of deep feeling. Her best characteristic is that she is intensely womanly, whether in her devotion, her sacrifice, or her hatred. To find anyone natural in these days--largely, humanely, sobbingly, even violently natural, is a rare thing...Miss Eytinge, with the art which conceals art, and does not brag about it, responds to a mood and interprets it with the intensity of the feminine nature, without effort and consequently without exageration.[4]

and finally as Peg Woffington in Masks and Faces:

> Most readers of theatrical history have their own types of this celebrated heroine, but few can conceive an ideal from that presented last night by this exquisite artist. The transitions from the face of the aching heart to the mask of the mocker are most frequent throughout the character, but those moods were never better fitted with in this instance. Affection almost fierce in its impetuosity, drinking in the violent delight of a sudden found friend with a thirsty eagerness that overbears everything marked the interview with Vane; and jealous rage, with blood at lava heat, is the emotion she pictures during the dumb sur-

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[1] Times, July 16, 1867, p. 4.

[2] Citizen, Aug. 17, 1867, p. 8.

[3] Times, Feb. 12, 1868, p. 4.

[4] Times, May 7, 1868, p. 4.

> prise into which she unconsciously falls when the man is tricked into acknowledging his wife before her. The tenderness and endurance which she exhibits in the interview with the starving poet's family is as intense as all the rest...an impersonation soffull of grace and passionate naturalness...Miss Eytinge's physique and temperment, as indicated by her acting, enable her to express with feminine grace a harmony of look and action, and grace, a delicate subtlety and a reality of emotion, for a parallel to which we may search our theatres now in vain. We mean this praise to be emphatic, because we feel, with that strong conviction which only long study of an art can justify the critic in trusting that it is observed.[1]

Most readers of Raymond's Times were aware of the parallels between the situation of Miss Woffington and that currently of Miss Eytinge and what Daly not so subtly implied here is that the actress went directly to her own life to find a parallel truth to portray. Raymond didn't want his mistress' physique or jealous rage or passion described in his own paper and he forbade Daly to review Miss Eytinge again. But the qualities Daly admired in an actress had been stated and the method to acquire these qualities had been implied: simplicity, intensity, sexuality--all attained by a deep study of the character and situation, by finding life parallels and by concealing the art which creates them.

Daly did not confine his remarks to leading players, but also addressed himself to those he termed the "Little People of the Stage," the fourth-rate or utility actors. He attacked the Bowery Theatre, which changed its bill nightly or semi-weekly, as destructive of potential talent:

> What ambition can an actor have under such circumstance. It is worked out of him. He studies a dozen clap-trap speeches and they last a season, with the names and places changed to suit the play of the night. And the pieces themselves are rejuvenated mummies.[2]

He commented on the performances of individual minor actors and in one article, sympathized with, praised and advised the best of them. The following remarks serve as a direct bridge

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[1] Times, May 8, 1868, p. 4.

[2] Sun, Feb. 18, 1867, p. 4.

to Daly's views on stage management:

> ...give as much time to your dressing as a great actor gives to his...Always ask yourself what such or such a character would be apt to do in real life and govern yourself accordingly--never forgetting that in real life the simple message of a servant conveying important news is always as impressive as the circumstances justify ...since there is no school of acting, each must tutor himself at home...don't be afraid of "stars"...use diligent observation and thought.[1]

Daly's comments on stage management are more important today because of the rarity with which critics mentioned the process by which a play was then mounted. And it was through his stage management that Daly would attempt to reform the acting and playwriting he espoused in his theory. He early established a credo: The first duty of a manager is the belief that nothing is too good for the public. The manager was responsible for maintaining a clean, pleasant and safe house. Daly attacked theatre managers for lack of ventilation, for aisles blocked by seats and for fire hazards. He praised others for redecorating and maintaining safe and clean auditoriums. He also commented frequently on the type of audience a manager attracted, not only by the plays presented, but by the conduct he allowed in the theatre. There are a number of articles attacking such practices as calling actors for bows during a scene within the play presented. His reviews noted all the details of costumes, makeup and scenery. He would praise a manager who would have actors playing an ugly character made up to look ugly--or poor. If Olive Logan playing a poor woman wore $1,000 worth of diamonds, Daly would be sure to note it in a review. But these were basics for him.

It became apparent to Daly rather quickly that no matter how "posh" the theatre, no matter how careful and good the individual actors were, if the entire process of management were not directed toward ensemble acting and the illusion of reality the theatrical experience for an audience would only

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[1] Express, June 5, 1866, p. 5.

be a fragment of its potential.

After praising Maggie Mitchell's acting in an 1866 production of Franchon,"who can look at her impersonation without crying out Nature! Nature! at every movement," Daly found the rest of the company and the staging inadequate and specified some of the duties of a stage manager:

> ...there is a general inattention to that neat business of the scene, so charming in other theatres where the stage management is as strict as it is competent. It is not only necessary that actors should be perfect in the words of their parts, but they should also have some notion of the characters they are playing...to the management behind the scenes we advise a more thorough supervision of the actors, the stage, and everything about.[1]

Wallack's Theatre was one of the few in which Daly felt that the management was competant. But even there he found that Lester Wallack had trained his actors too precisely, giving the productions a slick but unlifelike quality:

> ...the only fault we discover in the representations is one that most people (perhaps) consider their chief merit: that is to say, the clock-work precision with which all the players act their parts.
>
> These comedians will play...two or three times a week, or a season, and to a dot, with the self-same motions, looks, walks, gestures, expressions, all puppet-like, done at the same relative moment tonight as they were on the previous occasion. You will see the elegant and gentlemanly lover (Mr. Wallack, for example) as he softly murmurs, "dearest girl!" embrace the heroine by putting one manly hand carressingly on her diaphragm and the other in her dorsal region, not a whit more coolly, or tenderly, or lower down, or higher up, or an instant sooner or later than he did when you last saw him! You will see the old comedy father (Mr. Gilbert, let us say) slam his cane down at the identical "sirrah!" as last night, and say his first "Damme, Sir!" at precisely three quarters past eight as he has done since the many years he had "damme'd" on that stage. You will hear the same bit of choice indelicacy uttered in the same soft tone, with the same deprecating glance upward, as if the actor would shoot it up to the gallery and get it safely over the circles for whom he conscientiously believes it was not intended. You will see the lovely heroine (Miss Gannon, or Miss Henriques) pout the same pouts, flirt the same flirts, throw the same languishing glances, nestle in her lover's manly bosom,

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[1] Sun, Oct. 17, 1866, p.4.

> shake back her ringlets, be unconsciously kissed--all just the same as she has been doing it for years and years, and particularly the other night, when you saw her last.
>
> That exactness and adherence to our course of playing each piece--which we admire in a pantomime (and which is necessary in such a performance) can never be praised in a comedy, where the language permits almost numberless diversities of gesture.[1]

There could be no real life on the stage unless actors were allowed to improvise moments and react to what was happening about them, giving the impression that the dialogue and action were taking place for the first time. Daly advocated getting gestures and readings, drawing the best, from the actors themselves, rather than dictating strict interpretation and movement. He believed that a manager who was also an actor was not capable of doing this well. The actor-manager combination was at fault with most of the bad productions he reviewed. The flaw in this combination was most apparent in Edwin Booth, whom Daly considered the greatest Shakesperian actor of the decade and possibly the worst manager.

Daly's review of Booth's Merchant of Venice agreed with the melodramatic interpretation of the actor, described the costumes as "eccentric," the scenery as "extravagant" and the declamation of the rest of the cast as "wretched." The production had been advertised as a revival: "Considering the undying nature of his works, the term is a mistake; Shakespeare is always lively for those that seek him." Interestingly enough, Daly found that Booth's acting, "his living, breathing personation," was the true revival of the play and not the use of ponderous scenery, costumes and props. Daly thought the production elements the worst that Booth had ever managed.[2] When Booth announced that he was building his own theatre, Daly issued his strongest statement to date against the actor-manager and the star system:

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[1] Sun, Dec. 7, 1866, p. 4.

[2] Sun, Jan. 30, 1867, p. 4.

> It is stated that Mr. Booth is about to build a theatre up town to be "managed by himself." That would be very well if he is to be a manager and not an actor. But is it not time that theatres should seek something more than to furnish occasion for the histrionic displays of a single individual? The "star" system has discouraged and nearly destroyed everything like good dramatic performances, in which all the parts should be well represented and regard paid to the author's conception as well as to the leading actor's vanity. The theatre in this city has been nearly exhausted and ruined by false management...Even in the only theatre where an attempt is still made to keep up the traditional style, fine dresses, pretty faces and gorgeous scenery are regarded by the management as the main attractions. Why will not lovers of the art combine to build a theatre where good pieces can be well played, instead of making everything subordinate to personal vanity and ambition?[1]

Daly's obsession with Booth was simply that the great actor had the power and talent to destroy the kind of theatre to which Daly was committed. Daly had his own throne, that of the second most powerful newspaper in New York, the Times, and he fulminated his barbs against Booth's management principles from that sphere until April 20, 1869. On that morning, his latest attack had gone too deep and perhaps too cruelly; he cited Edwin Adams, who played the lover in the first production of Leah, now playing major roles with Booth, as being a prime example of the rot which he believed infested the Booth management. Raymond read the following article that morning and then wrote to Daly telling him that his services would no longer be required on the Times:

> There is generally a lack of force in the company which does not disappear in the changing of scenery or the splendid surroundings of a gorgeous theatre. The adjuncts, indeed, rather increase the distance between artists and scene painter and make the contrast greater. By force we mean a concert of action, suggesting as such is apt to do, a clearly-defined ideal. Neither the ladies nor the gentlemen of Mr. Booth's company are afraid to use their voices. But they falter in the greater necessity of using their brains. Everyone seems to be depressed with the notion that he or she is playing a star part, and to be profoundly conscious of its importance. In one or two

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[1] Times, April 30, 1867, p. 4.

instances it may be difficult to eradicate this tendency, for where an artist has merged into a star it is almost impossible to translate him back to the better profession of an actor.

This is particularly the case with Mr. Edwin Adams, whose natural gifts we all remember with pleasure. It is quite impossible to think they have been in any way improved by his various provincial trips and engagements. His manner has become overwhelmingly grave, and his voice, although rotound and good, has lost much of the richness which formerly was its most pleasing characteristic. There is not a particle of repressed passion in Mr. Adams' reading of this part or any other. It is the broadest sort of scene painting, and manufactured from tradition, just as conspicuously as are the grooves and trap doors and other pieces of stage carpentry. It is in the business of the stage that actors are constantly belittling themselves. The theory that I must go there and do something, and you must go somewhere and do another thing, simply because it has been customary to have these things done in the days of Garrick, or some other thinker who invented them, is broad enough in one sense, but it narrows down an actor's individual invention to the smallest point. It is well known that nearly all the business of the stage is patented or copyrighted or otherwise preserved. Mr. Edwin Booth comes rightly by the "business" of his father, but Mr. Adams comes rightly by no business at all. He ought to think for himself and not imitate. The country towns where "stars" are most in vogue are hotbeds of imitation. Everyone says to himself So-and-So has made a hit here; he was a vile imposter, whose name should never have appeared on the bills. I must show the people that I, too, can make a hit--and he does so--by imitating his predecessor. In this way is witnessed the dreadful spectacle of a good actor becoming thoroughly bad. Every word is an unvocal and unnatural effort. In straining at a gnat he swallows a camel, and judging from the fearful tones which generally ensue the animal must have disagreed with him. We have selected Mr. Edwin Adams as the peg on which to hang these remarks, not because they all apply to him, but because he is by far the most prominent young actor of the day. It was with no ordinary pleasure that we attended the first performance of "Romeo and Juliet." We had not seen Mr. Adams for many years, and naturally anticipated a great treat; for as our memory served us there was no character in the range of the drama which, by reason of its genial gallantry and unselfish partisanship, so became the gentleman as that of Mercutio. We were disillusioned. The Queen Mab speech did for us. That bright and gossamer-like fiction was recited with convulsive gyrations of the body. The first line was given in the voice of a clergyman giving out a text. The rest was in the tone of a Parish beadle. It was a humane act

> on the part of Tybalt to dispatch this deep-throated trifler. Indeed, when both were disposed of there was a flutter of relief throughout the house. We are dwelling too long on a single topic--and that somewhat technical--but we must still add a word more. Mr. Adams has not only wronged himself during his absence, but he is the cause of wronging others. As we had occasion to remark when writing of the "Marble Heart," the gentleman is burdened of imitators. Our purpose being simply to direct attention to a fault which is becoming painfully apparent, we shall not more directly refer to people who may be injured by harsh criticism. Mr. Adams may if he is so disposed take a hint, but we are certain he cannot derive any injury at our hands. Before ceasing, we may remark that Mr. Booth is comparatively free from the faults we have referred to.[1]

And so Daly's critical voice was stilled. His theory had been fully stated, though, and before the year was over, he would begin his 30-year-period of management in which the theory would be put to practice.

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[1] Times, April 20, 1869, p. 4.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

It seems strange that Daly, who had so much to say about the theatre, should be considered today to have said so little. So many of his views on the subject are as valid today as when he wrote them--perhaps more so. His statements are not earth-shattering; the times have caught up with them. They are part of an especially American viewpoint about the theatre. That viewpoint could not have been inculcated by any set of theories. It came from consistent practice of excellence. American theatre could have gone in a number of directions from the 1860s. Wallack's style, more English than not, was the standard of excellence then; Booth's style was considered the apex of fine acting. Daly came along and challenged them and then dominated the theatrical scene for two decades. It was his practice which influenced the American theatre, yes. But how foolish to have assumed that such practice existed without any theoretical basis!

A reduction of his thousand-and-some pieces of dramatic criticism poses the obvious dangers, but there is a need to sketch them out in a manageable form. An organon of his ideas can be constructed as follows.

All art is lofty which most nearly resembles what is natural. It is more artistic to make counterfeits of nature appear like reality than to present the reality itself. The true art of acting is to make what is not actual seem so.

Theatrical performances aim, and ought to aim, at the amusement of the public, not to certain arbitrary theories. At the same time, they should present a moral view of life. The characters in them should not preach, but contain their

moral in their deeds and in the action of the play itself.

It is not impossible that the sensational melodrama may sublime itself to be tragedy. It is the crimes and mysteries of life that stir the depths of human character and bring into play all the passions and if plays and stories turning with strong interest upon incidents of crime are to be put down as "sensational," let us bury Shakespeare at once, and burn half the romance in our language.

The object of true comedy being not only to illustrate the manners, but to expose to censure and ridicule the vices and follies of mankind, the inculcation of a sound moral is a matter of greater importance than any other description of dramatic composition.

Whatever is worth showing the public, is worth care and labor in composition. People spend their money and time to see a melodrama as well as a comedy or tragedy. The first duty of a manager is that he believe nothing is too good for the public, i.e., the theatre must not only be safe, clean and pleasant, but the entertainment itself must always be the best the manager is capable of producing.

Probability should govern the comings and goings of the characters on the stage. Each character should be allowed a life of its own and not used as a mere foil for a central or star role. Nudity, vulgar speech and intoxication can be used on the stage if they are probable and done naturally in an unforced way; they should not be used for purely sensational reasons.

It is not only necessary that actors should be perfect in the words of their part, but they should also have some notion of the characters they are playing. An actor destroys his talent if he puts it at the service of trite plays and shoddy management. Even the minor actors must ask themselves what the characters they are portraying would be apt to do in real life and govern their portrayals accordingly.

The best art conceals art. Great actors like Joseph Jefferson appear to forget the audience and by their concen-

tration on the scene invite that audience to look into the homes and souls of the characters they portray. They also speak their lines as if upon the inspiration of the moment and make the audience believe that, for the time passing, the scene they are engrossed in is a reality.

These are the major tenets which Daly held and reiterated and used to judge other artists of the theatre. The theory and his practice had merged by late 1866 when Griffith Gaunt and, in the following year, Under the Gaslight were directed by him.

The use of certain realities upon the stage to which Daly objected was primarily the display of animals, sometimes cruelly, for the pure sensation of seeing a horse, chicken or dog on the stage. Daly's use of an animal, the pig in the fair scene of Griffith Gaunt, did create a sensation. It was the first time a live pig had been put on the stage in New York. Daly wanted his sensation but he also wanted it to be an integral part of the work. He used the animal as the dramatic symbol of the play, as noted by S.R. Fiske in the Leader. When his dramatization was burlesqued, it was called Griffith Grunt. If this is true of his dramatization, the use of the railroad in his original work served an even greater dramatic purpose, as well as being the most exciting of all his sensations. In the English production of The Engineer, railroad tracks and a machine crossed the stage in a complicated attempt to duplicate the reality. Daly's train consisted of two men holding set pieces and walking across the stage. He tried by art rather than literal duplication to create his illusion of reality. In both of Daly's plays, the sensation employed reflected the moral of the piece: the pig was rather a simple and direct metaphor of Gaunt's swinish behaviour and the train was a more complex image of the society Daly created. There is no direct preaching in either play; both certainly convey strong moral views on life. There was an attempt in both plays to elevate the melodramatic form they used.

Four days in composition and four more days in directing Griffith Gaunt were not enough time and Daly would have censured any other writer-director for such haste. In this case, he was an opportunist with a good deal of luck.

With Gaslight, Daly had control as producer as well as playwright-director; time and labor were spent to see that the production came up to his theories. Rose Eytinge tells us of Daly's despair with Davenport, who spoke the lines but mutilated the character in mien and costume. Preparation was so solid that the play succeeded despite him and other opening night mishaps. The critical reception tothe production indicates that Daly was able to make the audience believe that scenes within the play were a reality, but for a time passing. He had other moments to remind them that they were in a theatre, such as the songs and dancing--well integrated into the plot line, but enjoyable for their own sake. Probability did govern the comings and goings of the characters. Daly was not only careful to specify time on stage, he pointed out articles which had to be used at later times, such as the handkerchief in the boudoir scene. "En negligee" was considered nudity, "damn" was vulgar language and Old Judas not only smokes a pipe, she is even described as being always drunk and Mrs. Wright, who portrayed the character, must have acted "tipsy" on the stage--but all three sensations were done naturally as part of the play's action. Also, there were no shocking elements that distracted from the play by their novelty; the three sensations named had been used before. Some form of nudity was almost considered de rigueur by 1867. Both the skirtless ballet and vulgar language were used in Chloroform (January 3, 1867) and a tipsy woman was simulated much earlier in The Child Stealer (February 19, 1866). No doubt Daly dipped into both these plays for more than the sensations noted; as their titles indicate, the use of chloroform and the theft of a child were also not original with Daly. What was original was his use of them.

Although Daly wrote and managed a number of plays after

Under the Gaslight--A Legend of Norwood (November 11, 1867), Pickwick Papers (January 22, 1868), A Flash of Lightning (June 10, 1868) and The Red Scarf (October 12, 1868)--they were under the aegis of other producers. He had learned that he needed to have total control if he were to present theatrical performances up to the standard which he had set as a critic. In a birthday note to Joseph on December 3, 1868, Daly wrote: "We are emerging from our dark time of loss, loss and loss; the future may be made brighter and richer if we direct it according to our past experience."[1] By the summer of 1869, the past experience had been codified and tested. With the availability of the Fifth Avenue Theatre, Daly would be able to put them to use, knowing exactly what he wanted and how to go about getting it.

The first four plays Daly produced at his new theatre were not selected by chance as it has been suggested. Daly opened with two of his favorite playwrights, T.W. Robertson and "early" Dion Boucicault. The pattern for the succession of leading ladies Daly managed had been set with Rose Eytinge, who did not become a star until after her work with Daly. His dislike of the "lines of business" had been inherent in his theory from the start and never more strongly stated than during the actor-manager strike of 1864 when he wrote:

> The actors by some of the ridiculous conditions adopted at their meetings, on the contrary, are robbing themselves of our sympathy. Among their resolutions is one proposing a revival of the old system of engaging for "special lines of business," and never deviating on any consideration.
>
> We regret this disposition on their part to return to a system which was always inconvenient and injurious. It was injurious to managers, because every actor set himself up as the judge of what character was in his "line," and obstinately refused to take this character or that, as his fancy...might dictate. It was injurious to actors, because when they were engaged for certain lines of characters they never advanced beyond them, and many excellent opportunities for progress in other branches of their profession were lost. It was injurious to the public because from both the above operations of the system, the

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[1] MS, Lincoln Center Library and Museum of the Performing Arts, Daly Correspondence, I.

> audiences were deprived of the best renditions of many characters of the drama.[1]

Even Daly's style of directing had been set in theory and in practice before 1869. Although Clara Morris' description of the rehearsal of Jezebel is probably the first recorded instance of a rehearsal being stopped to motivate a cross, Daly had stated the need for such motivation in his theory and had used it in his direction of Under the Gaslight. Miss Eytinge's recollection, substantiated by the reviews, proves that Daly had attempted discipline and sought finished performances from his actors. Davenport's "sick letter" tells us that rehearsals were well underway five days and, from other indications, at least two weeks before the opening of Gaslight. Miss Eytinge described Daly before the Griffith Gaunt rehearsals as being "perfectly equipped for his work, concentrated in his methods, self-contained and self-reliant, knowing exactly what he wanted to do and how he meant to do it"[2] and during the rehearsals of Gaslight: "Mr. Daly...was then the same watchful, ubiquitous manager he always was."[3]

After this journey of ten years in the life of Daly, it seems so apparent that the man had formed his ideas and technique with which to implement them before he started his three decades as a producer-manager, that the question remains as to why not even his closest associates during these years of success were aware of his convictions. Why was he so enigmatic to so many people, really even to his brother, wife and mistresses. Perhaps the following letter he wrote to Fanny Davenport in 1877 might shed some light on the mystery:

> I grieve me to the very soul, and I feel that all these years of intimate association have not sufficed to reveal to you my real character--or show you how willingly I would strip my very back of its rags to pay my honest debts, and how first of all I would care for you who have been most faithful, most devoted, most generous to me in my past painful struggles: most of all

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[1] Express, July 30, 1864, p. 2.
[2] Memories, p. 112. [3] Memories, p. 116.

showing it in your latest truly princely loan, which with God's good help you shall have back early in the new season with more than a money interest, and in ways you will be able to appreciate.

I have been roughly worked up, by all this. Am troubled with my old ailings, too, and I am worried over my play--so I fly from the wretched theatre a while to strive to finish the piece for tomorrow's rehearsal.

Forgive me--and believe me honest at least to you. Forever![1]

What a mixture of passion and calculation; what a striving outward for sympathy, love and understanding and at the same time what a proud, self-centered, cruel touch he adds. Daly had learned how to create joy, excitement, tenderness for others, but not for himself. If theatre is a form of communication, then here was one of the great communicators unable to transmit his real character. It was forever behind the scenes, overshadowed by the image of success and artistry he wished to project to his public as a manager-playwright.

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[1]Undated MS, City Museum of New York, Daly Collection. References earlier in the letter to the current repertoire at his theatre place it in 1877.

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