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ROBERT AYRES BARNET: AMERICAN PLAYWRIGHT AND LYRICIST

City University of New York PH.D. 1981

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ROBERT AYRES BARNET:

AMERICAN PLAYWRIGHT AND LYRICIST

by

Robert S. Zukerman

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Theatre in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

1981

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1981

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Theatre in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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PREFACE

Robert Ayres Barnet (1853-1933) was an American playwright and lyricist who wrote musical extravaganzas, burlesques, and comic operas from 1890 to 1906. During that period, he collaborated on sixteen full-length works: he acted in several, designed costumes for many, and served as stage director for most of the productions. He helped found the Boston Cadets' Theatrical Organization, perhaps the most important amateur dramatic troupe in America at the time, and served as its only playwright. Of the twelve plays which Barnet wrote for the Cadets, eight were later produced professionally, by such men as Edward E. Rice, Kirke La Shelle, and the firm of Marc Klaw and Abraham Erlanger. One of these plays, 1492, ran for over a year in New York, and made three national tours.

Barnet was the leading playwright in Boston from 1890 to 1906, and one of the most prolific in the United States during this period. Hailed by some newspaper critics as America's "Extravaganza King," Barnet specialized in light musical entertainments loosely organized around a central story, with a variety of characters and a plethora of musical numbers. His shows were heavily influenced by the English comic operas of Gilbert and Sullivan, as well as by American minstrelsy and vaudeville.

Barnet collaborated with such musicians as George W. Chadwick, Lewis S. Thompson, Harry Lawson Heartz, and George Lowell Tracy, encouraging these and others to write for the popular stage. Through his theatrical efforts, Barnet helped raise money for local charitable institutions, and helped raise money to provide the First Corps of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia--the Boston Cadets--with an armory in Boston, and campgrounds outside the city. Barnet was a familiar figure in the newspapers and on the amateur and professional stages of Boston, giving frequent interviews about his plays and making curtain speeches after opening-night performances. Always more popular with audiences than with critics, Barnet's plays became occasions of fashionable social gathering for Boston's elite during the 1890s and early 1900s.

On the professional stages of New York, Barnet's plays found only modest success, with the exception of 1492. Edward E. Rice, who produced 1492 and other Barnet shows, satisfied the popular taste for keeping musicals "up to date" by making frequent additions to Barnet's extravaganzas, usually by replacing specialty acts. But Barnet's style of heterogeneous musical extravaganza quickly became dated, as vaudeville and Viennese Operetta came to dominate the American musical stage of the early twentieth century. Still, many of Barnet's shows made successful national tours, and provided important starring vehicles for such popular performers as

Fay Templeton, Marie Cahill, Frank Daniels, Minnie Ashley, and Will Danforth.

In spite of Barnet's prolific output and many successes, his name has been largely forgotten in the history of the American musical. It is the intention of this study to correct this oversight. Barnet may not have been as talented a writer or as important a contributor to the American musical as George M. Cohan or Jerome Kern, but his shows are representative of an early era in the growth of musical comedy in America, and his productivity and popularity helped make him one of this country's most frequently produced writers of musical entertainments before the First World War.

Theatre historians are only just beginning to chart the diverse antecedents of our modern musical comedy. Most published studies on the subject of the American musical theatre accord Barnet little if any attention. Those that recognize him usually neglect to mention his many plays and frequent successes. While newer works, such as Gerald Bordman's comprehensive American Musical Theatre, provide more details about Barnet's shows, there is a need for further examination of these shows and of the career of the man who wrote them. This study has been undertaken with that need in mind. It will endeavor to chart the theatrical career of Robert Ayres Barnet, and provide a detailed review of his principal stage works. It is hoped that this study will be successful in presenting an accurate historical

evaluation of Barnet, his work, and his contribution to the American musical theatre.

The sources for this study are largely primary: unpublished typescripts, privately printed libretti, vocal scores, letters, interviews, contracts, photographs, and programmes. In addition, there are four personal scrapbooks kept by Barnet, which include notes for his plays, newspaper reviews, photographs, and other miscellaneous items. All of this information sheds light on Barnet and his plays, and has allowed me to form my own conclusions about the playwright. The importance of such material is incalculable, and I wish to thank the Barnet family for having made it available. Special thanks must go to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ayres Barnet, Jr. Mr. Barnet, the son of the playwright, graciously agreed to be interviewed at his home in Southport, Connecticut. Both he and his wife provided me with invaluable insights into the character of the playwright, along with a file of letters, contracts, programmes, and photographs. Thanks are also due to Mrs. Virginia Killie, who lent me the four scrapbooks kept by her grandfather, which inspired this project. Mrs. Killie also loaned unpublished typescripts of Mr. Barnet's later plays, and provided important details about the Barnet family.

A study such as this requires the help of many people. I wish to thank the staff of the Harvard Theatre Collection for their assistance in making materials available to me.

Thanks, also, to Mark Friedlander for initial research on Barnet, and to Carol Van Dyke for her good sense and good typing.

My academic debts are many, and I am grateful to have the opportunity to thank those who helped me, not only in the preparation of this study, but in my graduate education as well. Special thanks to Dr. Charles Gattnig, whose inspired classes in theatre history gave me the impetus to pursue my studies to this point. To Dr. Stanley Waren I am grateful for the advice and counselling which helped guide me through my doctoral study. He is an unrivaled administrator whose concern for the individual student is remarkable. Finally, to Dr. Vera Roberts goes the thanks and gratitude due to a mentor. She opened my eyes to American theatre history and made this work possible. She challenged me with her high standards of scholarship and her unfailing patience. Such teachers and advisers are rare, and when they all sit on one committee, one must feel both privileged and grateful.

This work is dedicated to my parents, Saul and Bertha Zukerman. Their encouragement has enabled me to learn, and their values have guided me toward wisdom.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Robert Ayres Barnet was born in New York City on 3 September 1853. He was the son of James Colby Barnet and Jane Ann French Barnet. Mrs. Barnet had a sister, Ada, who married an Englishman by the name of Robert Ayres, for whom the future playwright was named.

Information about Barnet's parents is very scanty, even from family records and present-day family members. James C. Barnet was apparently engaged in a number of different business pursuits during his career, in New York and elsewhere. Documented evidence exists, however, which shows that the elder Barnet was actively engaged in the New York theatrical world during the last ten years of his life.

In an interview at the height of his career (around the turn of the century), Robert A. Barnet had this to say about his father:

> . . . he was a close friend and contemporary worker with Edgar A. Poe, William E. Burton, John Brougham, Lester Wallack, and other celebrities of that bygone era. He was for many years what you might call Burton's right-hand man, and was with him in New York, both at the old Chambers Street Theatre, and afterward, at the Winter Garden, acting as Burton's treasurer. He was for some years connected with a law journal, and I think that that was issued in Philadelphia, for it was there that he began some

> work in harness with Poe and Burton. At one time he kept a store in Baltimore, where his chief business was the sale of law books.[1]

James Colby Barnet was the treasurer for Burton's Theatre for most of the years from 1849 through 1857. His name is first mentioned by Odell in connection with his benefit at Burton's on 29 May 1850, for which he "was lucky enough to engage Henry Placide"[2] and Burton.

A playbill in possession of the Barnet family mentions J. C. Barnet's next benefit, during the following season, on (or about) 12 May 1851. At this "Annual Benefit of Mr. J. C. Barnet, Treasurer and Box Book Keeper," the Burton company presented a comedy by Thomas Morton entitled A Cure for the Heart Ache, and a farce entitled Pillicoddy. In the former, Burton appeared "for this night only," doubtless as a favor to his treasurer. Also listed in the character of "Young Rapid" is a certain actor by the name of Lester, whom we recognize as Lester Wallack, "the Mr. Lester of Burton's Theatre."[3] At the bottom of this same playbill is attached a small piece of stationery which shows some figures, written in longhand, under the heading of "12 Monday." The last entry on this fragment reads "My Benefit," followed by

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[1]Boston Journal, 11 November 1894.

[2]George C. D. Odell, Annals of the New York Stage, 15 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), 5:131.

[3]William L. Keese, William E. Burton: A Sketch of His Career (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1885), p. 65.

the figures 334.25. It is possible that J. C. Barnet received that sum in dollars from his benefit.

Odell mentions J. C. Barnet's next benefit during the season of 1851-52:

> . . . on May 18th, John Bull was played by Brougham, Burton, Lester, Dyott, Johnston, Mrs. Skerrett and Miss Weston; C. W. Clarke and Bellamy volunteered in Bamboozling.[4]

The addition of John Brougham to the cast of his benefit, along with Lester Wallack and Burton, shows that Barnet enjoyed on his behalf the efforts of three of New York's finest and most popular actors. This was an enviable situation for any theatrical person, let alone a treasurer and "box book keeper."

The next and last mention of J. C. Barnet by Odell is merely to identify him as Burton's treasurer for the 1854-55 season.[5]

Two years later, a series of playbills originally held by the Players' Club mentions J. C. Barnet, treasurer at Burton's Theatre (presumably the old Metropolitan), three times during one week in June, 1857. On Tuesday, 2 June 1857,

> The Annual Benefit of Mr. J. C. Barnet, Treasurer, who has the pleasure to announce the following volunteer talent: Mrs. Lizzie Weston Davenport,

---

[4]Odell, Annals of the New York Stage, 5:131.

[5]Odell, Annals of the New York Stage, 6:350.

> Mr. John Brougham, Mr. George Jordan, Mr. C. W. Clarke, and Mr. Burton, together with the strength of the company.[6]

On playbills for 4 and 5 June, Barnet is listed as treasurer.

The above evidence seems to substantiate Robert A. Barnet's previously quoted remarks about his father's theatrical association. A short character description of J. C. Barnet is interesting for the light which it sheds on the character of his son.

> . . . John Brougham often called him [J. C. Barnet] Precise and Particular Barnet, and it is the inheritance of the traits described by these epithets, as well as the liking for the stage, which made the success of the son.[7]

According to family records, James C. Barnet and his family lived at 179 Chambers Street when his son Robert was born. This was very close to Burton's Theatre, and young Robert might have spent his early childhood among personalities from the theatre, and perhaps in and around the theatre itself. Robert's older brother, James Burton Barnet, 1851-1920, was probably named for the actor and theatre manager with whom his father worked at the time.

> . . . R. A. Barnet's very earliest recollections, although dim, are associated with the theatre and with visits he made to the Burton household, but no

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[6]Playbill, Burton's New Theatre, Tuesday, 2 June 1857, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[7]Boston Transcript, 16 March 1895.

> thought that he would ever be associated with the theatre, even as indirectly as his father had been, ever occurred to him.[8]

This question of "indirect" association with the theatre, though seemingly of little real importance, was underscored by Robert A. Barnet, Jr. In an interview, the son of R. A. Barnet had this to say about his grandfather:

> . . . he was a treasurer and bookkeeper . . . but he wasn't really a theatre man, he was a businessman. . . . His real work was in newspapers . . . Father [R. A. Barnet] felt this relationship [with the theatre] through his father. But that was purely a business relationship. . . . It had nothing to do with writing or acting or anything else like that.[9]

It is interesting to note that the playwriting career of R. A. Barnet came about indirectly through his ties with the business community of another city, Boston.

The financial crisis of 1857 led to Burton's selling his theatrical interests, and making his final appearance on any New York stage in 1859.[10] According to a letter from Leonard Grover, first president of the American Dramatic Authors' Society, Burton became a wealthy man as a consequence of liquidating his New York theatrical holdings.[11] But he

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[8] Boston Herald, 24 May 1896.

[9] Interview with Robert Ayres Barnet, Jr., Southport, Connecticut, 21 March 1980.

[10] Phyllis Hartnoll, The Oxford Companion to the Theatre (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 143.

[11] New York Herald Tribune, 13 September 1925.

died the following year, in 1860.

James C. Barnet also died in 1860, though there are no records about his family's situation at the time, save that the place of residence had changed, and was now, according to present-day Barnet family information, 698 Broadway, New York City.

Robert Ayres Barnet was six years old when his father died. There is no information about the next two years of his life, and little or no further information about his mother and brother.

In 1862, R. A. Barnet came to Boston with his uncle, Robert Ayres, and entered the Dwight School, on Springfield Street.[12] It was here that he came under the tutelage of a certain Master Page, from whom Barnet "obtained the brilliant historical knowledge which he has used to such good advantage" in many of his plays.[13] From the Dwight School he went to the English High School, which, in his own words,

> . . . I left in 1867 in order to visit England. I went to England with the intention of staying permanently, but the sudden death of my uncle changed my plans, and I came back to Boston in 1868, and secured a situation with Dana Bros., the sugar people. With them I stayed some fifteen years, or until I embarked with Mr. Bates, in business on my own account.[14]

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[12] Boston Journal, 11 November 1894.

[13] Boston Transcript, 16 March 1895.

[14] Boston Journal, 11 November 1894.

It is not known how long Barnet spent in England, and exactly where he stayed. His son mentions the Isle of Wight as a possible place--perhaps this was the original home of Robert Ayres--but there is no information to support this supposition. Of more interest would be any contact which the teen-age Barnet may have had with the pre-Gilbert and Sullivan English stage. According to R. A. Barnet, Jr., Robert Ayres worked in the insurance business, and on his death, left his widow, Ada French Ayres, rather well off. She must have helped support her sister and two nephews after Robert Ayres died.

Having left high school to go to work, Barnet evidently maintained interests outside of the Boston sugar business. In his early twenties, he became active in amateur dramatics.

> Some twenty years ago Lorin F. Deland, of present football fame, and F. O. North, now Stoddard's manager, organized the Park Dramatic Club, which included many of the leading amateurs of the day. The performances were given in Kennedy Hall, on Warren Street, Roxbury, and it was here that Mr. Barnet made his first appearance in a minor part in one of the plays produced by the club, his name being in the casts for several seasons. As almost every member of the club later became professionally connected with the stage, it is not surprising that he followed the general rule.[15]

A short time later, Barnet was instrumental in organizing an amateur performance of a burlesque which he evidently helped

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[15] Boston Transcript, 16 March 1895.

to create.

> I came upon, by chance, and a good many years ago, three or four bright, old burlesques of Romeo and Juliet. These I read with care, and I enjoyed them so much that I began an effort to blend the best points of all into one harmonious whole. Then, in a private house in which I was living at that time, I arranged a stage, secured a company of my friends, and in due time, and with one of these audiences that make up in character what it lacks in numbers, the Romeo and Juliet was brought forward. It was a flattering success, and our company gave the piece several times during that encouraging season. We had some really fine and artistic scenery on these occasions. I had a friend who was a growing artist, and he did some excellent work for us--work that earned for him warm praise.[16]

Unfortunately, no dates are available for this amateur theatrical activity. Barnet was in his late twenties/early thirties, still working in the sugar business, yet becoming more interested in the theatre. Sometime during this period he married Sarah Jessie Swasey, the daughter of a prominent New Hampshire physician, Dr. Charles Emerson Swasey and Susan Gresham Buck Swasey.

From his early scrapbooks, which contain notes and ideas for his writing, as well as numerous jokes and other clippings from newspapers and periodicals, Barnet may be viewed as a man of restless energy and curiosity, perhaps out of place in the structured world of business. Certainly, his dedication to amateur drama increased during the mid-1880s.

In 1885, Barnet became involved with the founding of a group called the Longwood Minstrels. This was the real

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[16] Boston Journal, 11 November 1894.

beginning of the theatrical efforts which led to his career as playwright.

> Of all the charitable institutions for which Boston has always been and is justly famous, no other is better known or has felt in it a more widespread interest on the part of the public than the one which has been known for the past 50 years as the "Children's Friend Society" of Rutland Street.
> . . . In 1885 it was found that the home on Rutland Street was not large enough to accommodate the growing needs of its benefactors. So that finally the society decided as a matter of pure practicability to make the home on Rutland Street a home for girls alone, hoping that interested friends would find a home for the boys elsewhere. Immediately this was known a band of generous hearted young men in the city, composed principally of younger business men, came together to devise some means of raising money for the establishment of a boy's home. Almost without formal planning, the Longwood Minstrel Club came into existence, and the result has been the founding of a beautiful country home in Dedham, the buying of buildings and grounds and the support of 25 boys for over two years, all of which has been paid from the proceeds of the annual entertainments of the Longwood Club.[17]

This group of concerned young Boston businessmen who formed the Longwood Minstrels in order to raise money for charity included R. A. Barnet. In their first of four consecutive annual shows, from 1886-1889, the "minstrels" displayed "a pardonable desire to remain unknown to a critical public."[18] Their show, at the Tremont Temple, on 16 February 1886, raised more than two thousand dollars for the Boston Children's

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[17] Boston Advertiser, 12 January 1888.

[18] Boston Post, 17 February 1886.

Friend Society.[19] On the program was a certain "Professor Howla, in some musical efforts mostly recitative. 'You are saddest when he sings.'"[20] Although this Professor Howla is not identified, we learn, by examining the programs for succeeding years of Longwood Minstrel Club performances, and by reading several entries in Barnet's own scrapbooks, that Professor Howla was R. A. Barnet.

By 1887, Robert A. Barnet had not only become an outstanding contributor of speeches and an important end man in the annual minstrel show, he had become company manager of the Longwood Minstrels and was honored for his efforts in a post-show banquet, sponsored by the trustees of the Children's Friend Society.[21]

In the program for the 1887 Longwood Minstrel Show, Barnet's name is very conspicuous. He sang a song, "Those Charming Bells," during the first part of the program, and delivered "Remarks" during the second part. According to contemporary reviews, he was quite successful.

> . . . Mr. Robert Barnet was irrestibily funny as one of the end men.[22]

> . . . Mr. Barnet delivered a unique speech on socialism,

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[19] Ibid.

[20] Robert A. Barnet Scrapbooks, Property of Mrs. Virginia Killie, New York City.

[21] Boston Transcript, 3 February 1887.

[22] Boston Gazette, 6 February 1887.

> the encore bringing from him two very funny songs in addition.[23]
>
> . . . Of the entire performance it may be said that the jokes were new, the music excellent, and that the audience was highly pleased. The success was in a great measure due to Mr. Barnet, the manager.[24]

Barnet wrote and delivered a speech in the second part of each Longwood Minstrel program. This was a "stump" speech, a typical and integral part of any minstrel show, whether amateur or professional. The only record of the speeches are scattered notes in his scrapbooks. Here is what a contemporary critic had to say about one such speech.

> . . . Next came "chants [sic] remarks, per Sam." The name of Sam and a free application of burnt cork effectually concealed the identity of Mr. R. A. Barnet, but did not in the least restrain the flow of his witty remarks. His topic was "Capital v. Labor," and, beginning with the statement that Noah was an-arkist, he gave one of the brightest stump speeches heard here for many a year. Incidentally he stated that the performance was the result of "nights of labor."[25]

Two elements characteristic of Barnet's playwriting are seen in early stages of development. The speech is rife with superficial word play, particularly puns. Barnet remained fond of puns throughout his writing career. Moreover, the speech probably had very little to do with the stated subject.

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[23] Boston Advertiser, 3 February 1887.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Boston Transcript, 3 February 1887.

What is important is the humor, directed solely to the entertainment of the audience. Much of Barnet's later work found its strength in pure entertainment, for which the subject matter (or plot) had seemingly been sacrificed.

Barnet performed his stump speeches in burnt cork, or blackface. He was well suited to the minstrel show, with his singing, writing, and organizational talents. He enjoyed this form of entertainment, as later that same year (1887), he performed with another minstrel group.

> . . . The Corinthian Yacht Club gave an amateur minstrel show on the afternoon of Thursday, April 20, 1887. Among the performers were E. P. James, C. J. Buffum, J. G. White, Charles L. Hill, George P. Ager, Jr., L. C. Benton, S. L. Hills, Fred Seaver, Barnet, Edgerly, Everett, Spalding, and Jackson.[26]

This production was an amateur minstrel show which took place at the Boston Theatre. It is logical to assume that the Barnet referred to above is R. A. Barnet, especially as Messrs. Edgerly and Everett were fellow end men with the Longwood Minstrels.

In 1888, the Longwood Minstrels performed in Boston's Music Hall for the benefit of the Children's Friend Society. The local papers now recognized not only the charitable efforts of the participants, but the fact that their performances were becoming popular.

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[26]Eugene Tompkins and Quincy Kilby, The History of the Boston Theatre, 1854-1901 (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1969), p. 346.

> . . . The good work in which the young men who compose the Longwood minstrels are engaged deserves recognition, and it is a pleasure to be able to state that their efforts are still warmly and substantially supported by the best citizens of Boston.[27]

This early support from the Boston theatre-going community began the city-wide popularity which Barnet later enjoyed when he wrote his musical works. His later success in Boston was tied to the willingness of theatre-goers there to attend amateur productions, at first for charity, and then for entertainment purposes as a sort of social ritual.

Barnet was still the company manager of the Longwood Minstrels in 1888, when he was singled out for recognition by one critic.

> . . . It may be said here that Robert Barnet is undoubtedly the best amateur end man whom Bostonians have ever had the privilege of hearing, and his jokes and stories last evening were capital.[28]

Clearly, one of the important elements which fuels a person's ambitions in the theatre is continued critical success. By 1888 he was keeping a notebook/scrapbook in which he collected jokes and other amusing stories cut from local newspapers and periodicals, as well as his own notes and outlines of ideas for speeches.

The second half of the Longwood Minstrel program of

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[27] Boston Herald, 12 January 1888.

[28] Boston Transcript, 12 January 1888.

1888 featured an amusing stump speech.

> . . . Professor Samuel Howla answered the question "Did Shakespeare write Bacon?" in a way that must be of value to all students. He also did some marvellous singing.[29]

What distinguishes this particular stump speech from Barnet's previous efforts is that notes for the Shakespeare/Bacon speech appear in one of his scrapbooks, in his own hand. An examination of these notes reveals much about the emerging style of the playwright and the methods which he used to compose his material.

The Shakespeare/Bacon notes cover approximately fourteen pages, several with little writing on them and others with numerous crossouts and editing of words and phrases. The scrapbook in which the notes appear is the slimmest of the four principal scrapbooks, each with hard cover and unlined leaves bound together. On the cover of this book, in Barnet's hand, is written, "R. A. Barnet--Private." Other contents of this scrapbook include notes and scribblings for other speeches and projects, reviews of Longwood Minstrel shows, and jokes which have been cut out and pasted or taped over pages of longhand notes. Evidently, Barnet felt that once the notes for a particular project had been used, and the project completed, the notes were no longer necessary, and could be pasted over with newspaper clippings. For the

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[29]Ibid.

most part, it is impossible to either read through the clippings or remove them in such a way as to not destroy the scrapbook. It is unfortunate that most of the handwritten notes in the four scrapbooks have been permanently covered over in this manner. That the Shakespeare/Bacon notes remain uncovered adds to their importance as a fairly complete example of one of Barnet's projects in the planning stages.

The Shakespeare/Bacon notes begin with a typical play on words, of which Barnet was so fond:

> Did Bacon write Shakespeare? I have spent much time and money on this question and find that Bacon did not write Shakespeare.
> (business)
> He telegraphed him![30]

No particular stage business is spelled out in this segment. Later musical works include a lot of very specific stage business in the libretti. After Barnet surrendered the artistic control of his products to professional producers, actors and specialties added their own interpolations.

Barnet continues the Shakespeare/Bacon controversy with some contemporary humor.

> Do you know about little Willie's early life[?]
> No?
> He was born in Hartford by New Haven[.] That is the way they pronounced it then.

---

[30]The punctuation and organization of these notes require some editing. My additions will be enclosed in brackets.

This is followed by more "details" about Shakespeare's childhood, including the assertion that

> . . . he had a strong aversion to bacon when under done or stale. . . .

Also tied in to Shakespeare's childhood is a bit of American mythology:

> When William was six years old he took a hatchet and cut down his father's cherry tree[;] and when his father asked who did it [,] he stood up like a little man and said[, "] It was Lord Bacon.["]

We are further informed that

> . . . When S[hakespeare] grew to be a tall and comely youth[,] well skilled in knightly games--poker etc.[--] books and minstrelsy and practised in the customs of the chase--and then his wit grew cunning apace-- . . .

In the same vein, but turning toward a more contemporary play on words, Barnet adds the name of a popular writer to his discussion:

> I have sought other minds on this subject[.] I asked a well known novelist[--] How well known it is not for me to say[--]what he thought of Shakespeare. He said Shak[e]s[peare] was very good in his way [but] he did not portray Boston society at all[,] and was lame in realism.

This allusion to William Dean Howells, the "father of American Realism," whose books, especially <u>The Rise of Silas Lapham</u>, did indeed portray Boston society, must have been meaningful to well-read Bostonians.

These few passages from the notes for his Shakespeare/Bacon stump speech demonstrate the emerging Barnet style. As in the previously discussed speech on "Capital v. Labor," puns and superficial word play stand out as principal stylistic elements. The interweaving of contemporary (humorous) references, with literary references and juxtaposed historical facts and myths complete the remainder of the material. Though Barnet had more than a passing interest in history, he chose to manipulate it. Finally, the entire speech could be considered a satire on or burlesque of a fairly serious scholarly debate. Barnet's greatest success as a playwright would eventually be in the area of burlesque, and this stump speech about the Shakespeare/Bacon controversy is a smaller, less mature version of his future two- and three-act burlesques.

In 1889, the Longwood Minstrels gave their annual show later than usual, in April. Once again, it was very popular, socially and critically, and Barnet was singled out as "Reuben U. Minus, A.M., delivering a monologue entitled 'The Colonial Days of Boston.'"[31] The show itself was also praised.

> It was generally admitted that this was the most delightful entertainment ever given by the minstrels. The club wore no black faces, and the whole affair was in many ways unique. The stage was set with excellent taste, plants, screens and draperies giving an artistic affect. The German part-songs were well sung, and the others--all with one exception being

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[31] Boston Transcript, 24 April 1889.

> the old-time Negro melodies too commonly neglected in late years--were given in a capital way, showing the good results of the careful training of Mr. Carl Pflueger of the picked chorus of twenty voices.[32]

Carl Pflueger, a German-born opera singer and musician, had been teaching and composing since settling in Boston in 1877. His work with the Longwood Minstrels led him to collaborate with Barnet on the first two of the latter's full-length musical pieces.

One reason for the late (April) performance of the Longwood Minstrels in 1889 is that they had competition. They had spawned another amateur minstrel troupe, in cooperation with another Boston organization in need of funds. The First Corps of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia, popularly known as the Boston Cadets, were in need of an armory in the city and a campground outside of it. Their present quarters consisted of a single house in the city which was much too small for their needs. Being responsible for the defense of the city of Boston and its environs, the Cadets planned to build a large armory in the heart of the city and purchase a tract of country land for drilling and maneuvers.

The Cadets approached the Longwood Minstrel Club, and convinced several of their leading performers to participate in a fund-raising entertainment for the benefit of the new armory fund. Thus, during the winter of 1889, the Cadet

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[32]Ibid.

Minstrels were formed, being made up of "the talented ones among the Cadets and some outside volunteers, principally from the well-known Longwood Minstrel Club."[33] R. A. Barnet was one of the Longwood Minstrels to join forces with the Cadets. This proved to be a fortuitous union. Barnet would soon become the stage director and principal playwright for the Boston Cadets; most of his full-length burlesques and extravaganzas were originally written for that organization.

In February 1889, amateur minstrelsy once again brought out the best of Boston society, and they enjoyed themselves.

> . . . It was a particularly large and fashionable gathering that assembled in Music Hall last night to witness the first performance of the Cadet Minstrels. The floor and both galleries were filled long before the curtain went up, and by the hearty applause and frequent encores the audience seemed to greatly enjoy the songs and jokes of the clever amateurs.[34]

Carl Pflueger led the orchestra, and Barnet contributed heavily. The souvenir programme for the performance listed Barnet as one of the two tambourines in a first-half act entitled "The Madagascar Minstrels." In the second half of the program, Barnet was listed as delivering something called "Live Humble," described as a "Potpourri." Also listed, under the heading of "Olio," was a now-familiar figure to

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[33] Boston Herald, 14 February 1889.

[34] Boston Times, 14 February 1889.

Boston amateur minstrel audiences:

> . . . The Dahomey Diogenes, Professor Samuel Howla, will soothe the shattered nerves of the bystanders with a few flowers of oratory, entitled, "Jessamines From Joy Street, or Wan Words by the Wayside."[35]

Barnet's songs, impersonations, and stump speech were lavishly praised by newspaper critics.

> . . . Mr. Barnet as "Tambourine" understands the duties of the office, and in his stump speech toward the end of the evening--"Jessamines From Joy Street"--attained a humorous drollery and a true minstrel accent of which even Mr. Lew Dockstader might be proud.[36]

High praise indeed, for Barnet--amateur minstrel and raconteur--to be compared with one of the foremost professional stars of American minstrelsy! Barnet's singing and impersonation were also well thought of. A review calls attention to

> . . . the song of the evening, termed a Pot-Pourri, entitled "Live Humble." This was rendered by Mr. Barnet, who strengthened his reputation of being the finest of Negro impersonators.[37]

Another critic simply wrote that the same song "brought down the house."[38] With this much acclaim from the successful

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[35]Souvenir Programme: Cadet Minstrels, Music Hall, 13, 14 February 1889, Harvard Theatre Collection.

[36]Boston Post, 14 February 1889.

[37]Boston Times, 14 February 1889.

[38]Boston Advertiser, 14 February 1889.

Cadet Minstrel Show, and similar praise from the local critics for the performance by the Longwood Minstrels just two months later, Barnet was clearly becoming widely recognized for his talents on the amateur minstrel stage. Just as clear is the fact that Barnet was spending more and more of his time in the theatre, even though by now he was a private importer of molasses, as a co-partner of the firm Bates and Barnet. R. A. Barnet, Jr. described his father as having been a "commission merchant in sugar and molasses," with an office near the harbor on Congress Street.[39] His theatrical activities had to fit into his business schedule, and his expanding responsibilities at home, where, in December 1889, twin boys were born, George Quincy and Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

It is not known whether Barnet was paid for his efforts on behalf of the Longwood or the Cadet Minstrels. The Cadet Minstrels of 1889 appeared for two nights at the Boston Music Hall and netted a profit of eleven hundred dollars for the armory fund.[40] Barnet was the leading spirit in the organization, as he was with the Longwood Minstrels. But his participation in amateur minstrelsy was coming to an end. The Boston Cadets, looking to the future and the need to raise more money for their armory fund, engaged Barnet to provide an entertainment for an evening in 1890. Barnet, leaving the

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[39]Interview with Robert Ayres Barnet, Jr., Southport, Connecticut, 21 March 1980.

[40]Boston Transcript, 13 May 1892.

minstrel format which had occupied his creative energies during his formative years of amateur dramatic work, turned to full-length entertainment. The work was a burlesque of the English ballad "Babes in the Wood," which had previously been adapted in several versions for the stage. Barnet's play was entitled Injured Innocents, which marked the beginning of the Boston Cadet Theatricals, and the beginning of his career as a playwright.

CHAPTER II

THE AMERICAN MUSICAL THEATRE, 1890

Before examining Barnet's first effort as a writer of musical entertainments, let us survey the American musical theatre of 1890, in order to better understand the types of entertainment being performed, and how they influenced Barnet. For these purposes, the documentation is based upon the comments of modern theatre historians, and centered around the types of plays which Barnet would later write, particularly the extravaganza and the burlesque.

That great accident called The Black Crook (1866), which combined scantily-clad ballet dancers with melodrama, is usually given as the beginning of the American "musical," although "the American musical theatre can be traced to origins in the eighteenth century."[1] This show, which Engel calls an extravaganza, started a half-century of experimentation with musical forms in America, resulting in more homogeneous, native types of entertainments by such twentieth-century authors as George M. Cohan and Jerome Kern. But The Black Crook served to establish a formula for American musical shows which was frequently imitated during the latter decades of

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[1]Lehman Engel, The American Musical Theater (New York: Collier Books, 1975), p. 1.

the nineteenth century, and which Robert Ayres Barnet fell heir to.

> These features included something for everybody: plot and action, dialogue and songs, sentiment and comedy, spectacle and dancing, leg art and specialty numbers.[2]

Similar elements were to be found in a British import of 1868. Lydia Thompson and her British Blondes presented an entertainment entitled Ixion; or, The Man at the Wheel. Wilson describes this show as

> . . . a hodgepodge of songs, dances, gags, and impersonations set in the framework of a story from Greek mythology.[3]

The important element here is the mythological framework which apparently lent some form to the entertainment.

Both The Black Crook and Ixion can be considered extravaganzas. This genre was a French import, which consisted of

> . . . dance numbers featuring the female form, brilliantly costumed and surrounded by a sumptuous production, novel scenic devices, unusual lighting, plus melodramatic musical scenes. . . .[4]

The French meaning of extravaganza referred more to "the

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[2]Garff B. Wilson, Three Hundred Years of American Drama and Theatre (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1973), p. 191.

[3]Ibid., p. 190.

[4]Engel, The American Musical Theater, p. 2.

balletic evocations of fairyland also known as 'féeries.'"[5] This definition is mentioned here because of the particular subject matter which Barnet later chose for many of his extravaganzas, namely, nursery rhymes or fairy stories, such as Jack and the Beanstalk and Simple Simon.

Such terms as "extravaganza," "burlesque," "musical comedy," and various combinations of these and others, were extremely vague as used in the early American musical theatre. "Even the newspaper writers of the day used theatrical terms ambiguously."[6] If there was any rule of thumb, it seemed to be, "when in doubt call it an extravaganza."[7]

According to Laurence Hutton, burlesque covers a broad range of elements:

> In art caricature is burlesque, in literature parody is burlesque, in the drama comic pantomime, comic opera, travesty, and extravaganza are burlesque. All dramatic burlesque ranges under the head of farce, although all farce is not burlesque. Burlesque is the farce of portraiture on the stage; farce on the stage is the burlesque of events.[8]

This definition helps to clarify the meaning of a term which has been consistently misunderstood by generations of modern

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[5]Cecil Smith, Musical Comedy in America (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1950), p. 8.

[6]Smith, Musical Comedy in America, p. 106.

[7]Ibid., p. 58.

[8]Laurence Hutton, Curiosities of the American Stage (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1891), pp. 147, 148.

theatre enthusiasts. Burlesque was one of the most popular types of entertainment during the latter part of the nineteenth century. It borrowed heavily from minstrelsy and the variety show; and the formula for American burlesque is sometimes credited to a theatre manager by the name of M. B. Leavitt,

> . . . who gave to the genre the form it maintained during its prosperous days. He took the opening of his entertainment from the minstrel show, an act composed of songs, choruses and gags. The second part, an assorted array of skits and specialties, he took from vaudeville. The third part was a grand finale by the entire company which resembled the minstrel show walk-around.[9]

Perhaps the best way to describe this form of entertainment is that it was heterogeneous. Minstrelsy was important to this formula, and Barnet developed considerable experience with minstrelsy in Boston, during the late 1880s. When we examine his first full-length piece in the next chapter, we will find it to be a burlesque. Barnet's early development as a playwright, therefore, seems very logical.

American burlesque antedates The Black Crook. During the 1840s and 1850s, managers such as William Burton and John Brougham were producing home-grown burlesque. In fact, Hutton calls Burton, Brougham, and William Mitchell the "founders of American Burlesque."[10] Brougham, especially,

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[9]Wilson, Three Hundred Years of American Drama and Theatre, p. 190.

[10]Hutton, Curiosities of the American Stage, p. 164.

was successful in burlesques which he wrote and acted in. Such works as Metamora or Last of the Pollywogs (which travestied the great vehicle of American tragedian Edwin Forrest), Po-co-hon-tas, The Gentle Savage, and Columbus el Filibustero helped establish Brougham as one of New York's most popular practitioners of burlesque. During the height of his career, Robert A. Barnet was frequently referred to in the Boston newspapers as "Boston's Brougham." Barnet wrote burlesques such as Miss Pocahontas and 1492, which travestied the same subjects Brougham had treated. Barnet, like Brougham, also performed in some of his (early) works. Brougham, however, was more acerbic in his parodies of contemporary performers and plays, while Barnet sought to express himself in a more lyrical fashion, in spite of his obsession with puns and other superficial word-play. The area of lower Manhattan where Burton's Theatre and Brougham's Lyceum were located has been called the "metropolis of burlesque."[11] It will be remembered that Barnet spent his childhood in this area and probably had some contact through his father with Burton, Brougham, and other actors and managers. Weaned in this cradle of burlesque, Barnet turned to it for his livelihood over thirty years after both his father and Burton had died.

George L. Fox (1825-1877) was a famous pantomimist

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[11]Ibid., p. 158.

and burlesque actor who advanced the cause of both pantomime and burlesque, often combining them in the entertainments which he offered in the 1860s and 1870s. Pantomime had been popular in the theatres of America since the 1840s, but Fox was its only great practitioner after the Civil War. The nature of American pantomime may be recognized for its similarity with extravaganza.

> . . . The plots of the pantomimes were ordinarily drawn from Mother Goose rhymes and other widely familiar sources, or else they were evocations of the ever-popular and seemingly inexhaustible doings of the fairy world. Whatever the subject matter of their plots, the pantomimes were seldom very faithful to it, since the pieces were intended to serve primarily as vehicles for the exploitation of any special talents the players might be lucky enough to have for comedy, song, character impersonation, or dance.[12]

Fox performed in Jack and the Beanstalk in 1862, and began his famous impersonation of Humpty Dumpty in 1868. During the 1870s, Fox "delighted New York audiences with his parodies of such famous heroes as Hamlet, Macbeth, and Richard III."[13] His burlesque of Edwin Booth as Hamlet was especially popular, and the tragedian is reported to have seen and enjoyed it. But pantomime never really succeeded as an important theatrical form in America, as it had in England during the eighteenth century, and where it continued into the nineteenth century

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[12]Smith, Musical Comedy in America, pp. 7, 8.

[13]Wilson, Three Hundred Years of American Drama and Theatre, p. 188.

as the popular Christmas entertainment. It was superseded here by burlesque and extravaganza. However, many of R. A. Barnet's musical works were based on Mother Goose tales, and the above pantomime formula seems to describe these shows rather accurately.

In spite of the importance and popularity of John Brougham and George L. Fox, it was another man, Edward E. Rice, who became the leading figure of American burlesque. Rice was later the principal producer of Robert A. Barnet's musical works for the professional stage. Fox and Rice were both born in Boston, the city which later made Barnet a foster home, and which showered popular support on his burlesques. This "Boston connection," however vague it seems, is an interesting anecdote in the history of the American musical theatre during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Many composers, including George Lowell Tracy and librettists, including J. Cheever Goodwin--with whom Rice collaborated--were born in Boston. The first Keith and Albee vaudeville theatre, the Bijou (opened in 1885) was located in Boston. The first American production of Gilbert and Sullivan's extremely popular H. M. S. Pinafore took place at the Boston Museum on 25 November 1878.[14]

Edward E. Rice left a desk job in the office of the

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[14]Elliot Norton, Broadway Down East (Boston: Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston, 1978), p. 100.

Cunard line to return to the theatre, where he had briefly worked in his early twenties as an actor with a stock company. Rice and his friend, J. Cheever Goodwin, saw a production of Lydia Thompson and her blondes, decided that they could write a better burlesque themselves, and set about to do so, burlesquing Longfellow's great poem, Evangeline. Goodwin wrote the book and lyrics (possibly with later help from John Brougham[15]), and Rice composed the music. The results were significant:

> . . . With his production of Evangeline in 1874, Edward E. Rice created the first American musical show of a character so homespun that it could in no way be described adequately by reference to foreign fashions and procedures. Evangeline created a world of entertainment in which Rice continued to enjoy the utmost success with the public for more than twenty years. The format of his "American burlesque" was permissive rather than restrictive; he invented an informal manner of presentation that allowed burlesque to grow along with the tastes and fashions of the time, to develop new performers, and to take on new colorations.[16]

Evangeline was perhaps the most popular burlesque of the American musical theatre. It was performed in theatres all over the country over five thousand times.[17] It began the long career of E. E. Rice as a producer of American burlesques and promoter of talented American performers. It became a vehicle for many future stars, such as Nat C. Goodwin

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[15]Hutton, Curiosities of the American Stage, p. 191.

[16]Smith, Musical Comedy in America, p. 37.

[17]Hutton, Curiosities of the American Stage, p. 191.

and Harry Hunter (in the famous part of the Lone Fisherman). Rice first brought a seventeen-year-old Fay Templeton to Broadway for the 1885 revival of Evangeline.[18] He offered eighteen-year-old Lillian Russell of Iowa the opportunity to appear in the chorus of a production of H. M. S. Pinafore in 1879,[19] where Tony Pastor noticed her. In 1881, Lillian Russell's first husband, English comic opera composer, Edward Solomon, wrote Billee Taylor, which was "produced by the curious and short-lived partnership of Rupert D'Oyly Carte and Edward E. Rice."[20] Had that partnership survived, Rice might have become the American producer of the "official" versions of the Gilbert and Sullivan comic operas. In 1892, Rice came to Boston and secured the professional rights to a burlesque on Columbus and the discovery of America, entitled 1492, written by Robert Ayres Barnet.

With the arrival of Gilbert and Sullivan's H. M. S. Pinafore during the 1878-79 season, America was introduced to English-speaking comic opera, and took to it with a passion. Previously,

> . . . comic opera had been largely the esoteric diversion of those who enjoyed hearing it performed in French or German. For fifteen years or more, French opera-bouffe had been a source of special

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[18] Smith, Musical Comedy in America, p. 43.

[19] Arthur Hornblow, A History of the Theatre in America, 2 vols. (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1965), 2:277.

[20] Smith, Musical Comedy in America, p. 84.

> delight among connoisseurs, among whom it shared favor with Italian opera, and, in lesser degree, German light opera.[21]

H. M. S. Pinafore became a rage in America, and was performed all over the country by a host of companies, much to the chagrin of the authors, who remained in London and received little or no royalties. This success of Pinafore helped alter the course of musical theatre in America. The literate, witty words, and the artistic and melodic originality of the music made Pinafore famous, and showed Americans that comic opera could reach great heights of artistic achievement in the hands of talented professionals. Pinafore, and the other Gilbert and Sullivan shows, strongly affected everything done on the American musical stage for the next ten to fifteen years. It marked a turning point toward integrated, artistic musical shows, though America would still have to wait until the first decade of the twentieth century for home-grown successes. Meanwhile, the comic opera stage was under the influence of London. But future patterns were beginning to take shape. By the early 1890s, lyrical works were being separated--however vaguely--into such categories as operetta, musical comedy, and revue. And American farce-comedy was beginning to assert its influence on the musical stage.

> . . . From H. M. S. Pinafore the American audience began to learn, whether it recognized the fact or

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[21]Ibid., p. 69.

> not, the difference between hack work and first-class professional skill and integrity. Having sensed this difference, the public was now ready to listen to other works by first-class craftsmen, French and German as well as English, and to assume some responsibility for apprehending more complex musical and dramatic textures. Thus Gilbert and Sullivan won an audience not only for their own works in America, but for transatlantic light music generally.[22]

But America at this time was also marching to the beat of its own native entertainments. The season of 1878-79, which brought H. M. S. Pinafore, also saw the first big success of Harrigan and Hart, The Mulligan Guards' Ball.

Farce-comedy had appeared frequently in the early nineteenth-century American theatre, but before the Civil War, it was performed mostly as an after-piece, or as a means of featuring a specialized character, such as the stage Yankee.

> . . . Like many another novelty, early farce-comedy wore out its welcome speedily because its practitioners could not find ways of renewing the interest of their audiences once the initial freshness of the form had worn off. Lacking real validity of plot or characterization and the integrity of presentation that specially composed musical scores might have provided, the farce comedies were easily nudged out of the Broadway scene by the comic operas which poured into the theatres after the triumphant success of H. M. S. Pinafore in 1879.[23]

Edward Harrigan had begun writing comic sketches, and performing in them, shortly after the Civil War. He teamed up with female impersonator Tony Hart, and at their Theatre

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[22]Ibid., p. 74.

[23]Ibid., pp. 62-63.

Comique produced the famous Mulligan Guard series: zesty, domestic farce-comedies which examined social and political problems of New York in the 1870s and '80s. The third partner in the Mulligan Guards' series was David Braham, a London-born musician who composed or adapted music for the shows. Braham's scores combined original songs with re-worked Irish ballads and other popular tunes of the day to produce a farce-comedy which was rich in musical variety, as well as in carefully delineated characters and localized high-jinks. The comic intensity and domestic material of this type of farce, combined with the comic opera rage over Pinafore, helped to bring about the decline of the older types of entertainments in America, such as pantomime and pure spectacle.

During the 1880s, Charles Hale Hoyt wrote comedies which discarded plot in favor of "local color" and American vernacular.

> . . . He translated minstrel-show music and dancing into fresh terms, eliminating the blackface aspects, but basing the essential style of his divertissements upon typical minstrel stunts and techniques. He showed little interest in finding pretexts to weave the music and dancing into the structure of his plays, as was customarily done--at least superficially--in the contemporaneous comic operas.[24]

Charles Hale Hoyt established the principles which George M. Cohan would later pick up on in his famous musical comedies of the early twentieth century.

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[24]Ibid., p. 65.

> . . . George M. Cohan, whose musical comedies were indebted even more, perhaps, to the example of Hoyt's highly localized and vernacular scripts and routines than to the more primitive conceptions of Harrigan and Hart. . . .[25]

But New York, the capital of the American theatrical world, was rather slow to appreciate musical farce-comedy, both before Cohan and during his early career. Here again, the importance of Boston in the development of the American musical stage is seen. H. M. S. Pinafore was not the only show to have its first production in Boston. Reginald de Koven's 1891 musical, Robin Hood, premiered in Boston, and was first performed by the Boston Ideal Opera Company. This group, popularly known as The Bostonians, was "based in Boston and devoted to touring the nation with its repertory. New York was simply another stop in the itinerary."[26] Although Robin Hood was more operatic than farce-comedy, "it was the first genuine hit by an American composer and librettist."[27] Two years after this show, R. A. Barnet's burlesque, 1492, would leave Boston for a successful and lengthy stay in New York, followed by frequent tours across the country.

The final element in this brief review of the American musical theatre scene of the late nineteenth century is

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[25]Ibid., pp. 65, 66.

[26]Gerald Bordman, American Musical Theatre (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 111.

[27]Smith, Musical Comedy in America, p. 78.

vaudeville. A sort of vaudeville had been part of the minstrel show, in which songs, clog dances, comedy skits, etc., were used. Just before the Civil War, female performers were added for a touch of sex, and a crude version of modern vaudeville began. The showboats, with their varied bills, brought specialty acts to the backwaters of the midwest: an unsophisticated early vaudeville, full of physical gags and low comedy. Tony Pastor opened his Fourteenth Street house in Tammany Hall, New York, on 24 October 1881,[28] and introduced America to the first "clean" vaudeville show. Having toured America during the 1860s and 1870s, Pastor engendered interest in variety shows, and then spent the rest of his career giving America what it wanted. During the 1880s, the appetite for diversion grew as comics, song and dance teams, jugglers, magicians, crayon sketch artists, and many more specialists played New York and toured on the early circuits. In the heterogeneous "spectaculars" or extravaganzas of the late nineteenth century, vaudeville specialists found their way into the second or third acts, in spots given over to entertainments which had little or nothing to do with the "plot" of the whole piece. Many performers, such as Nat Goodwin and Lillian Russell, used vaudeville as a means of stepping onto the legitimate stage. With the establishment of specific circuits during the 1890s (e. g., Keith's), came

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[28]Douglas Gilbert, American Vaudeville (New York: Dover Publications, 1968), p. 10.

a transition to a more "refined" vaudeville, featuring better theatres, nicer dressing rooms, props, furniture, and better salaries. With a revival of American burlesque during the 1890s, came the need for more vaudeville specialists on the legitimate stage. E. E. Rice's productions of Barnet's burlesques and extravaganzas were among those productions during the 1890s and early 1900s which required vaudeville entertainers as second- or third-act specialists.

In 1896, came the formulation of the "Theatrical Syndicate." This group of businessmen and theatre entrepreneurs, which included Charles Frohman, Marc Klaw, Abraham Erlanger, Al Hayman, Sam Nixon, and Fred Zimmerman, controlled "most of the theatres of New York and many of those in other big towns, and gradually exerted a stranglehold over the entertainment life of the country."[29] Of this group, Charles Frohman became active in Boston theatrical circles, particularly at the Boston Museum, while the firm of Klaw and Erlanger later became another of R. A. Barnet's professional producers. Syndicate control ended by 1916.

In 1890, with the American musical theatre entering an especially colorful age of experimentation and growth, R. A. Barnet began his career as a playwright. Having grown up among the burlesques of Brougham and Burton, and trained for the stage in the amateur minstrel shows of Boston in the

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[29]Phyllis Hartnoll, ed., The Oxford Companion to the Theatre (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 945.

late 1880s, Barnet entered upon a career as playwright in a very rarefied era in America, which the historian, Samuel Eliot Morison, called "the fecund eighteen-nineties."[30] One of the more prolific men of that fruitful time was Robert Ayres Barnet.

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[30]Samuel Eliot Morison, The Oxford History of the American People (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 789.

CHAPTER III

INJURED INNOCENTS

In 1890, Robert A. Barnet wrote his first full-length musical play. Entitled Injured Innocents, it was a burlesque of the English ballad "Babes in the Woods." More specifically, Barnet termed the play an "Operatic Farce-Tragedy."[1] The music was composed by Carl Pflueger, the man with whom Barnet had collaborated on the Cadet Minstrel shows. Injured Innocents was written for the Boston Cadets' newly-formed theatrical organization, and was performed twice in April 1890. The show was then revised by Barnet, and again performed by the Cadets, this time for one week, from 12 to 17 January 1891.

After the first production of the show in 1890, Barnet had the libretto published privately in a very limited edition. Happily, a copy of the libretto is available in the Music Collection of the Library of Congress. An analysis of this libretto will form the basis of the following discussion on Injured Innocents, particularly for the 1890 production. There is no corrected (or revised) libretto for 1891, but there is a complete programme for the 1891 production in the

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[1]Programme: Injured Innocents, by Barnet and Pflueger, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, Boston, 12 to 17 January 1891, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

Theatre Collection of the Lincoln Center branch of the New York Public Library. The 1891 production analysis will be based on this programme, with supporting details from newspaper reviews. This 1891 programme was the first in a series of beautifully executed, well-advertised Cadet programmes which were prepared for each of the shows which Barnet wrote for the organization. These programmes gave, in addition to the necessary information about the show being performed, information about the Cadets, their membership rolls, and pictures and progress reports on the building of the armory and development of the campgrounds, the projects for which the proceeds of the Cadet Theatricals were earmarked.

There are several versions of the English ballad "Babes in the Woods." The one which Barnet chose to burlesque was printed in the manner of a "Prologue" to the libretto of Injured Innocents. No author for the ballad is given, but the work is worth quoting here, if only to provide an insight into Barnet's early technique of burlesque, which will be discussed in an analysis of the libretto.

A gentleman of good account
    In Norfolke dwelt of late,
Who did in honor far surmount
    Most men of his estate.

Sore sicke he was, and like to dye,
    No helpe his life could save;
His wife by him as sicke did lye,
    And both possest one grave.

No love between these two was lost,
Each was to other kinde;
In love they lived, in love they dyed,
And left two babes behinde:

The one a fine and pretty boy,
Not passing three years olde;
The other a girl more young than he,
And fram'd in beautye's molde.

The father left his little son,
As plainlye doth appeare,
When he to perfect age should come,
Three hundred poundes a yeare.

And to his little daughter Jane
Five hundred pounds in gold,
To be paid down on marriage day,
Which might not be controlled.

But if the children chance to dye,
Ere they to age should come,
Their uncle should possesse their wealth;
For so the wille did run.

The parents being dead and gone,
The children home he takes,
And brings them straite unto his house,
Where much of them he makes.

He had not kept these pretty babes
A twelvemonth and a daye,
But, for their wealth, he did devise
To make them both awaye.

He bargained with two ruffians strong,
Which were of furious mood,
That they should take these children young,
And slaye them in a wood.

The children prattle pleasantly,
As they rode on their waye,
To those that should their butchers be,
And work their lives' decaye:

So that the pretty speech they had
Made Murder's heart relent;
And they that undertooke the deed,
Full sore did now repent.

For two long miles they ledd them on,
While they for food complaine:
"Staye here," quoth they, "we'll bring you bread,
When we come back againe."

These pretty babes, with hand in hand,
Went wandering up and downe,
But never more could see the men
Approaching from the towne.

Thus wandered these poor innocents,
Till death did end their grief;
In one another's armes they died,
As wanting due relief.

No burial this pretty pair
Of any man receives,
Till Robin redbreast piously
Did cover them with leaves.[2]

For a man of Barnet's wit and humor, there exists in the above ballad ample opportunity for travesty.

Barnet actually began his work--the published libretto--with his own brand of informal introduction. "The Excuse," signed by a certain "Wm. E. Gl-dst-ne," pokes fun at the story of the babes, the Cadets, and the play itself. It reads, in part,

> The plot is without the slightest shadow of consistency; the story is without any idea of moral teaching and the whole tone of its diction is on a lower stratum than I am accustomed to, and worthy only of the London Times or such periodicals. I was informed that there are some good jokes in the lines, but after a very attentive comparison with a standard of a joke as furnished me by the London Punch, I fail to detect the slightest evidence of any humour.
> As the piece is written, I understand, by some one in some way connected with the Independent Corps

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[2]R. A. Barnet, Injured Innocents (Boston: E. B. Stillings and Company, 1890), pp. 5, 6.

> of Cadets, of Boston, and is to be performed under their auspices and for their benefit, it may be that the object is to show what terrible execution they are all capable of, and to increase the Boston public's opinion of their value as engines of destruction. If these are the facts there is some excuse for its production.[3]

This same tone, which Barnet brought with him from amateur minstrelsy, carried over into Injured Innocents.

The libretto lists the original cast at the Boston Theatre, April 11th and 12th, 1890."[4] R. A. Barnet is listed in the role of Henry Rufyan, one of "two professional gentlemen swindlers. You must not confound them with summer hotel proprietors, or regular managers of church fairs."[5] It is uncertain whether Barnet wrote the role for himself, took it on after difficulties in rehearsal, or was persuaded to perform one of the roles in the production. Prior to this show, Barnet had been a highly successful and much-praised end man with several different minstrel troupes and he may have had ambitions to be an actor as well as a writer of burlesques. The character Henry Rufyan is a major role in Injured Innocents. In a lesser role, that of Sir Bertram O'Shaughnessy, was a certain H. A. Edgerly, very likely one of Barnet's fellow end men with the Longwood and Corinthian Minstrels.

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[3]Ibid., p. 2.

[4]Ibid., p. 4.

[5]Ibid.

The play was set in England, mostly in a fictitious county called McAllistershire, around the village (and suburbs) of McAllister, not far from McAllister Hall, quite obviously the ancestral home of the McAllister family. The principal villains were Sir Rawdon Slolmondley McAllister and his wife, Lady McAllister, and the two ruffians--appropriately named Henry Rufyan and George Tuff--who were hired to do away with the children, Marguerite and Cedric. The play was divided into three acts, with three scenes in the first act, and only one in each of the other two acts.

The opening scene shows a group of men preparing for the hunt. Barnet depicted Sir Benvolio Casey and Sir Bertram O'Shaughnessy as very typical Englishmen, full of expressions such as "Forsooth then!" and "By the rolling orb!" A chorus of "Auld Lang Syne" precedes the following exchange between Sir Benvolio and Sir Bertram (names lifted from the Shakespearean canon):

Sir Benv.: Oh, you naughty Knight! Oh, you bad Knight!! Oh, WHAT a Knight!!!--But come, let us prepare for the chase--

Sir Bert.: (disgusted) Go chase yourself! I care not for the chase.

Sir Benv.: Nay! Nay! My bully boy, not so. Think how our doughty ancestors did drive the wild beast to his lair. Shall we not "go to," as says our Willie Shakespeare?

Sir Bert.: Why certainly go to--any place you please.[6]

This is typical word-play from Barnet, in addition to a lengthy moment which has nothing to do with the plot of the piece. Continuing in the same vein, Sir Rawdon enters, and immediately begins a song about how unblissful marriage really is. The hunters leave to a chorus from Der Frieschutz, which shows that Pflueger could manipulate the music just as Barnet could the words. The stage was then cleared for the plotting of the villains, Sir Rawdon and Lady McAllister. Their conversation, full of quips and puns, gradually turned to "family and financial matters," with the inevitable mention that the children, Cedric and Marguerite, would soon inherit their promised fortunes.

Lady McA.: I would say that they will in a few years own the whole chebang [sic]. Something must be done. The hour has come for action.

Sir Rawd.: We might expose them to something--whooping cough, or criticism, or nervous prostration.

Lady McA.: No! they must be murdered!!

Sir Rawd.: Do you really think so?

Lady McA.: They must be foully dealt with!! (knocking) What means that summons?

Sir Rawd.: Perhaps it means that some 'un's at the gate.

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[6]Ibid., p. 8.

Lady McA.: (to servant) Show the gentlemen in. (to Sir Rawd.) Canst screw thy courage to the sticking place?--

Sir Rawd.: Anything that is agreeable to you, birdling.

Lady McA.: 'Tis well. Here are the agents for the deed. Confer with them.[7]

Barnet is here burlesquing a bit of Macbeth--which happened to fit nicely into the situation--while beginning to set the plot of the piece into motion.

The two ruffians enter, and immediately break into song, helping to reveal that their characters are not as rough and tough as their names and occupations would seem to suggest. Their duet is entitled "Episodes of Childish Woe."

We are two scamps with two soft hearts,
(Excuse me while I shed a tear)
We feel so mean when playing bad parts,
(Excuse me while I shed a tear).
To break a bank; hold up a train;
To burglarize gives us such pain;

But grief, and woe, and sorrow run wild,
When we do any harm to any small child,
Small child! Small child!
Episodes of childish woe
Vivify our apathy.
Unsuppressed our tearlets flow,
We have so much sympathy.[8]

The ruffians then engage Sir Rawdon in a conversation about their services, rates, and sentiments. This dialogue lasts

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[7]Ibid., p. 11.

[8]Ibid., pp. 11, 12.

for three pages and is an amusing series of puns, empty threats, and vague promises of future action. Finally, Lady McAllister returns to seal the bargain for the kidnapping and murder of the children, and the four sing about their wickedness, in a song called "But Nothing to Speak of."

> P'r'aps you think we are bad. Well, we are a crumb sly,
> "But nothing to speak of."
> We may appear "tough" and wink our left eye,
> "But nothing to speak of."
> We have our bad moments--in fact, so have you--
> But we're often real good and simple and true,
> And when we backslide we are apt to feel blue,
> "But nothing to speak of."
>
> Dinner speaking I think is a horrible bore,
> "With nothing to speak of."
> When called up you stare at the ceiling and floor,
> "And nothing to speak of."
> Your face turns so red, then comes that long pause,
> When thoughts are quite scarce--still its charming,
> because,
> When you've finished your speech then comes the
> applause,
> "Yet nothing to speak of."[9]

These lyrics, nonsensical though they may be, defuse the harshness of the deed to be undertaken, further delineate the characters involved, and end the first scene on a light note. Entertainment had been crucial to his minstrel offerings, and the diversity of a four-part "topical song" clearly added to the audience's enjoyment of the show. But Barnet had also added plot, and in spite of its meanderings, the story had begun to unfold rather clearly.

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[9] Ibid., p. 15.

The second scene of the first act is very brief, and given over to the slight romantic thread which runs through the show. Doctor Reginald Empirico is very much enamored of the McAllister governess, one Harriet Saltonstall Murphy of Boston (as she is identified in the cast list). In the midst of their wooing scene, Barnet places one of his familiar paeans to his adopted home:

> Governess: I have not been home for many years, but I like to feel that Boston is not so far away. The air blows right over the ocean from Boston, you know. Isn't it beautiful to think some of the air around us may be from dear Boston?[10]

This scene ends with happiness, a song, and the lovers united.

The third and final scene of the first act introduces the audience to the children, Marguerite and Cedric. The little girl is very young and (seemingly) innocent, but Cedric is a tough, worldly-wise "lad" of twelve. When Marguerite refuses to share her apple with her brother, he takes out a cigarette, lights it, and begins to smoke. Marguerite threatens to tell their uncle and aunt McAllister, and Cedric counters:

> Cedr.: You will, will you? Now you've got to smoke one yourself.
>
> Marg.: If you dare to--Cedric, I'll never speak to you as long as I live.

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[10]Ibid., p. 16.

Cedr.: Here, take it in your mouth. Now Puff! Puff!! or I'll choke you!

Marg.: Oh! Oh!

Cedr.: Now will you tell Aunt McAllister? How do you feel now? You girls can't stand anything.[11]

This scene is interrupted by the governess, who asks questions, tutor-like, to the children, setting up a series of Barnet's ubiquitous puns. Before long, Cedric and Marguerite are throwing books at their poor governess. Sir Rawdon and his wife enter and inform the children that they are being sent away on an excursion. They are introduced to their prospective "guides," who are none other than the two ruffians, and hustled away to the strains of a farewell chorus, as the first act ends.

The second act, complete in one scene, takes place in "a mountain pass." The ruffians are discussing their feelings of guilt for their participation in the plot against the children, and at the same time, informing the audience that they have had "training in the dramatic profession." They describe themselves as former actors turned toughs, but still harboring strong feelings in their hearts against the deceiving of children. By so proclaiming their weakness, they are setting up an amusing affair, which begins almost immediately when the ruffians call the children to them and

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[11]Ibid., p. 18.

inform them of the awful plot against their lives.

1st Ruf.: Little children, we should have told you before we started that at some convenient, secluded point we are going to kill you.

2nd Ruf.: We cannot tell exactly when or where, little children, as we wish to select a time and place that will not be auspicious for detection.

3rd Ruf.: We ought to have told you this before. You will please excuse the omission, little children; it will not occur again. Now I feel better.[12]

The children's response is desperate at first, until Cedric remembers overhearing that the ruffians had been actors. Marguerite sweetly begs to be entertained, and the ruffians are only too happy to comply with her request. While they are performing various "songs and specialties," the children make their escape.

The songs and specialties which the two ruffians perform are not described in the libretto. This omission is typical of the treatment given to variety and specialty numbers which appeared within a burlesque or extravaganza, largely because, over the course of a long run, these additions to the show changed, as new performers were added to the production. Specialties were usually listed in the programme, but there is no existing programme for the 1890 production of Injured Innocents. It is therefore necessary to examine the programme for the 1891 production--the revised

[12]Ibid., p. 22.

version of Injured Innocents, again performed by the Cadets' Theatrical Organization--in order to get an idea what this moment must have looked like in the original production. In 1891, the programme listed several specialty numbers for the ruffians, including a "Death Scene from Camille." This was obviously a burlesque on the famous French scene, written by Barnet and featuring

> Rufyan as Camille, with song.
> Tuff as Armand.[13]

Barnet, as Rufyan/Camille, was here performing his first recorded female impersonation. It would not be his last. Two other songs were performed during this specialty interlude. One, entitled "Zoology," was written and performed by T. E. Stutson, who played the character of the other ruffian, Tuff. And the other, entitled "Legerdemain," was written and performed by Barnet. It must be assumed that this interim variety act of 1891 was similar--in form if not in content--to its counterpart of the previous year.

After such a lengthy interruption in the action of the piece, it is not at all surprising to hear Tuff remark,

> Our usual luck, Henry, the audience have left, before the end of the performance--the children have escaped us.[14]

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[13]Programme: Injured Innocents, by Barnet and Pflueger, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, Boston, 12 to 17 January 1891, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[14]Barnet, Injured Innocents, p. 23.

And the ruffians set about to try to find the children.

As they leave the stage, the children enter from the opposite direction, and begin an exchange which reflects the different tone of this stage representation from the original ballad story. Here is Barnet at an early satirical peak:

Cedr.: Well, Margie, we have escaped that danger.

Marg.: Yes; but how does the present situation strike you?

Cedr.: Where are we?

Marg.: I don't know.

Cedr.: Nothing looks familiar around here.

Marg.: Still this whole affair seems familiar to me. Wicked uncle and aunt, two ruffians, two tender children--a girl and a boy--deserted in a wood.

Cedr.: Why, of course; "Babes in the Wood."

Marg.: That's it!

Cedr.: But those two little fools laid down to die.

Marg.: Yes; and some little birds that were in the neighborhood came along and covered them up with leaves.

Cedr.: Well, you can bet your sweet life I'm not going to take any such chances to get bedclothes!

Marg.: That's very smart, Cedric McAllister; but where are you going to get better accommodations?[15]

This open burlesque of his source--including the naming of

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[15]Ibid., p. 24.

the ballad in the scene--is another technique which Barnet adopted as he began to produce his own versions of fairy tales and nursery rhymes for the stage.

The second act ends with the adults of McAllister searching the mountains for the children--last seen running from a bear--to the tune of a "Pilgrim's Chorus," with music by Richard Wagner. The words, however, are all Barnet:

> A Wagner band of Pilgrims are we,
> Not German Op'ra, but I.C.C. [Independent Corps of Cadets]
> Allow us to add,
> This tune is not bad;
> But you may not like Wagner.
> Maybe Ibsen is your fad.[16]

With a little bit of Wagner, and a passing mention of Ibsen, Barnet kept the audience aware of present-day tastes, while entertaining them with both his lyrics and his dialogue. As the chorus files out expressing hope that the children may yet be found, the ruffians are paid off, and the second act is complete.

The third act of Injured Innocents is short, but it is so full of songs, comic bits, and distracting "subplots," that it is very difficult to follow. It begins with more songs and specialties, this time by the chorus and the characters of Sir Benvolio and Sir Bertram. Again, there are no listings in the libretto to indicate the substance of the

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[16]Ibid., p. 25.

specialty acts. The McAllisters then enter, gloomily, and immediately begin to argue.

> Sir Rawd.: (Very savagely.) Woman! If you had not tempted me those children would be HERE! No; about here.
>
> Lady McA.: That's right! Just like you men. Ever since that unfortunate apple episode in Eden you keep throwing it at us women, and it is usually the core. But come and get a pink lemonade in the neighboring Booth; it will make you Barrett better.
>
> Sir Rawd.: Booth!--Barrett!--a witticism! Ha! Ha! --ha! ha! No! it is of no use--I cannot be gay![17]

The references to Edwin Booth and Laurence Barrett, two of America's foremost Shakespearean actors, are clear. In fact, the last exchange, beginning with "But come and get a pink lemonade," appears in Barnet's first scrapbook, just after his notes for the aforementioned Shakespeare/Bacon stump speech of his minstrel days. It is very likely that Barnet had entered the Booth/Barrett idea in his scrapbook as part of his general sketching out of a minstrel stump speech. Then, having (perhaps) not used the material, he recalled (or came upon) it, and fit it into Injured Innocents. There are other bits and pieces from the third act of Injured Innocents which can be found in the same scrapbook, though there are no connecting ideas or material, and no mention of the general plot-line of Injured Innocents. It is not likely

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[17]Ibid., p. 29.

that Barnet repeated comic material from one show to the next, though his later works were sometimes accused of containing old and familiar lines. This charge will be examined in further discussions of Barnet's plays. A more characteristic element of Barnet's dialogue--and indeed the dialogue from many plays and musicals of the time--is the use of the adjective "gay." Modern society has perverted this splendid word, which describes the era for which Barnet wrote: the "Gay '90s." Barnet used the word frequently throughout his plays, in both spoken dialogue and songs. The connection is not insignificant. Even though Barnet's career flourished during the 1890s and shortly thereafter, he could not make the transition to a more demanding type of drama, and his career as playwright fell off. Barnet's short-lived success can thus be seen as a perfect marriage between the heterogeneous burlesque/ extravaganza musical form and a decade (and a half) characterized by social pleasure.

The "denouement" of Injured Innocents comes as little surprise, though there is a bit of a twist. Barnet, in this early effort, has his characters address the audience directly, a technique which he perhaps carried over from his minstrel days.

2nd Ruf.: (to the audience) Haven't you heard about it? Excuse us. The children are

not dead, no! You saw them in the last act; you also saw the bear! He evidently went down those canvas-back rocks that represented the mountain chasm to lunch on the children. But he didn't! He was a trick bear belonging to a circus, and he induced the children to come along. They joined the circus. The children and the circus are coming here to-day. Now, isn't that nice?

1st Ruf.: Then George suggested that we come here too--in disguise--I, as the supposed-to-be-lost-at-sea father of the children, and George as my faithful friend--secure the boodle, then move away.[18]

And this is exactly how the play ends. Although Sir Rawdon, who greets his "long-lost brother" by saying, "It is my brother, although I do not recognize him," decides to leave the merry-making, departing with Lady McAllister. They will steal the remaining fortune while everyone else sings the finale:

Never mind how the bad play ends,
Never mind, never mind;
If wealth to vice her favor lends,
Never mind, never mind.
The critics will call the thing a bore,
The public may shout Encore! Encore!
Never mind, never mind.[19]

And thus the play ends with a frivolous choral song celebrating a general feeling of happiness.

There seems to be some confusion over the performance dates for Injured Innocents. As previously stated, the libretto

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[18]Ibid., pp. 30, 31.

[19]Ibid., p. 32.

gives the performances as being on 11 and 12 April. But Tompkins and Kilby give the dates 11 and 12 March.[20] As most contemporary accounts seem to substantiate the April dates, including later newspaper articles about Barnet and the Cadets, and even an obituary for Barnet in 1933, it will be assumed here that the April dates are correct.

Injured Innocents was well-received by a limited theatre-going public, and Barnet was encouraged to rework the show for another production the following year. No reason is given for the limited number of performances in 1890, but one may surmise that given the previous years' minstrel shows, the Cadets were both inexperienced in producing full-length entertainment and unwilling to gamble on more than two performances. After the success of the 1890 production of Injured Innocents and the formation of the Cadets' Theatrical Organization, it is not surprising that subsequent Cadets' shows ran for a week, before they either faded away or were picked up by a professional producer. So Barnet was very likely encouraged by the Cadets to rewrite his show in order to play before a larger crowd over more performances the following year. Whether Barnet received anything for his efforts at this time is uncertain. The Cadets, through their armory and campground funds, certainly profited, though official

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[20]Eugene Tompkins and Quincy Kilby, The History of the Boston Theatre, 1854-1901 (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1969), p. 374.

records were not kept until 1891.

An examination of the programme for the 1891 performance of Injured Innocents reveals some of the changes which Barnet made during the nine months between productions. A comparison of musical numbers in the libretto and the programme shows that the first scene of the first act changed very little. The second scene, between the governess and the doctor contained a song, "Mrs. McCarthy's Party," in 1891. The third scene was altered quite a bit, with the addition of two songs, "Two Merry Little Kids," sung by Cedric and Marguerite, and "Symphonie Celtique," featuring the children, the governess and the doctor. The latter two characters seem to have been expanded in importance for the 1891 production. The second act shows that the roles of the children have been greatly expanded, and that the character of the bear has been enlarged. Cedric and Marguerite sing a duet entitled "A Dismal Story" toward the end of the act, and are joined by the bear in the following number, a gavotte entitled "A la Razle, Dazle." The third act of Injured Innocents seems to be the one most affected by Barnet's revisions for 1891. The programme lists the following music numbers:

Bone Effects--Mike Fee
March--"Victorie"--Chorus
Danse Eccentrique--Doctor, Marguerite
Irish Jubilee, and Gorgeous Spectacular Amazonian March--Pat and Harriet Murphy

Grand Ballet--Premiere Assoluta and Coryphees
Finale (Pflueger)--"Au Revoir"--Principals and Chorus[21]

The beginning of the third act was surely used for specialty numbers, as most of the above seem, by description, to have little to do with the play. The addition of marches and a ballet must have necessitated the addition of several new characters, chorus members, and specialty performers. The programme lists the following characters who do not appear in the 1890 production:

Pat Murphy, Harriet's Brother
The Innkeeper, "brings them straite unto his house"
Big Casino, standard bearer
Little Casino, a drummer
Eduardo Strauss, "ledd them on"
Premiere Danseuse Assoluta, "plainlye doth appeare"[22]

The presence of this Premiere Danseuse Assoluta and a Grand Ballet is noteworthy when one recalls that the Cadet productions were performed by men only. In the history of the Cadet Theatricals there were many occasions when male performers were asked to do female roles. Barnet himself performed in this capacity in 1893. In reading contemporary newspaper reviews of the Cadet shows, one is struck by the generous praise given to the female impersonators. Production photographs reveal that they were well-costumed and quite

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[21]Programme: Injured Innocents, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, Boston, 12 to 17 January 1891, p. 11, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[22]Ibid., p. 11.

convincing in their looks. But one is always skeptical about whether contemporary critics were being kind in their appraisal of a local response to a theatrical tradition which spanned many centuries in practice. In this case, however, there is an extraordinary document in the possession of the Harvard Theatre Collection, which sheds some light on the demands made on the female impersonator. This document was written in longhand by one of the cast members of the 1891 production of Injured Innocents, a certain M. D'W. Greene, who portrayed the role of the Premiere Danseuse Assoluta. In addition to giving an account of the demands which his role made on him, Greene provides an interesting behind-the-scenes account of the rehearsals and performances of this early Cadet show.

Greene gives detailed descriptions of shaving his body, and then layering it with undergarments, then adding tights, corset, ballet slippers, skirt, and wig. He wrote that when dressed, his image in the mirror was that of a woman. He (and the others portraying ballet dancers in the show) were dressed by other company members, and then forbidden to sit down, even between matinee and evening performances, as sitting might ruin the dresses. Other details include rehearsal work, special coaching for leading "female" parts, and the physical strain which such exertions produced in him. Greene does not mention Barnet, possibly because Barnet was not (formally) involved with the stage direction of the show. A certain William Seymour fulfilled that role, and if his

policies dictated the concentration and dedication which Greene writes about, then he must have been quite a good stage director. The precedents which this production established for Cadet female impersonators continued throughout the history of the Cadets' Theatrical Organization.

The 1891 production of Injured Innocents was well-received by both audience and critics. The newspapers were perhaps warming up to the Barnet style:

> . . . Injured Innocents is of course not new to Boston; but the immense advance of its present representation over that of last spring, makes it practically a novelty. As now given, it is a fairly original, more than commonly humorous, beautifully mounted and costumed and excellently well acted burlesque, with more merits than could be detailed in a column of commendation, and faults, which, in the catch phrase of its topical song, are "nothing--to speak of."
> . . . The slight changes made in the text since first heard bring the story no nearer to the original nursery tale from which--very far from which--Mr. Barnet has adapted it.
> . . . The jokes, comparatively few of which hark from the tombs of antiquity, are polished quite up to date, touching, among other things, on the mournful condition of Boston streets, and the rival merits, as scalpers, of certain Boston tradesmen and the rebellious Sioux. . . .[23]

Note the above reference to the jokes being "up to date," along with the local color which Barnet included in the revised version of the show. Another critic mentioned the specialty acts, and more details about the Barnet style, which was evidently becoming rather familiar to patrons of amateur

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[23]Boston Transcript, 14 January 1891.

theatre in Boston.

> . . . There was nothing to be asked for in this production of the gallant Cadets. It all came without the asking, from the natural history lecture to the dancing of a rather over-muscular Carmencita; from interpolations of Camille to impersonations of handsome Eduardo Strauss; from the airy floating pirouetting of the modern ballet boys to the songs of the ancient choruses so well known in comic opera. Sad indeed would have been the fate of these clever young players had they been obliged to do penance for every pun perpetrated upon a suspecting audience, but the people who heard it all swallowed the bad jokes with the good and apparently did not injure their mental digestion with this feast of unreason. The author never intended that Injured Innocents should cause an individual to laugh in his sleeve; he sought for a guffaw that would shake the universe by moving its hub. He practically succeeded last night, thanks to the frolicsome actors, the good-natured audience and the happy local hits of the text.[24]

Such criticism gives one an idea of what the show in question was like, generally, but really does not provide a detailed critical appraisal of the show. Such lack is partly due to the amateur status of the production, as well as the nature of the producing organization. Fortunately, there is one review which approaches Injured Innocents in a more critical manner, and even compares and contrasts the productions of 1890 and 1891. Though lengthy, this review is worth quoting almost in its entirety.

> . . . The piece by which the dramatic talent of the corps is framed in Mr. R. A. Barnet's adaptation from the English, which he calls Injured Innocents, as he

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[24]Boston Journal, 14 January 1891.

did last year when it was given two performances under precisely similar circumstances at the Boston Theater. It was highly commended at that time for the tact and discretion it displayed in not obtruding its mere words upon the audience, but, having introduced its actors with some grace and skill, in leaving to them the task of making it friends. This they did on all hands, and Injured Innocents passed into history as a very clever piece of work as burlesques go. It is therefore much to be regretted that Mr. Barnet, perhaps misunderstanding the true reason of the popularity of his work, should have introduced or permitted to be introduced into his revision of the play a considerable amount of encumbering words (if one's recollection of the original text is not greatly at fault), which distinctly impede the action. One can forgive in college undergraduates the common error that puns and perturgid rhetoric are intrinsically amusing things, but to a man of Mr. Barnet's experience it should be evident, as it certainly seemed to be last year, that in mere words, however whimsically conjoined or employed, there is no abiding force of humor. Injured Innocents, altogether, was much more enjoyable last season than this; and it is, indeed, rather Mr. Barnet's virtues of last year than his faults of this that have earned him this criticism, which his work, judged by its aims and pretensions, deserves, even in its present form, rather less than the average burlesque. Despite the habit of garrulity which age has somewhat prematurely brought to it, it is often admirable for its brightness of idea or expression, and its incidental features are most happily imagined, and by grace of its purely masculine circumstances, presented with immensely humorous effect. The simply inimitable "ballet" is perhaps the crowning triumph of the author's invention, which is almost as profitably employed in his "Strauss Orchestra," his Amazon March, and other incidental features.

It is played with the same precision and smoothness as last season and shows in the acting the same extraordinary good average of ability that distinguished last year's cast, which was, indeed, substantially the same. The ideal of burlesque which these gentlemen possess is no more the true one than that cherished by the organizers of college theatricals or the management of the average professional burlesque company, but the performance of Injured Innocents is well up to the accepted standard of this sort of thing, its incidental "variety" acts displaying a

> really extraordinary degree of special accomplishment and a grateful novelty for the most part.[25]

This review touches on a number of very important points. The libretto of 1890, as examined previously, did indeed seem full of "tact and discretion," in spite of its digressions. The language was full of word-play and puns, but not in such an overbearing manner as the Shakespeare/Bacon stump speech must have been, given the notes to part of it. The Boston Home Journal critic found that Barnet had, for 1891, substantially altered the libretto, and for the worse. This is the first criticism of Barnet's affection for "puns and perturgid rhetoric," and it will not be the last. This tendency to indulge himself in superficial word-play, while certainly a trademark of his dramatic efforts, may be one factor which prevented Barnet from becoming a more serious practitioner of his craft. Perhaps, rather than merely being a product of his age, he was a prisoner of it, and simply could not go beyond what he perceived to be the popular taste in musical plays. It will be necessary to keep this supposition in mind when analyzing others of Barnet's works.

Unfortunately, there is no record, either in his notes or in newspaper articles of the time, to indicate the reason for Barnet's rewriting of Injured Innocents rather than turning to another subject. According to the above

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[25] Boston Home Journal, 19 January 1891.

review, the decision was a mistake, in spite of well-received changes in the musical score and the addition of the ballet. Barnet may have been influenced by someone in the Cadets' organization, perhaps a governing board for the Theatricals, or perhaps by William Seymour, the stage director for the 1891 (and very likely the 1890) production. Another possible reason behind Barnet's revising Injured Innocents is his own experience with the minstrel shows. The format of the shows was basically the same, year after year, with changes in material and music. Barnet's own character of Professor Samuel Howla appeared in at least three minstrel shows, delivering speeches on different topics. It would not have been unusual for the novice playwright, familiar with the formula which had brought him success in minstrelsy, to attempt to carry that formula over to the full-length musical play. Whatever the reason, Barnet never again attempted to completely revise a Cadet show for a second production. However, when he prepared his shows for their professional debuts, he often made revisions, as will be seen in 1892. Clearly, these revisions were prompted by other reasons.

The above reviews praise the incidental features of the 1891 production. These variety acts, an important element in burlesque and extravaganza, and equally important to Barnet's works, have little or nothing to do with the actual work. It is therefore impossible to tell how much input Barnet had in the organization of these acts. As Barnet was

a performer in both the 1890 and 1891 productions of Injured Innocents, he must have been involved--to some extent--with the preparation of the variety acts. Furthermore, his experience as a principal performer, writer, and manager of the Longwood and Cadet Minstrels provided him with expert training in the creation of variety acts, which he must have applied to his musical efforts on behalf of the Cadets.

Finally, for the infant Cadets' Theatrical Organization, the real measure of success was in money raised for their armory fund. According to the figures given in a later programme, the 1891 production of Injured Innocents "allowed the Corps to increase its armory fund" by ten thousand dollars.[26] Whether Barnet received any remuneration for his considerable contribution is not known. Injured Innocents was not revised for the professional stage, and "died a natural amateur death."[27] But the Cadet Theatricals had formally begun their history, and Barnet was to continue to play a leading role in their growth and development, as his own career as playwright blossomed from amateur to professional. Injured Innocents thus provided Barnet with a transition between sketch writer and playwright. The controversial revision and second production further gave him the opportunity to develop and change his work, which experience would serve

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[26]Programme: Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, Boston, 13 to 18 March 1905, p. 56x, Harvard Theatre Collection.

[27]The Illustrated American, 26 February 1898, p. 276.

him in good stead when adapting his plays for the professional stage. Barnet learned quickly. His next musical would become his most famous, and would make his name known across the entire country.

CHAPTER IV

1492

After two successful productions of Injured Innocents, Barnet set about creating a new musical piece for the Cadet show of 1892. There is no information about Barnet's activities between the yearly shows, nor are there any further recognizable notes or sketches in his scrapbooks which would reveal his ideas for future shows. The pivotal show in Barnet's early career, however, was the one he began work on after Injured Innocents, with the collaborative assistance once again of Carl Pflueger. The subject matter was drawn from history--a favorite (though secondary) source for Barnet's shows--and timed to take advantage of the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of the New World by Columbus. Entitled 1492, and described as an "Historic Operatic Extravaganza," the show opened on 8 February 1892, at the Tremont Theatre in Boston, as the second (annual) production of the Boston Cadets' newly-formed Theatrical Organization. This second full-length play by Barnet became his most famous and successful work, enjoying long runs in Boston and New York, followed by three successful national tours.

1492 was not the first burlesque on the subject of

Columbus and the discovery of the New World to gain popular success on the American stage. As has been mentioned before, John Brougham wrote his own version of the subject.

> . . . "Columbus el Filibustero, a New and Audaciously Original, Historico-plagiaristic, Ante-national, Pre-patriotic, and Omni-local Confusion of Circumstances, Running through Two Acts and Four Centuries," was first performed at Burton's Theatre . . . on the 31st of December, 1857. . . .[1]

While Barnet's father was very likely still associated with Burton's Theatre at the time this play was written, Barnet was only four years old. It is very unlikely that he would have remembered this show, and it is equally unlikely that he ever saw a production of the show or read the written version, if such a thing existed. Still, Barnet may have known, at the time he wrote 1492, that Brougham had broached the subject before. There is no mention in any of the scrapbooks of Brougham's name, or the title of his Columbus burlesque.

The success of 1492 was largely due to the mood of the country during the 1890s.

> . . . In the early '90's Columbus was more of a hero than he had been during his last years of life. Everywhere, Americans were reading about the exposition that Chicago was planning to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the discovery of the New World.
>
> The newspapers and magazines carried numerous stories about the career of the great adventurer.

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[1]Laurence Hutton, Curiosities of the American Stage (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1891), p. 169.

> Most of them were highly laudatory, but Columbus had been dead for so many years that some people thought that it was not necessary to be too serious about him.
>
> R. A. Barnet and Carl Pflueger were two who decided that it would not be bad taste to write a burlesque about the great Genoese.[2]

By taking advantage of the situation to provide people with a show about subject matter of current popularity, Barnet displayed the shrewdness of a good businessman and entrepreneur. Unfortunately, he never again took such advantage with regard to his shows.

There is no available copy of Barnet's libretto for 1492. Although he registered all of his titles with the government for copyright purposes, Barnet seems to have submitted only a few of his libretti for limited, private publication. Even the Barnet family possesses only several typescripts of later plays. While this absence of material is to be regretted, it will not hinder this study of Barnet's works for two reasons. The first, as mentioned with regard to Injured Innocents, is the fact that many revisions were made by Barnet, both for extended amateur productions and for subsequent professional productions when the shows were optioned by a producer. Often, the professional revisions were not made by Barnet, as newspaper reviews indicate, and differed--sometimes almost totally--from the original versions. However, there are enough published libretti and unpublished

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[2]Boston Post, 10 November 1933.

typescripts from different phases of his career to provide a good analysis of Barnet's growth and development as a playwright. There are also published vocal scores for most of the major works, which enable one to examine Barnet's lyrics, and later in his career, the lyrical collaboration between Barnet and others. Further discussions of the plays will proceed by noting whether the libretto or vocal score of the play under consideration is being used. In the case of 1492, the lyrics from the vocal score will form the basis for the discussion which follows.

A detailed summary of the action in 1492 appears in several programmes for professional touring productions of the play. While the show changed somewhat over a period of sixteen years, the general argument remained basically intact. In the absence of the libretto, it will be useful to know the plot of 1492.

> The scene of this musical extravaganza opens at the court of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile [sic], where the Royal Treasurer is discovered trying to pacify the people who are clamoring for their money.
>
> Christopher Columbus arrives upon the scene in search of an audience. He is trying to get money enough together with which to purchase a ship to set off and discover the new world. Columbus is in love with Joanna, the eldest daughter of Queen Isabella, who takes her mother's royal jewels and gives them to Christopher Columbus to buy his new ship.
>
> Bridgette, the maid of all work, looms up and demands her salary, which is not forthcoming, as the court is in a state of bankruptcy, owing to the speculations of the Royal Treasurer. The King, who has been out on a tear with boon companions, also arrives and demands money for his friends. He, also,

> is refused by the Treasurer.
>
> About this time, the Queen being announced, learns that King Charles of France is in the palace and dunning for his money. He demands her royal jewels with which to secure money enough to liquidate the debt, upon which the Queen discovers the real situation and proceeds to make it lively for all concerned. She takes matters into her own hands and later sends Columbus off to discover the new world. Columbus embarks, and next we see him in mid-ocean in his new ship, sailing for the great undiscovered, and follow him in his various adventures in the new world.
>
> Finally, in Act III, we descend to the royal kitchen, where we find Queen Isabella and her royal family doing their own household work. This is caused by the fact that they have never heard anything from Columbus, and are naturally very hard up. While the Queen is in the kitchen, Pinzon and Margurite, the two conspirators, arrive and announce that they have discovered the new world, thus trying to cheat Columbus of the honor and credit of having discovered America. They are about to be loaded with honors and favors when a letter from Columbus arrives, exposing them. Directly, Columbus arrives, and is given the hand of Joanna by the Queen as his reward, and the royal family return to their former state of grandeur and luxury.[3]

The vocal score of 1492, published in 1892, reveals a three-act structure in which the first act contains the greatest number of songs, including an opening chorus, a "Grand Processional," and a Spanish Dance. The second act, which is set in "The New World," contains mostly specialty numbers. The third act appears to be the most musically diverse, with an opening Barcarole, followed by a Vocal March and an Amazonian March, an entire ballet number (featuring ensemble and solo numbers), and a finale. Two popular songs are appended

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[3]Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, Casino Theatre, Los Angeles, California, week of 23 October 1904, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

to the musical numbers from 1492 which appear to have little to do with the play: "Wait Till the Sweet Bye and Bye," and "The Hen and the China Egg." They may have been part of the second-act specialty numbers, or part of finale material for one of the acts. They may also have been appended to the score by the publisher. There is no mention of them in programmes or write-ups of the show.

Examining the lyrics of 1492, it is clear that Barnet had expanded little on the simplicity of structure, and the basic rhythm and rhyme of his lines which were noted in the discussion on Injured Innocents. The opening chorus finds the people of Spain clamoring for their money from the Royal Treasurer:

> Give us cash! Give us cash!
> Filthy lucre! Simply trash!
> You must say when you'll pay.
> Say tomorrow not today!
> Reprobate, must we wait?
> You're in luck to get a date!
> If you do not give us money
> Death will be your fate!
> To deceive us 'tis a shame!
> Yes indeed, 'tis a shame!
> His excuses are so lame!
> Very thin, and so lame.
> Though we hold them by his name,
> King and Queen, by his name!
> He will cheat us just the same.
> If he can, just the same.[4]

The structure of these lyrics is certainly not complex, and

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[4]R. A. Barnet and Carl Pflueger, 1492, Vocal Score (Boston: White-Smith Music Publishing Company, 1892), pp. 1-3.

there seems to be a preoccupation with the rhyme scheme, which results in some very weak lines and a good deal of repetition. The tone is benign, in spite of the threats, and is recognizable as belonging to the world of the light musical. The same general characteristics are found in the next musical number, "The Treasurer's Song," which is sung by the chorus and the Royal Treasurer:

Trea.: What provokes a gladsome smile
If the cashier has a pile?

Chor.: Why 'tis money!

Trea.: Yes! 'tis money!
Tell me what is orthodox
In an earnest true cash box?

Chor.: Why 'tis money!

Trea.: Right! 'tis money!
Will you truly, not tell me
What's the sweetest melody?

Chor.: Chink, chink, chink[-]chink
Merry chink of gold,
Welcome music sweet and old,
Charming measures, harmonies untold
Tuneful, dulcet gold!

In the above musical number, Barnet has integrated solo voice and chorus for perhaps the first time in his career; no such arrangement appears in the 1890 libretto of Injured Innocents, and the revisions for 1891 are not known. Here the mood is frivolous--not unlike much of Injured Innocents--and the repetition of phrases seems to be as important for the

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[5]Ibid., pp. 6, 7.

preservation of meter and rhyme scheme as it is for the interaction between the chorus and the Royal Treasurer.

The introduction of the romance between Columbus and Joanna marks Barnet's first use of a romantic sub-plot which is related to the action of the play. (It will be remembered that a very brief and comical romance had been introduced into the periphery of Injured Innocents through the characters of the governess, Harriet Saltonstall Murphy of Boston, and the Doctor, Reginald Empirico.) The duet between Columbus and Joanna in the first act of 1492 is very likely Barnet's first serious love duet. (The 1891 programme for the revised version of Injured Innocents lists a duet between the aforementioned governess and doctor, entitled "Mrs. McCarthy's Party," but it is doubtful that this was a serious love duet.)

Joa.: I've dared to whisper that I love thee
Col.: Sweet condescension on thy part
Joa.: Nay; Nay, in love I'm not above thee
Col.: Ah true! Thou art but to my heart.
Joa.: Thy words, my dearest, are most tender
Col.: Thy lips my love, are rubies red,
Joa.: Thine eyes mine own, true love engender
Col.: Thy waist my pet, is trim and slender,
Joa.: Thou art my sweet Knight and Defender,
Col.: Ah, blessings on thy precious head.
Both: I'll faithful be for ever more
What e'er betide.

Though on some foreign shore
Far, far from thy side,
My thoughts will fly to thee my own
Swift as a dove
And cheer thee when alone,
My own true love.[6]

There is another exchange between Columbus and Joanna, followed by a repetition of the refrain, but the above serves to give a good example of the nature of Barnet's early conception of a love duet. It is interesting to speculate about what may have influenced this side of Barnet's creativity, which had not previously been exercised. In 1892, the world of grand opera was moved by the passionate new work of Ruggiero Leoncavallo, I Pagliacci. Barnet had surely completed 1492 before this opera was produced, but he may have seen Pietro Mascagni's melodramatic opera, Cavalleria Rusticana, sometime after its first production in 1890. Such passages from Cavalleria as the following brief aria by Lola, from the beginning of scene six, give an idea of the passions at work in the opera:

Bright flower, so radiant!
Angelic thousands stand
Arrayed in heaven,
Yet none so fair as thou
Hath yet been given![7]

While the spoken drama was beginning to move into an age of

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[6]Ibid., pp. 8-10.

[7]Pietro Mascagni, Cavalleria Rusticana, English version by J. C. Macy (Boston: Oliver Ditson Company, 1919), p. 12.

greater realism and naturalism, the musical stage was showing its last blossoms of melodrama and romance. Barnet's plays, though burlesques and extravaganzas in form, were nevertheless touched by the heightened emotions which were more clearly articulated in the opera. Barnet had borrowed from Weber's Der Freischütz and Wagner's Tannhauser for the 1890 production of Injured Innocents. He had been influenced by the romance and historical spectacle of the opera, so it is not unlikely that he continued to draw from the tone of opera and apply it to his musical shows. As has been mentioned, 1492 was described in the programmes and in the vocal score as an "Operatic Extravaganza," and it would not be the only show of Barnet's to be described with the adjective "operatic." Of course, the term was in vogue during the late nineteenth century, and no doubt Barnet gradually began to think of himself as an American W. S. Gilbert, the king of English comic opera, as he was often dubbed by Boston newspapers during the late 1890s.

The entrance of King Ferdinand into the palace, surrounded by his spirited companions, prompts a rousing musical number about the necessity for kings to have "unroyal" flings. Sings Ferdinand:

> You all think dignity
> Does pervade royalty
> But I must disagree
> With this trite fallacy.
>
> . . . . . .

Always home, surely cloys
You bet this king enjoys
A night off with the boys
High old time; lots of noise.[8]

This is the frivolous tone which characterized much of Injured Innocents being picked up by the person of the King in 1492. Though the musical numbers are now longer and of a more complex structure, there is a continuation of the same lightness and absence of seriousness. Within this expanded airiness is a greater sense of the spirit of comic opera. Barnet was probably influenced by the American vogue for comic opera--particularly for productions of the clever Englishmen Gilbert and Sullivan--and sought to understand the form in order to blend it into his burlesques and extravaganzas. We can picture the action on stage as the chorus joins the King's merriment in the above song with their own verse:

Tho' a king, tho' a king.
It's nothing wrong for me to laugh and sing
Laugh and sing, laugh and sing,
Laugh and sing, not a thing!
Like skipping little lambkins in the Spring
In the Spring, early Spring, early Spring,
Gamboling, gamboling
From life some little fun I try to wring
Try to wring, on the wing, on the wing, for a King.[9]

Following this scene comes the grand processional, in which the chorus announces the entrance of the Queen,

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[8]Barnet and Pflueger, 1492, Vocal Score, pp. 11-14.

[9]Ibid., pp. 11-18.

Isabella of Castille. The role of Isabella was always played by a man. An actor by the name of Richard Harlow gained a measure of fame for himself by playing the role on professional stages in New York and across the country for many years. But in the Cadets' production of 1892, the role of Isabella was performed by Robert A. Barnet. Barnet had done a brief female impersonation in the 1891 production of Injured Innocents, in a burlesque of the death scene from Camille. Isabella was Barnet's first full-length female impersonation, and he wrote himself an opening patter song which resembles those of Gilbert:

> I am the queen who in fourteen and ninety-two
> Can rule this land and Ferdinand and maybe you.
> I dote on war, I have a corps of soldiers brave
> The pomp and show of peace also I likewise crave.
> Could I have been some later queen oh my what sport.
> In the smart set to be the pet at gay Newport
> To gain renown for hat and gown in styles of these days
> To always stop at Huyler's shop, from all matinees
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Isabella, Isabella is a sov'reign of notoriety
> Isabella, Isabella is the leader of gay society
> Isabella, Isabella is a lady of great propriety
> None excell her, Isabella
> I'm the daisy Queen of Spain.[10]

The final line of the song gave the role of Isabella the description which it would carry through all professional productions of 1492. As the "daisy Queen of Spain," Barnet also wrote himself the solo lead for the first act finale,

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[10]Ibid., pp. 20-22.

which included much repetition of lyrics from the songs of the first act.

The programme from the Cadet production shows at least two dance numbers during the first act. A "Spanish Dance" was performed by the "Corps de Ballet," and a "French Dance" was performed by two Cadets named Langdon and Greene.[11] Greene was surely the same M. D'W. Greene who had performed with such success as the "Prima Ballerina Assoluta" of Injured Innocents in 1891, and left the afore-mentioned handwritten account of the experience. It seems that Barnet had, in this second of his full-length musical works, become aware of the importance of general spectacle, especially dance, in the overall scheme of his entertainments. In the programme, under the listing of the principals, appears the supporting cast:

> Courtiers, Ladies, Peasants, Students, Ballet, Amazons, Newsboys, Moors, Sailors, Bull-Fighters, Soldiers, Pages, Standard-Bearers, etc. by a chorus of 100.[12]

Henceforth, Barnet's shows would always feature large casts with a big chorus playing a wide variety of roles. Even the professional companies who performed Barnet's shows were generally rather large.

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[11]Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, Boston, 8 to 13 February 1892, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[12]Ibid., p. 25.

The second act of 1492 is short and full of surprises. Columbus opens with his "Vision":

> Toss'd and shaken by the billows of the deep
> My heart is faint, my hopes seem vain!
> And yet my courage must not fail;
> Press on, press on, 'gainst storm and rain
> I yet will be rewarded.[13]

The chorus appears as "friendly spirits of the deep" to encourage Columbus not to waver in his course:

> Hope, steadfast hope thy fears all are vain
> For soon thou shalt be across the dark main
> Where daylight comes and past is the night,
> Then go! Westward go!
> We will guide thy bark right.[14]

When Columbus reaches the "New World," we find that it is the world of New York City, circa 1892. In front of a mock-up of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, a chorus of newsboys inform Columbus of the latest news from this hemisphere:

> Herald, Tribune, and Times,
> Telegram, Mail and Express!
> The latest news! The latest news!
> Us gang of kids you always meet
> We sell our papers on the street.
> We make you stop when we go by,
> You try to hear the news we cry--
> A great big fire! A railroad smash!
> Election news! Some stolen cash!
> We yell out loud to all the crowd,
> Here is the latest news.
> We has to work, we ain't Jay Gould
> And if you think we're jays you're fooled.

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[13]Barnet and Pflueger, 1492, Vocal Score, p. 36.

[14]Ibid., p. 38.

To some theater nights we go,
Ah, Tony Pastor's that's the show!
Some days we don't have much to eat,
But just the same on the street
We yell out loud to all the crowd,
Here is the latest news.
All up and down Broadway
Newboys you will meet,
Wall Street and Avenue A
Newsboys on the street,
All times of night and day,
Newsboys you will meet,
Rough, tough and poor and gay,
Newsboys on the street.[15]

Barnet's device of intruding on the historical reality of the play was not only a typical feature of his own work since minstrel days, but it was also a prominent characteristic of the heterogeneous American extravaganza of the late nineteenth century. Many shows were revised and then revived. Others changed periodically as managers added and subtracted specialty acts and new songs or lyrics. There was a late-century mania for being "up to date," and this trend was reflected in theatrical productions as well as in fashion. The play titles told the story: G. L. Fox's Humpty Dumpty (1868) became Robert Brietenbach's Humpty Dumpty Up to Date (1894); Goethe's famous play became Faust Up to Date (1889) in a touring version by London's Gaiety Theatre. Many other plays were either revised or entirely rewritten, adding "up to date" to their titles in order to assure potential audiences that the show in question would satisfy all desires to be modern. The

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[15]Ibid., pp. 43-45.

twentieth century was dawning, and as technology began to make life easier for most people, they became terribly conscious of removing themselves from the past. Barnet, very much in step with his time, found his imagination well-suited to the popular demand for topicality. This is another fortunate circumstance which helps account for Barnet's success in the 1890s.

The only other song from the second act which is listed in the vocal score of 1492 is another choral piece. This time, a "Casino Girls' Chorus" sings about the life of a Broadway chorus girl of the early 1890s:

> We are careless chorus maidens
> And we love to sing and dance,
> And to smile across the footlights
> With a sweet coquettish glance
> We just hate the prima donna
> But the tenor we adore,
> And we make the stage director
> Simply hanker for our gore.
> We are daily left big fortunes,
> In the papers, not in fact,
> Or we welcome well-known beauties
> Who are longing just to act.
> Yet all heedless of such gossip,
> We keep singing week by week,
> Unless payday is a failure
> Then we sing not, only shriek!
> Rosy cheeks, ruby lips
> Voices glad and laughter gay
> Dancing thro' life on our tiny tips
> Careless and happy the live-long day![16]

This is the first documented evidence of Barnet's use of the chorus girl, although it is likely that he used chorus girls

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[16]Ibid., pp. 48-50.

as part of the 1891 production of Injured Innocents. All of Barnet's subsequent shows featured female choruses, certainly not an uncommon occurrence on the American musical stage of the time. Many of Barnet's later musicals (c. 1902-1906) were often criticized for the similarity of his female choruses with that of the unusually popular Florodora sextette. Yet Barnet was well-practiced in creating numbers for chorus girls long before the opening of Florodora in 1900.

The second act finale of 1492 was a hodge-podge of topical songs and dances which included "Little Annie Rooney" and "There is a Tavern in the Town." Such familiar tunes served the dual purpose of keeping the play "up to date," as well as providing Columbus with a longer look into the society of New York in the 1890s. That Barnet could weave the two together--however frivolous this may seem to us today--indicates a talent for giving contemporary audiences what they wanted. This talent helps to explain the great success which 1492 enjoyed all across the country. As the second act came to a close, a combined chorus waltzed away to Delmonico's while the scene prepared to shift back to "fifteenth century" Spain.

According to the Cadet programme, the third act of 1492 was chock-full of specialties. An oration by Barnet's fellow ruffian from Injured Innocents, Stutson, preceded a "Magnificent March of Amazons, by the Corps de Amazon, led by Queen Dole." This was followed by a "Specialty," by Messrs. Edgerly and Benton--fellow minstrels with Barnet--and a

"Grand Royal Ballet, by Premiere Greene and Corps de Ballet."[17] Somewhere in between these specialties was sandwiched the plot of the play: the return of Columbus, the quashing of the false discoverers Pinzon and Margurite, and the revitalization of the Spanish monarchy with treasures from the New World. Musical numbers from this third act included a Barcarole, sung by Joanna, to the "mariners of Spain," urging them to bring back her love, who had somehow fallen captive to the Moors. When Columbus does return, he is accompanied by a triumphant "Vocal March," in which the chorus sings his praises:

> Onward, onward, with great pomp and show.
> Onward, onward, does Columbus go.
> Onward, onward, hailed by friend and foe,
> Does Columbus go!
> Welcome our hero to Royal Court again,
> With banner, plume, and lance,
> With music, song, and dance,
> Show him due honor all ye true men of Spain,
> And greet him all ye men of Spain.
> How many years he waited
> Pleading but vainly, dark page in history
> But now see him elevated
> Through glorious victory![18]

Columbus claims Joanna, the King rejoices over the new-found treasures (which will enable him to continue his wild ways), and Isabella, the "daisy Queen of Spain," is toasted in a rambling finale which seems to include pieces from most of

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[17]Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, Cadet Theatricals, p. 27.

[18]Barnet and Pflueger, 1492, Vocal Score, pp. 69-73.

the major musical numbers in the show.

The critical response to the Cadets' production of 1492 was overwhelmingly favorable. Most critics praised the material as well as the production, and emphasized the total enjoyment registered by each packed house.

> . . . It was a success in every respect--socially, financially, artistically.[19]

> . . . Mr. Barnet's text is brisk, bright and quaint; it is apt in its hits, grotesque, unexpected, clean, fresh and often distinctly original. And it is almost always delivered as it should be, without effort, without consciousness or attempt to sharpen its points and stick them into people.[20]

> . . . It is to be said in commendation of Mr. Barnet's new work that he does not repeat himself, the plot is new and excellently amusing, moreover, above most of its sort; the songs are new, the specialties new, the jokes new,--well--most of them; a few bearing date not far removed from that which gives title to the extravaganza.[21]

The little negative criticism which was leveled at the play had to do with the overabundance of material not related to the work itself, but merely thrown into it for the sake of satisfying the popular whim for variety:

> . . . but 1492 has not the fun in it that made the piece of last season so enjoyable, and it is to be regretted that Mr. Barnet has not insisted upon

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[19] Boston Herald, 9 February 1892.

[20] Boston Beacon, 13 February 1892.

[21] Boston Transcript, 9 February 1892.

> having more time devoted to his clever text and less to the omnipresent and ever aggressive specialty.
>
> The local hits, the bits of satire, and puns and jokes which proved so effective in the first act, and which find such ready appreciation from intelligent and cultivated audiences such as the Cadets attract, were too few in the second and last acts, and Mr. Barnet has been altogether too modest in giving Isabella so little to do. He is a capital actor, and the audience resented the arrangement which compelled him, as the Queen, to sit inactive for a long time merely a spectator of the specialties.[22]

The ubiquitous specialty would provide much of the fuel for the success of 1492 in professional theatres around the country. It would be an important feature of all of Barnet's burlesques and extravaganzas, largely because the specialty was an accepted and integral part of the heterogeneous musical works of the time. Barnet could have chosen to break the pattern and exclude the specialty from his shows as his career progressed. Had he done so, he might have distinguished himself rather notably in the history of the American musical. But he did not. He chose to remain a prisoner of the accepted form, a product of his time (and of preceding trends), and as a result, he ended his career as an obscure theatrical author who gained a measure of success, but who demonstrated little willingness to search for new forms and patterns. Although this criticism may seem a bit harsh and certainly premature with respect to this study of his career, it is well to keep it in mind during the discussion of his ensuing

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[22] Boston Herald, 9 February 1892.

works, as it will be crucial to understanding why Barnet's active career lasted for such a short time.

In the Cadet programme, Carl Pflueger was listed as the Musical Director. He was, of course, the composer. He probably assisted in the rehearsal of the musical numbers and led the orchestra for the performances. This show marked his last collaboration with Barnet. Barnet was listed in the programme as the stage manager and as one of the principals. The show was "produced under the direction of William Seymour and the author."[23] It will be remembered that William Seymour was the stage director of the 1891 production of Injured Innocents. Barnet seems to have taken over as the stage director for 1492, perhaps with the assistance of Seymour whenever Barnet was on the stage playing Isabella. It is also possible that the long periods of inactivity which the above critic cited in the role of Isabella were intentional, allowing Barnet the freedom to leave the stage during rehearsals and direct the ensemble from outside the show. Barnet seems to have acquitted himself well in the role of Isabella. The nature of the role, a supporting part rather than a lead (as he had played in both productions of Injured Innocents), suggests that Barnet's theatrical interests were moving away from acting and toward writing and directing. Indeed, his performing career did not last much longer; he wrote himself

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[23]Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, Cadet Theatricals, p. 25.

only a few more character parts of a secondary nature until he gave up acting.

Though 1492 represented a more mature work by Barnet, there was still plenty of evidence that the merriment of Professor Samuel Howla wasn't too far from the surface. Instead of writing stump speeches for performance, Barnet turned to writing them for the public to read. The following "Note from the Author" appeared in the Cadet programme for 1492:

> The action of 1492 is historical, intensely historical; a composite picture of fifteenth and so forth century history. It may not be history as it really was (ah, the doubts that harass true historians!); but it is history as it could, would, or should have been. Although I have labored earnestly, the historians of 2292 may call me a liar. I am prepared for it. I think I am. The costumes are correct, and from the four centuries. Certainly any costumer prefers the last four "Centuries" to a Harper's Bazaar of 1492. I feel deeply indebted to the royal family of Spain for many favors. I feel especially thankful that "the King of Aragon was so much impoverished by the wars, that he was obliged to pawn his costly robe of fur;" and that, "returning home late one evening, the king found no refreshment, and was chagrined to hear that he had neither credit nor money to purchase it." I was delighted to know that "for large loans some counties of Spain were mortgaged to the king of France." Vide Prescott. I beg to kindly thank Mr. Washington Irving for his thoughtfulness in mentioning the misconduct and conspiracy of Don Pedro Margarite, [sic] and the attempt of Martin Pinzon to defame and defraud Columbus. I feel under the greatest obligation for his complete cable report of the reception of Columbus in the New World: "The Cacique received them in a kind of public square, and invited them to a collation which he had prepared for them; and after the collation the natives performed several national games and dances." Mr. Irving's report of the return of Columbus is also very nice: "In a vast and splendid saloon"

> (as I hold only a dramatic license, the saloon will be omitted) "the King and Queen awaited his arrival." The little love romance that is crochetted through this charming idyl was suggested by a sweet little episode in West Skowhegan, State of Maine.[24]

More important than the burlesque tone of the above note is the insight which it gives--if inference may be taken at least in part for fact--into Barnet's methods of researching his material. Mention has been made of Barnet's interest in history and his use of it in his previous theatrical pieces. Injured Innocents was based upon an English ballad and embroidered with details from English country life. For 1492, Barnet evidently boned up on Spanish history, and read a bit of Prescott and Irving for ideas and situations which showed themselves well-made for potential dramatic scenes. Here again, as in the case of Injured Innocents, Barnet seemed to need outside material on which to base his dramatic ideas. This, of course, is the formula for the writer of burlesque, and Barnet was successful when he stuck to this formula.

During this flurry of theatrical activity, Barnet was still engaged in the sugar business as a partner in the firm of Bates and Barnet, of the Atlas stores on Broad Street, in Boston. It was a difficult time for small merchants in the sugar business. In spite of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890, the sugar trust controlled nearly all of the sugar refining business in the country, and a Supreme Court decision

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[24]Ibid., p. 27.

in 1895 absolved the trust of guilt in this obvious monopoly.[25] Barnet, feeling the pinch, described his activities during the late winter and early spring of 1892 in a later newspaper interview:

> . . . Business affairs were looking very dubious to me . . . and it had been suggested that I should put 1492 into the market. I didn't know what to do about it. My wife had advised me to do it. Two business friends had given me the same advice. I thought to myself, now, here are three good friends who think it a right move. At least I will see what I can do. I was on Washington Street one day, and I went into the Park Theatre, intending to make Crabtree a proposition. I went along to the office door and knocked. I could hear voices inside, so I knew that some one was there; but I got no response. I knocked again and waited a few minutes, but I didn't relish being kept outside, so I went on down to the Hollis Street [Theatre]. I saw Charlie Rich. He was very encouraging, and could give me a week at one time and then another week later. I was to think it over, but while I thought I went to the Boston [Theatre]. On my way back from a fruitless errand there, I saw John Stetson standing in the entrance to the Globe [Theatre], of which I had not thought. I went up to speak to him, made my request, and he took me up at once, with the proviso that I should play myself, and offered me the theatre at a rental or on shares--as good terms as he would make any organization. I was advised to take it on shares, and I did. . . .[26]

It is interesting to note the proviso in the above deal and the light which it may shed on Barnet's popularity in Boston in 1892. The insistence of the Globe Theatre's owner (or manager) that Barnet perform in his own piece, this time in

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[25]Samuel Eliot Morison, The Oxford History of the American People (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 764.

[26]Boston Herald, 24 May 1896.

a professional production, seems to indicate that after years of notoriety as an end man in local minstrel shows and an author of and actor in three successive full-length pieces for the Cadets' Theatrical Organization, Barnet had become something of a local celebrity. His personal following, in addition to the critical and popular success of 1492 in the Cadet production, made Barnet a worthwhile business risk (in a most uncertain business), and prompted the Globe Theatre to offer Barnet a stage for his production of 1492.

According to a hastily mounted and unidentified newspaper clipping which appears in one of the Barnet Scrapbooks, Barnet was the general manager of the production, and at the same time retained the role of Isabella. He negotiated with the Cadets for certain members of the original company whom he wished to hire for the professional debut of the show. He also had to find several local professional actor-singers to portray some of the principal parts. The success of the operation apparently depended on Barnet's ability to attract a certain number of Cadet performers, and thus be relieved of having to hire too many professionals. The Cadets were apparently not ecstatic about the demands which would be made on them by professionalism, but Barnet was successful in attracting those whom he wanted to use. He must have been fairly confident--buoyed by the advice of others--that the show, which had been so overwhelmingly popular as a piece of amateur entertainment, would be equally successful on the

professional stage. And it was.

Barnet's production of 1492 at the Globe Theatre opened on 16 May 1892, before a friendly crowd, full of Cadets, their friends and supporters. This would be typical of all opening-night crowds for Barnet's ensuing professional versions of his plays, and certainly helped influence critics who attended the performances on opening nights. In the case of 1492, the critical response was favorable, as the following example shows:

> . . . The players were not all professionals, for a few of the talented amateurs who appeared in the original performance lent their aid last night to give Mr. Barnet a good send off in his chosen career as a burlesque actor.
> . . . Mr. Barnet retained the role of Isabella, "the Daisy Queen of Spain." His impersonation did not materially differ from that given at the Tremont, and was characterized by an admirable make-up, some very fetching glances, consistent acting and poor singing. Possibly the feeble attempt at vocalization may have been added to the general fun of the piece.[27]

It is doubtful that the above critic had factual information to back up his claim that Barnet had chosen to pursue the life of a "burlesque actor." He had not yet given up his partnership in the sugar business, and was merely testing the water to see how lucrative his shows could be on the professional stage. No permanent decisions had been made, but the step was a significant one for Barnet. No longer would the theatre be merely a diversion, a place to exercise

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[27]Boston Journal, 17 May 1892.

his multitudinous talents for the sake of charity while his reputation grew. He was moving toward becoming a theatre professional, and this production of 1492 at the Globe Theatre must have convinced him that he was moving in the right direction.

Some critics called the Globe production semi-professional, no doubt because of the presence of many amateurs in the cast and an amateur general manager in Barnet. But the next step in the stage history of 1492 was decidedly professional. The American burlesque king, Edward E. Rice, was told about 1492, and came to Boston to examine it as a potential new vehicle for his organization. Rice had become famous by co-writing and producing the most successful burlesque in the history of the American musical theatre, Evangeline. Rice evidently liked what he saw of 1492, and, sometime after the run at the Globe Theatre, contracted with Barnet to purchase the professional rights to the show. Unfortunately, there are no early contracts among the Barnet scrapbooks and papers, so that Barnet's association with Rice must be gleaned from newspaper articles of the time. All such evidence points to an amicable relationship between the two men which was full of mutual respect. Rice had Barnet revise his script for 1492, and encouraged him to attend rehearsals to sharpen up dialogue with the actors present.[28]

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[28]Boston Herald, 4 September 1892.

Barnet, in turn, made Rice his producer for several succeeding shows, and allowed Rice to make his own changes in the shows when audiences demanded new dialogue and bits of business. Both men certainly enjoyed the profits they earned from their joint ventures.

The show was revised and rehearsed during the late summer of 1892. A certain Italian opera singer by the name of Signor Perugini performed the role of Columbus. A young actor named Richard Harlow succeeded Barnet in the role of Queen Isabella. This part would make Harlow famous and provide him with employment for many years in theatres all across the country. Rice had the show completely re-costumed and the set redesigned, with "novel mechanical effects [and] electrical sensations."[29] Rice also added a liberal dose of specialties to the second and third acts, and introduced one of his trademarks into the show, "scores and scores of pretty girls."[30]

On Saturday, 3 September 1892, Edward E. Rice opened his production of R. A. Barnet's 1492 at Boston's Park Theatre.[31] The company which Rice assembled was collectively called "Rice's Surprise Party," and every future production

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, produced by E. E. Rice, Park Theatre, Boston, 3 September 1892, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

of 1492 by Rice would be performed by a similarly named group, though the individuals often were different. Among the specialties in this production was the singing of the intermezzo from the opera Cavalleria Rusticana by Signor Perugini.[32]

Rice's production was very well received by Bostonians, who attended this third "first night" of 1492 within eight months. Having been well-established as a popular play during its first two productions, 1492 became an immediate hit in its first fully professional version. But many Bostonians, theatre-goers and critics alike, were immediately aware that Barnet and Pflueger's extravaganza had undergone a massive transformation at the hands of the burlesque entrepreneur Rice.

> . . . Those who saw 1492 as given by the Cadets last winter will find difficulty in reconciling it with the extravaganza presented at the Park Theatre Saturday evening, for the first time, by Mr. Rice's Surprise Party. To be sure the story of the piece remains the same, and in the first and second acts most of the music is unchanged; but speaking generally, only a skeleton of the whole has been retained. To give body to this, the experience and skill of professionals have introduced a long and variegated series of clap-trap novelties, fancy dances, "electrical sensations" and gorgeous costumes. To put it in a word, large spectacular effects have been aimed at and successfully achieved.[33]

Some critics were harsh in their appraisal of the additions by Rice.

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[32]Boston Herald, 4 September 1892.

[33]Boston Transcript, 6 September 1892.

> . . . In the Rice version the second act is devoted almost entirely to variety business of an inferior order. The songs and the jokes introduced therein are dull and the business is stupid.[34]

Nevertheless, 1492 was a home-grown product by a local favorite, which professionals had seen fit to purchase and perform. And Boston responded by filling the theatre each time it played.

By 10 October, Rice's production was entering its sixth week, and featured "La Regaloncity, the Child Wonder, in her famous Spanish Dances."[35]

By February 1893, the company had toured the show in the region, and one Boston paper reported,

> . . . Mr. Edward E. Rice has been conducting his famous 1492 over the frontier of New England villages, and has met with many an adventure.[36]

Shortly after the regional tour, Rice brought the play back to Boston, opening at the Columbia Theatre with a slightly revised edition of his "Surprise Party."

> . . . Of course, Rice has done all sorts of things to keep it fresh, and it opens at the Columbia with new scenery, and several new songs, and special

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[34] Boston Journal, 5 September 1892.

[35] Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, produced by E. E. Rice, Park Theatre, Boston, 10 October 1892, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[36] Boston Herald, 6 February 1893.

> features. But Isabella is likely to remain one of the strongest features of the show.[37]

The part of Isabella was still being played by the now popular Richard Harlow. The programme for the second week of the run at the Columbia Theatre, 13 to 18 February 1893, proudly announced:

> Positively Limited to Four Weeks Only!
> (Prior to their departure for New York and the West where they remain for the next twelve months.)
> Seventeeth Week in Boston, Second Week at this Theatre of
> The Magnificent Organization
> RICE'S SURPRISE PARTY
> In a superb production of the
> Brilliant Historical Extravaganza
> 1492 Up to Date[38]

Rice had found another Evangeline, and while he set about making arrangements for the New York opening and the subsequent tour, he continued to take advantage of the immense popularity of the show in Boston. Rice himself composed two new songs, "In New York" and "Chappies," for the Columbia Theatre production.[39] He evidently added new variety acts and scenery, and then tacked onto the title the ubiquitous crowd-pleaser "Up to Date," which no doubt prompted some Bostonians who had seen the show in its three previous incarnations to attend

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[37] Boston Journal, 6 February 1893.

[38] Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, produced by E. E. Rice, Columbia Theatre, Boston, 13 to 18 February 1893, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[39] Ibid.

yet another time. From his experience with Evangeline, the overwhelming nation-wide hit burlesque, Rice had certainly learned how to sell a show, even to those who thought they had already seen it.

After another brief tour of New England, Rice moved his "Surprise Party" to Philadelphia and the Walnut Street Theatre, where, in April 1893, the show received tepid reviews from local critics.

> . . . there is really nothing new in this ollapodrida of intermittent songs and dances and current gags, and which has been expressly constructed to satisfy what is believed to be a popular craving for the varieties. Originality is not, therefore, to be awarded this burlesque, reviving in almost every scene one's notions of the great Rice success, Evangeline.
> . . . There is a very great olio element in the 1492, and it is this, rather than any virtue in the story, or any splendor of scenery or grouping, which gives "go" to the entertainment.[40]

It is interesting to note this reviewer's reference to Evangeline. Rice clearly had a formula for burlesque which he imposed upon any framework. To the discerning eye (and ear), Rice's burlesques must have appeared rather similar, in spite of the different vehicle upon which each was based. With each revision of the show, the original must have become increasingly less important to the overall production. Unfortunately, it is not possible to compare Barnet's original 1492 with the many revisions it underwent during Rice's tenure

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[40] Philadelphia Telegraph, 4 April 1893.

as the show's producer. Were such a thing possible, the conclusion would very likely be that the show became more Rice's than Barnet's. But, as Barnet's name continued to appear in the various programmes and as he surely continued to receive royalties from Rice, 1492 must still be considered a Barnet show, and its professional progress duly recorded.

According to the production history of the play from Rice's own descriptions, 1492 left Philadelphia for a short New England tour, and then returned to Boston for "a farewell engagement of eight performances" at the Globe Theatre,[41] where Barnet had produced the first professional version of the show. Rice's "Surprise Party" now listed seventy artists appearing in 1492 Up to Date.[42] The show was "essentially the same, but it has been greatly brightened."[43]

Leaving Boston, Rice's "Surprise Party" performed 1492 on tour for seven engagements before arriving in New York.[44] Their first New York performance took place at

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[41]Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, produced by E. E. Rice, Palmer's Theatre, New York, 18 September 1893, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[42]Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, produced by E. E. Rice, Globe Theatre, Boston, 1 May 1893, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[43]Boston Herald, 2 May 1893.

[44]Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, produced by E. E. Rice, Palmer's Theatre, New York, 18 September 1893, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

Palmer's Theatre on 15 May 1893.[45] The cast included Yolande Wallace, Richard Harlow, Theresa Vaughn, Hattie Williams, and Walter Jones, who performed the dual role of King Ferdinand and Charlie Tatters, "a fringe on the edge of the crust of society."[46] This doubling served to introduce Jones into the specialty acts of the "New World," and was doubtless another device of Rice's for "improving" the show. There is no record of the changes which Rice instituted before opening 1492 in New York, although a note from a programme later that same year spelled out Rice's philosophy with regard to the production of burlesque:

> The whole production under the personal supervision and direction of Mr. Edward E. Rice, who will endeavor, by introduction of appropriate novelties from time to time, to keep it fully up to date.[47]

He certainly made good on this promise.

The New York response to 1492 was enthusiastic, not only because the show was found to be generally enjoyable, but also because it brought E. E. Rice back to the New York stage where his talents had been missed since the success of

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[45]John Chapman and Garrison P. Sherwood, eds., The Best Plays of 1894-1899 (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1955), p. 104.

[46]Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, produced by E. E. Rice, Palmer's Theatre, New York, 22 May 1893, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[47]Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, produced by E. E. Rice, Palmer's Theatre, New York, 9 November 1893, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

Evangeline. Most of the newspapers carried reviews of the show, and a sampling finds that 1492 was judged a success.

> A heterogeneous, bewildering, non-sensical and pleasing show is Rice's 1492. It is an up-to-date burlesque, with a good deal of fin de siecle woven in with the skirts of the corps de ballet and chorus.[48]

> . . . This burlesque, which has greatly amused Bostonians for about a year, was, of course, silly all the way through, but it was never dull. The fun in it was confined to one or two clever puns on timely topics and the horseplay of a host of variety actors. There was a constant flow of sweet music which tickled the ear for the moment and then melted away into another melody to be forgotten.[49]

> . . . 1492, which is "an historical extravaganza in three acts," with a libretto by R. A. Barnet and the music by Carl Pflueger, and is played by the company known as "Rice's Surprise Party," was last night, and will continue to be, a success. Of course the word "success" has many meanings, but it can be applied aptly enough to anything that perfectly fulfills the purpose it was designed to serve. This is particularly true when the purpose is a proper and laudable one, than which none can be more proper or laudable than the production of honest and wholesome laughter.[50]

> A whole lot of bright, catchy, spirited music; more than a score of pretty, graceful and attractively costumed girls; a stage flooded with brilliant varicolored electric illumination, and an ensemble effectively arranged--these are the chief characteristics of the performance of 1492 by Rice's Surprise Party, given at Palmer's Theatre Monday night. The people of New York know Edward E. Rice. He has catered to them in the matter of amusements for many

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[48] The Morning Journal, 16 May 1893.

[49] New York Herald, 16 May 1893.

[50] New York Times, 16 May 1893.

> years, and he has never disappointed his patrons in the matter of gorgeous productions. He is the father of "up-to-date" burlesque in this country, and to arrange such a production as was seen for the first time in this city last night is as natural to him as heat is to the sun. Mr. Rice has a genius for doing such things as these and making no mistakes.[51]

With standing-room-only crowds and good notices in the press, in addition to Rice's name and the build-up which he must have given the show, especially after almost a year of performances in Boston, 1492 was off to a fast start and a long run. Barnet was apparently in New York for the opening, as an unidentified newspaper clipping from one of the scrapbooks tells of his return to Boston to begin work on his next project. There had been no Cadet show for the year 1893, but Barnet hadn't been merely preoccupied with the success of 1492. He had written another show, and was about to organize its production company to begin rehearsals during the summer of 1893.

Meanwhile, Rice's "Surprise Party" continued its uninterrupted run of 1492 at Palmer's Theatre until 1 July 1893, when it closed for the summer. It re-opened at Palmer's on 26 August, and stayed at that theatre until 3 February 1894, when it moved to the Garden Theatre.[52] New York was still enthusiastic about the show, and continued to fill the house

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[51] New York Dramatic News, 20 May 1893.

[52] Chapman and Sherwood, eds., The Best Plays of 1894-1899, p. 104.

for each performance. From the reviews, it is clear that Rice was primarily responsible for the show's continuing success in New York:

> . . . The real secret of its popularity is to be found in the various sketches of character wherein the real burlesque comes. From a reference to the complete cast . . . it will be seen that the chief characters--excepting the Queen of Spain, who is impersonated by Mr. Richard Harlow--doff their historical titles for the second act and thus become very much "up to date." This act takes place in Madison Square, in front of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, with the Hotel Bartholdi and a bit of Broadway for the background. The king of Spain is reduced to Charlie Tatters, a "fringe on the edge of the crust of society"; the King's son becomes a comic policeman; and the Infanta Joanna is turned into a German waif. These characters, thanks to their admirable interpretation, together with a crowd of newsboys and other bits of readily recognized character studies, constitute the real success of the production.[53]

By December, Rice had added quite a few variety acts to the show, and a perusal of the programme of that time gives a good idea of the specialties to which the above review attributed the success of 1492:

> "Twelve Daily Hints from Paris"
> Spanish Ballet
> La Loie Joneseroso--engaged at enormous expense by the management (who desire to be entirely up to date) in the new creation, "The Turpentine Dance in Three Movements" . . .
> The Sensational Fantastic Toe Danseuse, Miss Mabel Clark

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[53] The Illustrated American, 30 September 1893.

Kick and Boom the "Hurrah Dudes"
"Chef" Ballet[54]

With the possible exception of the Spanish Ballet, there seems to be little connection between the above acts and the general theme of 1492. Such was the nature of specialty entertainment on the legitimate stage.

When 1492 moved to New York's Garden Theatre in February 1894, it was again reviewed in the New York newspapers, and as favorably as before.

> . . . The burlesque 1492, which was placed on the stage of the Garden Theatre on Monday night, is almost a new affair, but it keeps the name of the one that ran for so long a time at Palmer's, and has the benefit of all its reputation. So it has the advantage of all the fun and the prettiness that are contained in itself, and the added advantage of a wide fame which it does not have to wait for. So it can attract those persons who never saw the old piece by the glory of the old name, and it can attract those who did see it by the fact that it is itself new. It is the nature of these burlesques that they can be made new as often as the occasion requires. All that is necessary is to take out the old songs and dances and dialogues, and put in new songs and dances and dialogues. They can be taken out and replaced one at a time, or all at a time. The rest of the show, the part that the name belongs to, is only a frame, scarcely even that sometimes. In the case of 1492 the frame has been refilled to very good purpose. New things and bright things have been put everywhere. The progress of the entertainment is followed with all the laughter and good humor that animated the former one, and as that was enough to keep it in one theatre for many months, it is surely enough to be said about the new.[55]

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[54]Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, produced by E. E. Rice, Palmer's Theatre, New York, 6 December 1893, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[55]New York Dramatic News, 10 February 1894.

The practice of revising burlesques with constant additions in order to attract people back to the show is an interesting one. Actually, by examining the programmes from December (at Palmer's Theatre) and February (at the Garden), it is apparent that little had changed during the move from one house to the other. The above critic probably saw the show in its "original" (New York) form at the beginning of the run at Palmer's, and then saw it again when it moved to the Garden. The changes which occurred over six months must have been considerable, which accounts for the enthusiasm of the above review. Rice, as a successful and shrewd theatre man, must have been aware of the potential commercial value of staggered reviews, and surely took advantage of them as a means to prolong the run of his show.

After 187 performances in Boston,[56] and close to 250 performances in New York, 1492 had become a well-known and widely popular hit show. In Boston, on 16 February 1893, a benefit for the actor George W. Howard attracted a large cast of actors, including Joseph Jefferson, John Drew, and Maude Adams, and included, as part of the program, scenes from 1492.[57] Shortly thereafter, in New York, the famous Kilyani "living pictures" were introduced between the second and third

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[56] Illustrated American, 30 September 1893.

[57] Eugene Tompkins and Quincy Kilby, The History of the Boston Theatre, 1854-1901 (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1969), p. 402.

acts of 1492.[58] These pictures were set behind a large golden frame, and revealed when curtains were pulled aside. They were identified in the programme as "Queen Isabella's Art Gallery," no doubt to attempt a bit of continuity to cover the wildly heterogeneous subject matter of the "living pictures" themselves:

1. Diana
2. Moonlight
3. Sappho
4. The Fairy of the Moon
5. Hebe
6. Winter
7. The Daughter of the Sheik
8. Le Passeur
9. The Flautist
10. Psyche at the Well
11. Will O' the Wisp
12. Springtime
13. Venus of Milo
14. Faith, Hope, and Charity
15. Pharoah's Daughter
16. Cupid and Psyche
17. Ariadne
18. Aphrodite[59]

The use of these "living pictures"--actors costumed and arranged in position according to the subject of the particular scene--was certainly not peculiar to 1492. Other shows had them and would continue to do so while interest in them was maintained by audiences. The Kilyanis were the most famous

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[58]Allston T. Brown, A History of the New York Stage, 3 vols. (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1964), 3:524.

[59]Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, produced by E. E. Rice, Garden Theatre, New York, 19 March 1894, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

purveyors of the "living pictures." They continued to add new and different ones during the New York run of 1492, as well as for Rice's national tours of the show. The Kilyani "living pictures" became an integral part of the burlesque, and may have been at least partly responsible for the tremendous popularity of 1492.

Playing through its 350th New York performance on 4 June 1894, 1492 closed for the summer in early July.[60] When the show reopened at the Garden on 25 August, there were new features.[61] Rice must have brought his cast home from vacation a bit early in order to prepare the new material. It would be interesting to know how Rice went about making his changes, and just what his activities were during the summer break. One insight into a moment of Rice's inspiration was provided by an article in the New York World, which reviewed the changes in the production of 1492 from the previous season, and then went on to describe a real-life incident with a New York World advertising agent which figured into the action of the play. This incident, the arrest of the agent for obstructing a public walkway with his sign,

> . . . was copied from one which actually occurred on the same spot in Madison Square yesterday afternoon.

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[60]Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, produced by E. E. Rice, Garden Theatre, New York, 4 June 1894, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[61]Chapman and Sherwood, eds., The Best Plays of 1894-1899, p. 104.

> . . . Thus is 1492 brought up to yesterday afternoon. Mr. Rice's enterprise is worthy of New York in 1894.[62]

By following the events of the day and using his imagination to include a reference to them when possible, Rice was able to really satisfy the hunger of his audience for being "up to date."

The so-called "Second Edition" of 1492 which played into November 1894, was essentially the same as the show of the previous season, according to most of the New York newspaper critics. "The special novelty was the introduction of the fourth series of the Kilyani living pictures."[63] In mid-November of 1894, 1492 moved to the Harlem Opera House for one week.[64] Shortly thereafter, Rice reorganized his "Surprise Party" and took it on the road for a national tour. According to one of Rice's later programmes, 1492 had been performed 462 times in New York.[65]

From 1895-98, 1492 toured various cities all over the country, returning to Boston and New York periodically for brief engagements, as well as for the purpose of recasting and obtaining new specialties. The show played Chicago in

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[62] New York World, 26 August 1894.

[63] The Dramatic Mirror, 1 September 1894.

[64] Chapman and Sherwood, eds., The Best Plays of 1894-1899, p. 103.

[65] Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, produced by E. E. Rice, Hollis Street Theatre, Boston, 20 May 1895, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

January 1895, at the Columbia Theatre. It will be remembered that Chicago had been the scene of the exposition celebrating the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of the new world, engendering much curiosity and anticipation about the show, which opened after a typical barrage of publicity by Rice, accenting the long New York run. The Chicago reviews were generally favorable, save those which found the show disappointing after such a great build-up. The Chicago Herald spoke for the city when it called 1492 a "very agreeable diversion for an evening."[66]

In May of 1895, the show was back in Boston at the Hollis Street Theatre. Boston welcomed its "favorite Burlesque" back to town with lavish praise.[67] After a summer break, Rice's company was again at the Harlem Opera House for a week prior to another national tour.[68] A review from a performance in Chicago in February of 1896 suggests that Rice's production was becoming a bit threadbare:

> . . . There is a shabby, a weary atmosphere about the living pictures and the show which tells of its last legs . . . But the comedians are talented, the dancers good, the specialties most diverting. . . .[69]

From this review it is apparent that what sustained the show

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[66] Chicago Herald, 14 January 1895.

[67] Boston Herald, 21 May 1895.

[68] Chapman and Sherwood, eds., The Best Plays of 1894-1899, p. 104.

[69] Chicago News, 4 February 1896.

on its national tours were the diversions. How much, if any, of the original 1492 by Barnet and Pflueger still remained, is unknown. There is no mention of whether Rice made occasional visits to tighten up the show or whether the show slowly became unraveled until it returned to New York.

Rice's tour had been partly under the management of the powerful theatrical agents Klaw and Erlanger, which probably insured easy access into the major theatrical markets in the country. It is not clear whether Klaw and Erlanger were behind the Boston and New York productions of 1492. In March 1896, the show returned to New York for a week of performances at the Grand Opera House.[70]

As late as September 1897, Rice was still producing the show as 1492 made its third annual national tour. A month later, the show appeared in New Orleans, and one review from that city attests to the national fame of 1492:

> . . . The public is familiar with this piece, in a general way; but thanks to the new features which are introduced each season, it remains always fresh and always attractive.[71]

This tour during the season of 1897-98 may have been Rice's last association with the show. There is no evidence to show that he organized another tour of 1492 or that he was

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[70]Chapman and Sherwood, eds., The Best Plays of 1894-1899, p. 104.

[71]New Orleans Picayune, 4 October 1897.

responsible for any further productions of the show in Boston or New York. The show itself, however, did not disappear.

In the autumn of 1898, 1492 returned to Boston to the Grand Opera House for a production which was termed a "revival" in most of the Boston newspapers. It was the first production of the show in Boston for two years, and it was received with enthusiasm for several reasons. As a Boston-born gift to the nation, 1492 had achieved great fame, and was thus an object of local pride. Its author, Robert A. Barnet, had, by 1898, written six more musical shows, some of which had enjoyed professional productions in New York and on national tours. In addition, Barnet had written five of those shows originally for the Cadets, and his local celebrity had swelled as a result. As Boston's longest-running musical, 1492 had already proved itself extremely popular to one generation of Bostonians, and was eagerly anticipated by another. This revival was a new production of 1492--no longer one of Rice's "Surprise Parties"--organized around a popular vaudeville female impersonator named "Stuart," who took the part of Isabella. The company which had been recruited was

> . . . made up wholly of performers who had never been seen in 1492 before and the quick response of the spectators to the familiar jibes and quips as well as to the music of Mr. Pflueger, showed that the former popularity of the piece was founded on its own genuine merits and did not depend on favorites.[72]

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[72] Boston Advertiser, 13 September 1898.

This notice suggests that this revival might have discarded some of the numerous interpolations made by Rice in favor of a script which, if not Barnet's original, may have been close to it. However, a further examination of the Boston reviews for this production reveals that there were indeed interpolations--of a new and more "up to date" variety--which helped the play to be received very favorably, six-and-a-half years after it had first been produced in Boston.

It was highly appropriate that a play about Spain, which had previously thrived on being "up to date," should make reference to the intensely patriotic and jingoistic war between Spain and the United States, which had been ended by armistice only a month before the 1898 Boston revival of 1492 opened.

> . . . The revival in this city of Barnet and Pflueger's extravaganza, 1492, at the Grand Opera House comes opportunely, the war with Spain causing all references to Spanish history, and especially to Spain's operations in the New World, to be received with peculiar zest. It was natural that the Spanish trouble should have recognition in this revival, and that more or less glorification over the outcome of the war should be lugged into it; but upon the whole this is not done to the nauseating degree that is by some of the theatre managers considered the correct thing, and in fact the allegorical representation of the whole business, Philippines included, is no more irrelevant than very much of the other matter that is injected into the entertainment.[73]

One can only speculate about what Rice might have done with

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[73]Boston Transcript, 13 September 1898.

the show, given the popularity of the recent successful war with Spain. The above review indicates that the producer of this revival did his best to span the centuries from Columbus to the Battleship Maine. As to Boston's opinion about the difference between the Cadet production of 1892 and this 1898 revival, reviewers were quite clear:

> . . . There is much to praise and little to criticize in this new version of 1492, and although the piece as it is now given bears but little resemblance to the one played long ago by the cadets, it is in general a pleasing performance.
>
> A number of the characters and scenes have been entirely changed, and while the piece still has a connected story, a large portion of the book has been cut to give room for specialties. In many cases this is a great improvement.[74]

The above review seems to confirm the suspicion that in spite of a revival in Boston without the participation of E. E. Rice, 1492 had undergone irrevocable changes, and was Barnet's show in name only. Unfortunately, there are no comments--either published or private--from Barnet. He must have long since accepted the inevitable changes in his works, and relied on the professional producers to deal fairly with him in the payment of royalties. To that end, there exist no family records to indicate Barnet's royalties from the various productions of 1492. However, according to a newspaper clipping from one of Barnet's scrapbooks, undated, but assumed to be from 1895, Barnet was earning royalties of almost one thousand

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[74]Boston Globe, 13 September 1898.

dollars per week from various productions of 1492 and several other shows.[75] This is the only mention of royalties in the scrapbooks. If this figure is indeed accurate, Barnet was a wealthy man in the middle 1890s. One of the scrapbooks gives evidence of such wealth, as it is filled with hotel stickers from France, Switzerland, and Italy, indicating a trip to Europe. A further indication of wealth is Barnet's venture into another, non-theatrical business. Sometime during the 1890s he bought himself the rights to be the Boston agent for Ruinart, a French Brut champagne. Several of the scrapbooks are full of clippings--mostly from theatre programmes--announcing the excellence of Ruinart Brut champagne, as provided by R. A. Barnet, Boston, U. S. A. There is no mention of when Barnet bought the rights to Ruinart Brut or when he relinquished them. Nor is there any further mention of how long Barnet continued to receive such magnificent royalties from his shows. It must be assumed that the corner-stone of his new-found wealth was 1492, and when the show was dropped by Rice, Barnet's income from his plays dropped off.

Another revival of 1492 took place in 1904, when the E. V. Phelan Opera Company toured New England in a production of

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[75] New York World, 5 May 1895.

> . . . E. E. Rice and R. A. Barnet's Great Success, 1492, with Mr. Richard Harlow--the Creator of the Part--as Isabella, the Daisy Queen of Spain.[76]

There is no available itinerary for this tour.

The last documented revival of 1492 took place in Boston at the same Globe Theatre where Barnet had produced the first professional version of the show. There is no mention of whether Barnet saw one Frank B. Blair, who was

> . . . credited with the 1908 production and . . . [showed] scant mercy to the original text.[77]

The situations of the first and third acts were apparently left intact, but the second act was full of new specialties, much to the dismay of one critic:

> . . . Long passages of the dialogue are of that type of humor which causes a shudder instead of a laugh. Moreover, such promise of a story as the first act gives is wholly lost in the vaudeville turns, and the interpolated numbers are not conspicuous for their melody or point. Happily this act is of such abnormal length that it can be unsparingly "cut," and the more drastically that operation is performed the better the final result will be.[78]

This review may indicate some of the changes which had begun to affect the theatre-going public in the sixteen years between

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[76]Programme: 1492, by Barnet and Pflueger, produced by the E. V. Phelan Opera Company, 11 July 1904, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[77]Boston Transcript, 21 April 1908.

[78]Boston Herald, 21 April 1908.

the Cadet production of 1492 and this last revival. Barnet's brand of minstrel show humor might be part of what the above critic referred to as causing a "shudder." The harsh commentary on the specialties might indicate a new desire for a less heterogeneous type of musical entertainment than had been popular a few years earlier. Whatever the reason, 1492 and other such musical hodge-podges, which were merely vehicles for vaudeville entertainment on the legitimate stages of America, were passing out of fashion.

Robert A. Barnet enjoyed great popularity as a result of 1492. Unfortunately, it was his only big hit. Had he been able to follow 1492 with other works of equal success, he might have become one of the country's best-known authors of burlesque and extravaganza. Others of his shows were widely produced, and some even toured nationally, but none made the hit that 1492 did. Part of that success--if not most of it--must go to the credit of Edward E. Rice, who turned Barnet's show into his own successful theatrical production. Rice produced other Barnet shows, but none seemed to have his personal stamp on it as 1492 had. After 1492, Barnet's name was known to theatre-goers, critics, and producers in New York and across the country. Such national recognition surely increased Barnet's self-esteem as a successful playwright, and convinced him that the theatre was the place for him to make his livelihood.

CHAPTER V

PRINCE PRO TEM

The success of 1492 inspired Robert A. Barnet to bypass the Cadets and create his next musical play directly for the professional stage. During the late summer of 1893, when 1492 had resumed playing at Palmer's Theatre in New York, Barnet opened Prince Pro Tem at the New Taunton Theatre in Taunton, Massachusetts. This two-act "musical fantasie" had a libretto by Barnet and music by L. S. Thompson.

Lewis Sabin Thompson (1868-1908) was a young Harvard graduate whose musical experience had been largely confined to two productions by Harvard's Hasty Pudding Club. The second of these shows, called The Sphinx; or Love at Random, with words by one David Gray, had been produced in 1892. Barnet may have seen this show (which was later rewritten for the professional stage), and remembered its young composer when the time came for him to choose a collaborator. L. S. Thompson became a favorite partner for Barnet, most often adding songs to the latter's shows for their professional productions. Thompson became a well-known writer of love songs, piano waltzes, and Christmas music in Boston at the same time that Barnet was writing his musical works. It is very likely that Barnet helped further Thompson's brief career

through their collaboration. If so, he was not the only musician/composer whom Barnet helped.

Prince Pro Tem was quite different from 1492 in many ways. It was not a burlesque, and as such did not display the strengths of comic invention which Injured Innocents and 1492 had shown. There was a lot of love interest in Prince Pro Tem, a content which had been present in only a limited way in Barnet's previous works. This show was set in a more fictional kingdom than the other two, and depended far more on the element of plot, at least in the first act. Prince Pro Tem, though rather frivolous and full of topical humor, represents a more mature effort on the part of Barnet in his development of plot and character for a musical play.

A typescript in the possession of the Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library gives three acts for the play, but fails to include any of the lyrics to the musical numbers. Those lyrics are available in the published vocal score, and the ensuing discussion of the play will combine the dialogue from the typescript with the lyrics of the vocal score. It must be assumed that the typescript is from the original production, in spite of the fact that the vocal score calls Prince Pro Tem "a Comic Opera in Two Acts."[1] Barnet probably made changes in the original script, perhaps compressing three acts into two, during the run of the play.

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[1]R. A. Barnet and L. S. Thompson, Prince Pro Tem, Vocal Score (Boston: Miles and Thompson, 1893).

Prince Pro Tem is set in the country of Fogia, which has a strange set of laws regarding its prince. As the first act begins, the chorus, townspeople at Fogia are preparing themselves for the birthday of their ruler, Prince DeMocrates. They are exhorted to buy flowers from Florita, who sings a "Flower Song":

Florita: Come buy my flow'rs,
My roses gay and blooming!
Come and buy my flow'rs,
Born of the sun and showers,
Culled in dewy hours when day was dawning.
Lilies all in white,
The brides of yesternight,
Marigolds so bright,
Violets and mignonette!
Buy my flowers,
Daisies true and pansies tender!
Gone is the dark;
High is flown from the lark,
And the smiling morn breaks into bloom!
Roses red! Roses white!
Come and buy my flow'rs,
From fairy bow'rs so gay![2]

The chorus then picks up a refrain about buying flowers to honor the royal birthday, as they break into dance. This opening scene certainly does little more than set the stage for the ensuing action; but it is important in another way. Barnet, in writing directly for the professional stage, could transcend the limitations imposed upon him by the Cadets. The most important of these limitations, with regard to extravaganza, was the all-male chorus. Barnet evidently learned

[2]Ibid., pp. 1-3.

from E. E. Rice that one of the major selling points of the heterogeneous musical entertainment was the presence of a chorus of pretty women, dancing and singing in a charming and engaging manner. What better way to begin his first purely professional show than with such a female chorus, decorating the stage with beautiful and colorful flowers? This choral opening is an excellent example of Barnet's ability to learn from and adapt to more successful means of presentation. This theme of adapting to change recurs as Barnet became more successful in his chosen mode of theatrical presentation.

The arrival of the Prince's sisters, the Duchesses Maria and Agnes, precedes the arrival of the Prince, who is not at all pleased by the grand celebration:

Maria:	Your loving subjects have come to honor your birthday.
Prince:	Honor my birthday! Why do you want to remind me of the awful day when I was born, without the slightest congratulation, heir to the Princedom of Fogia?
Agnes:	Aren't you ashamed of yourself Edward?
Maria:	You are royal! Remember what's expected of royalty.
Prince:	"Expected of royalty." A country where the laws compel "Royalty" to spend thirty days in jail for horse stealing when the thief is another man and the horse is a jackass ought not to expect much.[3]

[3]R. A. Barnet, "Prince Pro Tem," Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library (no pagination).

The "Prince's Song and Chorus" follows, in which the story of Fogia's laws and how they came into being are revealed:

Prince: Some time ago there lived a man
Who made our laws on his own plan.
He came to town as senator
From district in the woods;
Though he knew law from A to Z
He really was "green goods."
Says he, "I have a certain way
To make the folks the laws obey.
Just make the prince responsible
For crimes done by the crowd."
The people said, "We'll try it on."
The prince said, "Damn," out loud.
The people said, "You are a brick,
Please make our laws, and make them quick!"
He made the laws to be in force
Till he returned to town.
He then "lit out," has ne'er come back;
I'd like to call him down.
To live has been a problem since
For him who has the job of prince.
So long as I've a gold reserve
Oh! I can laugh at crime,
For "Justice" has commercial trend
He has his price each time.

Chorus: He made the laws of Fogia,
We ne'er shall see him more,
Though when he went west,
For change and rest,
He just said, "Au revoir."[4]

The above song comes directly out of the dialogue, and is crucial to the plot of the play. For the first time, Barnet had begun to create an integrated libretto, in which many, though not all of the musical numbers grew out of the dialogue. In the absence of a libretto for 1492, one needs to return to

[4]Barnet and Thompson, Prince Pro Tem, Vocal Score, pp. 13-16.

Injured Innocents in order to examine the crude connections between dialogue and song which marked Barnet's previous efforts. Clearly, in this, Barnet's third full-length musical work, he had begun to learn a great deal about the structure of a unified libretto. In spite of the frivolous subject matter, Barnet continued to take important artistic steps forward as a librettist.

Following the exit of the Prince, the chorus welcomes two characters onto the scene, Justice and Law, who are very important to the state, given what we know about its peculiar laws.

Chorus: Here comes Justice, Here comes Justice,
Lord high Justice Fogia!
He our trust is. He our trust is.
Glory of the Fogian bar.
Sing his praises, go your wayses
If a cunning rogue you are.
Here comes Justice, Here comes Justice,
Lord high Justice Fogia!
He's a dandy, Oh so handy--
When there's crime in Fogia,
Our defender, tough but tender--
Hail him loudly, Rah! Rah! Rah!
Oh so clever--For there never
Can be his like in Fogia.
He is a dandy, always handy,
Glory of the Fogian bar. Hail! Hail![5]

After this lavish introduction, and in the manner of a distinguished Gilbert and Sullivan lord, Justice has his own song, supported by the chorus, entitled "Fogian Law":

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[5]Ibid., pp. 17-21.

Justice: I am the royal Justice,
And the boss of Fogian law.

Chorus: The boss of Fogian law.

Justice: My decisions, they are daisies,
And my rulings have no flaw.

Chorus: No not in Fogian law.

Justice: When e're a leading citizen
Has had of wine his fill--
Is creating a disturbance
And indulging in a mill,
I never, never pull him in;
I send our Prince the bill.
That is Fogian law.

Chorus: That is Fogian law, Fogian law.[6]

This song continues through two more long verses. Its comparison with Gilbert and Sullivan, particularly with a musical number such as Sir Joseph Porter's song, "When I Was a Lad," from H. M. S. Pinafore, shows that Barnet was familiar with Gilbert and Sullivan, as he was with Shakespeare, Wagner, and other artists whose work was either copied by or heavily influenced Barnet. Unfortunately, the above song bears a similarity to Gilbert and Sullivan only in form. The content, especially the message behind the words, which W. S. Gilbert gave to his libretti, is absent in Barnet. Although he was sometimes hailed as America's Gilbert (particularly in Boston), and his output, like Gilbert's, was enormous, Barnet never really went beyond pure entertainment in the writing of his shows. The English had a longer tradition of burlesque than

[6]Ibid., pp. 22-24.

the Americans, and the sophisticated level of Gilbert and Sullivan's comic operas was unattainable in the United States until well into the twentieth century.

Following his song, Justice, with his cohort Law, informs the Prince that because it is his birthday, he may take a holiday and need not fear any punishment. The Prince's reaction is to immediately knock down both Justice and Law, who regain their composure with a typical Barnet turn of phrase:

> (They get up--Justice feels of Law's head)
>
> Law: Has he broken any of the laws, Mr. Howe?
>
> Justice: They appear to be all right, Mr. Hummel.[7]

Following this incident, Justice informs the Prince of another important matter:

> . . . it is also your day to secure a "Prince Pro Tem," that is, if you want one.[8]

A stranger would be a prime target for a new prince, but no stranger has been seen in Fogia for years, so the Prince leaves the stage grumbling, and relegates his daughter Lucie to her fate, having to choose to marry one of the two dull-but-amorous Dukes, George or Arthur. She, of course loves neither, and sings a lovely ballad to her unknown love:

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[7]Barnet, "Prince Pro Tem."

[8]Ibid.

Lucie: More constant, far, than any star,
My course I vary never--
And hold my way 'till breaks the day
When I am Love's forever;
Robins are mating
Lonely I'm waiting,
Waiting, Sweetheart, for thee.
The bees are beaux to every rose,
And many a winged rover,
Had wed his mate in fragrant state
Among the fields of clover.
Among, among the fields of clover.
Who shall discover, for me a lover,
Waiting, Sweetheart, for thee--

Come then my love unknown, hear my appeal:
Thyself reveal--leave me no more alone
For I am thine by love's own sign--
Could I but see thy face
And hear thee say this very day
"I love, I love thee, I love but thee."[9]

Suddenly there is great excitement, as a stranger arrives in Fogia. Once he is safely within the gates, the Prince orders the gates locked, and one Tommy Tompkins introduces himself to the astonished Fogians as a wild animal buyer from New Jersey:

Tompkins: I buy for this menagerie,
My home's the state of New Jersee,
My name is Tompkins with a P.

Chorus: Who is this charming stranger?

Tompkins: My specialtee is novel freaks,
Won'drous barber! Never speaks!
Policeman! Hasn't slept for weeks!

. . . . . .

Jerus'lem knows me for my style,
I'm called a masher on the Nile,
I paralyzed Egypt for awhile.

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[9]Barnet and Thompson, Prince Pro Tem, Vocal Score, pp. 25-29.

Chorus: Who is this charming stranger?

Tompkins: I dress in every style that goes,
I'm up to date in last year's clothes.
I am the "beau-est" of the beaux.

Refrain: "Tommy Tompkins, howdy-do!
Tommy Tompkins, we love you!"
All the ladies say,
Call me night and day.
"Tommy Tommy Tompkins!
Tommy Tomkins come and woo!
Tommy Tomkins we'll be true!"
Young girls cry for me,
Old maids sigh for me,
I am such a dear![10]

This brash entrance song is followed by a monologue in which Tompkins introduces a female performer who travels with him, by the name of Rosy. This monologue is a piece of vintage Barnet, another example of the stump speech, whether it was a part of the show proper, or merely a note to the audience in the programme. The presence of the following stump speech in Prince Pro Tem breaks up the flow of the piece. The speech seems very much out of place in a work which is lighter, more integrated, and on the whole less given to the usual flights of Barnet's famous puns and superficial word-banter. Unfortunately, it is a harbinger of things to come.

Tompkins: I take great pleasure in introducing to your notice "Wild Rosy of Yucatan." (enter Rosy) Whoa! Rosy was born an orphan. She surprised her parents when quite young, by singing "Home Sweet Home" with her hands tied behind her--but she now eats pie with a knife and in other

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[10]Ibid., pp. 30-32.

> ways endears herself to the masses. In the year 18-- yours truly chanced upon the scene and not until after bribing the father with a safety razor and a bottle of Piso's cough medicine did he consent to exhibit his loved one. (off stage) Boy, get off that giraffe; do you want to break his neck? To resume: Rosy is a descendant of the shovelliers of France, on the shovel end. She speaks two languages, English and American. Her appetite is irregular. She lives chiefly on Angel cake and devilled ham. Her head is a study. Its shape is something between the voluptuous symmetry of a squashed grape and the spreading plumpness of a gas balloon. Her face compels her to travel mostly by night or through wooded roads. She likes woods. When any one approaches they can see she takes to the woods. Rosy never forgets an enemy and never remembers a friend. She can work for seven or eight days with drinking, whereas I can drink for the same space of time without working. Her pictures are for sale. There are two styles, one with a fan and the other without. Those purchasing both pictures kindly wait until after the performance when "Wild Rosy" will show you how the Indians make Welsh rarebits.[11]

This speech has an element of the American "tall tale" in it, reminiscent of such popular stories as "Paul Bunyan." It carries in it some of the spirit of Mark Twain, whose humor was very popular at the end of the nineteenth century. Barnet was well aware of current trends in literature and drama, and perhaps felt that a bit of exaggerated "local color" would add some spice to his play. The speech itself seems to be smoother than most of his previous, longer stump speeches,

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[11]Barnet, "Prince Pro Tem."

but there is no follow-up on it in the play. The character of Rosy--unless she distinguished herself in a specialty number--does little more than run on and off the stage watching out for Tompkins' interests, and later on in the play, she sings a brief song. So the speech is as out-of-step with the play as it is out of context.

Following a brief flirting scene between Tompkins and the Duchesses Maria and Agnes and a short interrogation of Tompkins by the Prince, Justice steps forward to announce to the assembled crowd:

> People of Fogia . . . Prince DeMocrates, feeling the need of a vacation without pay, and by the right given him by our constitution, appoints Thomas Tompkins to be your Prince Pro Tem.[12]

Tompkins is aimiably taken aback, but manages a short dialogue with the Prince:

> Tompkins: Thanks, I decline . . .
>
> Prince: If you do I'll hang you.
>
> Tompkins: Thanks, then I accept.[13]

Having thus accepted the position which he could not refuse, Tompkins is saluted by the population of Fogia in a rousing song of praise for the Prince Pro Tem:

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[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

Hail him! Hail him! Hail him!
Prince Pro Tem of Fogia
We hail the loudly Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!
We thy subjects true allegiance vow most proudly,
Tommy Tompkins take the throne!
Royal potentate, Ha! Ha!
Monarch good and great, Ha! Ha!
Hail the mighty Prince Pro Tem of Fogia
Lord of land and sea Ha! Ha!
Hail the mighty Prince Pro Tem of Fogia
Hail the mighty Prince Pro Tem!
Hail to Tommy Tompkins, Prince of Fogia![14]

According to the typescript, this is the end of Act I. But according to the published vocal score, it is merely the end of the first scene of the first act. As the newspaper accounts generally support a two-act structure, Barnet probably expanded the first act and did away with the third when he mounted the production. There is some confusion between the typescript and the vocal score about the sequence of the next scenes and musical numbers. The typescript contains a lot of pencil marks--crossouts and additions of words, lines, and even whole pages--for the second and third acts. One can only speculate about when these changes were made, although they must have been completed before the vocal score was published, later that same year (1893).

Tompkins is persuaded to woo the Princess Lucie in order that he might find a way out of his predicament of being Prince Pro Tem. In front of a group of official censors (hiding behind paneling on the set), Tompkins wins his lady

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[14]Barnet and Thompson, Prince Pro Tem, Vocal Score, pp. 33-36.

with a combination of romantic wooing and faintly humorous one-liners:

Lucie: Oh Prince, I'm so miserable. (weeps)

Tompkins: Oh that I had the right to dry those tears. Where is my handkerchief--"my hank." (leads Lucie up to couch)

Lucie: You have been so kind and papa so cruel.

Tompkins: My dear Lucie--pardon my audacity--but I cannot go forth without telling you-- (she starts to go)

Lucie: How dare you sir.

Tompkins: But I haven't told you anything yet. You cannot--you must not dismiss me thus. Oh don't give me the "hurry." I know I am a stranger to you. I know you will not take advantage of my ignorance. Think of the long weary years I have waited for you. Think of the heart throbbings I have throbbed for you . . . Lucie, ere seen I loved you and loved thee seen. Oh come to the wider life of New York. Leave these haunts of innocence and virtue and come and shed fragrance and flavor on me and the jaded metropolis--metropolitan--New York. You say your father is worth a million dollars?

Lucie: Alas, yes.

Tompkins: And you doubt my love. Oh Lucie one word. . . . Lucie DeMocrates I love you. I have come to tell you I must leave you in ten minutes for ten years. Will you be mine?

Lucie: Oh Tom! (embrace) And you'll never leave me?

Tompkins: Never! Never! Nothing shall separate us, not even marriage.[15]

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[15]Barnet, "Prince Pro Tem."

Of course, following this love scene, the lovers break into a saccharine love duet full of Cupids, golden chains, loving swains, and lots of "lovey dovey." Only the final verse is necessary in order to give an idea of the whole song:

Tompkins: Wilt thou trust me ever, ever darling?
Lucie: My love! for ever and for aye.
Tompkins: Thou art mine!
Lucie: I am thine!
Tompkins: With joy we warble Love's sweet lay.
Lucie: You'll buy my bonnets, yes! you may.
Tompkins: We'll be so merry.
Lucie: Yes, blithe and merry.
Both: Singing the live-long day.[16]

This is not a particularly good example of an early Barnet love song, but it does serve to illustrate what Barnet must have believed to be the component parts of the love song. Lots of stilted phrases (punctuated by "thee's" and "thou's"), in addition to a great many cliches and grandiose declarations, all seem to be integral to the love song. Of course, the addition of music, actors, and the proper situation might alter these perceptions somewhat, but not enough to make the words seem like anything but an extremely heightened sense of the sentimental. As has been mentioned before, the late

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[16]Barnet and Thompson, Prince Pro Tem, Vocal Score, pp. 83, 84.

nineteenth century was full of such wildly romantic words and scenes in the theatre. Romance combined with melodrama in grand opera to produce such masterpieces as Cavalleria Rusticana, I Pagliacci, La Boheme, Tosca, and Madame Butterfly, all of which were written during the years in which Barnet poured out his own burlesques and extravaganzas. Barnet's concept of romance for the stage seems to have fallen somewhere between the melodrama of these grand operas and the lightly humorous, mocking romance of Gilbert and Sullivan, in which captains' daughters fell in love with foremast hands, and the daughters of Major-Generals succumbed to uncommon pirates.

The return of Prince DeMocrates and his retinue to the stage surprises the lovers, who are forcibly separated, amid general plottings about how to do away with Tompkins. Before anything definite can be decided on, Tompkins interrupts the scene with a call for "Overture"! According to the typescript, this call is followed by an "orchestral overture of sixteen measures," and then the following dialogue:

Tompkins: If you went to the post office, bought a stamp, and asked the clerk to put it on, and he refused, what would you do?

Justice: I'd put it on myself, wouldn't you?

Tompkins: No, I'd put it on the letter.[17]

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[17]Barnet, "Prince Pro Tem."

Tompkins calls out, "Susan Eliza," and the whole company breaks into a "Minstrel Song":

Dere is a girl whose lips am sweet!
Susan Eliza!
Dere is a girl with nice large feet!
Susan Eliza!
Handsome as night when stars ain't seen!
My! She looks with a lofty mien!
Dressed all up in blue and green!
She is such a queen!

How we love you, Susan Eliza,
Oh Susie Sue!
You are a coal black beauty:
Oh my! how we love you!
Susan Eliza, Oh Susie Sue!
We love you darling Susan, Oh!
Susan Eliza!

When she walks she "takes the cake!"
Susan Eliza!
When she smiles, hearts do break!
Susan Eliza!
When she goes strolling in the park,
And she blush at a coon's remark.
She can always keep it dark!
She is such a queen![18]

After this song, Tompkins has the following exchange with Law and the Prince:

Tompkins: I say, Bones, what makes your hands so white?

Law: I sleep with my gloves on.

Tompkins: Do you sleep with your hat on?

Prince: Thomas Tompkins, is this any way to receive royalty?

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[18]Barnet and Thompson, Prince Pro Tem, Vocal Score, pp. 86-88.

Tompkins: It's my little artless theatrical way.[19]

This minstrel passage, built directly into the play instead of added to it in the way of a specialty, provides an illustration of how disruptive the disparate elements of the heterogeneous musical entertainment could be. It appears out of place here, in the climax of a fairly well-constructed plot, in which romance is leading the principal character into possible danger. Barnet felt the need to take time out from his story in order to entertain his audience with a potpourri of minstrel fare. Perhaps he felt that the plot of Prince Pro Tem was moving along too harmoniously, and the audience needed a break. Whatever the reason, this passage also illustrates Barnet's basic problem with regard to writing shows. He continually fell back on what was popular, refusing to experiment boldly in different ways. Prince Pro Tem is certainly not a brilliant show, but it did differ from Barnet's previous shows, at least to this point, in that the dialogue was rather smooth and not interrupted too much by superfluous word-play. The songs were fairly well integrated into the book, and the characters were on the way to being well-developed. Had Barnet kept out the minstrel passage--and a few other unnecessary encumbrances--and continued his plot development and integrated musical numbers through to the end of the show, he might have begun to realize the strength of a show which

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[19]Barnet, "Prince Pro Tem."

was unified by plot and character.

Following the minstrel passage, the plot and action of Prince Pro Tem seem to disintegrate. Barnet is up to his old tricks, with puns and word-play, silly song-and-dance numbers, and even the inclusion of a lion, not unlike the bear of Injured Innocents. Perhaps this animal gag is representative of Barnet's philosophy of musical theatre: a circus with as much action and diversity as is possible without straining the bounds of an already exaggerated theatrical setting. Again it is unfortunate because Prince Pro Tem had begun with such promise of being a more mature work for Barnet.

The third act (in the typescript) is very difficult to follow, with cross-outs and pencil additions. A cross-check with the vocal score for Act II reveals that musical numbers had been substantially rearranged by the time Barnet had the score published. But the general action is not difficult to follow. The lovers are separated, but are somehow reunited and married clandestinely. When they are caught, finally, after another minstrel interlude, Tompkins is sentenced to death, according to the laws of Fogia. The final scene is, according to the expectations of the day, rather predictable:

Lucie: Papa, can't we get Justice to reconsider:

Prince: No, there's no help for us unless we get the laws changed, and no one but a Fogi can do that.

Tompkins: Can't you wire him papa?

Prince: We've no trace of the family since we lost run of a grandson named Riceback.

Tompkins: Riceback! Not Peter Riceback?

(chorus takes one step towards Tompkins)

Prince: Yes!

Tompkins: Kept a bake house in East Newark?

(chorus takes one step towards Tompkins)

Prince: You know him?

Tompkins: Know him? He was my grandfather!

(the chorus show reverence by kneeling and bowing)

Law: Mighty descendant of Old Fogi, what will you do with our laws?

Tompkins: I repeal them all. You have no laws. Fogia shall now be ruled by Love and Woman![20]

This brings the play to a close, presumably with a grand choral finale (though this is unclear in the vocal score).

On the suface, Prince Pro Tem appears as frivolous as Injured Innocents and 1492. There are differences, however, which indicate that Barnet was learning how to write a better musical. These differences have been discussed piecemeal during the above examination of the play and need not be repeated. Perhaps the most important element to be considered is the method of presentation. Barnet, evidently buoyed by

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[20]Ibid.

the professional success of 1492--which included his own brief stint as the show's producer at the Globe Theatre in Boston--decided to dispense with an amateur "try-out," and introduce the show directly into the professional theatre.

A programme for the New Taunton Theatre, Taunton, Massachusetts, for 1 September 1893, reads as follows:

> First Time on any Stage of
> PRINCE PRO TEM
> by R. A. Barnet, author of 1492, and
> L. S. Thompson, composer of The Sphinx,
> produced by
> The Barnet Comic Opera Co.
> under the management of Mr. R. M. Field[21]

There is no mention of Barnet's participation in the mounting of the show, and he did not play a role in it. But the organization called The Barnet Comic Opera Co. indicates that he was behind the organization of this production, perhaps in the role of producer and stage director. The original cast included at least one familiar name to Barnet musicals, Harry Edgerly, in the role of Justice. The company was mixed--unlike the Cadets--and women portrayed women's roles. Two women were even cast in the roles of the Dukes George and Arthur, the suitors of Princess Lucie, and in the role of the Royal Page. It is impossible to tell whether the actors were professionals (as is assumed, by and large), or local Boston amateurs. But the show was decidedly professional in

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[21]Programme: Prince Pro Tem, by Barnet and Thompson, New Taunton Theatre, 1 September 1893, Harvard Theatre Collection.

intent, and Barnet was clearly testing the waters for his future as a professional playwright.

From Taunton, the show followed a curious route to Boston, travelling to Brooklyn, where it was "rehearsed . . . before an indulgent public until the performers were familiar with their parts."[22] While in Brooklyn at the Park Theatre, Prince Pro Tem was reviewed by the New York Herald:

> . . . Prince Pro Tem, by Barnet and Thompson, well named a fantasie, was presented for the first time in this locality at the Park Theatre, Brooklyn, last night. The piece had its initial production at Taunton, Mass., last Friday, and was favorably received there. The same cannot be said of its reception in Brooklyn last night. A small audience was awakened to generous applause here and there at an occasional good joke or bit of amusing comedy "business," but take it all in all, Prince Pro Tem is weak from a musical point of view, is amateurish in dramatic conception and was neither well sung nor well acted.[23]

Barnet was probably responsible for the staging of the show, and was in Brooklyn with it to read such harsh criticism as the above. Perhaps because of such criticism, Barnet decided to pull the show out of New York and take it to Boston where the critics were more favorable, and where he could further work out the show's difficulties. Seven days after the above review, Prince Pro Tem opened to encouraging notices in Boston.

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[22] Boston Journal, 12 September 1893.

[23] New York Herald, 5 September 1893.

> . . . It is refreshingly clean fun; one verse of one topical song containing the only trace of the Rabelasian humor in which extravaganzas are usually so offensively rich.[24]

> . . . But if the auditor will not demand the logical treatment which light opera at present declines to give, he will laugh until his sides ache, and he will find also (rarest attributes of all) considerable originality of humor, legitimate sarcasm, and pleasant, unhackneyed music.[25]

> . . . The music is by all odds the best feature of the piece. If Mr. Thompson has not in every instance been original, if there are here and there reminiscences of other composers, he is at least to be commended for the general excellence of his work. It is extremely good, and much of it will live long after Prince Pro Tem has been forgotten.[26]

The show had opened the regular season at the Boston Museum, and Barnet was as much the object of critical judgment as his show. With 1492 currently enjoying a successful run in New York, Barnet was perhaps the best-known playwright in Boston at this time. The pressure to succeed with Prince Pro Tem after the great success of 1492 must have been difficult for Barnet, especially without the experienced hand of E. E. Rice behind the show or the always-popular Cadet production to first introduce the show. Boston critics, aware both of Barnet's success and his gamble in producing a show directly for the professional stage, looked more closely at Barnet

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[24] Boston Evening Transcript, 12 September 1893.

[25] Boston Daily Advertiser, 12 September 1893.

[26] Boston Journal, 12 September 1893.

than before. Given this special attention, it is not surprising that Prince Pro Tem, and Barnet himself, suffered more than a few harsh criticisms.

> . . . Prince Pro Tem . . . is the merest trifle imaginable, as far as the plot is concerned. . . . The idea is a droll one, and, in skilled hands, might have been made very effective, but Mr. Barnet, the dramatist, has not shown any marked felicity in invention, in handling his theme, while his story wanders on its course disjointedly, and in an amateurish way, without any special clearness of intention, through a series of situations more or less diverting, according to the susceptibility of the spectator, to the peculiar quality of humor to which the librettist is partial. The lyrics are the best things in the book, and these are nearly all bright and clever. Mr. Barnet calls his book a musical fantasie, and this may pass as a fair description of it. It runs along spiritedly, and provides a light and laughable evening's entertainment.[27]

It is again unfortunate that Barnet let the plot, which had been promising through the first act, wander aimlessly through the rest of the play. One wonders about what he sought to change in revision. From Injured Innocents we have learned that revision, according to Barnet, often meant further complication of plot and other supporting details, rather than simplification and structural improvement. Another Boston critic found Barnet to be superior to his own show:

> . . . The nearest intelligent description I can give of Prince Pro Tem is that it is a farce in two acts, with original music, and so arranged that the librettist and composer can do pretty much whatever occurs to them in the second act.

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[27] Saturday Evening Gazette, 16 September 1893.

> It is a dreadful responsibility to be compelled to live up to such a reputation as Mr. R. A. Barnet has acquired in his writings for the Cadets' entertainments, and as last evening's "fantasy" was the first of his strictly professional efforts the result had a peculiar interest to all who have followed his career.
>
> I question if Mr. Barnet is altogether satisfied with his Prince Pro Tem as it stands, and I have no desire to dispute with such an eminent critic as he upon its merits.
>
> It is a clever departure from the traditional forms of stage shows, and when its possibilities shall be fully developed, I have no doubt that Mr. Barnet will find a fertile field for his work on the professional stage.
>
> Now don't misunderstand me. I am not belittling Mr. Barnet's work in Prince Pro Tem. I am merely saying that as it stands it is not up to what, in my opinion, he wants to make it.
>
> . . . Mr. Barnet's fun and fancy are as distinctly original as the same characteristics of Mark Twain's writings. Surprise is the factor he depends upon to make his jokes felt, and you generally feel them for some time after you have heard them. They bear repeating, and that is a quality in which they differ essentially from those of the average farce comedy.[28]

Note here the critic's mention of Barnet's originality. Clearly, he was not on the same plane as a Mark Twain, but had he honed his skills, he might have been an important force--as this review suggests--in the development of American farce comedy on the musical stage. The nagging question which plagues this study of Barnet is, why didn't he develop his skills? Was he simply not talented enough to write more lasting pieces of musical and comic entertainment? Or was he lazy, and victimized by his penchant for complication instead of simplification? Or was he simply afraid to go

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[28] Boston Herald, 12 September 1893.

beyond the accepted bounds of light musical entertainments which his age dictated? Whatever the reason, Barnet's lack of development was as apparent as it was unfortunate.

The production of Prince Pro Tem which opened the 1893-94 season at the Boston Museum was very likely still under the management of R. M. Field from the New Taunton Theatre engagement. No information is given about this Mr. Field nor is his name mentioned in any further connection with the show. For that matter, there are no details given in newspaper accounts of Prince Pro Tem about the structure of the Barnet Comic Opera Company. It must be assumed that the company was formed for the production of this one show, as no such similar company appears for any other production of a Barnet play. It is uncertain how long Prince Pro Tem ran in the autumn of 1893, but by September 1894, the show was back in Boston in a revised form and again under Field's management to open the fifty-fourth regular season at the Boston Museum.

Barnet's participation in the 1894 production is nowhere mentioned, but judging from the newspaper reviews, he had little to do with the revisions made in his book. The production also saw the show appear in three acts instead of two.

> . . . The musical numbers of Mr. Thompson have been transposed, somewhat, although all have been retained,

> and there have been added a number of special features, musical and otherwise, which are not Mr. Thompson's.[29]

Given this information, it is possible that the typescript in possession of the Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library dates from the 1894 production of Prince Pro Tem. The transposition of musical numbers would account for the disparities between the typescript and the 1893 vocal score. But, again, there are many pencil revisions in the typescript, and the changes indicated in the following newspaper reviews do not seem to match the contents of the typescript. However, most of the reviews seem to insist that although the piece had been extended to three acts, it was the music which had undergone the most change and not necessarily the libretto.

The reviews for the 1894 production of Prince Pro Tem were mixed. Many critics, given the local enthusiasm for Barnet, were loath to be too harsh, and usually ended by saying that "the piece afforded an evening's entertainment that passes, on the whole, brightly and merrily."[30] Other critics sought to inform the local theatre-going public of the changes which had been made over the previous year's production.

> . . . Prince Pro Tem is now a "musical fantasie" in three acts, with text by R. A. Barnet, assisted by the comedians, and with music by L. S. Thompson,

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[29] Boston Post, 18 September 1894.

[30] Boston Herald, 18 September 1894.

> John J. Braham, Marcheroni, Woods, Sousa, Petrie, and half-a-dozen other gentlemen. Messrs. Barnet and Thompson recognized their child with difficulty, although the old birth-mark Tommy Tompkins, was strongly in evidence.
>
> As originally produced, this operetta was in two acts, and in the last act the plot was a wanderer. Today there are three acts, and in the second the plot is constantly below the horizon. . . . At present the second act is one purely of variety business, some of which is amusing, and some stale and flat.
>
> . . . Prince Pro Tem should be boiled down. There's too much of it at present. . . . It is also to be hoped that the management will remember that operetta and a variety show are not necessarily synonymous.[31]

The show must have indeed expanded in order to prompt the above criticism. Note that Barnet's text may have been added to by the actors, not a pleasing thought for a professional playwright. The ubiquitous variety entertainment and other changes prompted another reviewer to assure potential audiences (including those who had seen the show the year before), that, in the watch-word of the era, "the whole performance is guaranteed to be thoroughly 'up-to-date.'"[32] So up to date was the show, in fact, that one critic was prompted to write that the performance gave,

> . . . as a whole a very distinct suggestion of the variety show. The most noteworthy of the new things introduced is a spontaneously developed minstrelsy travesty a la "Utopia, Limited," a "Serenade Comic" consisting of sixteen girls, dressed clown fashion, who ring out upon sleigh-bells "Blue Bells of Scotland"

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[31] Boston Journal, 18 September 1894.

[32] Boston Beacon, 22 September 1894.

> and "Home, Sweet Home," and a number of songs of a diverting nature.[33]

There were those critics who found the new, expanded version of Prince Pro Tem superior to the original. But Barnet was accused, again, of inferior workmanship, this time for a show which probably bore little of his actual work.

> The new arrangement of Prince Pro Tem, which opened the fifty-fourth regular season of the Boston Museum, Monday evening, is so much better than last year's version that one is almost persuaded to allow it to pass unchallenged; but it is so far below what might have been that silence would be undeserved generosity. Mr. Barnet, who wrote the dialogue, and we will charitably presume the lyrics, never rises even to the plane of mediocrity. It is a wonder that he finds composers, and a still greater wonder that he succeeds in having his works staged.
>
> Prince Pro Tem, like 1492 and Tabasco, starts with a moderately clever idea. This idea, by reason of necessary exposition, develops in the first act the suggestion of an interesting story. The second act invariably sees the death of the promising young plot, and in the third act it is, according to Mr. Barnet's established custom, buried with as little grief as possible. Consequently after the first act the opera, so called, becomes nothing more than a variety show, good or bad in proportion to the skill of the performers. Fortunately, the members of Mr. Field's new stock company are skillful.[34]

It is more than a little unfair to harshly criticize Barnet for all of the transgressions in the 1894 libretto. But it is nonetheless revealing to find reviewers who characterized Barnet's shows for what they were, rather light and airy,

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[33] Boston Transcript, 18 September 1894.

[34] Boston Budget, 23 September 1894.

and certainly plagued with many seemingly correctable faults. Perhaps popular acclaim and success at the box office meant more to Barnet than critical appraisal of his work.

Prince Pro Tem was apparently fairly successful, since a programme from the run at the Boston Museum, dated the week of 29 October 1894, noted that the show was to receive its 127th to 134th performances.[35] It also stated that the 150th performance was due on Saturday, 17 November. These numbers evidently refer to the total number of performances of Prince Pro Tem, from September 1893 through the 1894 run of the play. Still, even a two-month run in 1894 had to have been considered a success. There is no record of Barnet's participation in the show or the royalties which he received from it. Surely he continued to receive money from the show while it stayed in Boston, where he was still living and working.

Following the Boston Museum production, Prince Pro Tem was revived in March 1895, at Boston's Grand Opera House. Many members of the original cast apparently appeared in this production, including Harry Edgerly, Barnet's old friend. The show was restructured into two acts--perhaps some of the criticism had been effective after all--but it remained basically the "same amusing compilation, with variations,

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[35]Programme: Prince Pro Tem, by Barnet and Thompson, Boston Museum, 29 October 1894, Harvard Theatre Collection.

seen here before."[36] Most of the variations seem to have come into the music, as they had for the 1894 revival of the show.

> . . . Many new features have been introduced into the piece since its last production here, all of which were immensely funny and well appreciated by the large audience present.
>
> No little credit is due the musical director, Mr. W. E. McQuinn, for the even production given last night, for that portion of the entertainment was in excellent hands, and in addition to the music of the composer, Mr. McQuinn introduced musical numbers of his own composition, which were warmly applauded.[37]

This production at the Grand Opera House was scheduled for only one week, and was apparently part of a tour of New England by the show.

Prince Pro Tem was revived one more time in Boston, in May 1899, at the Tremont Theatre, scene of Barnet's many Cadet successes. Most of this new company were unconnected with previous productions of the show. There were, of course, revisions made in the show, mostly new songs and "no small amount of new matter in the spoken portion of the book, which is brought up to date. . . ."[38] This appears to be the final production of Prince Pro Tem.

Robert A. Barnet had returned to work for the Cadets

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[36] Boston Globe, 19 March 1895.

[37] Boston Journal, 19 March 1895.

[38] Boston Transcript, 9 May 1899.

before Prince Pro Tem was revived in 1894. He wrote two shows, Tabasco (1894) and Excelsior, Jr. (1895), which were performed by the Cadets while Prince Pro Tem was enjoying a moderately successful run and then revival. Barnet seems to have decided, however, that immediate professional productions of his works were not as beneficial as was writing for the Cadets. One can only wonder at the reasons which led him to make such a conclusion. Perhaps the Cadets offered him a contract of some sort to write shows for them. There is a newspaper cartoon, pasted in one of Barnet's scrapbooks, which reads "Barnet, Esq., has contracted with the Cadets for his whole output for three years." Unfortunately, the cartoon is undated, and was placed among clippings from 1902. But such a contract may have been offered by the Cadets in 1894, they realizing that Barnet's shows were a key to the accumulation of funds for the building of their armory. Were such a deal made, it is likely that Barnet would have found a contractual engagement with a guaranteed salary much to his liking. Possibly, given his history of using his dramatic talents for charitable purposes, Barnet felt obliged to return to work for the Cadets. Perhaps, artistically, Barnet felt comfortable writing for a troupe of actors with whom he was familiar. His burlesques seemed well-suited to the amateur talents of the Cadets. Whatever the reason, in 1894, Barnet returned to the formula which had brought him success with 1492: amateur productions with the Cadets, followed by

revisions and then professional options. He had a large family to support, and certainly could not afford to take the chances which a struggling professional dramatist had to take, in an era when only the best and most well-known playwrights could even think of earning a living from the theatre. Still, one can muse on what might have happened had Barnet forced himself to continue writing for the professional stage. He might have realized that his talents would inevitably lead him into other directions than the comfortable and accepted forms of burlesque and extravaganza. He might have then paid more attention to the criticism of his writing, and sought to make the changes necessary for his growth. And he might have become an important driving force in the American musical theatre. But, for whatever reason, Barnet chose instead to return to the Cadets.

CHAPTER VI

TABASCO

With Prince Pro Tem in periodic revivals around Boston and 1492 still running strongly in New York, Robert A. Barnet mounted his next show for the Cadets. Barnet wrote the libretto, and his collaborator this time was George Whitfield Chadwick,

> . . . the Boston composer who was, along with Edward McDowell, the Aaron Copland or the Virgil Thomson of his day--one of the most respected and most frequently performed American musicians of two generations ago.[1]

Lyrical assistance was provided by one Edward A. Church, marking the first time that Barnet had sought such help, not counting specialty numbers which had often been provided by the people who performed them. Barnet's subsequent shows, however, would often involve one or more lyrical collaborators, and in some cases, Barnet would turn over the task of writing lyrics for an entire show to someone else. According to the Cadet programme, "the entire production of Tabasco [was] under the direction of William Seymour and the authors."[2] Seymour

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[1]Cecil Smith, Musical Comedy in America (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1950), p. 107.

[2]Programme: Tabasco, by Barnet and Chadwick, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, Boston, 29 January to 3 February, 1894, p. 27, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

was the man who had served as stage director and producer for Injured Innocents, and had performed one or both of those roles with Barnet's assistance for 1492. The cast for the Cadet production of Tabasco included Barnet and several of his colleagues from minstrel shows and earlier Cadet shows: T. E. Stutson, L. C. Benton, and the favorite featured dancer of the Cadet shows, M. D'W. Greene.

There is no libretto available from Tabasco, but the published vocal score and numerous newspaper reviews provide ample information about Barnet's talents as exercised in the writing of Tabasco. A short synopsis of the play is useful in order to understand the framework which Barnet constructed as an excuse for this particular extravaganza with a middle-eastern flavor.

> . . . Suffice it to say that the fate of everybody in Tangiers, from the Bey down to his latest slave, native and exotic, appears to depend upon the ability of his cook to duplicate a chance bottle of Tabasco with which unfamiliar condiment that potentate had joyously inflamed his interior surfaces on a certain crucial occasion.
>
> Degradation, despair and death are the trifles which await the unlucky cook, the newly arrived addition to the harem, her would-be rescuer and his fascinating sister, unless the torrid refection can be obtained, and every attempt at flight which this agitated quartette of protagonists make is discovered and thwarted by a jealous old favorite of a meddlesome vizier.
>
> But relief comes in the shape of a bottle big enough to cremate every vital in the pasha's economy, and joy, exhilaration and mutual adoration stand out saliently amid the universal clamors of triumph.[3]

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[3]Boston Courier, 4 February 1894.

In spite of this critic's droll prose, the plot, with its love interest, attempted escapes, and culinary focal point, seems typical fare for comic opera/burlesque. The middle-eastern setting doesn't travel quite as far as Gilbert and Sullivan's oriental Mikado, but the same fascination with strange mores and exploits in a far-off clime probably fueled Barnet's efforts on this show. Indeed, The Mikado may have served as an inspiration for Barnet in the creation of Tabasco.

The principal characters of Tabasco bear names related to their nationality and to their individual traits or station in life, with a bit of Barnet's tongue-in-cheek added:

> HOT-HED-HAM, PASHA, Bey of Tangier.
> MARCO, a Spanish trader.
> SID-HAS-SEM, Major-domo.
> LOLA, Marco's sister.
> FRANCOIS, the chef.
> BEN-HID-DEN, Grand vizier.
> FATIMA, the beautiful slave.
> HAS-BEEN-A, a third-term harem favorite.
> MAHOMELET, the cook.[4]

Compare these names with those of the principal characters in The Mikado, Nanki-Poo, Pooh-Bah, Pish-Tush, Yum-Yum, and Ko-Ko, and the differences between Barnet's more surface humor and Gilbert's amusing subtlety become very apparent. Barnet also wrote the following note, which appeared in the Cadet programme for Tabasco:

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[4]Programme: Tabasco, by Barnet and Chadwick, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, Boston, 29 January to 3 February, 1894, p. 25, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

> NOTE.--The object of Tabasco is to teach a great moral lesson, the moral to be hypodermically diffused by incisive wit; but I fear the instrument may be dull, and that the moral introduction will be imperfect. However, I know there is a moral in Tabasco, and if it is not circulated, it is not my fault, only my failing.
>
> --AUTHOR[5]

Moving away from the "printed stump speech" (as in the Cadet programme for 1492), Barnet seemed to want to inject a brief passage of his minstrel wit into the programme, as if to reassure his Boston audiences that the once-popular Professor Howla was still lurking just out of sight, and would cast his familiar tone over the piece which they were about to see.

The opening chorus of Tabasco sets the scene of the play: the port of Tangiers, in Morocco, with boats arriving laden with cargoes from all over the world.

> Dawning, the dawning the shadows westward fall;
> Morning, good morning, good morning neighbors all.
> Heigh o! oh! heigh o! The east is all a-glow;
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The boats come in from ev'ry how, a-hoy,
> With swelling sail and bending oar come here my boy.
> The boats are in from ev'ry shore
> All laden low with luscious store,
> A-hoy, a-hoy, come here my sailor boy,
> Come buy, come buy, come buy the sun is high.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Cinnamon from Zanzibar, clove and aloes,
> Myrrh and mallows potted in a dainty jar,

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[5]Ibid., p. 27.

Hear the fellow, Punchinello,
Ladies buy of me alone.[6]

This opening chorus, flecked with solos, is very long, and seems to describe every possible import which Tangier took in. Unlike 1492 and Prince Pro Tem, the opening chorus for Tabasco sets the scene of the piece, rather than concentrating on one or more important characters and a narrow piece of action. Barnet established the locale right away, as Gilbert had done in The Mikado. In spite of the obvious oriental dress and make-up of the characters, the first few lines of The Mikado are:

If you want to know who we are,
We are gentlemen of Japan;
On many a vase and jar--
On many a screen and fan,
We figure in lively paint:
Our attitude's queer and quaint--
You're wrong if you think it ain't, oh![7]

Of interest is a comparison of the romantic and fanciful lyrics of Barnet with the more direct and purposeful lyrics of Gilbert in the opening of these two musical shows which were set in foreign locations. Tabasco's lengthy choral opening also gave composer Chadwick an opportunity to introduce some different melodies and moods into the music of the piece, which would be picked up and expanded on as the action

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[6]R. A. Barnet and G. W. Chadwick, Tabasco, Vocal Score (Boston: The B. F. Wood Music Company, 1894), pp. 3-18.

[7]W. S. Gilbert and A. Sullivan, The Mikado, 1885.

progressed. Thus, looking at the lyrics and music for the opening of Tabasco and The Mikado, we see that Gilbert and Sullivan created a homogeneous whole, while Barnet and Chadwick displayed the heterogeneity which would eventually cause problems for their show.

Barnet played the role of the Grand Vizier in Tabasco, and wrote himself a rather short and simple song for his entrance:

> I'm Vizier here; I'm always in mishap,
> Fortune declines to hold me in her lap;
> To many, life is one delightful snap,
> But not to me. I seem to be society's doormat;
> And seldom know exactly where I'm at,
> And when I fry to others comes the fat,
> But not to me. The market slumps whenever I take hold;
> And gets a boom as soon as I have sold.
> To others come the coupons and the gold,
> But not to me!
> I get the shade when others greet the sun,
> I have the crust, the Pasha yanks the bun,
> To all the rest my fate is only fun,
> But not to me![8]

The song is as simple musically as the words seem to be: only eighth notes and quarter notes with a very rare sixteenth note here and there. The range is quite modest, from middle C to the octave above, and nothing higher. This simplicity might be attributed to Barnet's lack of sophisticated singing technique. Indeed, the Grand Vizier was the last role which Barnet wrote for himself, being content thereafter to concentrate on writing and directing. At the age of forty-one with

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[8]Barnet and Chadwick, Tabasco, Vocal Score, pp. 19, 20.

(probably) little formal training, Barnet must have found the rigors of singing a strain on his already limited acting abilities.

Following the Grand Vizier's song, Pasha Hot-Hed-Ham, Bey of Tangier and lover of things hot to eat, enters and sings his song, "What Other People Say," accompanied by the chorus.

> In Tangiers I'm the Bey,
> I'm the monarch of the day,
> And my will it is my loving subjects law,
> I was born and bred to rule,
> I'm despotic, never cool,
> I am apt to grumble, reprimand and jaw.
> For victuals I like hot--
> And my prattle's polyglot,
> On the days when things are going t'other way,
> O 'tis then I tear and roar
> And I throw things on the floor,
> And do not care what other people say,
> Wear my "swallow tail" at noon,
> Eat my doughnuts with a spoon,
> For I do not care what other people say.[9]

In this song, the Bey establishes two character traits which become important to the plot of the show: his love of hot things to eat and his absolute indifference to the needs or difficulties of other people. This type of character song appears to be something rather new for Barnet, or, if not entirely new, then certainly better developed than such character songs as the ruffians' "Episodes of Childish Woe" from Injured Innocents or "The Daisy Queen of Spain" from 1492. Here again, Barnet may have been influenced by Gilbert,

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[9]Ibid., pp. 21-24.

who excelled in writing songs in which his characters explained themselves:

> I am the very model of a modern Major-General,
> I've information vegetable, animal, and mineral,
> I know the kings of England, and I quote the fights historical,
> From Marathon to Waterloo, in order categorical;[10]

The patter songs of Gilbert are, of course, unique, not only because of their wit, but also because of their regular structure, which enabled them to flow along smoothly in spite of an endless stream of words. By contrast, Barnet's lines often seem jumbled, full of oddly juxtaposed elements which break up their flow, and produce an unevenness which often leads to confusion. It is perhaps unfair to compare Barnet with Gilbert; although as his career progressed and he wrote more and more musical pieces, Barnet out-produced most of his contemporary American librettists and approached the prolific Gilbert in the volume of his work. Also, Barnet, like Gilbert, was the stage director of the first productions of most of his works.

A choral number involving many of the principals follows, and as the title suggests, "Reading of the Mail" finds several letters arriving in Tangiers. One is from the mother of Has-Been-A, the old harem favorite, announcing her imminent arrival. Another letter tells the Grand Vizier

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[10]W. S. Gilbert and A. Sullivan, The Pirates of Penzance, 1879.

that his sweetheart wants a rendezvous with him. And a third letter informs the Bey that a new addition to his harem is expected, much to the disappointment of the female chorus who threaten to harm this new arrival when she comes.

Midway through the first act we are introduced to the characters who will play an important role in one segment of the plot, namely François, the chef, and a chorus of cooks. Their song is an introduction to their talents and accomplishments:

Fran.: For I'm a Chef of high degree,
With the biggest salaree,
And I always go with the family tree,

Chorus: With the family tree he goes.

Fran.: My "menus" are quite beyond compare.

Chorus: Now "menu" is French for a bill of fare,

Fran.: And I call the claret "vin ordinaire,"

Chorus: O that is known to all,

Fran.: The secret of my friends, I mean "secret"

Chours: Is never a word of English to say,

Fran.: And bill each dish in the gallic way,

Chorus: Oh he's noted for his "gall."

Fran.: Tin tan, patty pan, pan pan,
Let's keep our fires a-glow,
For a man must eat, and 'tis heav'n sends meat,
But cooks are from below, Ho, ho!
The cooks are from below.[11]

This musical is typical Barnet fare with the accent on

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[11]Barnet and Chadwick, Tabasco, Vocal Score, pp. 35-38.

superficial word-play, though this time throwing in French words. Such word-play is more reminiscent of Barnet's older work--minstrel speeches and Injured Innocents--than more recent plays, such as 1492 and Prince Pro Tem. Perhaps Barnet felt the need to stay in touch with part of his personal expression which he felt was popular and enjoyable. Perhaps, like many creative artists, he over-estimated the extent of popularity of a certain characteristic device.

The entrance of the beautiful slave Fatima, the new addition to the Bey's harem, is marked by her song, "O Lovely Home." This ballad, simply written, shows that Barnet was capable of lyrical beauty and simplicity when inspired to write a song of mature sentiments:

> O lovely home beneath the oak
> Where love was never known to fail,
> Where morning's smile the dove awoke,
> And evening's tear the nightingale.
> O mother left to weep alone,
> By the dark Terek's rushing tide;
> Might you but hear my helpless moan,
> How would you hasten to my side.
> I long to breathe the mountain air;
> To follow fawns along the glade;
> To pick the woodland blossoms fair
> And linger in the chestnut shade.
> O save me from those cruel bands
> I long for dear Circassia's vales;
> Leave me no more, no more in alien lands,
> But take me home, O take me home.[12]

The rhyme scheme of a-b-a-b in the above number is different from Barnet's typical profusion of rhyming words and lines

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[12]Ibid., pp. 39-41.

which, in many of his songs, create the feeling of immature doggerel. Although still very much under the influence of the melodrama and romance of grand opera in his ballads or love songs, Barnet had clearly matured to the point that he was capable of writing lyrics with poetic sensitivity.

Following Fatima's song comes the arrival of Marco, the Spanish trader, and his sister Lola. This entrance is marked by a complex choral number involving not only the new arrivals, but the Bey, Fatima, and the entire chorus. Fatima is hailed by all as the new bride of the Bey until Marco intervenes on her behalf, which arouses the anger of the Bey:

Bey: By the beard of the prophet!
What a phiz here, come Grand Vizier,
Throw the wretch into the ocean!
By the beard of the prophet!
Seize him! Hassem "Demi tasse" him,
With a strong and killing potion!
Hang his sister, Hang his cousin,
Hang his sister, cousin, brother.
Let me kill him, Let me kill him,
Let me kill him for his mother!
Seize him! Hassem hang him! Kill him![13]

This, of course, sets off a great deal of confusion in the midst of which Fatima sings of her devotion to Marco and of her design to find him--after he has been seized--and escape with him. Her only alternative is to marry the "heathen Pasha" whom she despises. This sprawling musical number is rather new to Barnet's repertoire, its complexity being unlike

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[13]Ibid., pp. 42-51.

anything he'd previously written with the exception of act finales. Based on an examination of the musical score, possibly Chadwick was responsible for pushing Barnet on to levels of sophistication which he hadn't yet touched upon. Chadwick was the most experienced composer with whom Barnet had worked to date, and the challenge of collaborating with a very good composer and musician may have inspired and challenged Barnet's creative powers. If such were indeed the case, it is a shame that Barnet did not continue his collaboration with Chadwick or with someone of equal stature. Barnet certainly helped many composers by offering them a chance to collaborate on musical works with him, but he might have lost much in the final analysis by not sticking to one partner and developing a rapport which might have inspired both.

The last musical number of the first act of Tabasco before the act finale is a very short ballad called "François' Lament."

> The shamrock blooms white on the lakes of Killarney,
> An' swate are the bells on the banks o' the Lee;
> The Ivy is green on the castle o'Blarney,
> But sorra a bit of it all is for me.
> The divil fly off wid me foolish ambition,
> Bad luck to the day that I left the Green Isle,
> Me ould mother's pigs were in better condition,
> The darlins all died in an illigant style.
> Why did I go roamin' and lave my old home
> In sweet Erin a-cush-la, dear land cross the say;
> Bad cess to that mornin' whin slightin' all warnin'
> I left ye Mavourneen forever and aye.[14]

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[14] Ibid., p. 52.

This is a sentimental Irish ballad which, sung by a French chef in Tangiers, seems at first quite out of place in this musical work. But the audience soon learns that "François" is really one Dennis O'Grady, a shipwrecked Irishman masquerading as a French chef in the service of the Bey of Tangiers. With this character twist, Barnet was able to supply Boston with several opportunities to enjoy Irish ballads. Although these must have pleased the audience, their inclusion certainly did little to help unify Tabasco, which seems to be one of the most musically heterogeneous of Barnet's shows. Again, Barnet may have been influenced by the skills and creativity of his collaborator, who seemed able to write music to cover any possibility which Barnet dreamed of adding to his plot.

The first act of Tabasco ends with the usual Barnet finale, employing the entire chorus and most of the principals. Only this time, the finale is not a hodge-podge reprise of first act melodies, but a musical number unto itself, glorifying the chef François and his discovery of a bottle of tabasco, which delights the Bey, who honors the chef with a title befitting his culinary "discovery":

> Hail to his highness the Peer of Tabasco
> King of the Kitchen and Prince of the Pan!
> Never again will he know a fiasco,
> Crown him with parsley the fortunate, fortunate man!
> Fill up the flagon and flask, oh!
> 'Rah and hurrah for Tabasco!
> Turn out the town, boys drink it down,

Hail to the Peer of Tabasco!
Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah![15]

Following this praise by the chorus, the Grand Vizier and the Bey himself tell of the chef's great discovery to the tempo of a waltz. The Bey is happy with his new slave, Fatima, and his satisfying new taste treat, tabasco. And all of the Bey's subjects are happy because their tyrant is satisfied. Thus, the first act of Tabasco ends on a happy note.

In terms of the greater musical sophistication present in this show, there is a four-page "Interludium" between the first two acts. This entr'acte music, which includes a mazurka, is a new feature to Barnet's musicals, at least as published in vocal score editions. It supports the thought about Chadwick being a more sophisticated collaborative partner for Barnet just as Sir Arthur Sullivan was, in addition to being Gilbert's collaborator, a famous and highly regarded composer and musician. Queen Victoria's favorite contemporary musician, he was responsible for the success of the Savoy operettas as was Gilbert. Chadwick, with his prolific musical output might have gained greater recognition for himself had a successful partnership with Barnet resulted in works other than Tabasco.

The second act of Tabasco begins with two short

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[15]Ibid., pp. 53-60.

songs involving different parts of the chorus. The first is entitled "A Beauty, My Boy, You Are, You Are," and is sung in praise of the Bey:

> A beauty, my boy, you are, you are,
> By the beard of the prophet 'tis so!
> Like a palm tree you tow'r in pride of your pow'r,
> The very biggest thing in all the show.
> You swear by the Kaaba and quote the Koran,
> And never get drunk when you're dry, dry, dry,
> Your morals domestic were safe to gamble on,
> And you think you are remarkably fly;
> A wonder you are, by thunder you are,
> A sov'reign that's always up to par, par, par;
> O Allah, Abdallah, Tally ho, Tally hi, Tally hah!
> And that's the kind of Monarch you are![16]

When Barnet tried out a different location for a show, he tried out a suitable vocabulary for that location as well. This literal approach seems to characterize his method of playwriting--even from his minstrel days--and is partly responsible for his surface humor, which begins to grow stale as it fails to mature over several years and shows.

The second choral piece of the second act, this one involving Has-been-a and the harem, is entitled "Hush, Hush, Silent Be," and actually has little more to it than the title.

A love duet between Fatima and Marco follows, and this is not only short, but decidedly ordinary. Barnet had written better love songs in 1492.

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[16]Ibid., pp. 65, 66.

Fatim.: My heart again to hope begins.
O Marco, you and love are twins.

Marco.: Fatima be a bit more coy,
Or we a chaperon employ.

Fatim.: A chaperon I soon would shake,
O Marco leave my love or take,

Marco.: I'll give you all my own instead,
And we'll be happy when we're wed.

Fatim.: Each to other now we vow,
I to thee,

Marco.: And me to thou;

Fatim.: It is no longer you and me
But only one harmonious we.[17]

The song stumbles because of lame verses and inversions which read like a juvenile attempt at love poetry.

Following the three previously mentioned short songs comes a medley of musical numbers from around the world. This medley may have been part of the specialty break, for the songs seem to have little to do with the show, save that they are performed by characters in Tabasco. Here again, Chadwick might have been responsible, as the diversity of musical elements seems to indicate a more practiced hand than Barnet's:

No. 4a. BOLERO. (Spanish) Marco and Quartet.
No. 4b. DITTY. (Irish) François and Quartet.
No. 4c. RIGAUDON. (French) Lola and Quartet.
No. 4d. BALLAD. (Plantation) Fatima and Quartet.[18]

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[17]Ibid., pp. 69, 70.

[18]Ibid., p. 2.

Each of the four concerns a love affair in a different country, and each is accompanied by a dance. Barnet wrote lyrics which fit each song: castanets and senoritas for the bolero; Irish shamrocks and colleens for François' ditty; grisettes and "la belle Paris" for the rigaudon; and "darkies" and "hebben" for the plantation ballad. The inclusion of this medley in the vocal score of Tabasco is probably due more to the stature of the composer than to any other element in the songs themselves. Each separate song required a different type of dance, so the effect on stage must have been quite entertaining. There is no choreographer listed in the programme for the Cadet production of the show.

The remainder of the second act of Tabasco is filled with love songs (or musical numbers very much resembling romantic ballads) and dance numbers. Barnet wrote himself another song as Grand Vizier, "Greet the Old Man With a Smile." The two pieces before the finale suggest more music and dance than actual singing: "March of the Pasha's Guard" and "Dance of the Harem." The number of musical pieces in this show which are referred to as marches, dances, ballads, laments, etc., suggests the strong influence of the composer. Perhaps one reason to explain the structural weakness of Tabasco is the collaboration between a strong composer offering many different types of musical numbers and a librettist with a weak sense of plot and a great appreciation for heterogeneity.

The second act finale brings all of the action of the show to a close, showing lovers united and happy and the Bey possessed of tabasco singing praises to his chef. The two-act structure evidently meant that the second act would be sacrificed to the specialty--as the vocal score of Tabasco seems to bear out--with the "plot" of the show somehow reaching a tidy conclusion amid the reprises of the finale. As in the case of Prince Pro Tem, Tabasco begins with a great deal of potential, but loses steam and finally loses out to the specialty, causing the show to limp to its final curtain. Most of the musicals being written for the American stage during the 1890s followed much the same pattern. The audiences seemed to want it that way and the librettists and composers were willing to oblige.

America was only beginning to produce world-class actors, directors, playwrights, and composers in the late nineteenth century. The American musical theatre was heavily under the influence of European styles until the first World War. Vaudeville was extremely popular, creating a vogue for light, variety entertainment. The fashionable audiences of the 1890s--particularly the socially-conscious Bostonians--wanted to be entertained by the very latest, "up to date" theatrical styles. Barnet and his colleagues, who attempted to make a living from their efforts as librettists and composers, did not disappoint the audiences by giving them something other than what they expected.

Tabasco opened at the Tremont Theatre in Boston on 29 January 1894, and played for a week as had been the custom with the Cadet shows since the second production (1891) of Injured Innocents. The reaction was generally favorable, and was possibly helped by Barnet's return to the Cadets after the success of 1492 and the one-year hiatus following his attempt to produce Prince Pro Tem in an original professional version.

> . . . The text follows the lines long consecrated to burlesque. For at least fifty years this sort of thing has been in fashion, and another half-century may pass before playgoers tire of droll confusions of time, place and speech with dialogue well charged with puns and the evolution of the story accompanied with diversions more or less in keeping with the sentiment or the incidents of the plot. Mr. Barnet has a special aptness for work of this nature and a trained adroitness in using his faculties, and from their combination the happiest results are often produced.[19]

The Transcript seems to have been the Boston newspaper which paid the most attention to Barnet's shows, and which reviewed them in a more even-handed way than most of the other contemporary Boston newspapers. The same critic continued his review with praise for Chadwick, a ploy which indicated more criticism of Barnet than he was willing to make directly:

> . . . given first class material in the way of text, the composer would be able to show a comic opera

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[19] Boston Transcript, 30 January 1894.

> worthy of being rated according to the French standard as an opera-comique. . . .[20]

Unfortunately, the direct criticism leveled at Barnet was very lenient, perhaps because the Cadet shows were amateur productions and the Boston press wanted to foster their growth (after all, they were for charity, or rather for the potential defense of the city of Boston in the construction of the armory), rather than destroy them with harsh criticism. Barnet needed the criticism in order to progress meaningfully as a playwright; all he got was praise.

> . . . Mr. Barnet is given to dealing in humorous surprises, and although he relies to a certain extent upon what might be called "stock humor," he certainly uses this matter in an original and amusing way. His lines and lyrics proved irresistible to the audience last evening, and he has little cause to take exception to the success attending his efforts in this production.[21]

> . . . It is not very deep nor very complicated, but it serves its purpose very well, and Mr. R. A. Barnet has made clever and thoroughly diverting use of his scant materials. There are many bright light lines and many amusing situations, and the piece has the merits of rapid action, constant bustle and unflagging incitement to mirthfulness.[22]

> . . . Tabasco . . . is altogether the most praiseworthy piece the Cadets have given to the public. It has a well-conceived and cleverly carried out story, now told so often it is not necessary to repeat, and the audience was kept in applause out of something more than neighborly feeling.

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Boston Herald, 30 January 1894.

[22] Boston Gazette, 4 February 1894.

> . . . There are many unique and bright sayings that attract and remain in the memory for their newness.[23]

> . . . There are escapes, pursuits, and the confirmed operetta-goer can easily fill in the action, which at its liveliest is thin. There are good lines, and there are lines that are not particularly bright or fresh. All in all there is the stuff for an amusing book; and when more experienced comedians versed in the fatting of parts take hold of it, the framework may well serve for the setting off of verbal pyrotechnics and the display of grotesque scenes.[24]

The veiled criticism which is present in almost all of the reviews seems to have been directed more at burlesque in general and the shortcomings of the amateur performers than at Barnet. The Cadet Theatricals were immensely popular.

> . . . As Mr. Barnet said in his speech last night to the audience, the Cadet Theatricals are now a Boston institution. That this is no vain boast was shown by the large and brilliant audience and by the attention paid to every word and evolution on the stage.[25]

Along with reviews of the shows, most newspapers listed distinguished Bostonians who were in attendance at the Cadet openings. Often there were performances at which the audience was completely made up of local military men and their families. Once Barnet's shows had become "institutionalized" as part of the extremely popular Cadet Theatricals and audiences came

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[23] Boston Post, 30 January 1894.

[24] Boston Journal, 30 January 1894.

[25] Ibid.

to expect certain things from the shows each year, Barnet may have then become prisoner to the form which seemed to suit him so well.

Barnet's performance as the Grand Vizier was generally well received, though not without the criticism which would eventually force him to give up acting.

> . . . Mr. R. A. Barnet had a rousing reception upon his entrance in the loose and roomy habiliments of the grand vizier, which he wore with becoming grace, and his impersonation had many points of merit, though he can be acquitted of any claims for distinction as a vocal artist.
>
> Despite the disabilities he labors under as a singer, his "Greet the Old Man With a Smile" made a pronounced hit, and the chorus added a great element to this capital musical number.[26]

Performers were apparently under greater critical scrutiny in Boston than were playwrights. Chadwick's music was universally praised, and even the wildly hetereogeneous second act of Tabasco received special attention from the critics for its composer's skill:

> . . . In the second act Mr. Chadwick has given some of the prettiest music in the work. There is one number, especially, in which there is a bolero, a rigadon, an Irish melody, and a negro tune that is exceedingly clever, the national characteristics of each phase of the number being preserved with great felicity. There are two songs in the Irish style, in the opera, and both might easily pass for the real thing, while the negro tune is a perfect imitation of the plantation song.[27]

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[26] Boston Herald, 30 January 1894.

[27] Boston Gazette, 4 February 1894.

The general opinion of Chadwick's venture into light musical entertainment was positive, though the concern, as quoted above in the Transcript, was for him to find better written material:

> . . . It is a good and cheering sign when a musician of Mr. Chadwick's acknowledged talent sets himself to work at operetta. May he continue in this field, and may he next time be more fortunate in the libretto.[28]

This criticism may not have been lost on Barnet. He did not collaborate with Chadwick again. Perhaps Barnet felt that Chadwick's artistic superiority would continue to overshadow his own efforts. Perhaps the team did not work well together. Unfortunately, there are no comments in any of the scrapbooks or in any of Barnet's surviving letters which indicate his feelings toward any of his collaborators. Chadwick went on to write three symphonies, five string quartettes, Christmas madrigals, pastorals, ten canonic studies for organ, Irish ballads, and many popular songs. He set the words of Sir Walter Scott, as well as the poetry of Longfellow and Shakespeare, to music and also edited a book of choruses for high schools and choral societies. A year younger than Barnet, he died only two years before the librettist.

Following the successful Cadet production, the professional rights to Tabasco were sold to one Thomas Q. Seabrooke,

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[28]Boston Journal, 10 April 1894.

principal actor and manager of the Seabrooke Opera Company. Barnet helped revise his libretto for the first professional production, which opened in early April 1894, at the Boston Museum. The reviews were generally favorable, but this time, the critics were far more harsh in their attack of Barnet's libretto.

> . . . Unquestionably the opera in its professional garb will have a successful run, for despite the inanity of the libretto, the "chestnutty" puns and local hits, it has the element of success in a fine musical score, interpreted and developed by a good company of comedians and singers.[29]

> . . . Apparently the success achieved with the professional production of 1492 after the Cadets had given it will be duplicated with Tabasco, which was given at the Boston Museum last Monday.
>
> Since the original presentation there has been much alteration in the dialogue, so that it is more suitable for professional production. The action has been greatly quickened, and several funny lines and incidents have been added, to the marked improvement of several places, but the employment of local names might well be omitted.[30]

> . . . Mr. Barnet has made some changes in his libretto since the operetta was produced by the Cadets at the Tremont. . . . Mr. Barnet or Mr. Seabrooke has introduced some new lines and new business. But in spite of changes the libretto is a dull affair.[31]

Apparently one of the changes was to expand the role of the cook François into the leading part with new songs, and in

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[29] Boston Budget, 15 April 1894.

[30] Boston Weekly Transcript, 18 April 1894.

[31] Boston Journal, 10 April 1894.

some cases, songs which had been transferred from other characters. Seabrooke played this role.

The production continued through early May at the Museum and was then revised again, this time with a view toward moving it to New York. Probably this revision cut down on the number of local names which the above review from the Weekly Transcript had criticized. The final performances were announced in the Boston newspapers, as the show was seen in its third version.

> . . . With a view to adding special interest to these closing performances, the changes made for the New York run of the opera were introduced last evening, and during the final week here Tabasco will be given in its metropolitan dress.
>
> Mr. Seabrooke has had the active co-operation of the author in arranging the new form of this popular production, and last evening's large audience appeared to heartily appreciate all the improvements made in the action and incidents of the scenes.[32]

In spite of the enthusiasm for the show in its "metropolitan dress," it had varied little in substance from Seabrooke's first production, and still counted on the strength of Chadwick's music for its ultimate success.

Tabasco opened in mid-May at the Broadway Theatre in New York. With 1492 still drawing audiences to the Garden Theatre, Barnet had the distinction of having two of his shows in New York at the same time. Unfortunately, Tabasco proved far less successful than 1492, and lasted only until

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[32]Boston Herald, 8 May 1894.

the summer break. The reviews were tepid, and were perhaps best summed up by later historians:

> . . . The mixed genre of comic opera-burlesque-extravaganza was somewhat painfully exemplified by Tabasco (1894), which deserves to be put on record because it was the only light-minded essay of George Whitfield Chadwick. . . . After Tabasco Chadwick must have dreaded comic opera as a burned child dreads the fire. The Dramatic Mirror, apparently overlooking the composer's high station, considered Tabasco "hardly worthy of serious mention. Of late, almost anything that contains musical jingles, slangy witticisms and a variegated assortment of coryphees and multi-colored costumes is styled a comic opera on the American stage. But it is time to call a halt, and give the style of entertainment to which Tabasco belongs its proper classification. Tabasco is nothing more nor less than a musical hodge-podge of this, that, and the other."[33]

> . . . The next and final production of the season was less literary and more noisy--pretty hot stuff, to judge by its title--Tabasco. It was compiled by R. A. Barnet, with music by George W. Chadwick. . . . Tabasco continued till the Broadway, on June 23rd, closed for the season--not a season, as a whole, to awaken reminiscent nostalgia, a half-century later.[34]

In spite of a relatively short five-week run, Barnet had seen his second show move to New York, a fact which was not overlooked by New York producers, who began to pay more attention to this new playwright from Boston.

Tabasco did not die after its brief New York run.

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[33]Cecil Smith, Musical Comedy in America (New York: Theatre Art Books, 1950), pp. 107, 108.

[34]George C. D. Odell, Annals of the New York Stage, 15 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), 15:598.

Seabrooke still had the rights to the show, and opened the 1894-95 season at Boston's Park Theatre with yet another revision of the play. Boston critics were kind to the show:

> . . . It was a happy thought to choose Tabasco for the attraction at the opening of the Park Theatre's season. Apparently the extravaganza was never a greater favorite than at the present hour.[35]

The New York run, however limited, may have added to the prestige of the show, at least in the minds and hearts of Boston theatre-goers. There may also have been another reason for the success of this latest production:

> . . . A revised version of Tabasco opened the season at the Park Theatre last Sunday evening. It is doubtful if Messrs. Barnet and Chadwick would recognize their child in this wonderfully-constructed piece which has been put together to suit the abilities of Thomas Q. Seabrooke. The original Tabasco has been added to and subtracted from to such an extent by other hands than its original compilers that what was virtually a new piece was presented at the Park Theatre.[36]

The constant revising of a Barnet show was nothing new. Indeed, Barnet's shows, filled as they were with specialty numbers, encouraged frequent additions and deletions. Critics seemed to find the changes welcome. But Seabrooke got carried away with such revisions after he began a national tour of Tabasco in September 1894, following the run at the Park.

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[35]Boston Transcript, 4 September 1894.

[36]Boston Beacon, 8 September 1894.

Seabrooke took his company to Washington, D. C., and opened Tabasco at the new National Theatre. The notices were encouraging, probably due in part to Seabrooke, who had become a local favorite in his previous appearances in Washington.

> . . . Tabasco is a sort of theatrical curry, including nearly all the ingredients of opera, burlesque, and farce-comedy, with a liberal condiment of fun. Its book is not . . . well balanced. In two or three places the burlesque breaks, and has to be patched together with specialties to preserve the interest, but the patching is cleverly done and there is not a dull moment in it.
>
> The music is in some respects remarkable. The composer, Mr. Chadwick, is a master of harmony, and he has applied grand opera methods to his frivolous theme in a manner that is almost as amusing as the story itself. The orchestration throughout is rich, and while melody is not lacking, the burlesque effects are most fetching.[37]

Somewhere between this production of Tabasco in Washington and January 1895, Seabrooke and company began performing a new play entitled The Grand Vizier, which bore

> . . . a startling likeness to George W. Chadwick's and Robert A. Barnet's Tabasco, which Mr. Seabrooke has been playing for some time. Even the name of the character he plays is the same in both pieces--Dennis O'Grady. In each he is a shipwrecked Irish sailor, but in Tabasco he wins favor with the Bey of Tangier by masquerading as a French cook and feeding him on red hot sauce, while in The Grand Vizier he passes himself off as a French doctor, and treats a hypochondriacal raja of Tunis with whiskey so successfully that he is appointed to high office. In one opera the supply of tabasco runs out, and in the other the bottle of whiskey is lost. A new

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[37]Washington Post, 25 September 1894.

> supply in the one case of tabasco, in the other of whiskey, is found just in time to save Dennis' head.[38]

It did not take Barnet long to find out that Seabrooke had made slight changes in Tabasco in order to stop paying royalties, and continue to tour the same fairly popular show. The result was a messy situation which produced much anger, but little else. The story is worth quoting from a Boston newspaper:

> . . . Messrs. Barnet and Chadwick have many friends who became very wroth over what they call a "clean steal," and they wanted those gentlemen to institute proceedings at once to cause a halt in the career of The Grand Vizier. But a great many considerations intervened, and so far nothing has been done except the insertion of the following notice in a dramatic publication printed in conspicuous type, two columns measure:
>
> > Burlesque opera--Tabasco--Warning to managers: We take this opportunity to warn all persons against the production of above opera under the above title, or any part of the opera under any other title, or any infringement thereof, same being our sole property. We therefore respectfully notify all proprietors and managers of theatres that we shall hold them strictly accountable to the full extent of the law for performing or permitting the performance of such opera, or play, in their respective houses, or any opera or play, which is an imitation, of, or which contains any of the names, characters, dialogues, lyrics, music, business or other substantial parts of Tabasco.
> >
> > R. A. Barnet
> > G. W. Chadwick
>
> Mr. Barnet does not wish to be quoted in relation to the matter, but has left all in the hands of his attorney. It is understood that no legal proceedings

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[38] New York Herald, 17 January 1895.

> have yet been begun. The greatest obstacle to bringing injunction proceedings, according to Mr. Charles Frohman, who has had plenty of experience, is that they are very costly, and that the Copyright law, under which they would be brought, is only operative in one state at a time, so that an infringer could easily escape by the simple expedient of crossing the state line.
>
> Then there is the problem of satisfying judgment, even if decreed by the courts. The Grand Vizier is now being played on the Western circuit. Messrs. Barnet and Chadwick's friends assert that it is substantially the original Tabasco, that a few slight alterations have been made, and the characters renamed in a similar style of nomenclature. Mr. Barnet has a copy of the bill, and numerous press notices which he has secured.[39]

There are no further records in possession of the Barnet family which indicate what happened in this matter. It must be assumed, from the above article, that Barnet and Chadwick did not take legal action, and that Tabasco in the guise of The Grand Vizier toured the west under Seabrooke for a time after the above article was written. Tabasco was not revived again, and Seabrooke never again was allowed to buy the rights to a Barnet show. This incident was certainly not unique in the history of the American theatre, and helps explain why the profession of playwright was such a precarious one. Barnet certainly learned an important lesson about the professional theatre through this experience. There are no further indications of trouble with producers in Barnet's career.

By the time the furor over The Grand Vizier was raging, Barnet had another show in performance at the Tremont Theatre,

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[39] Boston Journal, 7 February 1895.

under the auspices of the Cadet Theatrical Organization. Tabasco had been only moderately successful, and Barnet was no doubt anxious to create another 1492 in order to maintain his professional standing and increase his earnings from royalties.

CHAPTER VII

EXCELSIOR, JR.

In March of 1895, during the height of the affair with Seabrooke and The Grand Vizier, R. A. Barnet opened his fourth show for the Boston Cadets. Entitled Excelsior, Jr., the show was a burlesque of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem, "Excelsior." Barnet wrote the book and lyrics, and George Lowell Tracy composed the music. Set in Switzerland, and loosely involving not only elements from the poem, but pieces of the William Tell legend and commentary on modern tourism in the Alps, the show featured a host of disparate musical numbers and specialty acts. An ambitious undertaking for Barnet, the show quickly became popular both as an amateur presentation by the Cadets, and subsequently as a professional production under the direction of E. E. Rice.

G. L. Tracy was another popular Boston composer who wrote orchestral marches, sacred choral music, band arrangements of well-known music, and popular and patriotic songs. He did piano arrangements for Gilbert and Sullivan's Mikado and Ruddigore, and was himself the composer of several operettas, including The Trundle Bed (1902), an operetta for children. In 1919, Tracy wrote Bay State, the state song of Massachusetts. Tracy was one of the composers to whom Barnet

repeatedly turned for additional songs when his shows were revised for professional productions. As with Lewis Thompson, Tracy may have benefitted from friendship and professional association with Barnet.

In returning to the style of burlesquing an existing literary property, Barnet was once again dealing with a form which he knew well. In choosing to travesty a poem by Longfellow, Barnet was following the lead of his 1492 producer, E. E. Rice, who made his initial fame and fortune with a burlesque of Longfellow's Evangeline. Not known is whether Rice, who was still producing 1492 at the time Excelsior, Jr. was written and performed, and who would eventually produce the latter play as well, had any influence on Barnet's decision to attempt a burlesque of another poem by Longfellow. Longfellow had been an extremely popular poet, and Rice's Evangeline, which had been written and performed during the poet's last years (it opened in New York on 27 July 1874), had been the most popular burlesque of the American theatre to date. With the success of 1492, Rice's confidence in Barnet may have convinced the producer that another successful travesty of Longfellow was possible.

Barnet's original title for the piece was "Upidee," but as the following newspaper account explains, this name had to be changed:

> . . . The Cadets have changed the name of their new piece from "Upidee" to "Excelsior, Jr.," as a result

> of the discovery, recently made, that a dramatic production of the name of "Upidee" was brought out some years ago and appeared at several places in this country. Mr. Barnet and the dramatic committee of the corps accordingly decided to avert the suspicion of plagiarism and the change was officially confirmed yesterday.
>
> It is true that a ballet by the name of "Excelsior" had a long run both in this country and abroad a few years ago, but the addition of the "Jr." saves the Cadet piece from any infringement upon this.[1]

This piece is of interest for two reasons. In light of the Seabrooke plagiarism of Tabasco, the action by Barnet and the Cadets seems honorable, though the subject matter of the first Upidee isn't given. Barnet may have learned about the show called The Grand Vizier sometime in December of 1894, before the newspaper review of 17 January 1895, quoted in the previous chapter. Thus the immediate action by the Cadet dramatic committee would have served as an example of their scrupulous attention to detail in the matter of copyright laws for plays. Barnet had secured a United States copyright for "U-Pi-Dee; an opera burlesque, by Robert A. Barnet . . . (c) Boston, 20 March 1893."[2] This fact brings to light the second point of interest raised by the above newspaper story and confirmed by the details from the Library of Congress copyright record. Barnet seems to have secured this title and other titles for new shows before actually writing.

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[1] Boston Herald, 13 December 1894.

[2] Government Printing Office, Dramatic Compositions Copyrighted in the United States, 1870 to 1916 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1918), p. 2871.

U-Pi-Dee, the title of a burlesque opera, was copyrighted at a time when Barnet was presumably at work on Prince Pro Tem (copyrighted in 1892),[3] which may also have been copyrighted under the name of the leading character, as Tommy Tompkins, described in the government record as "a comedy with music in three acts . . . (c) 1 October 1894."[4] The copyright record shows that Barnet listed some thirty-six play titles with the government for copyright purposes. Many of these plays, as in the case of U-Pi-Dee and Excelsior, Jr., which are listed separately, are duplicate titles. Some of the duplicates are easy to identify, but others, as in the case of Prince Pro Tem and Tommy Tompkins, cannot, with certainty, be cited as duplicates. Some of the listings appear to be only copyrighted names of works never written, unless it is true that all other traces of such works have been lost. The Library of Congress has in its possession only the major works of Barnet, and most of them in the form of published vocal scores. Still, the fact that Barnet often chose to copyright a title for a show--presumably with no further ideas on paper--long before he wrote it, gives testimony to the creative artist at work: thinking, planning, clipping items of interest from newspapers and periodicals, and constantly searching for appropriate subject-matter for his

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[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

musical plays. Unfortunately, Barnet did not keep better personal records of his work, particularly with regard to his sketching ideas for different shows. Unknown is how long Barnet took to complete a script, or how much revision took place during the rehearsals with the Cadets and then in preparation for the professional productions.

Longfellow's "Excelsior" was a very popular poem, and is worth quoting here as the basis for Barnet's burlesque:

The shades of night were falling fast,
As through an Alpine village passed
A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice,
A banner with the strange device,
    Excelsior!

His brow was sad; his eye beneath
Flashed like a falchion from its sheath,
And like a silver clarion rung
The accents of that unknown tongue,
    Excelsior!

In happy homes he saw the light
Of household fires gleam warm and bright;
Above, the spectral glaciers shone,
And from his lips escaped a groan,
    Excelsior!

"Try not the Pass!" the old man said;
"Dark lowers the tempest overhead,
The roaring torrent is deep and wide!"
And loud that clarion voice replied,
    Excelsior!

"O stay," the maiden said, "and rest
Thy weary head upon this breast!"
A tear stood in his bright blue eye,
But still he answered, with a sigh,
    Excelsior!

"Beware the pine tree's withered branch!
Beware the awful avalanche!"
This was the peasant's last Good-night,
A voice replied, far up the height,
    Excelsior!

At break of day, as heavenward
The pious monks of Saint Bernard
Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,
A voice cried through the startled air,
    Excelsior!

A traveller, by the faithful hound,
Half-buried in the snow was found,
Still grasping in his hand of ice
That banner with the strange device,
    Excelsior!

There in the twilight cold and gray,
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,
And from the sky, serene and far,
A voice fell, like a falling star,
    Excelsior![5]

Like "Babes in the Wood," "Excelsior" was a serious poem with a rural setting which ended with the death of the main character(s). Barnet evidently found the Alpine setting to his liking, especially as it suggested other elements which might belong to the same environment. Also, the cast of characters suggested by the poem--an old man, a maiden, a mountain peasant, and a host of monks--must have stimulated Barnet's imagination to create a story involving them and many others.

The original title, U-Pi-Dee, seems to be based on a song. In one of Barnet's scrapbooks, a single sheet of vocal music appears, which shows on one side a song entitled "Upidee." Evidently a college song, the sheet of music might have been removed from a college song-book, as the song on

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[5]Murray Rockowitz and Milton Kaplan, The World of Poetry (New York: Globe Book Company, 1965), pp. 111-13.

the other side, entitled "Bingo," is a drinking song whose first words are "Here's to good old Yale, drink it down, drink it down." Just under the title "Upidee" appears the following inscription:

> The solos usually sung at Harvard to this music are college songs, which contain so many local names and allusions as to render them uninteresting to all but Harvard's students. Some familiar verses from Longfellow's "Excelsior" are therefore inserted for the solo parts of the song.[6]

The lyrics do indeed comprise five of the stanzas of the poem, with the important substitution of the word "Upidee" for "Excelsior." With the thought of burlesquing Longfellow's poem, Barnet might have run across this song, and decided to change the name of the show to Upidee, perhaps to take advantage of the song's popularity. He seems not to have been disturbed when asked to change the title back to a take-off of the poem's title. Whereas the scrapbook containing information about the show had been marked with an ink stamp which reads "Burlesque, 'Upidee' property of R. A. Barnet," a new stamp was purchased and its ink impressions entered into the same scrapbook as "Burlesque, 'Excelsior, Jr.' property of R. A. Barnet." Several of Barnet's later shows would undergo name changes between their amateur and professional performances.

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[6]Barnet scrapbooks, in the possession of Mrs. Virginia Killie.

There is no available libretto for Excelsior, Jr., but there is a vocal score, and there is the aforementioned scrapbook devoted almost entirely to notes, sketches, and newspaper or periodical clippings about this one show. Unfortunately, Barnet, as was his wont, pasted over his notes and dialogue sketches with later clippings, pictures, and even European hotel stickers. Perhaps he did not care to look over rough outlines for his works long after they were produced. However, some of the notes for Excelsior, Jr. are accessible in spite of their coverings, and these will be examined before beginning an analysis of the lyrics in the vocal score.

In the first few pages of the scrapbook, several drinking songs cut out of periodicals are pasted in, with notations on one of them indicating possible consideration as part of the show. Next, one can make out Barnet's handwriting as he sketched out the characters who might appear in the play. Chorus members are grouped according to the parts they would play: Friar Tuck and his cronies would constitute a quartette; there would be a quintette of monks from the monastery (presumably referring to Saint Bernard's, as mentioned in the poem); and finally, there would be a large chorus of villagers numbering thirty-two. On the page opposite these chorus designations are listings for the principals, with some names of actors beside several of the character names. Barnet's old friends, Stutson, Edgerly, and

Benton, were to play the Hustlior (later called Coupon Book) and an unidentified man and woman, respectively. At the top of the list is Barnet's name, beside the character of Excelsior. Perhaps the Longfellow poem, or his own idea for burlesquing it, appealed greatly to him. He hadn't played a leading role in one of his shows since Injured Innocents. But Barnet did not play the role. After the Cadet production, the role of Excelsior, Jr. became, like many of Barnet's leading male roles, a "breeches" or "trousers" part for a leading lady. And in this case, it was Fay Templeton who gained a measure of fame for her portrayal of H. Wadsworth Excelsior on the professional stage.

Following this proposed cast list are three pages of notes for the beginning of the play. These are some of the few available sketches by Barnet for any of his plays, and demonstrate how Barnet sketched out the action of a particular scene before adding greater details of character, dialogue, and lyrics. The following excerpts are all Barnet's words, with some punctuation added to make the ideas flow together a bit more clearly.

Act I, #1

> Opening chorus villagers, on their way to a neighboring village to the annual games. All in holiday attire; one or two to represent their champions, wrestler . . . rifleman . . . After chorus is finished, Inn Keeper and daughter urged to come along, they refuse as they expect tourists' business. Exeunt chorus to last strains of opening chorus.

> (New) suggestion: opening chorus begin with part on and the opening measure to be a call to their other companions (girls) who answer from a distance and come on singing and form in the ending of the chorus.[7]

When sketching out the general action which he wanted, Barnet could interrupt his flow to jot down a new suggestion or idea which came to him on the moment.

Act I, #2

> Enter Wm. Tell. His general business through the piece is to sell the piece of the apple that was left after being shot from . . . Tell's son's head. He sells every one and has a bag across his shoulders filled with apples. His story is of course that each one is the only relic. General conversation at this point with Inn Keeper (Gessler) and daughter about dullness of business. Exeunt into Inn.[8]

The comic business which was an integral part of the role of William Tell as conceived by Barnet is a direct link with the business given to Professor Samuel Howla in the old minstrel stump speeches. Barnet seemed to conceive of a character--famous as this one may be--and his business all at the same time. Barnet's William Tell later became the great-grandson of the original Swiss hero.

Act I, #3

> Enter Hustlior and Friar and three cronies. Hustlior is the advertising agent for a N. Y. house. Hustlior tells about himself and what he had done, and also tells about Excelsior.[9]

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[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Ibid.

Right away, Barnet has gone from William Tell to a modern advertising agent from New York to stories about the anticipated Excelsior. The possibilities which can grow out of these characters are many. Perhaps Barnet used this method of creating characters and then letting them fuel the dramatic situations and action of the play. His confidence about what he wanted to include in the show seems to have been rather secure, although we cannot know how much planning went on before these notes were made, or how much revision was done afterwards.

Act I, #4

Enter Excelsior.[10]

The notes for the rest of the play are pasted over too closely to remove without damaging the scrapbook. Items pasted over most of the notes seem to be cut-outs from some periodical which show scenes from Swiss life. There are many pictures of peasants gathered around large tables, smoking, drinking, and talking, and of monks and friars, making music, engaged in debate, and praying. There are actual photographs of mountain-climbers and peasant girls, and scenes from rural mountain life, with wooden chalets in the background, and hunters with their dogs setting off in pursuit of wild game. The pictures of the monks are the most plentiful, and there

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[10]Ibid.

are frequent notations made beside many of these pictures, usually with a number indicated. Barnet may have been using the pictures not only to get an idea of what rural Alpine life looked like, but also to show exactly how he wanted to costume some of the characters. Although no costume credits are given in the Cadet programme for Excelsior, Jr., Barnet frequently assisted with the costuming of Cadet shows.

In the absence of a libretto, here is a brief synopsis of the play, as provided by Bordman in his discussion of the New York production of the show. The assumption is that the basic plot changed little from the Cadet production.

> . . . The titular hero is left a large fortune with the stipulation he must first scale a mountain as his father had done before him. He goes to Switzerland, where he meets the operator of a shooting gallery, William Tell. The young man is courted by Bertha, the innkeeper, and by an elderly Venetian lady who hears him sing and believes he is serenading her. But Excelsior has eyes only for Mary Vanderbilt Lamb, an American heiress. He climbs the mountain and wins Mary. Bertha settles for Tell, and the Venetian lady is left sadder but wiser.[11]

The brevity of this synopsis is no doubt representative of the relative insignificance which the plot played in the show. This fact will be born out in the following discussion of the vocal score of Excelsior, Jr.

Evidently, the idea about the champions and a possible staggered entrance for the chorus, were combined in the final

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[11]Gerald Bordman, American Musical Theatre (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 140.

version to get a song of praise for the Swiss people and the country.

Morning breaking o'er hill and dale
Waking to gladness mountain and vale.
Loudly echo joyous and free,
Proud song of triumph, Victor, to thee!
Hail noble Switzer homeward returning
Clothed in thy triumph pride of our race.
True-hearted maidens with love are burning
Waiting to give thee fondest embrace.
Strong of arm and mighty is our champion Hans the bold.
Proud defender of right he fears no rivals
with strength untold.
Ring out the song then la, la, la, la,
Making the wild glen echo each voice.
Home of the Switzer, land of the free,
Gladly we render homage to thee,
Each mountain and valley, dear to the heart,
Ah! never! no never, from thee will part.
Sweetly the echo answers each tone
'List to the voice e'er it hath flown.[12]

In this opening number, Barnet has combined some of the spirit evoked in Longfellow's poem with the necessity of setting the scene for the spectator. Like the opening of Prince Pro Tem and Tabasco, the tone here is light and airy, but it doesn't give an inkling of what action is to follow. Barnet's opening choruses were used for various functions: to set the scene, to establish character, or merely to entertain, and there seemed to be no pattern in Barnet's creative decisions with regard to opening his shows. In this case, the opening was then followed by the introduction of the first major character, who sang a song revealing who he was. In

[12]Robert A. Barnet and George Lowell Tracy, Excelsior, Jr., Vocal Score (Boston: Bates and Bendix, 1895), pp. 5-10.

Excelsior, Jr., the first major character with a song to sing is, according to Barnet's original plan, William Tell. His song gets the burlesque going, though it will be some time before anything related to Longfellow's poem is brought into the action. William Tell's song is entitled "Bill Tell":

> I'm Tell, Bill Tell of the familee
> That's known in historee.
> My Pa's Grandpa was the man you see,
> That held the belt for archeree,
> And set, this land, and set his own land free.
> "What's that, a hat?" one day he said,
> "Floating o'er that shed."
> And Gessler "Yes," replied, quite red.
> "Bend your knee and bow your head,
> Or else, my boy, or else my boy you're dead!"
> "I vow no bow of my head you'll get,"
> Cried out our family pet.
> "By jink," says Ges, "'tis an idle threat,
> For William Tell you don't forget.
> You'll wince, I'm prince, and I'm a 'peach' you bet.
> You son of a gun they say's not shy,
> Show me that's no lie.
> Just shoot the fruit off that galoot."
> Tell he did what he was bid,
> Then shot at Gess, and winged him through his tie.
> Some say 'twas never so, Gessler's hat and Billie's bow.
> Some say 'twas never so. I tell you all I know.[13]

The only element of unity in this show is its Swiss setting. This suggestion is confirmed with the arrival of a chorus of tourists, led by a certain agent named Coupon Book, the final incarnation of Hustlior from the rough sketch in the scrapbook. These tourists are on a special, pre-arranged package tour, and they sing about what they see, how they travel, and the responsibilities of the conductor. The lyrics are frivolous

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[13]Ibid., pp. 15-18.

and not worth noting here.

The first scene is further complicated with the arrival of one Mary Lamb, a "Book tourist not personally conducted,"[14] who sings a little song about herself.

> I'm a little "Snow-drop,"
> I'm a little "Gum-drop,"
> I'm a little "Starling,"
> I'm a little all things queer,
> My brow is "alabaster,"
> My hair is "yellow aster,"
> My teeth are little "white, white Pearls,"
> My lips are "Ruby Cherries,"
> My feet are "little fairies,"
> I am the very "Peachiest of girls"--
> When a man is married, and too long has tarried,
> In that doubtful region "town," comes home little frisky,
> With an odor whiskey, wifie meets him with a frown.
> "Just tell me if you can sir, where have you been?"
> His answer: "You see my darling Mary Ann,
> Was just this way, my dearest, his accent's not the clearest
> I had to stop and see another man ann ann ann."[15]

Unknown is how much Barnet tailored his works for the Cadets, and how much he envisioned would be part of the eventual professional production. This song seems to have been written with an attractive actress in mind.

In examining the vocal score, one finds more dancing in Excelsior, Jr. than in Barnet's previous works. The two musical numbers which follow Mary Lamb's song are clearly

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[14]Programme: Excelsior, Jr., by Barnet and Tracy, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, Boston, 18 to 23 March 1895, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[15]Barnet and Tracy, Excelsior, Jr., Vocal Score, pp. 24-27.

meant to mix singing with dancing. The first, entitled "Drinking Song and Dance," is a choral number which celebrates not only drinking, but that which drinking leads to, namely dancing:

> O Drink! drink and be gay, joyous today,
> Drive care away all drink, all drink,
> Chink, chink, chink--
> It makes the head, the head forget
> The daily care and fret--
> 'Tis wine, divine, that gives us freedom,
> Freedom yet from daily care and fret.
> All dance mother of mirth merrily tread
> A measure we tread all dance, all dance,
> Retreat -- Advance --
> It leads the feet, the feet away
> In paths of pleasure sweet--
> Yes wine--divine--will lead our giddy, giddy feet
> In paths of pleasure sweet.[16]

Barnet had studied drinking songs, having pasted several into his scrapbook on Excelsior, Jr., as has been noted already. One of these songs which he had made pencil notations on was a drinking song from the sixteenth-century English play Gammer Gurton's Needle. That Barnet would read Prescott and Irving in preparation for writing about Spain and seek out a drinking song from an Elizabethan school drama for his play about Alpine life, indicates a wide-ranging interest and a desire to research ideas before creating a dramatic work.

The next musical number is a love song, entitled "Valse Serenade," and sung by one Blanche Calvé Santootsie. This is another of Barnet's saccharine love songs, overloaded

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[16]Ibid., pp. 28, 29.

with simple rhymes and abundant references to hearts beating and lovers' fate. The lyrics are not worth quoting here. Barnet was capable of writing a good love song, and often did. But he was equally capable of repeating the same catch phrases and dull rhymes in love songs from different shows.

Finally, near the end of the first act, H. Wadsworth Excelsior enters the scene. His first song, supported by the chorus, is part Longfellow, part Harvard "Upidee," and part Barnet:

Chor.: The shades of night were falling fast.
As through an Alpine village passed
A youth who bore 'mid snow and ice,
A banner with a strange device.
His brow was sad his eye beneath
Flashed like a falchion from its sheath,
And like a silver clarion rung
The accents of that unknown tongue.
Upidee, Idee, Ida, Upidee, Upidee.

Excl.: I am Excelsior.

Chor.: He is Excelsior.

Excl.: I am Excelsior, you know my ancestor,
That silly "youth who bore" Excelsior,
I'm not that sort of chap by jove!
I dote on wickedness and jollity
For cigarettes and girls I love
I am such a "blade!" Je suis!
At Lennox golf I play,
Have yacht in Newport Bay,
At horse show night and day Excelsior.
I am at home in London's whirl
At royal function or at music hall!
I know five dancers and an Earl
I was quite the vogue last Fall!
I am by jove! an up-to-date Excelsior,
I do not yearn you know
For fame for that's all rot.
Society and Fashion for Excelsior!
I am quite so an awful jolly lot!

I am an up-to-date Excelsior.
I am a fashion plate Excelsior.
Swells all admire my attire
That's the sort of style I am.[17]

Barnet has created "Excelsior, Up To Date," along with "William Tell Up To Date," and "Swiss Tourism Up To Date," along with a variety of other characters, sub-plots, and doings, and all in the first act of this show. The complexity of such a tapestry is staggering. Barnet's imagination was certainly vivid, and his ability to mix and match characters, legends, and modern concepts together with foreign landscapes, constituted part of his creative genius. When it all came together, as in many of his later shows, the result was a uniquely unified extravaganza. When it didn't work, the result was a thinly veiled variety show. Excelsior, Jr. seems to be representative of the latter case.

The first act finale brings in major themes from the whole act, and at the same time sets the stage for action to come. The chorus sings:

Ho, ho! Ho, ho! the Alpine horn is calling,
And Oh, and Oh! the avalanche is falling,
But though they know it is a risk appalling,
They go, they go, where Cook has marked the way.
Ho ho! Ho ho! Our Alpen stocks a-taking
Hullo, hullo, our song the echo waking;
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, the Alpine record breaking,
We go, we go, where our Conductor leads.
By jove the snow will very soon be falling,
And oh heigh-ho! A maid for us is calling,
But go we do to yonder heights appalling,

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[17]Ibid., pp. 33-40.

For oh, you know, we are Excelsior.
Lie low, lie low on him we'll soon be falling,
We know, we know the maid he would be calling,
Ho, ho! Ho, ho, his fate will be appalling,
For ho, we know, he is Excelsior.[18]

The action hinted at involves the poem: the avalanche, the snow, climbing great heights, and threats to Excelsior. The characters who sing, the wandering tourists, are pure Barnet. He conceived of burlesquing Longfellow's poem, though the differences between the stark simplicity of "Excelsior" and the complications of Excelsior, Jr. become increasingly apparent.

The second act of the show opens with a chorus of monks singing about their life:

Oh a friar's life is a jolly good life,
Fol-de-ray, fol-de-ray, fol-de-ray,
In a convent old from the world and its strife
Far away, far away, far away,
There he smiles at the follies of life,
The friars stout in his heart and limb,
He mocks at the world and he quaffs his wine,
A jolly old monk ever ready to dine,
And trouble is not for him.
Still he has his days of sorrow,
Feast today and fast tomorrow,
Sins he fain must expiate,
Scourge the body and shave the pate.
Friday's fish and Saturday's thirst,
Faith! he knows not which is worst!
Yet a friar's life is a jolly good life,
Fol-de-ray, fol-de-ray, fol-de-ray,
In a convent old from the world and its strife
Far away, far away, far away,
We all smile at the follies of life,
With goodly cheer and a vintage choice,
We laugh and we jest and our days prolong,

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[18]Ibid., pp. 42-47.

We're jolly old monks, and with frolic and song,
Contented we sing, Rejoice! Benedicite.[19]

This is actually a rather effective song, with some clever lyrics and good possibilities for ensemble work. Judging from the cut-out pictures of monks in Barnet's scrapbook, he must have spent a good bit of time contemplating the life of a friar, and his reflections led to good results.

The next song listed in the vocal score is a ballad with chorus, involving one Friar Bartholomew and the chorus of monks. According to the score, the words of this song were written by one G. H. Coggswell. Here is an early example of another's work appearing in the published score for a Barnet show. Songs by others had been added to previous Barnet shows as they reached the professional stage: the practice would increase, and Barnet would begin to collaborate with other writers on the book as well as the lyrics of his shows. Later in this same act there is a ballad sung by the character Bertha Gessler, with words and music by the composer, G. L. Tracy. The lyrics for these songs will not be examined in this study, in spite of their appearing in Barnet's show. There are enough of Barnet's own words throughout the body of his work to be considered here.

The rest of the second act of Excelsior, Jr. seems to be devoted to specialties, or musical numbers which were

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[19]Ibid., pp. 55-59.

designed to entertain the audience: they seem not to relate to the show at all. Among many, one song is about George Washington and Napoleon. Another is entitled "The Twentieth Century Girl," and speaks about the stylish, up to date, educated "new woman." The finale for the second act is more or less a reprise of the "Valse Serenade" from the first act.

The third act picks up the specialties where the second act left off, with a chorus of "Van Dyck's" singing and dancing a Gavotte. The next number is an air entitled "Gussie Giles," and is sung by Coupon Book with the chorus accompanying. The song is about a little man named Gussie Giles, who was "full of sunny smiles," a nonsense poem set to music. The musical number which follows is called "French Song," but really should be called "French Lesson" as half of the words are French expressions apparently chosen for no other reason than that they rhyme with one another.

Finally, in the last number before the third act finale, we again come across Longfellow's poem, but only for a fleeting moment, as a quartette composed of Excelsior, William Tell, Mary Lamb, and Bertha Gessler, and backed up by the chorus, sing a song entitled "Long Ago," which is really about New York:

Excl.: Shades of night were falling fast,
Through an Alpine village pass'd,
Youth who bore mid snow and ice,
Banner with the strange device.
Trav'ler by the faithful hound
Buried in the snow was found,
Grasping in his hand of ice
Banner with the strange device.

Chor.: Long ago, long ago,
My! 'twas long ago.
Days and weeks and months and years,
Long, long ago.
Dying in a snowdrift,
Really that's too slow!
"Lofty heights!" Oh that's way back,
That's right! Long ago!

Tell.: In a little barber shop,
Saturday I chanced to stop.
Just to get my weekly shave.
With a dime I'd chanced to save.
There I heard some music sweet,
From the barbers trim and neat,
Though their method was so queer
Still their singing charmed my ear.

Chor.: Long ago, long ago,
My! 'twas long ago.
Days and weeks and months and years,
Long, long ago.
'Twas not German Op'ra-Oratorio
Still they all said, "Oh that's great!"
That's right! Long ago!

. . . . . .

Excl.: Once they had a police force,
Where? In New York why of course.
Vice and folly fled the town,
Sports to dry goods settled down.
At the coming of the "cop,"
Every kind of game would stop.
Lexow nerve and John Goff gall
Were not "in it," then at all.

Chor.: Long ago, long ago,
My! 'twas long ago.
Days and weeks and months and years,
Long, long ago.
Not a tip was given,
All was pure as snow,
New York just like paradise!
That's right! Long ago![20]

Barnet's transition between Longfellow's poem and New York

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[20]Ibid., pp. 96-99.

up-to-date is indeed curious.

The show finishes with a resounding song of praise for Excelsior, who has triumphed over his difficulties (climbing the mountain) and has claimed his lady love (Mary Lamb). The show, called a burlesque by Barnet, is really more of an extravaganza, as the supposed source for the burlesque, Longfellow's poem, is buried under specialties and other irrelevant detail. Barnet seems to have written the show with a professional production in mind, in which a bevy of attractive chorus girls could add sparkle to the widely diverse elements of the show.

Excelsior, Jr., however, did not have to wait for a professional production to gain popularity. It opened at the Tremont Theatre on 18 March 1895, and played to packed houses for one week. The show was so successful that its receipts, plus money taken in from advertising in the programme, earned twenty-four thousand dollars for the Armory Fund, almost four thousand dollars more than 1492 had earned.[21] R. A. Barnet was listed as the Stage Manager for the show, and G. L. Tracy the Musical Director.[22] The cast included many of Barnet's old friends, as the scrapbook outlined, with

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[21]Programme: Boodle and Co., by Barnet, Otis and Densmore, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, Boston, 13 to 18 March 1905, p. 56x, Harvard Theatre Collection.

[22]Programme: Excelsior, Jr., by Barnet and Tracy, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, Boston, 18 to 23 March 1895, p. 23, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

the part of H. Wadsworth Excelsior, so named in honor of the poet who wrote "Excelsior," going to B. P. Cheney, Jr. There is no mention of why Barnet did not take the role. M. D'W. Greene played the part of Fitzy Cissgerald, and apparently was again involved in a dance specialty, as the following programme notes indicate:

> During the Burlesque these introductions may occur:
>
> Chant Celtique, by Lucretia Murfe (M'Guinniss)
> Soubrettique in A Minor, Op. 2, by Mary Lamb
> Gaiety Girl Galop, by Mlles. Puffball, Effingham, and April
> Thrilling Gymnastic Act, by Mons. Fék (T. D. Barroll) and Mons. Sewer (E. J. Watson), of the Theatre Gymnase, Paris (Ky.)
> Grand Gavotte Van Dyck, by the Van Dycks and the Van Dychesses, with a Pas Seulic Interval by Premiere Danseuse Assolutist Assoluta Fitzy Cissgerald.[23]

The Cadet shows were becoming more sophisticated, as specialties of greater variety were introduced into the shows. The increasing complexity of their extravaganzas accounts for the continuing popularity of the Cadet shows, and makes it easy to understand why these amateur theatrical productions became such important social events in Boston, and why newspaper critics were generally so lavish in their praise.

The Cadet programme for Excelsior, Jr. also contains a "Short History of the Cadet Theatricals." Although much of this history has been charted in this study, note what

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[23]Ibid., p. 31.

the Cadets had to say about their successful theatrical operation. The author of the following is not identified, probably someone on the Cadet dramatic committee.

> The enterprise now familiarly known as the "Cadet Theatricals" originated in the efforts of the Corps to secure additions to its Armory Fund, and was practically inaugurated in 1884 by a minstrel entertainment in Tremont Temple. This organization presented its work as the "Senegambian Serenaders" on the evening of May 23rd, under the management of Mr. George W. Morgan, Mr. Joseph Dorr, Jr., being musical director. The next entertainment was in 1889, and consisted of two performances in Music Hall February 13th and 14th under the name of the "Madagascar Minstrels." This was also under Mr. Morgan's management, with Mr. Carl Pflueger as musical director.
>
> Coming down to the theatricals proper, the first performances were given in the Boston Theatre Friday and Saturday, April 11th and 12th, 1890. On these occasions the theatrical company, made up of members of the Corps and their friends, presented "Injured Innocents," a farce-tragedy written by Mr. R. A. Barnet, the music by Mr. Carl Pflueger. The net results were about $1,700. This work was also under the management of Mr. Morgan.
>
> The great demand for the best seats at these entertainments and their great success led the members of the active Corps to extend their work by placing the whole affair in the hands of a committee, with the idea of playing an entire week at one of the city theatres. The committee decided to repeat the play of "Injured Innocents," a contract was made with the proprietors of the Tremont Theatre, and a week's performances were given commencing January 11, 1891. The system of selling the seats at auction was decided upon, and this plan has been followed ever since. It was during the preparation of these entertainments that the society craze over the Spanish dancer Carmencita arose, and, taking advantage of it, the Committee, after a great deal of trouble, secured her appearance for Saturday evening. The result is well known. The price paid for her appearance was $800, and the receipts for the evening were over $5,300. From the week's performances the Committee turned over $10,000 to the trustees of the Armory Fund, at the same time carrying forward several

> hundred dollars to another year's account.
>
> Encouraged by their work, another similar enterprise was planned for 1892, and a new piece, by Messrs. Barnet and Pflueger, entitled "1492," was contracted for and the theatre re-engaged for the week of February 8th. The success of this play is well known. It was during the preparation of this play that an elaborate scheme for the extension of the "Souvenir Programme" was conceived, and the receipts from this alone were about $9,700. In "1492" over $20,000 net were realized, a result unprecedented in such work.
>
> During the year 1893 no entertainments were given, but plans were laid which resulted in giving another week's performances at the Tremont Theatre, commencing February 8th, 1894. This time Mr. Pflueger was succeeded in the musical work by Mr. George W. Chadwick, Mr. Barnet writing the libretto. The result of their labors was "Tabasco," which was given during the week of January 29th. This netted the Armory Fund about $18,000, the programme amounting to about $8,700.
>
> It is too early to give the totals for "Excelsior, Jr.," but the programme this year "beats all records," having within its pages over $12,000 worth of advertising. This has been in charge of a special committee under the chairmanship of 1st Sergeant James C. White.[24]

This "Short History" clarifies a number of points with regard to Barnet's participation in the Cadet Theatrical Organization. The early director of the Cadet minstrel shows, before Barnet assumed the leading role, was the heretofore unknown George M. Morgan. Evident, too, was the practice of auctioning off seats in advance of the opening of the shows. The seats could go for more money this way, and with the advertising from the programmes included, the armory fund benefitted greatly. One may speculate about how successful Barnet might

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[24] Ibid., p. 71.

have been had he chosen to produce the shows privately with a semi-professional or professional company. Clearly, he was instrumental in the creation of a major theatrical institution in Boston, and his personal rewards, in royalties and reputation, were considerable.

The fact that Excelsior, Jr. was to be considered a burlesque and nothing else was emphasized by an article in the Boston Sunday Globe which previewed the show before it opened.

> . . . Mr. Barnet would have it understood at the outset that "Excelsior, Jr." is a burlesque pure and simple. He has avoided introducing any business that would throw this, his latest venture, into the farce or opera comique class. He has even ordered that it be styled a burlesque in big letters on the score book. Taking that for granted, it is not necessary to say that there is no plot to speak of, only a series of situations.[25]

Just exactly why Barnet was so adamant about calling Excelsior, Jr. a burlesque--if, indeed, this account is to be believed--cannot be known. Perhaps it had something to do with the Seabrooke/Grand Vizier affair. The above writer was certainly correct, however, about the absence of plot. He had probably attended a dress rehearsal of Excelsior, Jr. at the invitation of the Cadets, so that such a preview article could appear before the show opened. This became a regular practice with the Cadet shows. Oftentimes, the plot

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[25]Boston Sunday Globe, 10 March 1895.

of the show in question was given, as well as the cast list, songs, and special notes about the progress of rehearsals. Later, sketches of the Cadets in rehearsal appeared alongside stories about the upcoming show, and several sketches of Barnet directing rehearsals are to be found among such preview newspaper publicity. From a study of the Boston newspapers of the 1890s, it is easy to see that the Cadet shows were extraordinarily popular social and cultural events for the city.

The critics greeted Excelsior, Jr. warmly, praising the efforts of the Cadet performers, and reminding the reader that the show was amateur entertainment designed to amuse audiences.

> . . . The purpose of these Cadet entertainments is well known. . . . It is to raise money for the Armory, as well as incidentally to have a good time. This purpose is laudable, and not without reason does the public look on the entertainments with kindly eye. The public welcomes Mr. Barnet's child, and enjoys its pranks; and it also goes to see the child when it wears clothes thoughtfully provided for it by Mr. Edward Everett Rice.
>
> Mr. Barnet, in "Excelsior, Jr.," builds his airy edifice on the poem by Longfellow, which not many years ago was, strange to relate, regarded by some as the gentle poet's masterpiece. . . . Mr. Barnet's libretto, or frame-work, or scaffolding, or what-you-will, resembles Longfellow's poem: there are several disconnected episodes, and the young man appears in each; but Mr. Barnet's version introduces more characters and some of them indulge in specialties never dreamed of by the creator of the rash and flippant young man.[26]

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[26]Boston Journal, 19 March 1895.

Note the hint in the above review about Rice's "thoughtful" changes in Barnet's shows. Not all Boston critics were content to lavish praise on Barnet's shows.

> . . . Mr. Barnet has entitled his work "a burlesque," and that is what it really is, for it has neither plot nor story. Mr. Barnet has not in this, his latest effort, surpassed the humor of its predecessors in the matter of the dialogue. Neither are the situations and opportunities as happily effective and numerous, respectively, in this piece as in former works where he has furnished the libretto. There are bright spots, to be sure, in the book, but there are also many places where the dialogue is unproductive of either originality or humor.[27]

By this time (1895), some critics were actually beginning to be critical of Barnet's work.

> . . . Under ordinary circumstances, Mr. Barnet's latest work might be criticized as being too comprehensive, not to say diffusive; with scattering tremendously instead of hitting any one mark plump in the centre. But as the burlesque was written not so much to achieve a literary or a dramatic triumph as to provide ways and means whereby several clever amateurs could display their varied accomplishments, it does not so much matter that we are given so large a collection of subjects that full justice is done to none of them. Had Mr. Barnet continued his attentions to Excelsior, or to William Tell, or to the Alpine monks, or to the vendetta, or even to the personally conducted tourists, there would have been abundant material in his hands for pleasant fun-making, but in bringing them all in, he has hit off nothing very happily. Instead of a connected humorous story, he has given us a book of jokes. But, as has already been said, "Excelsior, Jr." is not to be measured by conventional dramatic rules, and doubtless it will have a thorough overhauling before it goes upon the professional stage.[28]

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[27] Boston Traveler, 19 March 1895.

[28] Boston Transcript, 19 March 1895.

Note the above criticism about the disparate elements in this Barnet show. Barnet must have read some such criticism, but he does not appear to have been challenged to reshape his thinking about the structure of his works. Perhaps his method was to leave his works in a largely unrevised form for the Cadet production, and then to cut and revise, based upon critical response and his own judgment, for the professional libretto. Such a theory makes some sense, since Barnet knew that the Cadet shows were treated with leniency by the critics, who might then make useful suggestions for revision. At any rate, Barnet seems to have been relatively unaffected by criticism from the Boston theatre press, some of whom (such as Philip Hale, author of the above review for the Boston Journal) were bright and perceptive writers. Perhaps Barnet relied more on the response to his shows from the general theatre-going public.

Another possible explanation for Barnet's apparent indifference to the critics was the influence on him of E. E. Rice. Rice was still producing 1492 on its national tours when he bought the professional rights to Excelsior, Jr. in 1895. In accordance with the previous arrangement, Barnet probably reworked his libretto, while Rice cast the professionals and looked for appropriate specialty acts. The result of this collaboration between Barnet and Rice was another success on the professional stage, though this time not as great as 1492.

Excelsior, Jr. had the distinction of opening Oscar Hammerstein's Olympia on Broadway between Forty-fourth and Forty-fifth Streets in New York. This represented the final uptown movement of the expanding New York theatre. "When Oscar Hammerstein opened the Olympia in 1895, the new theatrical district at Long Acre (Times) Square was officially born."[29] Excelsior, Jr. opened on 29 November 1895, in the Lyric Theatre, which, along with the Music Hall, were the two theatres within the Olympia complex. The music for the show was credited to George L. Tracy, A. Baldwin Sloane (a future collaborator with Barnet), and Edward Rice.[30] The cast which Rice had assembled was spectacular, including Fay Templeton as H. Wadsworth Excelsior, Walter Jones (who had played King Ferdinand/Charlie Tatters in 1492), Irene Vera, Theresa Vaughn, and Marie Cahill.[31] Contemporary reviews were generally warm, though not without a few suggestions for the show's improvement, as the following example demonstrates:

> . . . "Excelsior, Jr." is a clever skit designed to reintroduce the funny men and pretty women who won the town in "1492." . . . It also served to bring Miss Fay Templeton once more into leading notices as a clever actress and singer.

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[29]Mary C. Henderson, The City and the Theatre (Clifton, New Jersey: James T. White and Company, 1973), p. 263.

[30]John Chapman and Garrison Sherwood, eds., The Best Plays of 1894-1899 (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1955), p. 154.

[31]Ibid.

> "Excelsior, Jr." has the additional advantage of being produced in one of the prettiest theatres in the world, and when the "gags" are better spoken and some awful puns trimmed down, the piece is apt to enjoy the same sort of a run as its predecessor, and every one knows that "1492" was on the boards from Columbus' time up to the present.[32]

Very likely the combination of a strong cast, a beautiful new uptown theatre, and Rice's producing genius were primarily responsible for the success of Excelsior, Jr. Bordman notes that the show was "the season's biggest success," largely because of Hammerstein's beautiful new theatre complex.[33] The show ran for 120 performances at Hammerstein's, then moved to the Broadway Theatre on 30 March 1896 for twenty-four additional performances.[34]

As to why such a strong combination of talent and architectural beauty did not produce a hit as popular and as long-running as 1492, modern historians explain that the musical theatre in America was undergoing a change.

> Excelsior, Jr., introduced at Hammerstein's Olympia Theatre in 1895, constituted one last reversion to the now historic burlesque type. Once again one of Rice's pieces depended upon Longfellow for its inspiration; the book by W. A. Barnett [sic] was blithely advertised as "a perversion of Longfellow's 'Excelsior.'" But in brashly announcing that the burlesque was a "perversion," Rice revealed the sophistication that had come over his own thinking

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[32]New York Herald, 1 December 1895.

[33]Bordman, American Musical Theatre, p. 140.

[34]Chapman and Sherwood, eds., The Best Plays of 1894-1899, p. 154.

> and over that of the theatre public as well. No longer could the homely hokum of Evangeline be offered in a new piece without self-conscious apology. Whatever the durability of the heifer and the Lone Fisherman, they were recognized to be period pieces. Excelsior, Jr. survived for six months, less on its own merits than upon those of Fay Templeton, who was still a charmer, though she had put on enough weight to make her tights bulge embarrassingly; Theresa Vaughn, who repeated from 1492 Up To Date her artifice of singing local ballads with German words, strumming the guitar "somnolently"; and Arthur Dunn, who gave a raucous imitation of Paderewski, whose name was now beginning to be a household word.[35]

In spite of the changing nature of musical theatre in America, a six-month run in New York was considered more than a modest success, and before it was over, Barnet had written another musical show for the Cadets. Perhaps it was just such measured successes which fueled Barnet's desire to keep writing in the same style. His shows were still doing very well: 1492 was touring the nation for the second consecutive year, and New York had greeted Excelsior, Jr. warmly. Boston still turned out for every revival of a Barnet show, and the Cadets were still enormously popular. So, in spite of the changes which historians assert were afoot, the public continued to support the styles which it liked, and these included the burlesques of Barnet. As contrived as some of his shows were, as non-existent as were their plots, and as repetitive as were their jokes and topical allusions, they

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[35]Cecil Smith, Musical Comedy in America (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1950), pp. 47, 48.

played, and were popular. He continued to succeed with everything he wrote, and in so doing, locked himself into a method of conceiving musical entertainments during his short-lived career.

In November of 1896, Excelsior, Jr. played at the Boston Museum in a production still under the direction of E. E. Rice, but with some different personnel from the New York engagement. The reception in Boston was warm, but critical gibes at the specialty numbers were numerous.

> . . . Mr. Barnet's burlesques, prepared for Cadet performance, always hold their own well when they are afterwards transferred to the regular stage, especially when Mr. E. E. Rice gets hold of them and bedecks them with the trappings and the personal charms which he understands so well how to display. . . . Of course what story there was when the piece had its original presentation has somewhat shrunken, and the specialty department has correspondingly expanded. . . .[36]

> . . . The funniest thing in the first act of Excelsior, Jr. is the dog; the funniest thing in the second act is the scene which gives the centre of the stage to diminutive Arthur Dunn, in a burlesque of Paderewski; and as to the third act, well, the supply of fun has given out and the act serves only to keep in their seats for another thirty minutes an audience which would like to separate into its individual parts and reach home before midnight. . . . In fact the Cadets [who came to see the show], saw and heard but a fragment of their genuine burlesque, the rest had been perverted or eliminated. . . . The play seems now to be plagued by specialists, and their short "numbers," unrelated to the Barnet burlesque.[37]

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[36] Boston Courier, 15 November 1896.

[37] Boston Transcript, 10 November 1896.

Barnet had created a wildly heterogeneous burlesque, and nothing Rice could do was able to save it from degenerating into a variety show. So, Excelsior, Jr. passed into oblivion, and Barnet kept on writing.

One additional note may be of interest in this discussion of Excelsior, Jr. In February of 1897, Barnet received the following letter, which has been saved by the Barnet family:

> Paris, Feb. 17, '97
>
> My Dear Mr. Barnett [sic]--
>
> I write back about Excelsior Jr. Have you still got it? If so, upon what terms would you let me have it for season '97-98 for United States and Canada? Will you let me hear from you at the earliest possible moment. I oblige
>
> Yours sincerely,
>
> Fay Templeton
>
> A line sent to me in enclosed envelope will reach me.[38]

The opening line of the letter suggests that Barnet had written her first. There is no information about what action was taken on this request by Fay Templeton for permission to star again in Excelsior, Jr. Very likely, Rice held the professional rights to the show, and therefore would have been the one to make decisions with regard to Miss Templeton's request. Possibly, there was some friction between Rice and Fay Templeton.

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[38]Letter in possession of Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

During the New York run of Excelsior, Jr., while the show was still playing at Hammerstein's Olympia, Fay Templeton was replaced by a Miss Alice Rose on 10 February 1896.[39] Such replacements were certainly not unusual, but for a major star to leave in the middle of a successful engagement was, at that time, except for reasons of poor health, not common. As Cecil Smith mentioned, Fay Templeton was noticeably heavy when she played H. Wadsworth Excelsior. She had a problem with her weight during the latter years of her career, and this apparently got her into difficulties with producers. In fact, Bordman states that Miss Templeton's contract for Excelsior, Jr. "stipulated she must remain under 150 pounds."[40] Maybe Rice forced her to leave the show after she violated this provision of her contract. Nevertheless, almost exactly one year later, Fay Templeton wrote Barnet about the performing rights for the show.

Meanwhile, Barnet was busy writing. With royalties coming in from 1492 and Excelsior, Jr., Barnet was a very successful playwright during the winter of 1895-96. At that time, the Cadets were in rehearsal for another of his shows. This one, and that which followed it the next year, represented a return to a type of musical form which Barnet had first attempted with Injured Innocents. Only this time, instead

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[39]Chapman and Sherwood, eds., The Best Plays of 1894-1899, p. 154.

[40]Bordman, American Musical Theatre, p. 141.

of burlesquing a ballad about two children, Barnet entered the children's realm of nursery rhymes and began a series of children's extravaganzas which hearkened back to the days of George L. Fox and the Humpty Dumpty pantomime. In fact, Barnet's show for 1896 was based upon the same nursery rhyme as an early Fox pantomime, "Jack and the Beanstalk."

CHAPTER VIII

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

In the autumn of 1895, the following article appeared in the Boston Record, accompanied by a drawing of Barnet:

> It was freely rumored last season after the very successful run of "Excelsior, Jr." and not denied by the committee that there would be no Cadet theatricals this season.
>
> Mr. Barnet was represented as desiring a rest after four or five years' devotion to the Cadet cause and although there are other librettists as willing as he and perhaps as able, the Cadets, too, seemed not unwilling to take a rest. After all, it took half a year's time and did necessitate some heavy work for all hands.
>
> . . . This committee called for libretti. Several were submitted. Some desire has been expressed from outside of the Cadets that a new librettist be chosen--"Barnet, always Barnet," they have made a reproach. But while the committee felt that Barnet's libretto this time (he had been persuaded to re-enter the lists), was better than the rest, "it is to be remembered," said (committee chairman) Mr. Rollins today, "that Mr. Barnet's work has not ended at the libretti in any case. He has been most valuable in staging the piece, furnishing "business," new lines, etc. In fact, he has done and can do far more than a new man could possibly do."
>
> R. S. Barnet [sic] therefore has written the book. It is called "The Strange Adventures of Jack and the Beanstalk," out of which old tale can be instantly imagined all sorts of droll situations for burlesque.
>
> Mr. Sloan [sic] of Baltimore is the composer. He has written operas for the Paint and Powder Club of Baltimore, brilliant, light and catchy music, just the kind the Cadets want, and his work was received with high favor.
>
> "Mr. E. E. Rice tells me," said Mr. Rollins "that he considers Mr. Sloan [sic] about as good a composer of the light, airy, stage music as he knows of."[1]

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[1] Boston Record, 26 October 1895.

This article raises a number of different points about Barnet and the Cadet Theatricals in general. Clearly, the intense collaboration between Barnet and the Cadets was time-consuming and demanding for both parties. Although we cannot know how long it usually took Barnet to compose his works, nor what his collaborative relationship was with his composers, the above assertion indicates that the mounting of the Cadet shows took half a year. This presumably includes not only rehearsal time, but also the planning or designing of the production, the casting and reading of the play, the organization of the production team, and frequently, the integration of a new musical director. One must assume that rehearsals were held on a regular basis, though not as regularly as if the production were being prepared for the professional stage. The call for other libretti and the mention of "Barnet, always Barnet" indicates an element within the Boston theatrical community which was evidently unhappy about Barnet being the sole librettist for the Cadet Theatricals. This dissatisfaction on the part of other Boston theatre people may have been motivated, at least in part, by jealousy over the continuing success of the Cadet Theatrical Organization and Barnet's personal success with his shows on the professional stage. Some of the dissatisfaction may have been motivated by genuine artistic complaints. During the 1890s, Boston was teeming with writers and musicians skilled in light musical entertainments, many of whom Barnet employed to write additional songs

for his shows, or in outright collaboration on the book or lyrics.

As the above article points out, Barnet was more than a mere librettist for the Cadets. He was also a coach, stage director, actor, designer (of costumes), and resident dramaturg, whose personal touches in the preparation of his works were crucial to the success of the Cadet Theatricals. Moreover, he was a highly successful playwright on the professional stage (by 1895), whose prestige and contacts with New York producers helped gain a wider notoriety for the Cadet shows: note the Cadet drama committee chairman, Mr. Rollins, quoting E. E. Rice's personal evaluation of a potential Cadet show composer. By the autumn of 1895, Barnet had clearly become a major force in Boston theatrical circles.

Curiously, Barnet's copyright for The Strange Adventures of Jack and the Beanstalk (henceforth Jack and the Beanstalk), listed in the government's copyright record, was granted on 26 October 1895,[2] the same date upon which the above newspaper article appeared. This coincidence suggests that the show was completed shortly before the article was written. If such were the case, the amount of time involved in the mounting of the Cadet show, which opened on 10 February 1896, was certainly less than "half a year's

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[2]Government Printing Office, Dramatic Compositions Copyrighted in the United States, 1870 to 1916 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1918), p. 2871.

time."

There are no notes in Barnet's scrapbooks to indicate why he suddenly moved into the area of nursery rhymes, which he had abandoned after the 1891 production of Injured Innocents. The success of Excelsior, Jr. must have convinced Barnet that he was better at burlesquing material which already existed in some written form than in attempting to create a story on his own. Prince Pro Tem and Tabasco had been his least popular offerings to date, both of which seem to have been originally concocted by Barnet. There is nothing in the history of the American musical theatre to suggest that nursery rhymes were returning to vogue as vehicles for burlesques or extravaganzas, though in New York, "Humpty Dumpty still retained his theatrical allure," with a production of Humpty Dumpty Up to Date in September of 1894.[3]

Whatever prompted Barnet to turn to Mother Goose or nursery rhymes as a vehicle for an extravaganza, it was a fortuitous decision. He wrote two other nursery rhyme-inspired works after Jack and the Beanstalk, and most of the rest of his work for the Cadets bears the influence of the children's tales. Possibly, he was influenced by the English Christmas pantomime, which he might have enjoyed as a teenager while in England with his uncle. Barnet seems to have been an Anglophile, as his preoccupation with Shakespeare in his

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[3]Gerald Bordman, The American Musical Theatre (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 131.

early work and his stylistic similarities to W. S. Gilbert in his later works bear out. Barnet may have decided to attempt to introduce--or re-introduce, if one remembers the efforts of G. L. Fox--the popular pantomime into the late nineteenth-century American musical theatre. Regardless of the motivation, the nursery rhymes certainly were ripe for the type of heterogeneous musical entertainments which Barnet continued to write and with which he continued to enjoy considerable success.

A. Baldwin Sloane (1872-1925) was Barnet's collaborator on Jack and the Beanstalk. He was born and raised in Baltimore, where he received his musical training.

> . . . An early fondness for the lyric stage made him one of the founders of Baltimore's Paint and Powder Club, a semiprofessional theatrical group, which mounted some of his fledgling efforts. Moving to New York, he began composing in accepted Tin Pan Alley style, and soon found his songs being interpolated into musicals and employed by vaudevillians.[4]

One of the musicals to which Sloane contributed was Excelsior, Jr., which was opening in New York about the time that Jack and the Beanstalk was going into rehearsal in Boston. There are similarities between Sloane's background in Baltimore semi-professional theatricals and Barnet's experiences with the Cadets. Such similarities in theatrical experience may have helped to form a bond between the two men. Sloane not only

[4]Ibid., p. 148.

collaborated with Barnet again, but frequently provided songs for other shows by Barnet. After Jack and the Beanstalk, which was Sloane's first recorded full-length work, he went on to write music for twenty-six other light musicals, including The Greenwich Village Follies of 1919 and 1920 and the original stage version of The Wizard of Oz (1903).[5] Sloane's career was probably helped by the opportunity which Barnet gave him to compose a full-length musical work. The two seemed well suited to each other with respect to style, and the show which they created for the 1896 Cadet Theatrical became quite successful in Boston and New York.

Jack and the Beanstalk was described in the vocal score as a "Fairy Extravaganza" in three acts. The fact that Barnet called it an extravaganza seemed to be a bow in the direction of reality, for the show was another wildly heterogeneous affair, with characters drawn from many different children's tales. Present in this show were not only Jack and his cow, but King Cole, Little Miss Muffett, Puss in Boots, Sinbad the Sailor (from The Arabian Nights) and his accompanying chorus of comic thieves (à la Gilbert's tame pirates from The Pirates of Penzance), and a chorus of fairies with names such as Asparagus Blossom, Gypsy Moth, and Buffalo (take-offs on fairy names from Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream). Such a cast of characters required a complex

[5]Ibid., p. 693.

plot, and Barnet provided one, as the following synopsis shows:

> . . . The plot evolved, dove-tailed and spliced from "Mother Goose," "Sinbad the Sailor," and "Jack the Giant Killer," with a veneer from the "Arabian Nights," . . . A most ridiculous cow is sold as the nursery story goes for a hatful of beans, by Jack, who, as the author has discovered, is the son of Mother Hubbard. Jack's boon companion is Sinbad, who is in love with Princess Mary, who is remembered as being quite contrary, and Mary, strangely enough, is the daughter of Old King Cole, that merry old soul, while "Little Miss Muffett, who sat on a tuffit," [sic] is the friend and factotum of the Princess, to whose hand Jack aspires. King Cole opposes the suit, and favors the attentions of the Marquis of Carabas, a multimillionaire. Several members of the gang of Forty Thieves buy the cow, and hand the beans to Mother Hubbard, who tosses them away in anger. Under the spell of the guardian fairies of Jack, the beans take root and grow into a mighty vine. By this vegetable route, Jack and Sinbad gain entrance to the giant's dominions.
>
> The ferocious Brobdignagian is named the Giant Rusie, possibly because of his ferocious aspect at the beginning of the season of the play and his dwarfed appearance at the end. The giant is the husband of "the old woman who lived in a shoe," who, according to the author, advertised for a husband who loved children. As the bean stalk monster loved them in all styles from soft boiled to ragout and fricassee, he answered the personal and won a wife. It is proper to explain that the fairy queen is of the male persuasion, and with a face of such exaggerated homeliness, that it must be painful. She furnishes "knock-out drops" to Jack, who doses the giant, and with Sinbad escapes down the stalk. He climbs again to seize the golden harp and the hen that, in the absence of the goose, lays golden eggs, and with these evidences of wealth melts the heart of the asthmatic King Cole and his bride.[6]

Such a plot requires a great variety of musical numbers, and

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[6] New York Mail and Express, 27 October 1896.

Barnet and Sloane oblige with surprising inventiveness. As there is no available libretto for Jack and the Beanstalk, the vocal score will again be used as the basis for examining Barnet's growth in the writing of musical entertainments.

Jack and the Beanstalk opens with the chorus of thieves singing about their profession:

> What Ho! for the life of a freelance and bold
> A life full of villainous jollity
> Relieving poor mortals of burdensome gold
> Or anything else that we see.
> We always say "thank you" and "please sir" as well
> In gallantry we are not much amiss.
> When stealing or pilfering none can excel
> The way we say "thanks for this"
> From nabob to peasant the great and small
> We relieve oft we grieve
> Though one to our twenty we rob them all
> Brave little outlaws we.
> From a henroost or bank 'tis the same you bet
> Stealing here--stealing there
> And we work night and day stealing all we can get
> All is fish that comes tumbling into our net
> And we tell you the truth while we linger yet
> We're bold bad men.[7]

In this opening chorus Barnet has once again returned to the device of introducing a certain group of characters who discourse on who they are, and give a hint as to what their role will be in the show.

During the very next song, "A Captain Bold," the leader of the thieves is introduced:

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[7]R. A. Barnet and A. B. Sloane, Jack and the Beanstalk, Vocal Score (Boston: White-Smith Music Publishing Company, 1896), pp. 5-11.

Thief: See lads our noble captain now comes this way
Good news, I warrant, brings he today.

Chorus: Good morning, good morning, good morning.

Captain: Good morning my hungry crew,
Good morning to you.
In me behold a robber bold with nerve of steel.
And like my ancient namesake old, I've nerve to steal.
Though captain of the murd'rous crew, no fear I feel.
I'm monarch here of all that I survey.[8]

This song continues through quite a few more verses, during which the Captain of the thieves further expounds on his likes and dislikes, threatening potential victims with his ruthlessness. It is a good and strong musical number in which a principal character reveals his personality, to the accompaniment of his cohorts.

The form of this opening to Jack and the Beanstalk is familiar. In Gilbert and Sullivan's H. M. S. Pinafore, the opening curtain rises on the crew of the "Pinafore" singing about themselves in "We Sail the Ocean Blue." Shortly thereafter, the following exchange occurs:

Boatswain's Mate: My lads, our gallant captain has come on deck; let us greet him as so brave an officer and so gallant a seaman deserves.

Captain Corcoran: My gallant crew, good morning.

All (saluting): Sir, good morning!

Captain Corcoran: I hope you're all quite well.

All (as before): Quite well; and you sir?

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[8]Ibid., pp. 15-18.

Captain Corcoran: I am in reasonable health, and
happy to meet you all once more.

All (as before): You do us proud, sir!

Captain Corcoran: I am the Captain of the "Pinafore";

All: And a right good captain, too!

Captain Corcoran: You're very, very good,
And be it understood,
I command a right good crew.[9]

Gilbert's influence on Barnet was certainly profound, as this and other examples prove, but Barnet didn't adopt from Gilbert the unity and economy of phrase which helped make the Savoy operettas so popular both in England and America.

The third song of the first act is primarily a short musical introduction for the chorus of fairies which inhabit Jack and the Beanstalk. The only lyrics in this musical number are borrowed, in a slightly altered form, from another Englishman, Shakespeare:

Fairies fay do not stay
Meet me here 'tis break of day.[10]

These, of course, are not too far removed from Oberon's lines at the end of A Midsummer Night's Dream:

Trip away; make no stay;
Meet me all by break of day.[11]

Barnet's familiarity with better known works of drama certainly

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[9]W. S. Gilbert and A. Sullivan, H. M. S. Pinafore, Act I.

[10]Barnet and Sloane, Jack and the Beanstalk, Vocal Score, p. 20.

[11]William Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Act V, scene i.

aided him in constructing his own heterogeneous entertainments.

Following the fairies, King Cole introduces himself with yet another character song:

> I'm a cute little king, and my name it is Cole,
> And these are my fiddlers three.
> I've been put down in books as a merry old soul,
> But that's all a joke you see.
> For I'm morbidly rabbid,
> I'm cross-grained and crabbed,
> I'm filled to the muzzle with bile
> And another man's jest is a thing I detest
> And I've never been known to smile.
> All musical salads of popular ballads
> Oft' set me to squirming with pain.
> If I catch the offender, a fig for the gender,
> You bet it don't happen again.[12]

In changing the essential character of King Cole and giving him a strong song in which to express his "true" personality, Barnet has taken an innovative approach to the nursery rhyme, in terms of converting it into a musical entertainment. This children's extravaganza, a new form for Barnet, was clearly related to the Christmas pantomime and to the works of G. L. Fox, America's foremost pantomime artist of the nineteenth century. For Barnet, the children's extravaganza allowed him the freedom to create a heterogeneous work whose characters actually lent unity to the whole, as they came from nursery and Mother Goose tales.

Unfortunately, such heterogeneity couldn't encompass everything which Barnet tried to pack into the show, and the

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[12]Barnet and Sloane, Jack and the Beanstalk, Vocal Score, pp. 22-26.

Plantation Song, "Cum Along Wid Me," seems terribly out of place:

> Oh way down dar hear de coons all sing,
> So cum along wid me;
> De bucks am dancin' an' de banjos ring,
> Cum along wid me.
> Oh black-faced coon in de melon patch,
> So cum along wid me;
> De bald head rooster den he scratch and scratch,
> Cum along wid me.[13]

One can only wonder whether it was Barnet's fondness for minstrelsy or the tastes of his audience which prompted him to include a Plantation song in a children's extravaganza.

The title character, Jack, then sings a simple ballad about the selling of his cow and his love for the King's daughter, Mary, who, though quite contrary, might accept his love.

> I've sold my cow, I've sold my cow
> For a hatful of beans that were pretty,
> I've lost her now, I've lost her now
> Poor Bossy it was such a pity.
> But the king and his daughter will soon come this way,
> To dine at our humble dwelling.
> So what in the world would her Highness say,
> If she knew we our cow were selling.
>
> I love her so, I love her so,
> That I fear me my love's my undoing,
> Too well I know, too well I know
> The answer I'll get to my wooing.
> But as love has triumphed so often before,
> O'er parent so unrelenting,
> The sweet life I saved then for evermore,
> May be mine with her own consenting.

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[13]Ibid., pp. 28, 29.

Ah Mistress Mary quite contrary
How does your garden grow--
With silver bells and cockle shells,
And pretty maids all in a row,
For your sake, miss Mary dear,
I sell dear old Boss our cow.
So promise you will e'er be true,
And be not contrary now.[14]

Having already woven Gilbert and Shakespeare into this tapestry, Barnet has now begun to weave in pure Mother Goose in such a way as surely would have delighted an audience which was looking for it.

A "topical trio" follows, in which the Queen of the Fairies, Jack, and Sinbad sing "Looking for Another Occupation." This is a ditty about people--good and bad, children and adults--who face changes in their lives. As it is really outside of the general action of Jack and the Beanstalk, it will not be quoted here. There follows a short choral piece, "Now Behold a King," announcing the entrance of King Cole and his daughter into the Hubbard cottage. This, too, will not be quoted, as it is merely another instance of Barnet's hodge-podge dramaturgy.

The presence of Mary in Jack's house is enough to spark a love song, and a duet follows, "'Tis With Love":

Jack: Ah lady fair, I love but thee

Mary: Be still my heart, he loves but me
Oh wonderous love, oh fatal passion.

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[14]Ibid., pp. 31-33.

Jack: Consumed by love, Oh fatal passion,
Thine image filling this poor heart of mine
With brightest fancies, woven round thy
tender form.

Mary: With throbbing heart I feel the sway,

Jack: Ah wondrous joy she feels the sway.
Oh love, thy power is eternal.

Mary: Of purest love that is eternal.
Oh happy hour, Oh happy day,
When I shall become thine own.

Jack: Oh, 'tis with love, true love undying,
That I give my poor heart to thee,

Mary: Ah what joy

Jack: For a kiss from thy lips I am sighing,
Sighing with love's ecstasy,

Mary: Sighing with love's ecstasy.

Jack: And I vow with love's emotion,
Ever faithful to thee I'll be.
And I pledge thee my whole life's devotion,
If thou'lt wait, my true love, for me.[15]

This is a standard, two-part Barnet love song, with little to distinguish it from others which he had already written. Barnet was better at writing love songs for one voice than duets because the latter usually became rather syrupy, bogged down as they were with exchanges involving "poor hearts," "sighing," "kissing of lips," and "great joy."

The finale for the first act of Jack and the Beanstalk is rather complex, involving many of the major characters and revolving around King Cole's refusal to allow his daughter

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[15]Ibid., pp. 39-43.

to marry Jack. Perhaps the character most angry at the king's refusal is Mother Hubbard, who proudly asserts to the king:

> My rage I'm ill concealing
> For it does not seem to me,
> So high an honor to become
> One of your familee.
> So I take this opportunity
> To tell you to your face,
> When your daughter weds a Hubbard,
> You have suffered no disgrace.
> For my tree is as good as your own.
> 'Tis a fact you can hardly deny
> To each child in the land we are known,
> For a Hubbard from Boston am I.[16]

In seven years of writing full-length musical entertainments, Barnet seemed never to tire of paying homage to his adopted city, no matter how oblique the reference was. As the song continues, Jack decides that if he can't marry Mary, he'll ascend the beanstalk and seek his fortune. Sinbad announces his intention to accompany Jack, who takes his leave pledging his eternal love for Mary, whom he urges to wait for him. The chorus assures Jack that Mary will indeed wait for him.

The second act of Jack and the Beanstalk begins with the introduction of several characters who inhabit the world of the giant. We are introduced to the giantess, who sings a song with the familiar characters from its title, "The Butcher, the Baker, and Candlestick Maker."

> The butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker
> To lord of this realm are we--

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[16]Ibid., p. 48.

His wife is the cook,
He commands that we take her advice
Right or wrong you see-
For breakfast and dinner on meat he's fed.
For supper we give him the finest bread
Then the brightest of candles for his bed,
Sing Hey for our work is done,
So Fol de riddle de rol de ray,
Laughing and singing the hours away
With never a gloomy or sorrowful day,
A jolly good lot are we.[17]

Barnet has created a fanciful world for the giant and his mate, peopled by more famous nursery rhyme characters. This is an imaginative twist on the tale of the lonely and boorish giant, and shows that Barnet not only warmed to the idea of the children's extravaganza, but invested it with quite a bit of creative thought.

Jack's entrance into the giant's kingdom is marked by a love song, "Tell Me Truly, Daisy," in which he sings about what is really on his mind:

Pretty little daisy, tell me now I pray,
That my love loves me, that my love loves me.
I will guard your petals, if you'll only say,
That my love loves me, that my love loves me.
Now ere I trust my fate to thee,
Promise that you won't prove untrue,
Tell me not false! Ah! do haply foresee,
Give my love to me, and I will love you.
Give my love to me, and I will love you.

In one fleeting moment, I will know my fate,
I'm all a-tremble, I'm all a-tremble.
Though I fear to ask you, I can scarcely wait.
I'm all a-tremble, I'm all a-tremble.
Come daisy, truly now impart.
First, 'tis she loves, now, loves me not.

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[17]Ibid., pp. 60-65.

Wicked, bad flow'r, thus to sadden my heart,
Lie you there alone, till you're quite forgot,
Lie you there alone, till you're quite forgot.[18]

This is a good example of Barnet's ability to write a good, simple love song for a solo voice. Jack's singing to the daisy which he will pluck, in the manner of lovers everywhere, to determine whether or not his love is true, is a device which fits harmoniously into this crazy quilt of invention.

Before the entrance of the giant, there is a short musical number in which the giantess identifies herself as the famous "old woman who lived in a shoe":

I am the old woman that lived in a shoe,
Who had so many kids she knew not what to do,
So I gave them some "bouillon" without any bread.
Then I whipped them all soundly and sent them to bed.
And you bet your sweet life they were not overfed
With soup, or anything.[19]

Here again, Mother Goose pops up to reassure the audience that the characters of this play are indeed the old familiar friends of childhood. Finally, toward the end of the second act, we meet the giant, whose name is given in the vocal score as Rusè. His entrance song, beginning with a choral flourish, reveals that he is a "typical" giant.

Chorus: Hail! hail! noble Rusè! noble Rusè!
noble Rusè!
Bringing gifts of gold to thee, filling
full thy treasury

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[18]Ibid., pp. 66, 67.

[19]Ibid., pp. 68, 69.

Hail! hail! noble Rusè! noble Rusè!
noble Rusè!
Now thy loving followers await thee here,
Behold before you our yearly tribute to
noble Rusè.
He in return, renews our licenses to steal,
Our licenses to steal, our licenses to steal.
He approaches, he approaches, down on your
knees,
Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum, he smells the blood of
an Englishman.
Be he alive or be he dead, he'll grind his
bones to make him bread.

Rusè: I'll grind his bones to make me bread.
For a typical giant am I.
For a picturebook giant am I.
For a miserly giant am I.
For a "want-it-all" giant am I.
I possess a remarkable appetite,
A remarkable appetite.
And an Esquiman maid is a nice cold bite,
For a hungry old giant like me.
Though I'm King of the villainous robber crowd,
It is something of which I'm proud,
For no thieving or stealing is then allowed,
Till they pay up their tribute to me.[20]

Barnet achieves a measure of unity in this show by revealing the connection between the first act thieves and the giant. Although seemingly insignificant, none of his previous shows were as strongly unified as this one, in spite of the many heterogeneous elements which were part of it.

As the previously quoted synopsis of the play points out, there is no clear reason why Barnet named his giant "Rusè." Perhaps, as suggested, it did refer to size. Another explanation involves the giant's character. In French, "ruse," without the final accent, means "trick, dodge, or stratagem,"

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[20]Ibid., pp. 70-78.

as it does in English. "Rusé," with a different final accent, means "sly, crafty, or artful."[21] It is very likely that Barnet sought to suggest these meanings, though why he added the final accent isn't certain. Barnet probably wanted the audience to know that the giant was a crafty fellow, who could outwit a potential troublemaker as well as overpower him physically.

The musical numbers which bring the second act of Jack and the Beanstalk to a close do not reveal much about the plot. There is a drinking song, presumably when, according to the plot synopsis, the giant is administered knock-out-drops. This is followed by a "Slumber Song," which no doubt refers to the sleeping giant, from whom Jack makes his escape. The second act finale is a general call to arms, "Now See the Traitor," involving the giant's people and the fleeing Jack. Sometime during this act, King Cole, Mary, Mother Hubbard, and Miss Muffett have followed Jack up the beanstalk, and are now chased back down by the giant's chorus, clamoring for the arrest of Jack:

> Seize the traitor, seize the traitor, seize the traitor,
> Ere he gets away, away, away, away.
> Now see the traitor fast is escaping.
> With him our precious gold is disappearing.
> After the villain, after the villain.
> Lose then no time, see him to earth, rapidly nearing.
> Let us pursue him, let us pursue him,
> For he takes with him all our precious treasures.

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[21] Collins French Gem Dictionary (London: Collins, 1973), p. 317.

If he is caught, we will bear him away to a dungeon cell.
Bear him away, away.[22]

Apparently, all escape successfully, including Jack and the treasure.

The third act of Jack and the Beanstalk is short, and is full of nursery rhyme characters singing about themselves and each other. The opening number, "Once There Lived a Little Maid," is a charming ballad about her life, which Mary sings to Jack:

Once there lived a little maid of noble birth and royal station,
All day long in gorgeous raiment she so gaily attired met adulation.
When the days were dark and drear, forbidden out among the flowers,
No such thing as ragged dollies dear, consoled the lonesome childhood hours.
Soon this little maid to woman grew, met a youth with handsome eyes of blue.
He adored the maid she loved him too (do not interrupt my story if you please),
But the youth was poor and lowly born, dared not brave her kindly father's scorn,
Then the little maid was so forlorn, (If you don't keep still I'll go,
If you care to have me stay, blow your smoke the other way),
Then came a fatal day, the youth in search of wealth was going.
Though the maiden's heart was slowly breaking,
Her lips were smiling, he went unknowing,
Bitter were the days that passed.
Agrieving night and day was she.
He with wealth and honor came at last,
And now a loving wife she'll be--
Since you cannot guess these lovers true,

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[22]Barnet and Sloane, Jack and the Beanstalk, Vocal Score, pp. 88-95.

If you turn your head I'll try.
You the youth with handsome eyes of blue,
And the little maid was I.[23]

Here again, Barnet has written a very nice love song in the form of a story for one voice. Simple and direct, the song is devoid of the excessive emotions which plague many of his other love songs. Barnet's difficulty in writing a good love song for two voices is curious.

The very next musical number is a duet, though not a love song, sung by Sinbad and Miss Muffett:

Sinbad: Oh little Miss Muffett, one day on a tuffett,
Sat eating of curds and whey,
When along came a spider and sat down beside her
And frightened Miss Muffett away.

Muffett: Yes I am the Miss Muffett who sat on that tuffett
Partaking of curds and whey.
But unlike that bad spider the young man beside her
Won't frighten Miss Muffett away.

The "New Woman" crazes are raising the blazes,
With all the poor men they say.
While they chide and advise her and lor! criticize her
Can't frighten the new girl away.

Sinbad: Since the "New Woman" rumors are facts with her bloomers,
Just clear up a doubt I pray.
If we say "Please see Mother" or "No, I'll be brother"
Will it frighten the new girl away?[24]

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[23]Ibid., pp. 97-101.

[24]Ibid., pp. 102, 103.

In this song, Barnet has found a way to integrate social comment into a musical number in much the same way that W. S. Gilbert did with such enjoyable frequency. Beginning with a nursery rhyme and gradually turning it into a timely comment on the "New Woman," while maintaining the rhythm of the rhyme, Barnet displayed the keenness of his imagination, which was evidently stimulated by his work with the rhymes. Here is another type of unity found in this work, the unity of the nursery rhyme, which joins the unity of character and (to a certain extent) a unity of plot, to create a strong show.

Jack and the Beanstalk ends with two songs and a finale in the form of a wedding ceremony. The first song, "Perhaps He Would," is sung by King Cole, and is a topical song, having little to do with the nursery rhymes, as it concerns those things which a modern man might do. The next musical number, a march song for the entrance of the Marquis of Carabas and Puss in Boots, concerns the two of them. The former, chosen by King Cole to marry his daughter, reveals his interest in the king's money. His companion, Puss, sums up her own involvement in the affair:

> For I'm a dainty little Puss in Boots,
> Little Puss in Boots, Little Puss in Boots.
> I'm not jealous for we both are in cahoots,
> To relieve King Cole of his much treasured gold.[25]

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[25]Ibid., p. 108.

The wedding ceremony unites Mary and Jack as the chorus sings happily of the love between the two, repeating strains from the love ballads of the show.

Jack and the Beanstalk was appraised as Barnet's best work to date. In it, as mentioned above, he seems to have found the perfect marriage between the hetereogeneous structure which he liked and a unity based on character and general theme. As an extravaganza, it worked much better than his previous burlesques, possibly because it seemed less inclined to travesty a single idea or story, especially in the loose style in which Barnet persisted in writing. In Jack and the Beanstalk, there are very few instances of the typical surface humor, word-play, and puns of Barnet's previous full-length works. The nursery rhymes seem to have inspired Barnet to break out of his style of writing, in a way not really exhibited since he had begun writing stump speeches for minstrel entertainments.

Jack and the Beanstalk opened at the Tremont Theatre in Boston on 10 February 1896. The Cadet production was under the direction of Barnet and the stage manager, Mr. William Seymour. Sloane's music was orchestrated by Barnet's friend and collaborator from Excelsior, Jr., George L. Tracy, who frequently undertook the role of music director for the later Cadet shows. The reviews were almost unanimous in acclaiming the show as the best of the Cadet offerings.

> . . . the crowning sensation of the week has been the Cadets' annual extravaganza, "Jack and the Beanstalk," which has been produced at the Tremont Theatre with such elegance, amplitude, completeness and efficiency as none of their previous productions have shown, admirable, entertaining, and finished though they were.[26]

> . . . "Jack and the Beanstalk" is easily, from any standpoint of dramatic criticism, the most finished work in the way of operatic extravaganza that the Cadets have yet offered--coherent in story, with incidents of natural sequence, and music of distinct worth and charm, it compels interest from rise to fall of curtain, and its after-impression is pleasant and lingering. To say that it ranks with the typical burlesque of the regular stage would be gross flattery--to the latter production--for in Mr. Barnet's extravaganza neither the merry jests nor the coryphees have any flavor of antiquity, the mirth has no Mephistophelean dregs of uncleanness, and the performers seem to enjoy their work as heartily--and this is putting it very strong--as do those who witness it, in all of which points "Jack and the Beanstalk" as will be at once noted, departs very widely from the "regular" traditions of its kind.[27]

> . . . Quite uncommon and clever were most of the situations. The whole play is, indeed, a fresh breeze from Wonderland, like a holiday extravaganza, a medley of bright nonsense that cheers, but not inebriates--a cool cup in a desert of business or wearisome dramatics. Exceptionally bright are the jests and quips, and they patter down like hail, with hardly room for a laugh between. Last night's audience was not to be cheated out of its fun, however, and lost half of the jokes roaring at the other half.[28]

The critics recognized Barnet's growth and development: the

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[26] Boston Courier, 16 February 1896.

[27] Boston Transcript, 11 February 1896.

[28] Boston Advertiser, 11 February 1896.

tighter structure of this play, the fresher jokes and quips, the more finished product. They emphasized Barnet's contributions to the Cadet Theatricals, now that he was no longer performing in them:

> . . . Mr. Barnet, too, is a very large figure in his own pieces, for he personally superintends many of the rehearsals and by adding here, subtracting there, modifying the good things and dividing the lines and things he ensures successes. His work, those who know tell you, is only half done, when he has written the play.[29]

Sloane's music was generally well thought of, though no critic found it to be exceptional or dominating. The most interesting comments were offered by those critics who found the music to be harmonious with the tone of the piece.

> . . . The music, while not the highest or the best perhaps the Cadets have ever had, is the most perfectly adapted to a burlesque. It is bright, melodious, catchy, all that is wanted. It rises to the spirit of the moment. There are rollicking choruses, a pretty lullaby, tender love songs, and topical ditties. The finales are strong. There is a snap and dash that go with the work when needed. There is not a dull number in the score.[30]

This successful collaboration between Barnet and Sloane undoubtedly prompted the two to work together the very next year on another children's extravaganza.

Meanwhile, Barnet was negotiating the professional

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

rights to Jack and the Beanstalk. There is no record in any of the scrapbooks, nor any documents in the possession of the Barnet family, to indicate what sort of agreements were made concerning Barnet's sale of the rights to his shows. There are extant documents from later agreements, and these will be examined at the proper time. In this case, newspaper records indicate that by late October of 1896, New York producers and Syndicate members Klaw and Erlanger had taken control of Jack and the Beanstalk, and had placed a certain Gustave Kerker, the musical director of the Casino Theatre in New York, in charge of the production. Kerker had apparently added some musical numbers to the show, and had opened it at the Hyperion Theatre, New Haven, Connecticut, for a week's run before bringing it to the Casino.[31]

Jack and the Beanstalk opened at the Casino Theatre in New York on 2 November 1896. The company of nearly one hundred was headed by Madge Lessing in the part of Jack.[32] The New York critics gave the show generally favorable reviews, and praised Barnet in several instances.

> . . . There have been extravaganzas with wittier lines, no doubt, but it has been a very long time since New York theatregoers have seen such a piece put on the stage so gorgeously as "Jack and the Beanstalk," which was presented for the first time in this city at the Casino last night.[33]

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[31] Boston Herald, 27 October 1896.

[32] New York Times, 3 November 1896.

[33] New York Herald, 3 November 1896.

> . . . The nursery play at the Casino is a remarkably pretty show in the manner of the English Christmas pantomimes, with lots of dainty fairies, and a dozen or more of the personages of children's fiction jumbled up together in complications that seem to have logically neither beginning nor end. . . . Every point tells. Every "joke," scenic, mechanical, musical, or verbal, is in the right place. The various "specialties"--and there are not too many of them--seem to fit in naturally. One cannot help admiring the unclassified skill of Mr. R. A. Barnet, who puts this sort of stuff together so ingeniously. That it is difficult work, the dismal failure of so many others who try their hands at it proves.[34]

> . . . R. A. Barnet has woven about the familiar fairy tale of Jack and the Beanstalk a delightful entertainment which, albeit less diverting in dialogue than his popular efforts in the field of burlesque, is infinitely superior to "1492" or "Excelsior, Jr.," in construction and lyrical beauty. The simple story of the beanstalk is made to involve a merry throng of little fairyland folk whose doings will be a limitless joy to the children and a real pleasure to those of more years who have not forgotten the dear friends of nursery days.[35]

The actors, costumes, scenery, and special effects were generally admired, so that all in all, the show may be considered to have been a critical and popular success in New York.

By late December, Jack and the Beanstalk had left New York, and was playing at the Chestnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, where it received mixed reviews as a Christmas pantomime of sorts.[36] Shortly thereafter, in early January

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[34] New York Times, 8 November 1896.

[35] Dramatic Mirror, 14 November 1896.

[36] Philadelphia Telegraph, 29 December 1896.

of 1897, the show had returned to Boston, and was playing an engagement at the Boston Museum.

According to Bordman, the Casino Theatre had advertised Jack and the Beanstalk as a

> . . . children's extravaganza--another genre new to the house--and was awarded with two months of good holiday business.[37]

Possibly, by 1896, New York was beginning to tire of the type of extravaganza which had been quite popular several years before. Perhaps Jack and the Beanstalk really was seen by New York theatre-goers as a holiday pantomime. Or perhaps Klaw and Erlanger were not as skilled as Rice in promoting a show and then attempting to keep it fresh over the course of a long run. Jack and the Beanstalk relied less on the ever-popular specialty than other shows of a similar type. In spite of good reviews and popular support, Jack and the Beanstalk did not find the success in New York which 1492 had found, and returned to Boston where it fared better.

The show which reached the Boston Museum in early January of 1897, was, according to critics, essentially the same show which had left Boston the year before.

> . . . "Jack" has changed but little in text or music, but such changes as have been made are for the better.[38]

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[37]Bordman, The American Musical Theatre, p. 148.

[38]Boston Traveler, 12 January 1897.

Apparently the show had grown more technically sophisticated, which seemed to be the best recommendation for seeing it.

> . . . The production is on a big scale. It is elaborate, beautiful, and expensive. Among the many gorgeous stage pictures presented the electric ballet stands forth most prominently. It is daring, original, novel and singularly beautiful. It created a sensation. No such effects have ever before been obtained on the stage by the use of electricity, and this one dazzlingly brilliant feature will attract hundreds to the theatre night after night. Much was expected from this feature, but it surpassed all expectation.[39]

Otherwise, the show continued to be hailed as Barnet's best work. Barnet, present at the opening night of this production, was called before the curtain:

> . . . At the end of the play the curtain was called up three or four times by the audience, and shouts for Mr. Barnet were so imperative that he was finally assisted to the stage from the auditorium. He made a little speech in which he thanked the audience, on behalf of the people in the cast, and complimented everybody engaged in the production, even to the stage mechanics.[40]

With yet another professional success to his credit (and another Barnet/Sloane children's extravaganza in rehearsal with the Cadets), Barnet was riding the crest of immense local popularity.

Following the run at the Boston Museum, Jack and the Beanstalk was toured nationally, though the length of the

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[39] Boston Herald, 12 January 1897.

[40] Boston Daily Globe, 12 January 1897.

tour and its individual stops are uncertain. It was in Chicago in early September 1897, as the Chicago Interocean reported:

> "Jack and the Beanstalk," an entertainment whose interests have been very adroitly and judiciously forwarded in this city during the past six weeks, was artistically materialized Sunday at the Columbia and achieved immediate and distinctive success.[41]

Klaw and Erlanger, like Rice, knew that publicity was important in selling a show. An undated publicity advertisement sheet in the possession of the Harvard Theatre Collection states that Klaw and Erlanger's production of Jack and the Beanstalk toured Canada, playing in Toronto and Hamilton. This may have occurred on the same tour in the fall of 1897, which brought the show to Chicago.

By late February 1898, Jack and the Beanstalk had returned to Boston, and was again playing at the Boston Museum. Boston seemed eager to see another of its home-grown successes return to the city, and newspaper critics welcomed the show back with predictions of yet another long run. After this production, the history of the show became a series of revivals over thirty years in Boston. It is unclear whether Klaw and Erlanger retained the professional rights to the show and how long Barnet continued to receive royalties from the periodic revivals.

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[41] Chicago Interocean, 7 September 1897.

The first revival of the show was at the Boston Museum in November of 1898, with a different cast than the spring production of the same year. The next revival occurred the following fall, in October of 1899, at Boston's Grand Opera House. The next recorded revival of the show took place in June 1905, at the Empire Theatre in Boston. Instead of a Christmas pantomime, this production was very likely meant to be a light summer diversion from the regular season fare.

In the winter of 1910, after Barnet and his family had moved to New York, Jack and the Beanstalk received a major revival at the Castle Square Theatre, also in Boston, by actor/manager John Craig and his company. The show was mounted as a Christmas extravaganza, but began selling out so quickly that the run was extended several times until it had played Boston for five weeks. Craig took the role of Sinbad, and apparently added a number of new wrinkles to the show in order that it be brought up to date. Critics examined the changes, but continued to praise the inventiveness of Barnet.

> . . . Like all musical pieces which are revived after several years, "Jack and the Beanstalk" has been brought up to date and has now an aeroplane song for Miss Young (Jack), while there are allusions to the politics of the day. Several songs are introduced from other plays, notably Basil Hood's bright lyric, "It Was Twenty-Seven Bells in the Waterbury Watch," from "The French Maid," and a catchy duet with effective stage business for Mr. Craig (Sinbad) and Miss Shirley (Miss Muffet) entitled "Will You Take a Little Walk."
>
> Perhaps it is rather late to discuss the cleverness which Mr. Barnet showed in bringing together the

> prominent characters from Mother Goose and the Arabian Nights and making a fairly connected story of the adventures of such childish heroes and heroines as Sinbad, King Cole, Mistress Mary and Little Miss Muffet, to say nothing of Jack, who is made the son of Old Mother Hubbard and whose adventures with the Beanstalk lose nothing in the telling. Some new characters have been introduced that have little to do with the story and the story itself has been cut.[42]

Some critics suggested that the play had become a novelty in Boston, being a favorite among a previous generation of theatre-goers, and many turned out in curiosity, taking their children to see a play which they had first enjoyed some fourteen years earlier.

The next major revival of Jack and the Beanstalk occurred during the winter of 1921. The Boston Society of Singers staged the show as a holiday extravaganza at the Arlington Theatre in Boston. A review of this production made mention of the Cadets:

> . . . Again, as in other years, "Jack and the Beanstalk," reminiscent of the Cadets long before their grim war days, was presented yesterday, with its travestied characters from the Arabian Nights and Mother Goose.
> . . . "Jack and the Beanstalk" is still good holiday entertainment, full of fun and nonsense, with its tuneful music, familiar songs, puns, picturesque costumes and settings.[43]

For those Cadets who survived World War I, this production of Jack and the Beanstalk must indeed have hearkened back to a

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[42] Boston Transcript, 24 December 1910.

[43] Boston Transcript, 24 December 1921.

very different era. The same could be said for Barnet, living obscurely in New York in 1921, whose active career as a playwright had ended before the war.

In December of 1927, one Henry Jewett produced the last major revival of Jack and the Beanstalk at Boston's Repertory Theatre. Once again, the show was revived as a holiday extravaganza:

> . . . The choice of giving "Jack and the Beanstalk" at Christmas is a particularly happy one. It brings a delectable feast to the holiday public for children of all ages, from one to one hundred.[44]

Barnet was still alive when this production took place, though it is uncertain whether he received any royalties from it.

Before ending this discussion of Jack and the Beanstalk, one should note one other production of the show, a highly unusual one, which took place in December 1902, at Clinton Prison, Dannemora, New York. The story is perhaps best told by the Boston Transcript:

> The convicts in Clinton Prison, Dannemora, N. Y., gave an entertainment at Christmas which is worthy of record. Some weeks ago R. A. Barnet, the author of "1492," received a request from Lawrence Macy, No. 4683, Clinton Prison, that he be allowed to bring out that burlesque. Mr. Barnet, however, no longer controls the producing rights. . . . But the letter of the prisoner appealed to the playwright and he wrote in reply that while "1492" was not feasible, if the convicts would like to give "Jack and the Beanstalk" the matter could be arranged. Mr. Macy, who was formerly a comic opera tenor, and who has

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[44] Boston Evening Transcript, 17 December 1927.

been a concert singer and a newspaper man, was greatly pleased, as Mr. Barnet told him that he would not only send on the book, but also two large cases of costumes, so that the piece might be properly presented. The prisoners give an entertainment every Christmas night, a minstrel show a year ago proving so remarkable that the spectators could not realize that they were not witnessing the efforts of a professional troupe.

The prison authorities assisted the men all that was possible, the chapel being turned over to manager Macy for rehearsals. As the stage of the chapel is thirty-four feet deep and fifty feet wide, he had a fairly good chance to make an effective display. He called the men he had chosen to act the play together, read the book to them, assigned the parts, and for weeks held three rehearsals daily, the last work each day being done with the orchestra. During the period of these rehearsals the authorities exempted the actors from other labor, so that the men could devote themselves to the play. One prisoner, who had been a professional female impersonator, was given the part of Little Miss Muffet, and in the cast of twenty-one and the chorus of seventy-five were several who had been connected with the stage.

Mr. Barnet received a large number of letters from the manager, who was anxious that the production should be worthy to rank with the professional performances, and worked out the details with a great deal of care. In the beginning of the correspondence the librettist, anxious to spare the feelings of the convicts, cut out all references in the first act of "Jack and the Beanstalk" to the robbers, and changed the text to fill in the omission. But this did not suit manager Macy, who wanted to give the piece entire. He wrote to Mr. Barnet that the little world of the prison was like the great world outside, with far less difference than might be imagined. He spoke of the jealousies that would break out among the players and of the care that he had to use in casting the piece. "But whatever else we are," he added, "we are not hypocrites, and we know ourselves pretty well. The men will enjoy the robber episode as well as any theatre audience ever did." So the first act was left intact, although some changes were made in the other two acts to admit of the introduction of the popular songs of the day, such as "Psyche," "The Good Old Summer Time," and "Mister Dooley."

Performances were given on Christmas and the two

> following nights, that on Saturday evening being for the citizens of the town. The play was a great success, and even Mr. Macy, whose standard of excellence seems to be as high as that of Mansfield or Belasco, was satisfied that the convicts, the prison officials and the public enjoyed the show. He was surprised and pleased at the interest that was taken in his work by everyone who heard of it. Mr. Barnet spent time and money to further the scheme, and when a rumor gained currency in the prison that the author of "Jack and the Beanstalk" was coming to Dannemora to superintend the production of the play, the convicts went wild with delight. The ready and active sympathy with which Mr. Macy's appeals were met, professional and non-professional friends springing up as if by magic, often assisting at considerable expense to themselves, made a deep impression upon the prisoners. Among those who helped were David Belasco, Tony Pastor, "Aunt Louisa" Eldridge, J. Aldrich Libbey, and many of the prominent composers now before the public, while music publishing firms and costuming establishments sent hundreds of dollars worth of music and dresses. The dull lives of the prisoners have been cheered and lightened by their three nights of play and the weeks of preparation which led up to them, and the earnest, grateful letters of Mr. Macy to those who helped him show that the kindness was not wasted.[45]

This article is pasted into one of Barnet's scrapbooks, a sign that he wanted to remember this unique production of one of his shows. Barnet's cooperation in such a matter was nothing new for him. He had begun his theatrical career with minstrel shows dedicated to the raising of money for a children's home, and his association with the Cadets began with a desire to help raise money for the armory fund. Whether Barnet attended rehearsals or a performance of Jack and the Beanstalk at Clinton Prison, and whether he came into

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[45] Boston Transcript, 5 December 1902.

contact with David Belasco through this effort is not known. There are two letters from Belasco to Barnet in the possession of the Barnet family, which will be discussed later. Clearly, Barnet was instrumental in this production of the play, which he very likely worked on as a measure of civic duty.

Jack and the Beanstalk was an important play for Barnet, establishing a genre of children's extravaganza which seemed well-suited to his talents. He began a collaboration with A. Baldwin Sloane which would be perhaps his most successful partnership, and the play had a successful (though brief) run in New York, followed by a national touring engagement and repeated revivals in Boston. It was produced lavishly by two very important American theatrical entrepreneurs, Marc Klaw and Abraham Erlanger. Finally, Jack and the Beanstalk emerged as one of Barnet's most popular plays, which helped continue his reputation as an important writer of musical entertainments for the American stage. No wonder that Barnet chose to continue in the same vein with his 1897 offering for the Cadets.

CHAPTER IX

SIMPLE SIMON

After Jack and the Beanstalk and before he wrote his next show for the Cadets, there is evidence that Barnet put together a musical entertainment for the summer of 1896. According to a newspaper report, Barnet created a show called A Merry-Go-Round, which opened at the Tremont Theatre in late May, and featured Marie Cahill in the leading role of Mrs. Helen Asterbilt.[1] Miss Cahill had been in the cast of Excelsior, Jr., and would star in future Barnet shows. Her autographed photo is part of the collection held by the Barnet family of stars who had worked in shows by R. A. Barnet. A Merry-Go-Round is mentioned in an unidentified newspaper article pasted into one of the Barnet scrapbooks. As the article is signed by Philip Hale, it must have appeared in the Boston Journal, for which paper Hale was drama critic. According to this article, A Merry-Go-Round was written by Barnet, with lyrics by Paul West and W. M. Browne and music by at least nine composers, including Barnet's recent partner, A. Baldwin Sloane. Hale described the show as a sort of revue, with moments of burlesque thrown in. Hale felt that Barnet should have stuck to the pure revue, as the attempts

[1] Boston Herald, 24 May 1896.

to add plot only confused matters. There is no further mention of this show in the Barnet scrapbooks, nor, curiously, is the show listed among the many for which Barnet secured copyrights from the government.

A Merry-Go-Round seems to be representative of a number of shows which Barnet wrote for summer or special production. These appear to have been "minor" works in that they did not receive performances by the Cadets or by professional companies in New York and across the country. However, they were very likely written for professionals--as A Merry-Go-Round certainly was--and produced locally, in and around Boston. There is little available information about these shows and no record of published libretti or vocal scores. According to the copyright record, Barnet wrote many shows from 1896 to 1908 when he and his family left New England for New York. There are no performance records for a lot of these "minor" shows, of which A Merry-Go-Round seems to have been one of the first.

Sometime between the Cadet production of Jack and the Beanstalk and the summer production of A Merry-Go-Round, Barnet took out a copyright for his next major work, "Simple Simon, a Mother Goose Extravaganza in three acts."[2] It is doubtful that he began work immediately on Simple Simon,

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[2]Government Printing Office, Dramatic Compositions Copyrighted in the United States, 1870 to 1916 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office), p. 2871.

with professional revisions needed for Jack and the Beanstalk and the idea for A Merry-Go-Round beginning to take shape. But it is not impossible. Barnet was an energetic man who, by 1896, seemed ready to make the theatre his primary occupation. His partnership with A. Baldwin Sloane had been fruitful, and Barnet very likely contracted with him to collaborate on the new Mother Goose piece shortly after the successful production of Jack and the Beanstalk. According to Hale, Sloane added songs to A Merry-Go-Round, so he and Barnet may have already been working on Simple Simon when the opportunity to write the summer piece came up. Whatever the sequence of events was, Simple Simon, by Barnet and Sloane became the Cadets' show for 1897 and was rather successful.

Bordman calls Simple Simon "a variation of Jack and the Beanstalk," in which

> . . . the good Fairy Queen helps Simple Simon in his courtship of Curly Locks, whose heart has been turned to stone by a witch.[3]

With a successful formula established in Jack and the Beanstalk, and with Sloane aiding their collaboration, Barnet probably sought to merely continue his venture into children's extravaganza with different nursery rhymes. According to the Cadet programme, the following is a "list of nursery

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[3]Gerald Bordman, American Musical Theatre (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 150.

jingles used in Simple Simon":

1. Simple Simon
2. Curly Locks
3. Little Tom Tucker
4. "There was an old woman tossed up in a basket"
5. Lucy Locket
6. Tommy Trot
7. Tommy Snooks and Bessie Brooks
8. Little Polly Flinders
9. Little Jack Horner[4]

Clearly, Barnet sought out a group of nursery rhymes whose characters he hadn't used the year before, spliced them together with a thin plot, and then wrote songs and specialty numbers to provide the real entertainment. The lyrics of these songs will be examined below to note any changes in the Barnet style and any similarities with Jack and the Beanstalk.

The first and most noticeable change between the two children's extravaganzas of Barnet and Sloane is that, in spite of what appears in the copyright record, Simple Simon consisted of two acts instead of three. Thus, there were fewer musical numbers in this show, though there was still a diversity of types: choruses, solos, entrance songs, dances, duets, and quintettes. In paring down this show, Barnet surely realized that variety in the type of musical numbers offered was more important to the success of the

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[4]Programme: Simple Simon, by Barnet and Sloane, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, Boston, 8 to 13 February 1897, Harvard Theatre Collection.

show than mere quantity of songs. Continuing in the same vein as Jack and the Beanstalk, Barnet and Sloane must have found the construction of Simple Simon rather easy.

The opening chorus of Simple Simon is subtitled "Fairy Revel," a perfect introduction to a children's extravaganza which takes place in its own magical kingdom.

> Gleaming from yonder dark tower
> O'er crumbling and ivy-clad walls
> Down in a silvery shower
> Fair Luna's bright radiance falls.
> This is the mystical hour
> For revel by fairy and fay
> Back by the dawn to our bower
> Reproof from our queen should we stay
> Nectar from buttercups quaffing
> Distilled from the clouds that roll by
> Happy and innocent laughing now tells
> Poor mortal fairy and fay are near
> And hold we a revel here
> Yes hold a revel here, a revel here
>
> On with the dance, the dance the dance,
> Rapidly nearing the hour
> For leaving this sweet woodland dell
> Back by the dawn to our bower
> So now we dance and sing
> A sweet fare-well.[5]

There was a Queen of Fairies and chorus of "Fairies fay" in Jack and the Beanstalk, and Barnet might have wanted to expand the role of fairies in Simple Simon from their rather insignificant part in the previous show. The presence of fairies also represented a challenge to scenic designers, who, it will be remembered, had created the spectacular

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[5]R. A. Barnet and A. B. Sloane, Simple Simon, Vocal Score (Boston: White-Smith Music Publishing Company, 1897), pp. 3-6.

"Electric Ballet" for Jack and the Beanstalk. Barnet was certainly aware of potentially exciting visual effects for his shows.

The second musical number is the "Queen's Song," in which the Fairy Queen reveals herself to be quite a modern little sprite:

> My love was a most ardent spirit,
> His family were very swell sprites
> Deportment, perfection or near it
> Tho' his bus'ness did take him out nights.
> To me, it was Passion's first shiver,
> Love's primary throb and thrill,
> Mama thought at first 'twas my liver
> Papa said "only a chill!"
> But 'twas love' Yes 'twas love, early love
> For he called me his dear little "tootsie,"
> And his "wootsie," also "cootsie,"
> He said, "oo's baby oo?"
> Then I'd murmur "I'se oo,"
> Then the man in the moon hid his face![6]

In Jack and the Beanstalk, Barnet had first introduced the group of thieves, and followed this choral introduction with the entrance of the captain of thieves singing his song. In Simple Simon, he used a chorus of fairies followed by the Queen of fairies and her song. The pattern was much the same.

Following the "Queen's Song" is a lengthy ensemble number which introduces the heroine of Simple Simon, Curly Locks. She is praised and criticized by the men and women of the chorus:

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[6]Ibid., pp. 7-9.

Impatiently awaiting here for Curly Locks, for Curly Locks.
She's such a winsome little dear, is Curly Locks, is Curly Locks,
We'll spoil your beauty, never fear, Miss Curly Locks, Miss Curly Locks.
Footsteps, footsteps, Curly Locks is drawing nigh,
Footsteps, footsteps, Lack-a-day they pass us by.
We would gladly, yes so gladly for you die Miss Curly Locks, Miss Curly Locks,
We miss you so, we miss you so Miss Curly Locks, Miss Curly Locks,

. . . . . .

For she's such a very horrid little girl,
Please do, please do,
You are only fascinated by her curl.
A kiss, such bliss,
From a laughing little mouth and teeth of pearl.
For you, for you,
If you'll only leave this horrid girl.[7]

The different tones echoed in the above represent two different reactions to Curly Locks: the praise of the chorus and the jealousy of her rivals Bessie and Polly. Barnet had become practiced at setting the stage for a principal character, and this song represents his best effort in that direction. Within this song are two opinions of the character about to enter the stage, which gives the audience an opportunity to decide for itself what opinion it is to have of Miss Curly Locks. And, after a few lines sung off-stage, she is brought on to fend for herself.

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[7]Ibid., pp. 10-19.

Curly Locks: (without) Curly Locks, Curly Locks wilt thou be mine

Horner and Trot: Yes Curly Locks

Curly Locks: (without) Such is the plea I always decline

Bessie and Polly: (angrily) Fortunate he with a wife so divine

Chorus: 'Tis Curly Locks 'tis Curly Locks . . .

Curly Locks: (entering) Good morning, gentlemen, and ladies too.

Bessie: Pray be off with you for you're not wanted here my lady fair.

Curly Locks: Ha Ha! a tribute unto my vanity
You can't be blam'd for being inflam'd with green-eyed jealousy
Forsooth this much I'll do for you
(to men) I'll leave it gentlemen to you: Shall I stay--or shall I go?

Men: (spoken) No, no, no.

Curly Locks: (to girls) I told you so.

I'm Curly Locks a village belle,
A belle without a ring
Though each one vows he loves me well
His words no thrill can bring
My whilom charms I must confess
Cause endless suffering
In worship of my loveliness
On bended knee they sing

Chorus Men: (on knees) On bended knee we sing

Chorus Girls: (angrily) On bended knee they sing

Curly Locks: Curly Locks Curly Locks
Wilt thou not be mine
Thou shalt not the dishes wash
Nor feed the swine
But sit on a cushion love

Sewing a seam
And feed on strawberries love,
Sugar and cream.[8]

The isolation of the charming romantic heroine, scorned by the other women but loved by all of the men, was standard stage fare for the light musicals of the 1890s, and Barnet merely added to the tradition with this introduction of the heroine of Simple Simon.

Shortly after her introduction, Curly Locks sings a song with the chorus entitled "The Walrus and the Seal," which appears to be nothing more than a nursery rhyme--perhaps invented for the occasion by Barnet--set to music:

Once on a time on an Iceland floe,
Way up North in the cold, cold snow,
There liv'd a maiden Walrus you must know
Who lov'd Alaska Seal with an Arctic glow.
Sweet Walrus sigh'd for her Seal alack
Seal was a "skin" and gave her the "sack."
Wretched little Walrus, Foolish little Walrus.
All because she lov'd a Seal.
Heigh-ho! Heigh-ho! Because she lov'd him so.
And then she wink'd, and then she blink'd
Did this coy and shy young Walrus
She waved her fin and rais'd her chin
As should the well-bred Walrus.[9]

There are two more verses to this ditty, but they are unnecessary to quote here, as the gist of the song is readily available from this first verse. In writing an extravaganza centered on nursery rhymes, Barnet could not only draw in

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[8]Ibid., pp. 19-24.

[9]Ibid., pp. 25-28.

famous characters and their stories from Mother Goose, but could also invent his own nursery rhymes. The above song seems to be an example of this. If so, this was a technique which suited Barnet and his conception of the light musical entertainment very well.

The next musical number introduces us to the character of Tommy Tucker, whose song, "For I Wonder," tells us a bit about his life:

The hours flee in misery
Unhappy youth am I;
In vain I plead in hour of need
To thee who pass me by.
Oh, willow wail, Oh, willow wailing
Yet did I dare build in the air
A place that I called mine
And loving mate decrees by Fate
To make my life divine.

No food hath passed my lips for days
And faint with hunger I
It surely seems 'twere best indeed
To lay me down and die.
Oh, willow wail, Oh, willow wailing
All hope has fled all life seems dead,
I end it all today,
And yet doth seem
The last night's dream
Hath turn'd my steps this way.

Oh, willow wail!
Oh, willow wailing!
Oh I wonder, yes I wonder
What kind of fortune for me will decree
Did I blunder, did I blunder,
Thinking, Goddess, thou'dst smile on me?
What betide me, what betide me
If my fate unpropitious should be
None to guide me, none to guide me
All alone in my misery.[10]

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[10]Ibid., pp. 29-33.

Some of Barnet's character songs were far less successful than others, and this is one of them. Barnet could handle humor very well at times, but had a more difficult time when it came to writing lyrics suggesting more serious emotions, such as love or pathos. Such songs usually became repetitive and shallow, and unnecessarily emotional, as in the case of the above song.

In sharp contrast to the above is the following musical duet, sung by Lucy Locket and Tommy Trot, making light of relations between the sexes during an era when the "modern girl" was all the rage.

Lucy: I may stand upon the corner in my bloomers
if I "chooses"
I may smoke a cigarette in public too,
I may walk in little skirtlets when the
mud's a-top my "shoeses"
And in fact do anything that's truly new.
But oh! do not yet divine
You creature masculine
I am satisfied I'm woman not a man!
For I'm always wont to do
The things I'm not expected to
As I do not care to do them when I can.
No I do not care to do them when I can,
You may think I want to act like any man;
When I find that you'll allow me to be
just like you,
Then I do not care to do it if I can.

Trot: Women talk of woman suffrage,
Or the ballot to be chosen,
Or her right to run as May'ress of
the town;
She may take her little drinklet
With a voter when he's doubtful
Tho' it gags her all the time it's going
down.
When Election day comes 'round,
At her home she will be found

Hoping earnestly she'll beat the other
"Man."
If you tell her she's elected,
Then the job will be rejected,
For she doesn't care to have it when she
can.
For she wouldn't care to have it when she
can.
Tho' she knows that she has whip'd the
other man.
If the office you deny her,
She would get it or expire;
But she doesn't care to have it when she
can.[11]

Barnet had used this theme in previous musical entertainments, and would continue to exploit it as long as the twentieth century promised a new role for women in American society. More important to his musical works, however, is Barnet's use of a duet between nursery rhyme characters to articulate this popular theme. Finally, Barnet was achieving the promise which his early career had suggested, and which his study of and borrowing from W. S. Gilbert had foreshadowed. Barnet was effectively using his songs for social commentary, regardless of the level on which they were written. But the rage for heterogeneity in light musical entertainments of the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries kept Barnet expanding on his themes and ideas instead of contracting and polishing in order to produce works more fitting to the dawn of a new century.

So similar were Jack and the Beanstalk and Simple Simon

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[11]Ibid., pp. 33-36.

in structure that the hero of each did not sing his character song until well into the first act of each. The entrance of Simple Simon occurs in the seventh song of a short first act:

> Simple Simon is my name, no other do I bear;
> And hist'ry says I met a pieman going to the fair,
> "Let me taste your ware," said I
> But he said "Where's the dough?"
> "Just put it down on the slate" said I
> The pieman he said "no."
> A stingy pieman was he
> A moral here you surely see
> 'Tis plain as plain can be,
> If you haven't the penny
> You do not get any
> For you can't have pie
> If you have no dough.[12]

Another verse follows, but again, the gist of the song is rather clear from this first verse. Here, Barnet built a song around one of his infamous puns, which were so often criticized when they appeared in the books of his shows.

The finale for the first act of Simple Simon shows another variation on a Barnet theme. His act finales seemed to be either a reprise of the words and music which had gone on in the act, or else entities unto themselves, with complex structures, in which Barnet advanced the plots of his shows at the expense of a unified musical number. In this case, the story wins out. Simple Simon is honored by the chorus as he courts Curly Locks with "gold and jewels

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[12]Ibid., pp. 37-39.

rare." Curly Locks is flattered, but is also wooed by Tommy Tucker, who, with the help of the fairies, is encouraged to declare his love to Curly Locks. She refuses him, which refusal invites the warnings of the chorus. The matter is further complicated by Jack Horner, who also declares his love for Curly Locks, warning her not to marry Simple Simon. As the tempo changes to a waltz, the women of the chorus advise Curly Locks to marry Tommy Tucker, wondering all the while what fate the Fairy Queen has in store for the popular Curly Locks. This finale is as complex musically as it is in plot, with solos interrupted by other solos, leading into choral passages for different groups of voices. Barnet seemed to have delighted in throwing together the many nursery rhyme characters in a plot of love and improbable adventure which could only be resolved by magical fairies and acts of individual distinction. For a children's extravaganza based upon at least nine different rhymes, this was a perfect finale for a first act in which most of the musical numbers did little more than reveal the cast of characters.

The second act of Simple Simon opens with a choral number which sets the new scene:

> Ho for the joys of Bartholomew fair,
> Laughter and song on this festal day;
> Flowers so sweetly perfuming the air,
> Homage to patron Saint now we pay.
> Happy and free, who could else be
> While merrily wishing each sight to see
> O hi for this day of days for me
> Saint Bartholomew here's to thee, to thee!

Ribbons and jewels for maidens fair,
For golden tress and nut brown hair
Garlands alone for the youth to wear,
For youth to wear, yes, youth to wear.
Let your heart with gladsome singing
Tell your joy in tuneful voice
Set the village bells a-ringing,
Let us all rejoice, all rejoice![13]

This song continues with a variety of "Showmen" who enter, beating on bass drums or clanging cymbals, announcing the "wonders of the show." This device is a good example of Barnet's strong ability to create a scene of enormous activity. One can imagine the chorus, entering individually, or as couples or small groups into Bartholomew Fair, and meeting the hawkers offering their special delights. Such scenes represent the transition from the crude masses in The Black Crook (1866) to the more controlled spectacle and unified musical intention of Victor Herbert's Babes in Toyland (1903), which bears a distinct relationship to Barnet's children's extravaganzas, as it was populated by many of the same characters from nursery rhymes.

Into this busy scene steps Tommy Tucker, who sings a song about his admiration for the life of a soldier, "Every Inch a Soldier Boy":

What ho! I say and give to me
The gallant soldier's life,
What fear has he of cannon's roar
Or of the battle's strife!
His duty lies before him

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[13]Ibid., pp. 64-71.

Tho' tis in a soldier's grave.
His country's honor to defend
Its liberty to save.
The trumpets sound the word "Fall in!"
And thro' the awful battle's din
When stern defeat seems imminent and near
Though wounded and about to die,
"To Vict'ry or to Death," his cry,
"Keep fighting boys, for flag we hold so dear!"

Then here's to him a soldier true
And citizen as well,
I sing of him our brother staunch,
Our fireside's sentinel.
He stands at rest but quite prepared
To answer duty's call,
And be against his country's foe
A solid loyal wall.
No rattling drum nor words of men
To fan his courage needs he then
He heeds his country's flag and its demand
It waves a duty plain and clear
The Massachusetts Volunteer
Responds to grand "Old Glory's" high command![14]

The refrain which gives the title to the song follows each verse, but isn't really necessary to quote here, as the verses tell everything. Note Barnet's praise of the Massachusetts Volunteers, of which the Boston Cadets were perhaps the best known part. There seems to be no immediate reason for Barnet's sudden patriotic theme invading this work. The war with Spain was a year away. But the United States was awakening to the realization of its potential in the world, and the late 1890s saw a rise in national awareness and patriotism which led to the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the flag-waving of "Yankee Doodle" in the early twentieth

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[14]Ibid., pp. 72-75.

century. Barnet, like Cohan after him, could reflect America's emotions in his work. After all, Barnet's biggest success had been 1492, celebrating not only the four hundredth anniversary of Columbus' discovery of the new world, but also America's excitement over having arrived at that milestone in her history.

Following his patriotic number, Tommy Tucker is joined by Curly Locks for "Oh! Beloved One," a duet in which vows of love are exchanged by the two:

Tucker: Oh beloved one, Oh my cherished one
Ere sets the morrow's sun thou'lt be mine own.
Oh beloved one, Oh my cherished one
No more we'll wander thro' this life alone
All my world I hold when my arms enfold thee,
To my heart, my love, I'm happy then
For whate'er befall thou'rt my life, my all,
Thou'rt my hope my faith I care not then.
Love like mine is giv'n to man but once in life
And all that Love I give to thee
What care I for nation's peace or nation's strife
As long as thou art true to me.[15]

Curly Locks joins in with a refrain, and the two seem happy for the moment, though Tommy seems to have forgotten his patriotic fervor from the previous song. This is another poorly written Barnet love song, which not only suffers from an excess of sentiment, but also from some odd word and sentence structure.

The next musical number seems to praise the glories

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[15]Ibid., pp. 76-79.

of champagne, and is sung by Simple Simon and a character by the name of Lew Cid. The song is called "The Other Won't be There," and really has little to do with anything save the popping of corks and struggling home while drunk on champagne. Barnet seemed to enjoy drinking songs, as many found their way into his shows. In this case, Barnet may have been motivated by his business interest in Ruinart Brut Champagne.

A quintette follows, sung by Curly Locks, Tom Tucker, Tommy Trot, Jack Horner, and Tommy Snooks. Entitled "I Could Never Marry," this song reveals the secret of Curly Locks, whose heart had been turned to stone until the age of eighteen.

Curly Locks: When but an infant was my fate by fairies told,
And on my brow set this decree,
Until full eighteen years o'er Curly Locks have roll'd,
A maiden icy hearted she must be.
Wealthy suitors they, and come from ev'ry clime,
With graceful bow and courtly mien yet cold I must remain;
Until that time, until that time,
When I'm eighteen, when I'm eighteen.
Think no more, I pray of me,
Go seek elsewhere a bride with face and form more fair than mine,
For a life with thee is destined ne'er to be.
You may sigh, you may cry,
Swear for love of me you die;
But I cannot marry you,
Since an answer you press,
I must honestly confess
I could never marry one of you.[16]

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[16]Ibid., pp. 82-86.

With Curly Locks threatening to prevent a happy ending to this work, Barnet introduces a song entitled "Eight Little Chinese Maids," which has no bearing on the nursery tale, save that it again introduces some characters which seem to be Mother Goose-like. A lovesick walrus and a group of Chinese maids were certainly no more out of place, either as characters or as subjects of songs, than Curly Locks, Tommy Trot, Jack Horner, et al. The problem for Barnet is an old one: instead of resolving the many difficulties raised in the most expedient manner possible, he actually expands and complicates the whole situation by adding characters, then lets the plot meander toward a happy ending.

In Simple Simon, the resolution of the action is impossible to follow from the vocal score. The finale to the second act is another bit of orientalia, a "Chinese Ensemble," which does little more than praise the "golden land of China." In some way, the love triangle between Simple Simon, Curly Locks, and Tommy Tucker is resolved, and the other characters go about completing their business as well. From Bartholomew Fair, the second act has taken the spectator into China, and the story, however thin, has been lost on the way. Since Gilbert and Sullivan's The Mikado, orientalia had been popular on the American musical stage, and this seems to represent Barnet's first exploitation of the craze. Although why he would have chosen to end this particular show in the way he did is certainly mystifying.

Simple Simon opened on 8 February 1897, at the Tremont Theatre in Boston, with a Cadet company which for the first time did not include any of Barnet's old friends from minstrel days. Perhaps the Cadets wanted to bring new blood into the productions, or perhaps Barnet's friends had finally given up amateur acting to concentrate on their businesses and families. Whatever the case, new names appear in the Cadet programme for this show, and some of these names began to appear in leading roles during the latter part of Barnet's career with the Cadets. One such person, a certain W. B. C. Fox, who portrayed the character of Tommy Trot in Simple Simon, became a leading man in many subsequent shows which Barnet wrote for the Cadets.

As had become common practice, Simple Simon was previewed in the Boston newspapers, with accounts of rehearsals and a general outline of the plot. One such preview had some flattering things to say about Barnet:

> . . . A brief and superficial glance at Mr. Barnet's book and a sight of a rehearsal on the installment plan inspires the belief that Mr. Barnet has done the best thing yet. Indeed, his career has been a sort of crescendo in that way, for each year has taught him new notions of the possibilities of such productions as he has undertaken, and he has proved himself far cleverer in designing effects than in writing dialogue. Luckily, in the sort of pieces he does, quickness of action, [and] cleverness in devising amusement are far, far more desirable than wit or humor, and he has a light way of skimming along the surface of things that is cleverness in itself. The man who in making such a production as "Jack and the Beanstalk" devises opportunities for spectacular effects, gives clever people a reasonable

> opportunity to do clever things has a mission, and that is Mr. Barnet's. He comes nearer to putting up what the English public knows as an extravaganza than any one in this country, and his books are much better than those made in England, because they are not so wordy and their humor does not depend on tiresome plays on words, the eternal pun.[17]

Although the final comments in the above preview weren't quite true and some great liberties were taken in dismissing wit as an important ingredient in musical entertainments, Barnet had clearly profited by his children's extravaganzas, and his reputation was riding high in Boston. The above writer also noted, however, that Barnet seemed better at designing effects "than in writing dialogue."

Other critics, reviewing the play after it had opened, made comparisons between Barnet's work and that of European light opera composers and librettists:

> . . . Mr. Barnet has followed the example of Humperdinck and Massenet. They, with "Hansel and Gretal" and "Cinderella," have turned their backs on tales of lust and blood and have gone to the simple stories that delight all healthy, normal children, young or old.
>
> In "Simple Simon" Mr. Barnet has shown wisdom in choosing the form of two acts instead of three. There are few extravaganzas, there are few operettas in which the third act is of any value or interest. Gilbert and Sullivan realized this fact, and Mr. Barnet does well to follow their example. His knowledge of stage effects and his ingenuity of invention are recognized throughout, and it seems to me that he has firmer control of his subject than in his former pieces. There is method even in his

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[17] Boston Sunday Herald, 31 January 1897.

> madness of fancy. . . . "Simple Simon" is to me the best of Mr. Barnet's pieces.[18]

The above comparison between Barnet and the Europeans is interesting, foreshadowing the coming popularity of Viennese Operetta between 1907 and 1914 in America, and at the same time, hinting at the evolution of the American musical stage, which, though outclassed by European imports, would begin to develop its own unique style when the 1914-18 war isolated America from Europe. The above critic also pointed out the growth which Barnet had exhibited in Simple Simon, and also praised his "knowledge of stage effects." In cutting the piece down from three acts to two and purging many of the specialties, Barnet must have created a more unified show, which prompted critics such as the above to call Simple Simon his best show yet.

Other critics continued to praise the show, but brought up small points relating to Barnet's style which seemed to be stamped on his works no matter how successful they were.

> . . . In such a work coherency is not required. But Mr. Barnet has a co-ordinating brain, and he and it have actually wrought out a kind of transformation fairy tale, which makes the complicated plot of "Simple Simon." That the dialogue should be always brilliant, or even always interesting, was not to be anticipated.
>
> But Mr. Barnet long ago demonstrated that he had wit, taste and sense, and "Simple Simon" relishes of

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[18] Boston Journal, 9 February 1897.

> all these virtues. The local hits were not too numerous, and were always shrewd. The infusion of old jokes was no more extensive than it might well be, in view of the frailty of our common humanity.
>
> The scheme of the relations of the characters showed much novelty and invention. Many of the lyrics might well be praised for their wit and worth.[19]

Of interest is how Boston critics seemed to go out of their way to praise Barnet and his shows, beyond what would seem to be the bounds of sound theatre criticism. New York critics would probably not have ignored weak and uninteresting dialogue, especially by saying that one should not always anticipate brilliance. The leniency of the Boston theatre critics must be considered an important factor in Barnet's success and popularity. Perhaps, however, they merely reflected the taste of the theatre-going public.

According to the Cadet records, Simple Simon was one of the most successful of the Cadet shows, grossing around twenty-five thousand dollars for the armory fund.[20] This figure is vague, as it might represent a lot of advertising for the programme or increased prices for the seats, which were sold at auction. But the show was certainly popular. There is no evidence that it was produced professionally. A later article in The Illustrated American commented:

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[19] Boston Advertiser, 9 February 1897.

[20] Programme: Boodle and Company, by Barnet, Otis, and Densmore, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, Boston, 13 to 18 March 1905, Harvard Theatre Collection.

> "Simple Simon," the Cadet show of last year, was wisely not transferred to the professional stage, astute theatrical managers unanimously agreeing that there can be too much of a good thing even in the dramatic world.[21]

Jack and the Beanstalk continued to enjoy revivals, and Simple Simon was really nothing more than a spin-off of the former play. Jack and the Beanstalk seemed to have a livelier plot, and definitely had more popular characters. Curly Locks, Tommy Trot, and Lucy Locket represent far less popular nursery rhymes than Little Miss Muffett, the Giant, and Old King Cole. Had Barnet not used so many characters in the first play, he might have been able to increase the popularity of the second. As it was, Simple Simon was a short-lived, local amateur success. Although Barnet showed a lot of growth in this second children's extravaganza and his talent seemed stimulated by the possibilities which this form suggested, he quickly ran out of popular material and was forced to change direction for his next show.

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[21]The Illustrated American, 26 February 1898, p. 276.

CHAPTER X

QUEEN OF THE BALLET

For the Cadet show of 1898, Robert A. Barnet created a "musical comedy in two acts" entitled Queen of the Ballet. This same piece was also copyrighted under the name of Gretchen, Queen of the Ballet,[1] and was performed professionally under yet another title, Three Little Lambs. The ensuing discussion of the play will use Queen of the Ballet when referring to the Cadet show and Three Little Lambs for the professional productions of the play.

Barnet's collaborator on Queen of the Ballet was Edward W. Corliss, a Bostonian who wrote songs and other musicals and burlesques. He collaborated with Barnet on two shows, and added songs and additional music to many of Barnet's shows. There were other contributors to Queen of the Ballet. According to the vocal score, additional musical numbers were provided by Alfred Norman, George Lowell Tracy, H. L. Heartz, Walter Goold, and Hastings Weblyn. Lyrical assistance was provided by Frederic W. Arnold, Jr. and others.[2]

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[1]Government Printing Office, Dramatic Compositions Copyrighted in the United States, 1870 to 1916 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1918), p. 2871.

[2]R. A. Barnet and Edward W. Corliss, Queen of the Ballet, Vocal Score (Boston: White-Smith Music Publishing Company, 1898), p. 1.

There is no indication of whether this assistance was provided before or after the Cadet version of the show, though the vocal score was published under the amateur title of Queen of the Ballet.

There is a printed libretto for Queen of the Ballet, which includes lyrics for the songs and the stage directions. This is the first available libretto for a Barnet show since Prince Pro Tem, and, as it marks a mid-point in Barnet's active career as a playwright/lyricist, both the book and lyrics will be examined to note changes and development in the Barnet style.

The action of the play revolves around a simple story, the eligibility of one Jack Harwicke to inherit his promised fortune if he meets the conditions of his benefactor uncle. The conditions are challenged, and the money itself threatened by thieves, ballet dancers, golfing trustees, female bank clerks, and a horde of incidental characters whose presence ensured that Queen of the Ballet would not be too far removed from the extravaganzas which Barnet had created in the years previous to his writing this show.

In examining the libretto, some attention will be paid to the stage directions and indications of "business" which appear in the script. Barnet took pains to copyright

the "words, story, action, . . . stage business."[3] It is assumed that the "business" refers to the staging of the show by Barnet for the Cadets, despite the copyright date on the libretto of 1897, the year before the show was first produced.

The first act of Queen of the Ballet is set in the

> Palatial Offices of the Harwicke and Tooke Safety Deposit and Debenture Corporation (Limited) 44 Hook and Eye Street, Never Square, London T. C., Great Britain.[4]

Barnet's peculiar sense of humor is firmly stamped on the libretto. The audience was made aware of it throughout the show. The first characters to appear in the show are the Bank Maids, who sing the opening chorus:

> Spick, and spandy brand-new bank!
> Spick, and spandy clerks of rank!
> Ladies make bewitching clerks,
> And banking thus becomes such larks.
> Your cheques are honored with a kiss.
> Overdrafts are perfect bliss!
> Only discounts come amiss.
> There never was a bank like this![5]

Next on the scene comes David Tooke, one of the principals in the bank, accompanied by the Board of Directors of the bank, all women. Tooke sings an "Aria" about the bank, as

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[3]R. A. Barnet, Queen of the Ballet (Boston: By the Author, 1897), p. 1.

[4]Ibid., p. 3.

[5]Ibid.

the directors form a chorus behind him. Barnet's device is clear, and is articulated by Tooke in a speech addressed to the bank personnel:

> . . . they condemn our banking system. Why? Because we are unconventional. We have given young women a chance in the marts of the world, as workers. Is that system vicious? Certainly not![6]

In learning the tricks of the musical extravaganza from Rice, Barnet had begun to invest his shows with more chorus girls. Now, the bank clerks are women, as are the Board of Directors.

A good example of Barnet's stage business occurs in the following exchange between Tooke and the bank messenger, Cicely Glaire:

Tooke:	What are you laughing at?
Cicely:	At you--at nothing. (Vigorously chews gum.)
Tooke:	(Holding out his hand for another document.) How dare you chew gum before me?
Cicely:	(Take gum out mouth, and put it in Tooke's open, extended hand.) I'll wait till you're through, sir.
Tooke:	(Closing his hand thinking the expected document is there.) Is Mr. Harwicke in the bank?
	(Tooke's hand is stuck together by the gum. Elaborate futile efforts to get it off.)

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[6]Ibid., p. 4.

Cicely: No, sir; he's coming now, with Miss Jerome. (Laughing at Tooke's trouble with the gum.) He's stuck on himself.

(Tooke turns, and she stops laughing and makes a very meek exit, followed by a furious Tooke.)[7]

This sight gag, with accompanying puns, is only the first of many which occur in the play, demonstrating that Barnet's sense of humor, though perhaps expanded a bit, hadn't changed much since his minstrel days. The "business" which was noted in the scrapbooks as accompanying the stump speeches was never described by Barnet, but the nature of the written lines leaves little doubt that Barnet's sense of humor carried through to his eighth full-length work.

As Tooke and Cecily leave the stage, Harwicke and Miss Beatrice Jerome enter,

> Both laughing and pulling in a hurdy gurdy man with a monkey. They are followed by a lot of street urchins.[8]

In just such a simple way does Barnet expand his shows to include elements from the street or anywhere else outside of the scene in order to bring in new and different songs, such as the one which grows out of the above situation, "Hurdy Gurdy." This song is a mixed choral piece, with solo voices extolling the pleasures of springtime and the

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[7]Ibid., pp. 4, 5.

[8]Ibid., p. 5.

Hurdy Gurdy man. It is merely a diversion from the action of the play, as are many of the songs in this show and in other Barnet shows. The lyrics for "Hurdy Gurdy" were written by Frederic W. Arnold, Jr., a frequent contributor to Barnet shows, and will not be quoted here.

Following this song comes a conversation between Tooke and Harwicke which is meant to fill the audience in on the events which took place before the curtain went up:

Tooke: Jack do you want to lose all of my--your money? Really my dear fellow you must stop this!

Harw.: What do you mean?

Tooke: Remember the terms of the Harwicke will. Suppose your Trustees had seen you dancing with a ballet girl--

Harw.: A bank secretary.

Tooke: Well, a bank secretary. Besides you hurt the credit of the--

Harw.: Bank?

Tooke: No, the secretary. I want to protect Miss Jerome's honor.

Harw.: David Tooke, how dare you!

Tooke: Just as I dared one night twelve month, when I saw some drunken duffers insulting a pretty girl. Just as I dared to rush in, and with the help of a manly chap, (Harwicke grasps his hand) rescue the pretty girl.

Harw.: And I told you then as I tell you now David Tooke, though a stranger, by that act you made me your faithful friend for life.

Tooke: And didn't you tell me then of your romantic love for the pretty girl, pretty Beatrice Jerome, the Queen of the Ballet, and of a nonsensical will, making you heir to an immense fortune, if you did not dissipate or go into questionable society?

Harw.: Yes, and I told you that I didn't dare know the Queen of the Ballet because two thick-headed Trustees considered dancing in the Ballet moving in questionable society.

Tooke: But I dared to know her! I dared to open this bank! I dared to bring Miss Beatrice Jerome near you, as your secretary. And that is why I dared to speak to you now.

Harw.: David, your pardon! You are a noble, true hearted gentleman.

Tooke.: Well, perhaps I am.[9]

Barnet handles this exposition in a rather straight-forward manner, telling past events and foreshadowing future ones, while showing a bit of the characters of the two men. Although he was good at writing dialogue, Barnet often displayed little inventiveness when called upon to provide exposition.

Barnet's real inventiveness--and the area where he demonstrated the most growth--was in the introduction of spectacle into his shows. In Queen of the Ballet, the bank opens for its business day to the tune of a waltz ensemble, with men in evening dress.

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[9]Ibid., pp. 6, 7.

Men: Bees deposit honey.
Honey won from flowers.
We deposit money.
Here in honey-bowers.

Girls: And the sweetest honey's found
Where the tulips most abound,
But in sip--sip--sips
Of two lip--lip--lips,

Men: Then pass the two lips round,

Girls: Where the draughts are drawn at sight.

Men: Is the bank that brings delight.

Girls: Put in sip--sip--sips.
Of two lip--lip--lips.

Men: But keep the balance right.

Omnes: Come and leave your money,
Come and deposit your heart.
Tellers sweet as honey,
Book it with saccharine art,
Clerks of high born station,
Enter each palpitation,
Verify each vibration,
And pay in counterpart.[10]

A thought occurs during a musical number such as the above, wherein deposits in a bank are likened to deposits of honey and withdrawals of love. Barnet would have been a good contributor to a revue, or to such yearly variety shows as Ziegfeld's Follies, Earl Carroll's Vanities, or George White's Scandals, all of which began after Barnet's active career had ended, but while he was living in New York. It is known that Barnet collaborated on at least one revue-type show, the aforementioned A Merry-Go-Round, but it is not

[10]Ibid., pp. 7, 8.

known if he worked on others. His talent for the creation of spectacle and heterogeneous elements of song and dance, plus his talents at comic repartee and stage business, all seemed to suit him well to have been a writer of revues. There is no information in the scrapbooks, the collected letters, or biographical newspaper articles about Barnet's attitude to the revue form. That he chose to write burlesques, extravaganzas, and "musical comedies," and only wrote one documented revue, seems to indicate that he preferred the challenge of creating an entire show to the uncertainties of collaborating on a segment or so of a revue. Also, the revue form didn't really take hold of the public imagination until the second decade of the twentieth century, although revues were certainly being written and performed at the time Barnet was active in theatre.

The action of Queen of the Ballet continues with the entrance of Hungry Jim, who turns out to be an old associate of Tooke's, whom the former identifies as "Brummel Bob, the sneak thief, the bank robber . . ."[11] Tooke threatens to call the police, but Hungry Jim counters with a threat to expose Tooke:

> . . . So before Clem passed, he left a sealed document containing proofs of our last job, that forgery job--Oh, not with me, but in the hands of his solicitors with orders, that if they did not receive a call from me once a year, the seal was to

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[11]Ibid., p. 9.

be fractured. Clem was afraid you wouldn't care for me, but you will, won't you Bob? You won't give me up to the police, will you Bob? For then I couldn't make that call? Could I Bob?[12]

Before Tooke can catch his breath, Phyllis Argyle, the bride of Hungry Jim, enters. She turns out to be the former Moll Mugger, associate in crime with Tooke and Hungry Jim. Now reunited, these three sing a song entitled "Three Little Lambs," from which the professional production of the show took its title.

Phyl.: When the band comes down the street.
See if the "cop" is off his beat.
Set your gaze on a nice old gent.
Wait until the band holds him intent.
Keep together and mind your game,
Feel for his watch and take the same.
Presto! change! and sleight of hand,
Then join the crowd in watching the band.

Trio.: Like three little lambs just out at play,
Sweet and innocent as the May,
We wiggle and frisk, and whisk away,
Thoughtful and loving are we.

Tooke: When you meet a moneyed boy.
Shake his fist with honeyed joy.
Bunco game is the thing to play.
Over the bar across the way.
When the beers reach thirty-two,
And boy replies: "Don't care f' I do."
You'll find you've lost your bunco; "pard"!
For the moneyed boy's from Scotland Yard![13]

The lyrics of this song were written by Arnold and Barnet, and they continue through a solo by Hungry Jim and repetition

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[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid., pp. 10, 11.

of the refrain. This number, unlike most of the ones in this show, is well integrated into the plot and action of the show. It represents the introduction of the subject involving the crookedness of the three, which will be added to the other pieces of action--love, financial complications, hidden identities--to make up the complex plot of this show.

After the song, Tooke explains to Hungry Jim and Phyllis that he plans to get hold of Harwicke's money through an investment in "an American Railway." Hungry Jim assures Tooke that the three "partners" will divide the profits from this job, and the latter can only agree. When Harwicke enters suddenly, Tooke introduces Hungry Jim as "James Carlyle, the Poet. Eccentric but gifted." And he introduces Harwicke to "Phyllis Argyle, the celebrated actress. A child of Bohemia."[14] Harwicke is delighted, and a song ensues entitled "Mistress Muse." The lyrics of this song were also the product of a collaboration between Arnold and Barnet, with music by Corliss. As the song touches on poetry and the theatre, there is no real need to record the lyrics here.

After the thieves exit, Beatrice joins Harwicke to welcome her best friend, Gretchen Dare, and the other members of the "Jollity Ballet." According to the libretto, there are eight other members of the Jollity, all of whom engage

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[14]Ibid., p. 13.

in singing and dancing a short number entitled "The Jollity Girls":

"The Jollity!" "The Jollity!"
We are the girls of the Jollity.
We are the girls that smile just so!
We are the girls that kick, so so!
"Jollity!" "The Jollity!"
Bubbling fun! Frivolity!
We'll keep you awake!
And make no mistake!
At "The Jollity!"[15]

This song was written by Barnet, and introduced yet another female chorus into the action of this show. Barnet was clearly looking beyond the Cadet production of Queen of the Ballet to a professional company which would be chock-full of attractive chorus girls.

While Beatrice introduces Gretchen to Harwicke, Gretchen introduces her intended, Johnny Blackstone Coke, a law student. Beatrice asks for "all the news about the dear old ballet," and Gretchen responds by engaging her in a duet entitled "Tipple Topple." This is a song about ballet dancers, written by Arnold and Corliss involving the "Jollity" girls as a singing, dancing chorus. As Barnet did not write the lyrics, the song will not be recorded here, except to say that it had little to do with the action of the play. This is the second ballet number of the first act of Queen of the Ballet, which also includes a lot of

[15]Ibid., p. 18.

waltzing and other dancing. Barnet's early shows, such as Injured Innocents, kept the dance numbers to a minimum, but Barnet must have learned that audiences enjoyed seeing a lot of dance in their musical entertainments. He certainly provided a lot of it here. This is one of the important changes in his shows as he became more experienced as a writer of extravaganzas.

After the ballet number is over, the two aforementioned trustees of the Harwicke estate, the Honorable Brassie Bulger and Willie Putter, enter "in heated argument" about the game of golf. This will be their peculiar obsession throughout the show, and will provide yet another diversion for singing and dancing. Brassie Bulger, the more loquacious of the two, tells Putter of a difficult shot which he recently made:

> . . . What do you think I was doing, eating mush? I was playing golf g-o-f, golf. The ball was in a rut, part clay, part sand, part mud. I swiped it over a grove of trees: against a rock: into a house, through an open window, first floor front: out same house, through a closed window, second floor back: across a water hazard 43 feet wide: over a wooded hill: on to the green: into the hole, and I did 18 holes in just 50.[16]

Bulger represents that strain in Barnet's work which parallels the popular "tall tale" figures of American literary fiction. Barnet's use of such characters was limited, usually relegating

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[16]Ibid., p. 18.

them to secondary roles, as a colorful background to the main characters and action of his works. This is unfortunate, because such "tall tale" characters as Brassie Bulger are representative of Barnet's genuine creativity in his musical entertainments. Had he created such a character to serve as centerpiece for a "tall tale" extravaganza, Barnet might have hit upon a more typically American response to the children's extravaganzas which he had borrowed, at least in part, from the English holiday pantomime.

Bulger also serves to further complicate the plot of the piece, by pulling out a locket with the initials "L. L." on the cover, containing a miniature inside of an "orphan dancer that struck Ned Harwicke's fancy, when he was gambling through Italy, ten years ago."[17] Before the play is over, this dancer will reveal herself, and have some bearing on Jack Harwicke's inheritance.

When Harwicke and Tooke enter, Bulger reminds the former that he must live up to the terms of the will until that very midnight or risk losing the inheritance. Bulger challenges Harwicke and Tooke about investing in the American Railway. Tooke must produce a president of the American Railway that night in order to get the money from Harwicke, who still trusts him implicitly. The two exit, leaving Bulger and Putter to muse on what they'll do to pass a few hours. Tooke pushes two of the bank clerks, Patience and

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[17]Ibid., p. 19.

Janet, onto the stage, instructing them to "take care" of the two gentlemen. The four sing a song, "What You Don't Know, And I Don't Know":

Pa.:	You think that girls are simple things.
Bul. and Put.:	Oh, I don't know.
Pa. and Jan.:	Oh, yes you do.
Jan.:	You think their goal, plain wedding rings.
Bul. and Put.:	Oh, I don't know.
Pa. and Jan.:	Oh, yes you do.
Pa.:	You know, of course, that man's a knave.
Bul. and Put.:	Oh, I don't know.
Pa. and Jan.:	Oh, yes you do.
Jan.:	His proper place--a woman's slave.
Bul. and Put.:	Oh, I don't know.
Pa. and Jan.:	Oh, yes you do.
Omnes:	If you don't know, and we don't know, Don't you know, we'd never know. So let's find out, And learn about What you don't know, and we don't know.
Bul. and Put.:	I guess we know!
Pa. and Jan.:	I guess we do![18]

This song continues through two more verses, with the men challenging the women in the second about how discreet they are, and whether they give or take a kiss. The third verse

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[18]Ibid., pp. 21, 22.

is about dancing and the elevating of the hemline in women's skirts. The song was written by Barnet and Arnold--as most of the better songs of this show seem to have been--and concerned the battle of the sexes. The late nineteenth century, which produced the women's suffrage movement and the concept of the "New Girl," saw these themes reflected in the plays of the era. Barnet was not a major social commentator, but he usually took notice of the important concerns of his day, and presented them in a humorous and light-hearted way.

Following the exit of Bulger, Putter, Patience, and Janet, Tooke hurries on stage with Hungry Jim and Phyllis, instructing the former to buy some good clothes and show up at the bank later that evening as the president of the American Railway. Beatrice happens to overhear part of their conversation, and hurries off to warn Harwicke that his friend Tooke is a thief. Before Hungry Jim and Phyllis make their exit, the following exchange takes place:

Tooke: Disguise yourself, hurry back, offer me this (Give him an envelope.) and say: "Here's the transfer."

Jim: What kind of fur?

Tooke: Transfer. (Exits)

Jim: You remember "trans" and I'll remember "fur."

Phyl.: I bet our finish won't be fur.

Jim: Well, let's go and see our clothes.
(Comic exeunt.)[19]

This is a brief example of the Barnet puns and surface humor which occur throughout this play, though with less frequency than in previous works. Boston seemed to have accepted Barnet's particular brand of humor as his characteristic stamp, and probably looked for it in the Cadet shows. New York critics were quick to point out that the puns and superficial word-play were quite unnecessary, and even tiresome.

The next musical number, listed as the ninth in the first act, is the ubiquitous Irish ballad which seemed to find its way into almost all of Barnet's shows. Whether he did this to please Irish Boston, or whether audiences demanded such a musical number as part of the specialty entertainment, cannot be known. "For the Love of Peggy Blake" was Barnet's offering in Queen of the Ballet, and he did little to even attempt to integrate it into the show.

Following this Irish ballad came the first real love song of the first act. It is a two-part number, which, true to form--as discussed in previous chapters--Barnet found difficult to compose without great flourishes of emotion. This time, Arnold collaborated on the lyrics. "Only a Heart" is sung by Harwicke and Beatrice:

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[19]Ibid., p. 23.

Har.: Ye knights of olden days,
Who wooed ye ladye fair,
Would kneel before her throne,
Pledge deed of valour there.
But what can I, poor I,
No knightly deed's my part?
I've naught to offer thee,
But my own true loving heart.

Bea.: Only a heart that's filled with love.

Har.: Only a heart that's filled with love,
But still a heart so true,
Throbbing for one, my dearest one--
Throbbing sweet love for you:
Oh, take my heart, my loving heart,
Give me, sweetheart, thine own.
I'll crown thee with love,
I'll make thee my Queen,
On Cupid's Golden Throne,

Bea.: Ye maids of olden days
When wooed by cavalier,
Would--if he chanced to please--
With gifts his valour cheer;
So what can I, poor I,
But follow form polite?
And pledge thee in return,
My own true loving Knight.

Har.: Only a Knight with heart of love.

Bea.: Only a Knight with heart of love,
But still a Knight so true,
Throbbing for one, his dearest one,
Throbbing, sweet love, for you.[20]

Perhaps it was Arnold's influence which kept the verse fairly regular, and kept Barnet's famous inverted lines out of the lyrics. This song is certainly an improvement on the previous two-part love songs of Barnet, and the reason must be the hand of Arnold.

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[20]Ibid., pp. 25, 26.

Following this song, Harwicke proposes to Beatrice, who turns him down, saying that he must meet and marry a noble and wealthy lady. But Harwicke wants only her, and before he can exact a promise, she begs him not to trust Tooke, whom she had overheard conspiring with Hungry Jim and Phyllis. During this conversation, Beatrice plays with a locket "exactly like the one shown by Bulger," telling Harwicke that she used to be called "Little Lucy" when she was "a wee mite, dancing in the streets of Italy."[21] The plot thickens.

At this point, Tooke has entered quietly, and hearing Beatrice sound her warning, takes charge of Harwicke, whom he spirits off stage. Meanwhile, Hungry Jim enters "in the costume of a railroad conductor," leading the chorus in a song entitled "Chu Chu," which tells of railroads and the type of travel which one can expect on them. As most of the lyrics are "chu, chu, chu, chu, . . ." the song need not be recorded here.

The build-up to the first act finale is complex. Tooke introduces Hungry Jim to Harwicke and the Trustees, who question him about railroads, declaring that they're sure Harwicke is being swindled, but they cannot say anything more about the matter. Declaring the fortune his, although the time is only 11:45 P.M. instead of midnight, the trustees

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[21]Ibid., p. 26.

prepare to leave. Suddenly, Beatrice bursts onto the scene, demanding that Harwicke drink to her health, and announcing that she is a Ballet Girl. She has decided to save Harwicke from the thieves, even if he must lose his inheritance in the process. In the ensuing finale to the act, Harwicke is disinherited during a musically complex number which features drinking songs and reprises of several songs from the act. Barnet was fond of drinking songs, which, like Irish ballads, seemed to make their way into most of his shows. The final tableau is described by Barnet in the libretto:

> (Curtain. Picture Harwicke almost persuaded by Tooke to disbelieve in Beatrice. Beatrice with Gretchen and Coke regretting her part in the affair, Bulger and Putter comforting Patience, Janet, Cicely. Jim and Phyllis looting the place, and at curtain are leaving with a load of furniture.)[22]

A comparison of the detailed stage directions of Queen of the Ballet with the relative absence of such directions in the libretto for Injured Innocents demonstrates Barnet's increasing sophistication with regard to staging and the opportunities offered by visual spectacle, becoming obvious, even in his writing.

The second act of Queen of the Ballet opens with a change of scene which immediately serves notice that this act will be full of specialties in the best tradition of

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[22]Ibid., p. 31.

the extravaganza form. The stage directions tell the story:

> (Venice, at Carnival time. Chorus discovered in gondolas, and grouped about stage. Harwicke in the costume of Faust, sings the serenade. Tooke is his shadow, in the costume of Mephistopheles.)[23]

The not-so-subtle costuming called for in the above represents a physical manifestation of Barnet's surface humor. The first musical number is a romantic ballad for Harwicke and the chorus, entitled "Dreamily Dream, My Love." The lyrics were written by B. D. Whiting, and will not be quoted here. Harwicke sings about Beatrice, of course, whom he still loves, despite the fact that she betrayed him and caused him to lose his inheritance. Tooke tries to persuade Harwicke to return to London and claim the fortune which is rightfully his, but Harwicke will not go back without first finding Beatrice. They exit, and the stage directions describe the next entrance:

> (Incidental music. Enter two or three of the chorus, and indicate approach of some one. They cry: "Lucia! Lucia!" The cry is taken up by all the chorus as they now come on. Enter Beatrice in Italian dancing dress, with locket on chain about her neck. Chorus surround her, with general hubbub of welcome.)[24]

Beatrice has returned to Venice, where she was once an "orphan dancer." The chorus recognize her, and she begins to tell them about having hurt Harwicke, her love. Barnet,

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[23]Ibid., p. 32.

[24]Ibid., p. 33.

like other writers of extravaganza and burlesque, had no difficulty in mixing past with present and shaping reality according to a personal dramatic scheme. Beatrice and the chorus then sing "Bits of Life," a song written by Barnet:

A little queen of babies, in a little throne of cribs.
A little bunch of majesty in robe of little bibs.
With sceptre--that's her rattle--
Orders everything she sees.
And do you think she gets them?
Oh, no! Just only these:

A little bit to drink! A little bit to eat!
A little bit of bitter, and a little bit of sweet!
A little bit of peace! A little bit of strife!
A little bit of laugh and cry! A little bit of life!

When woman grown, and crowned as queen of all the social realm.
When flowers, gems, and diadems, her boudoir overwhelm.
When Dukes and earls and princes
Hasten at her beck and call--
Has she more than a baby queen?
Oh, no--for this is all:

(Refrain.)[25]

After this song, the chorus exit, and Beatrice "sinks on steps and faints." She is discovered by Hungry Jim and Phyllis, who enter in costume and discuss their precarious state of waiting for Tooke's advice, as well as for his unclaimed money. Jim steals Beatrice's locket just before Tooke enters, and finds Jim and Phyllis hovering over the still faint Beatrice.

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[25]Ibid., p. 34.

(Tooke lifts Beatrice, and takes her to water's edge to throw her in, when she revives, struggles, and screams. Harwicke rushes in.)

Tooke: Jack, my boy, she's found! (Delivers her into Harwicke's arms.)

Harwicke: David, heaven bless you![26]

So, Tooke manages to fool Harwicke again, and the two exit with Beatrice, leaving Jim and Phyllis on stage. When Barnet concentrated on plot, as in this particular incident, he was able to create action which moved rapidly and alternated between tension and release. The elements of plotting in Queen of the Ballet are good, and suggest that Barnet learned much from his experience with the two children's extravaganzas, in which he was forced to create an original story which could logically include a wealth of characters from different nursery rhymes. Barnet, however, was concentrating on extravaganzas at a time when he was beginning to realize his full powers as a dramatist.

No sooner have Harwicke, Beatrice, and Tooke left the stage, when Bulger and Putter arrive, accompanied by Patience, Janet, and the rest of the women from the bank. The action of the play comes to a halt in the face of the almighty specialty, as the new arrivals are "all costumed in rich golfing suits," and begin a song which extolls the pleasures of playing golf, "That Naughty Little, Sporty

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[26]Ibid., p. 35.

Little, Gay Golf Ball."

You see us play every day upon the links,
Some people play for exercise, and others play for drinks,
You'll note our legs of variated size,
So small are some, to see them you'll have to strain your eyes,
We wear red coats and our trousers sorter specked,
We have an Irish keeper with a Scottish dialect,
We wave our sticks in an idiotic way,
And if you listen closely you are sure to hear us say:

Oh, the ball
That sassy little ball,
So vexing--perplexing--
For one so very small,
You slam it--you damn it--
But can't touch it at all.
That naughty little, sporty little, gay golf ball.[27]

This song, written by Arnold and Barnet, goes on for three more verses, with slightly different refrains for each verse. The spirit is the same all the way through, however, so the above will suffice for an idea of what the song is about. Not known is why Barnet chose to include such a strong theme of golf in the play. Perhaps the sport was beginning to gain popularity, though it hadn't been in America very long. Samuel Eliot Morison writes,

> . . . golf was imported from Scotland in the 1880s . . . President Theodore Roosevelt . . . begged his friend William H. Taft to stop injuring his presidential prospects by playing golf. In the next century both golf and tennis became so popular that towns and cities provided municipal golf courses and tennis courts.[28]

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[27]Ibid., p. 36.

[28]Samuel Eliot Morison, The Oxford History of the American People (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 784, 785.

Barnet was slightly ahead of his time by paying attention, even in a mocking way, to the soon-to-be-popular sport of golf. Some drama critics took him to task for doing so. Nevertheless, it certainly provided a different milieu in costuming and business especially for the extravaganza. Queen of the Ballet was one of the first musical entertainments to exploit the theatrical possibilities of golf.

Hungry Jim bursts onto the scene after the golfing sequence, and questions Bulger, who tells him that his locket--which Jim was about to steal--would help identify the new heir to the Harwicke fortune, an orphan dancing girl, who carried in her possession the same locket. Immediately, Phyllis enters with the locket which she stole from Beatrice, and proclaims herself the long lost dancing orphan in a song entitled "Little Lucy Little":

Little Lucy Little is a maid.
Seventeen exactly in the shade,
With complexion, just perfection,
Fact, 'tis of an even higher grade
Little Lucy's beauty so divine
When her fascinating glances shine,
That she captures and enraptures,
Everything from youth to ninety-nine!

Lucy's such a pretty little lass.
She can stand a magnifying glass.
She's the peach-let, of the beach-let;
Just the best that ever came to pass!
Little Lucy Little little knows,
How like time her fascinator goes,
When you meet her, you could eat her
She's so sweet from tip to little toes.

When sweet Lucy Little joins the saints.
(Which she will, for Lucy has no taints.)

She'll disparage, that old adage,
That in Heaven there'll be no lovers' plaints.
Even there she'll have them, without dearth,
Still she will, with eyelets full of mirth,
Nod her ringlets, wag her winglets,
Just as Lucy Little does on earth.

Little Lucy Little, Lovely Little Lu,
Tho' your heart is brittle,
For it's love we sue.
Lovely Little Lucy, Little Lullah Lu,
Lovely Little Lucy Little, Lovely Lu.[29]

Barnet wrote the lyrics to this song, and Walter Goold wrote the music. It is very much in the style of the songs of the children's extravaganzas, which helped Barnet sharpen his lyrical powers in writing character songs for his later shows.

There is no further discussion about the inheritance, as the stage suddenly fills up with "masquers in carnival march, followed by the king of the carnival, concluding with big marching ensemble."[30] This is the beginning of four consecutive musical numbers which include much dancing, many costume changes, and lots of spectacle. The "Carnival March," a choral piece involving the crowning of the king of the carnival, was the first number. This was written by Arnold. Then Gretchen enters in a French costume, and sings a solo entitled "Willye Willye," also written by Arnold. This song involves her courting of a young lad named Willye.

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[29]Barnet, Queen of the Ballet, pp. 39, 40.

[30]Ibid., p. 40.

According to the vocal score, "Willye Willye" was preceded by another solo for Gretchen entitled "The French Danseuse," with music by Alfred Norman and lyrics by Barnet.[31] This song does not appear in the libretto.

The third musical number in this sequence was a "Song and Ballet of Dolls" called "Automaton Dolls" in the libretto. With part of the chorus dressed as dolls, there was dancing and singing about the new "electrical dolls" that sigh and cry and squeeze the hand. Barnet wrote the lyrics to the song in collaboration with one H. R. Evans; the music was written by H. L. Heartz. The most popular feature of the professional production of Jack and the Beanstalk was a specialty called the "electric ballet." Barnet's established pattern as playwright/lyricist was to use those aspects of his shows which proved popular with audiences again and again, often resulting in pointed criticism for repetitiveness.

The last number in this sequence is a stirring nautical song called "Our Sailor Lads," involving a chorus of sailors and the ubiquitous Gretchen. Barnet wrote the lyrics, and Hastings Weblyn wrote the music for this song which honors "Old Glory" and the sailors who fight for her. This is a repetition of a patriotic theme which occurs throughout Barnet's later works.

This medley of musical numbers represents the specialty acts which Barnet managed to fit into this extravaganza

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[31]Barnet and Corliss, Queen of the Ballet, Vocal Score, p. 79.

without too much awkwardness. Having set his second act in Venice at Carnival time, with the actors wearing costumes and masks throughout, it was rather easy to throw in a lot of singing and dancing which were unrelated to the action of the piece. Many of the numbers, even those not written by Barnet, bear a distinct resemblance to the musical numbers of the children's extravaganzas. The crowning of a Carnival king, a chorus of automaton dolls, and another chorus of sailors, all would fit into a children's entertainment such as the popular Jack and the Beanstalk. Barnet had benefited much from his work on that show and on Simple Simon. In Queen of the Ballet, he retained a lot of nursery rhyme elements, but became bolder in creating plot and in expanding the total number of songs and dances. Queen of the Ballet has the most music of any Barnet show to date, and within that body lie many songs which are well-constructed improvements on Barnet's previous efforts. The amount of dance in this show has already been noted, as has the spectacle, which Barnet expanded greatly over the previously spectacular Jack and the Beanstalk.

After the musical interlude, the plot of Queen of the Ballet continues on to its logical conclusion. Beatrice reveals herself to be the true Lucy Little, having had the locket stolen from her. Tooke and his associates are led off by the police. Coke and Gretchen come together. And the chorus sings a short finale which includes bits and

pieces from many songs of the second act.

Queen of the Ballet was Barnet's most demanding, spectacular, and entertaining show to date. It was really an extravaganza and not a "musical comedy," as Barnet wanted people to view it. True, there was a plot which meandered through the entire piece, with some well-drawn characters and interesting incidents. But the real stuff of the show was spectacle, as the above discussion of the libretto underscores. Barnet's growth and development as a writer of musical entertainments is evident in Queen of the Ballet. As has been mentioned, the plot was stronger throughout, the songs better, the characters sharper, and the general structure of the show tighter.

With a show of such complexity, the rehearsals must have been arduous. A preview article in the Boston Globe gives an interesting account of this matter:

> . . . All the rehearsals save the last two will be held in the new armory on Columbus Ave., which is not practically completed, and furnishes a floor space large enough for probably 25 such affairs. Although this is the first year the armory proper has been utilized for the purpose, it has proved satisfactory.
>
> A simple yet ingenious stage setting has been arranged at one end of the armory, by placing a lot of Japanese screens to represent the wings and such simple set pieces as boxes and portable steps to serve for all other practical purposes of the stage business.
>
> The 110 persons taking part in the play were all on hand when the rehearsal was called by stage manager Barnet, at 8 o'clock, on Friday night.
>
> The first half hour is taken up with drilling some of the principals in songs and business, mainly

> of a specialty character.
>
> The members of the chorus each have a placard suspended by a string about the neck after the fashion made familiar by blind men on the corners.
>
> Every placard bears a number six or seven inches long, for when a man enters the chorus he becomes identified, like the inmates of a penal institution, no longer by name, but by number. It gives him his place in the ranks, and affords the only means at present of distinguishing the males from the females.
>
> As one member explained to the reporter: "If a fellow's number is 21 or more, you know he's a man; if below 21, then he's a girl."[32]

This insight into the Cadet rehearsals is revealing. The Friday night time indicates that rehearsals were probably held at night, after the working day and dinner. Now that the armory was complete enough for use, the Cadets could have their own private rehearsal space, so very important to the successful mounting of any show. The rehearsal period was evidently broken up into several units, as any modern textbook on stage direction would counsel, and it is likely that Barnet was aided by assistant stage managers, or perhaps the musical director. The system of numbering the chorus members was ingenious and very necessary for Queen of the Ballet, in which chorus members changed costumes and roles frequently. Barnet may have devised this system to help him direct the show. The Cadet programme announces that "the entire production [is] under the sole direction of

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[32] Boston Globe, 9 January 1898.

Mr. Barnet."[33]

Another newspaper article which previewed the show gave details about Barnet's further contributions:

> . . . As for costumes, the "Queen of the Ballet" will be far ahead of anything the cadets have ever shown. This feature of the production has been specialized as it never was before, and the result is that there are not less than 15 groups of costumes, each full of character, original, and carried out so intelligently as to give the greatest effectiveness. The costumes are the property of Mr. Barnet, and are designed by him.
>
> It is not putting it too strongly to say that he is a genius in this line. Like all creators of styles, however, he has fads, and the use of black and white is his pet fad.
>
> At least one scene in black and white has always been a regular fixture in the cadets' shows, but this year the black and white scheme runs through the entire piece. Even the principals will be clad in black and white, with only splashes of color here and there for jauntiness.
>
> Almost the only dissenting note in this black and white symphony will be the costumes of the five bank directors. These are stunning creations, correct models of the latest Paris modes. It is understood that Mr. Barnet has already received offers for them from "ladies of quality."[34]

This article goes on to provide a more extensive description of the costumes for the show, but the point is made in the above quotation. Barnet not only wrote the book and most of the lyrics for Queen of the Ballet, but he directed the production and designed the costumes as well. His contribution

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[33]Programme: Queen of the Ballet, by Barnet and Corliss, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, Boston, 7 to 12 February 1898, Harvard Theatre Collection.

[34]Boston Sunday Globe, 30 January 1898.

to the Cadet Theatricals was enormous, and it seems safe to say that when Barnet did not participate in the creation of a Cadet show, as in 1894 and 1899, the Cadets did not perform.

The above preview article goes on to mention an interesting anecdote about Barnet and his plays which is worthy of quick notice:

> . . . Mr. Stone [the soubrette] will carry a cute little dog, which is not a property dog. The dog is introduced not only because he is a charming addition to Mr. Stone's outfit, but also out of deference to Mr. Barnet's superstition. Mr. Barnet never wrote a play without putting into it an animal for luck, and with both a dog and a monkey in the "Queen of the Ballet," he is sure he has worked the double cross on any "jonah" that might happen to be about.[35]

This is the first time that the newspapers had mentioned anything about Barnet's animal superstition, but a quick review of his previous shows substantiates the presence of animals in most if not all. This practice by Barnet further suggests his strong belief in entertainment over artistic soundness in his shows. The presence of an animal on stage, whether it be the real thing or a costumed actor, is an instant sight gag and potential show-stopper, which certainly works against the cohesiveness of a show, but for the greater amusement of the audience. Barnet's purpose in his shows was to entertain, at any cost.

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[35]Ibid.

Queen of the Ballet opened on 7 February 1898, at the Tremont Theatre in Boston, as the seventh annual Cadet show. Most of the newspapers called it Barnet's and the Cadets' best show:

> . . . There is not a dull moment in the book, which, on the whole, may confidently be pronounced the best that its author has written for the Cadet theatricals. The text is spirited, and there is not too much of it. It is hardly necessary to add that it is prolific in witty repartee, quaint word-juggling, droll humor, and unexpected turns of retort, all in the best of taste and free from the vulgarities of current slang that forms so large and offensive an element in the musical comedy and the comic opera of the period.
> . . . The costuming was gorgeous . . .
> . . . The acting was exceptionally good, and the greater part of it was surprisingly lacking in any suggestion of amateur stiffness.[36]

> . . . The piece itself seems the best thing Mr. Barnet has yet done; it is in every way capital. The jokes do not come so thick as to necessitate their being poor in quality; some of them may be a trifle esoteric . . . but they are for the most part excellent wit and humor. The music is tuneful and quite good enough for the situation. Indeed, the whole affair took us pleasantly back to the palmy days of "blonde burlesque," and Lydia Thompson herself might have bestowed her blessing upon it. Dressing, stage-setting, grouping and management were of the very best and most sightly. Queen of the Ballet may be accounted an unequivocal triumph.[37]

The above critic's mention of Lydia Thompson helps explain why Barnet's shows were so popular, at least in Boston. They represented the end of an era to Boston theatre-goers

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[36] Boston Herald, 8 February 1898.

[37] Boston Transcript, 9 February 1898.

weaned on minstrelsy, "blond burlesque," and variety. Barnet's musical entertainments combined the best elements of the American musical theatre with the most up-to-date spectacle, and the result was overwhelmingly popular success for Barnet and for the Cadets.

Some critics praised the show, but felt that the previous efforts at children's extravaganzas were somehow more enjoyable:

> . . . "The Queen of the Ballet" is not quite what the older plays were. Mr. Barnet has abandoned the more promising field he opened in Mother Goose and fairyland, and while the genius of clever stagecraft, bright dialogue and clever lyrics has not failed him, the play is not altogether in itself so freshly and piquantly fascinating as some of the earlier ones, and even the last one. There is missing something of the glamour of the improbable which was the probable of childhood days, nursery names and re-animated myths.[38]

This review is curious in its praise of previous shows. There is a thread of criticism which runs through the Boston newspapers during Barnet's career which always seemed to praise the past shows while enjoying and adding enthusiasm for the show being reviewed. Though this seems a minor point, it may have been important to Barnet, who felt obliged to continue in much the same vein throughout his active career. He did make changes in his style, and Queen of the Ballet represents such change. But he never shook

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[38]Boston Advertiser, 8 February 1898.

off some of the lessons which minstrelsy had taught him: the puns, the superficial word-play, the sentimental lyrics to love songs, and the exaggerated physical "business."

Queen of the Ballet was extraordinarily successful, attracting attention outside of Boston. The Illustrated American ran an article with photographs on the show. Written by Edwin Francis Edgett, this article discussed the Boston Cadets' Theatrical Organization, its history, and its successes, paying a lot of attention to Queen of the Ballet:

> . . . The humor of the piece consists in this absurd commingling of melodrama with so-called musical comedy, and through this warp is woven the attractive woof of startling color combinations, original dances and localized witty dialogue. The text is full of quaint turns of speech, extravagant word-juggling and clever "double entendres," and was helped into instant popularity by the daintiness and toe-tapping rhythm of the score.
>
> Songs topical and otherwise are generously interlarded throughout the book, the writer of the lyrics veering into unexpected rhymes of the order which W. S. Gilbert first popularized.
>
> The performers were trained perhaps even better than usual, if possible, and the fact that almost everybody in the audience knew everybody on the stage made each performance as interesting from behind the footlights as before them. The wonder to all who see these productions is that the men who take the female parts can assume them so gracefully and skilfully that a stageful of male beings is really as attractive as a performance in which the fairer sex forms the larger part.
>
> The scenery in itself was sufficiently gorgeous to carry many a lesser production to success . . .[39]

This article is interesting for its evaluation of the Barnet

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[39]Edwin Francis Edgett, "The Annual Show of the Boston Cadets," The Illustrated American (26 February 1898): 276, 277.

musical, and the praise which it metes out to the Cadet performers, especially those who took the female parts. Barnet, on top of his other contributions to this show, was surely the one who deserved credit for training the actors.

The other out-of-town attention which Queen of the Ballet attracted was the interest of one of America's most famous theatrical producers, Augustin Daly, who secured the professional rights to the show, but died before he could produce the play.[40] An autographed photograph of Daly is part of a collection of signed photographs by famous theatrical personalities which is held by the Barnet family.

After Daly's death, the rights to Queen of the Ballet were acquired by Edwin Knowles, whose Fifth Avenue Theatre Musical Company first produced the play professionally, changing the title to Three Little Lambs, in Portland, Maine, on 16 October 1899, at the Jefferson Theatre.[41] As was his custom, Barnet collaborated on the revision of the libretto for this professional production, which apparently played in Portland for about a week before opening at the Tremont Theatre in Boston, where the original production by the Cadets had taken place. The new version of the show featured Marie Cahill as Phyllis Argyle.

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[40] Dramatic Mirror, 6 January 1900.

[41] Boston Herald, 17 October 1899.

> . . . Those who remember the story of "Queen of the Ballet" will find quite a change in the piece, under its new name. The plot has not been tampered with, except to change the scenes to New York and Porto Rico.
> . . . The words and business, however, have been very materially changed. There are an enormous number of poor puns and overstrained plays on words that are not up to Mr. Barnet's former standard.
> The music is good. All the familiar and popular airs have been retained, and a number of new songs introduced that held well up to the standard which Mr. Corliss set in his original score.
> It is rather hard to know just what to call "Three Little Lambs." It is a mixture of comic opera, farce and vaudeville. Different sets of the company do their turns like sketch teams, without seeming to have any connection whatever with the show. If this is musical comedy, why, then, the line between musical comedy and vaudeville is very fine.[42]

The final comments about the nature of the show are curious in that no such comments were made when Queen of the Ballet was given by the Cadets. Perhaps Barnet had altered the style of the show, throwing in more puns and word-play, and mixing more specialties into an already crowded musical score. Unfortunately, there is no way to examine a professional libretto from Barnet's shows and compare it with the libretto written for the Cadet Theatricals. This assumes, of course, that the available libretti are indeed from the amateur productions of the plays. No indication is given, but assumptions based upon the newspaper reviews seem to substantiate this point. Were the professional revisions available, one could learn a lot about Barnet and his

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[42] Boston Transcript, 24 October 1899.

conception of the difference between the amateur and professional stage.

Three Little Lambs evidently worked well enough, and was popular enough to merit a run of forty-nine performances in New York.[43] It opened during holiday season, during late December 1899, which prompted Bordman to call it "a Christmas present from the Boston Cadets at the Fifth Avenue Theatre."[44] Raymond Hitchcock played the role of Tooke, and Marie Cahill continued in the role of Phyllis Argyle. The Dramatic Mirror noted that the show had played Boston, Montreal, and on the road since its opening in Portland, Maine. "It scored a distinct success before a crowded house at the Fifth Avenue Theatre on Christmas Day."[45] New York critics gave the show tepid praise, waxing ecstatic about certain elements of the production:

> . . . "Three Little Lambs," at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, is the most elaborately costumed play in New York just now.[46]

It is uncertain whether Barnet had anything to do with the costumes for the professional production. The article in the New York Times went on to give elaborate descriptions

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[43]Gerald Bordman, American Musical Theatre (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 169.

[44]Ibid., p. 168.

[45]Dramatic Mirror, 6 January 1900.

[46]New York Times, 14 January 1900.

of the many characters and their specific costumes, paying attention to such details as belts and holsters. The Dramatic Mirror found something else to rave about:

> . . . The stage-management was the best yet shown here in musical comedy. The variety of action, the pictorial arrangements, the groupings, the tableaux, were admirable, and consequently effective . . .[47]

The same reviewer found that

> . . . A large share of golf jokes might have been extirpated without serious injury, since golf is Greek to the average citizen.[48]

The other important comments about Three Little Lambs made by contemporary critics concerned its style. The following piece sums up what New York critics felt about the American musical at the turn of the century:

> . . . The fourth play to depart from our stage was "Three Little Lambs," the musical farce by Robert A. Barnet and others, the unnamed ones being the various contributors of tunes. The London Gaiety method was applied to the making of this entertainment. That is to say, no single musician was depended on for the score. None of our American composers seems versatile enough to supply all the facetious and sentimental, light and heavy, required for such pieces. That has been the most grievous lack in our native comic operas. . . . The theatrical public is hungry for light, trivial, but tuneful music. It is true, also, that our comic opera librettos are unoriginal in themes, low in humor, seldom witty at all, and contemptible generally. But the lack of really diverting music is still more grievous. Such merits

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[47] Dramatic Mirror, 6 January 1900.

[48] Ibid.

> as the scores contain are usually technical, and for musically expert ears alone to appreciate. We haven't a Sullivan, able to attune any verse suitably; nor an Offenbach or a Strauss, capable of putting at least one captivating melody into each he takes in hand; but it seems as though a manager, with a good libretto on an American subject to start with, might obtain from here and there among such ballad makers and bandmasters as we have a set of suitably diverse tunes. There would be a fortune in a strikingly original American comic opera thus outfitted with popular good music.[49]

This is a fascinating piece of criticism about the American musical theatre, which seems to answer the question of why Barnet has remained obscure in the history of theatre in America. His works, according to the above article, were representative of a type of musical entertainment which was popular at the time, but which lacked real staying power and greatness. Bordman sums it up by saying,

> . . . The success of the Boston Cadets was little short of phenomenal, even if it sadly suggested that the company's tinselly theatrical artifice was more rewarding than the Bostonians' soul-searching artiness.[50]

The Bostonians were the Boston Ideal Opera Company, which, as noted in a previous chapter, brought their offerings to New York during the late nineteenth century. The question which both of the above writers address is that of quality, and the concern is for the American musical theatre in general.

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[49] New York Sun, 4 February 1900.

[50] Bordman, American Musical Theatre, p. 169.

What they do not take into account, however, is the taste of the public, who had a strong voice in determining what was presented in theatres across the country. Only thirty-three years had passed from the time of the so-called "first American musical," The Black Crook, to the opening of Three Little Lambs.

Three Little Lambs apparently went on a tour after closing in New York, as an article in the Philadelphia Telegraph places the show in Philadelphia in early May 1900.[51] Thereafter, details of the show are scarce, and there is no further evidence of a return engagement in Boston.

Queen of the Ballet/Three Little Lambs was an important show for Barnet, marking the first effort on his part to collaborate with several lyricists as well as composers in the construction of a musical. The successful result evidently convinced him that this method was a good one, and he stayed with it for most of his later shows.

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[51] Philadelphia Telegraph, 3 May 1900.

CHAPTER XI

MILADI AND THE MUSKETEER

According to available records, there was no Cadet show in 1899. Barnet was busy on a number of projects, including the revisions for Queen of the Ballet. He may have also begun work on his next show for the Cadets, Miladi and the Musketeer, the title of which was copyrighted in December 1898.[1] The copyright register lists two other titles copyrighted by Barnet in 1898: "Legend of the Klondike, an extravaganza in three acts"; and "The Little Gascon, a romantic burlesque."[2] Possibly, The Little Gascon was merely a working title for the show which eventually became Miladi and the Musketeer. But there is no mention in the Barnet scrapbooks or family records of Legend of the Klondike. This may have been one of the "minor" works of Barnet--as discussed in a previous chapter--which were written for local (Boston) production, possibly as summer pieces, such as A Merry-Go-Round (1896). These "minor" works are difficult to identify, and even more difficult to date. Barnet seems to have provided them to fill a need for summer replacement

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[1]Government Printing Office, Dramatic Compositions Copyrighted in the United States, 1870 to 1916) (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1918), p. 2871.

[2]Ibid.

shows or for specific commissions by theatre groups or producers. Given the example of A Merry-Go-Round, it is likely that Barnet was involved only in writing the book for these "minor" works and not in writing lyrics for songs or in providing any assistance in production. The only real importance attached to these works is that they represent another avenue of Barnet's productivity at the height of his active career. Not only was he turning out approximately a show a year for the Cadets, but he was revising those shows for professional productions, beginning work on the following year's piece, and at the same time copyrighting titles and sketching out ideas for future shows.

Another possible reason for the Cadets not to perform in 1899 was discussed in chapter eight. A newspaper article from 1895 pointed out that the annual shows required long and exhausting months of preparation, which tempted the Cadets' Theatrical Organization at least once before to postpone the show for a year. In 1899, the decision might have been made to do just that. With the armory well on its way to completion, the Cadets were probably secure enough financially that they could take a year off from performing.

In 1900, Miladi and the Musketeer, "a romantic extravaganza," became Barnet's eighth show for the Cadets. The music for this one was composed by Harry Lawson Heartz, with additional numbers by G. L. Tracy, E. W. Corliss, D. K. Stevens, and R. G. Morse. Barnet had lyrical assistance from

W. M. Browne and Ogden Ward. The whole thing was a hodge-podge of musical numbers and spectacle, written by a group of composers and lyricists and tied together by an extremely thin plot, borrowed from a number of sources.

H. L. Heartz had contributed songs to previous works by Barnet, and so was a fairly logical choice for a collaborator. As he did with A. Baldwin Sloane, Barnet seemed to have formed a good working relationship with Heartz, who collaborated on Barnet's next two shows after this one. Subsequent to this association with Barnet, Heartz went on to compose the music for at least two other light musical plays, The Tenderfoot (1903) and The Hurdy Gurdy Girl (1907), both in collaboration with Richard Carle. Heartz also wrote songs, dance music, and arrangements of music by foreign composers. Miladi and the Musketeer seems to have been Heartz's first full-length piece. He thus joins a long list of musicians to whom Barnet gave a chance to collaborate on a full-length show.

According to a newspaper article which previewed the play,

> . . . "Miladi and the Musketeer" is in three acts, each act with but a single scene. Dumas's The Three Musketeers, Bulwer's "Richelieu" and Rostand's "Cyrano de Bergerac" furnish the themes for the burlesque.[3]

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[3]Boston Transcript, 6 January 1900.

This show represents Barnet's return to elements of burlesque, in a multi-faceted travesty of a novel and two plays. Critics pointed out amusing take-offs on the originals, but unfortunately, there is no available libretto from which to learn how Barnet constructed this work and where he chose to burlesque elements from Dumas, Bulwer-Lytton, and Rostand. From an examination of the cast of characters one can get an idea of Barnet's humor at work, as the Musketeers were called "Ah-Those," "Pork-House," and "Arrah-Miss." The ensuing discussion of the show will be based upon the published vocal score.

Miladi and the Musketeer opens with a number involving a double chorus, first of soldiers, then of girls. From the start, this show will be oriented toward the military, as the chorus of soldiers sings,

A soldier's life is a game of strife,
With Glory and Fame the stake!
He bears the brunt in battle's front,
He's never been known to quake!
But in times of peace when his labors cease,
With his pipe and his ale and cake:
He will toast his feet in a safe retreat,
And shake and shake and shake.

For it's rattle, rattle, lose and win,
And it's battle, battle, all for tin:
With a rattle down,
And a rattle of the battle for the tin.

Coy and sweet, nice and neat,
Come a foe alarming!

Eyes aglow, tip-pi-tip-toe,
Come the maidens charming.[4]

The girls enter, talking about themselves, and then exchanging lines with the soldiers:

Girls: Sweet little, neat little maidens are we,
Inclined you will find, to be good as can be!
We have dang'rous dimples and radiant eyes,
And hearts that you never can take by surprise!

Soldiers: Rosy little, cosy little charming maid!
Woo a little, coo a little with your blade!
We give in! Lass you win!
Your soldier brave disarming![5]

In this opening, Barnet has chosen to give the tone of the piece without detailing the actual setting. As has been pointed out before, this seems to have been an arbitrary opening style with him. Of interest here is the double chorus, mixing the pageantry of the military with the beauty of chorus girls in order to create an attractive opening spectacle for the show. This was Barnet putting into practice a lesson which he had learned from E. E. Rice and expanding on it through his own experience in creating extravaganzas.

Following the opening number is a character song which follows the pattern established in Barnet's children's

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[4]R. A. Barnet and H. L. Heartz, Miladi and the Musketeer, Vocal Score (Boston: White-Smith Publishing Company, 1900), pp. 3-6.

[5]Ibid., pp. 7-10.

extravaganzas. Like the leader of the thieves in Jack and the Beanstalk or the Queen of Fairies in Simple Simon, a certain De Rochefort enters into Miladi and the Musketter, and describes himself, with the help of his companion Gabrielle and the double chorus in a song entitled "He's a Military 'Beaut'!"

Rochefort: I'm a singular example of a military man!

Chorus: Military man?

Gabrielle: A Military man!

Rochefort: Carefully constructed on the military plan!

Chorus: Military plan?

Gabrielle: The military plan!
I beg to call attention to his military pose,
The shapeliness and beauty of his military nose!
His military boots conceal his military hose,
Of course you cannot see them, but the military knows!
You can't have failed to marvel at his military suit,
His voice you must have notic'd is as sweet as any lute!
Did modesty not stay him and compel him to be mute,
He would really like to mention,
He's a military "beaut!"[6]

The previously established pattern of a character song, inherited from those of W. S. Gilbert, is, of course, inverted here, as the character's companion does most of the singing

[6]Ibid., pp. 10-13.

about him, an interesting twist which Barnet uses for the first time. In choosing a military theme, Barnet must have anticipated the handsome uniforms, marches, and general spectacle which such an idea would engender. As with the nursery rhymes, the military was a perfect subject for extravaganza, in spite of the literary sources which are burlesqued in this work.

The same pattern of chorus-then-soloist is repeated in the next two musical numbers of Miladi and the Musketeer. First, a chorus of "Maids-in-Waiting" is introduced:

> We are Maids-in-Waiting here
> We are the Waiting Maids!
> Wait for Queen or wait for man,
> That's how the waiting's made!
> And we sigh at, cry at Fate,
> Fate and a waiting maid;
> For we just hate to wait wait wait,
> Why was waiting made?

This short vocal number, full of typical Barnet word play, is followed by a dance. After the dance comes the entrance of the Queen, singing a love song, "O'er the Sea of Dreamland Sky":

> Dearest heart so swiftly beating,
> Tell me what has stirr'd thee so!
> Dearest blushes oft repeating,
> Tell me why they come and go!
> Like some rosy, fairy dancer,
> Dearest eyes to me make answer
> Silent, sweet, enchanted answer
> While we're sailing far on high,
> O'er the Sea of Dreamland Sky!

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[7]Ibid., pp. 14-16.

Dearest heart so truly beating,
Far away all soul alone,
Wilt thou give a thought, tho' fleeting,
For another all thine own?
Dearest eyes with hoy [sic] a-swimming,
Made me answer all a-brimming;
Wilt thou watch with joy a-brimming,
Love come sailing love and I,
O'er the Sea of Dreamland Sky?

Love is sailing far on high,
O'er the Sea of Dreamland Sky;
Smiling kisses fill the air,
Greeting sunbeams ev'rywhere!
Love is sailing far on high,
Ev'ry breath a happy sigh;
Sailing off to bye and bye,
O'er the Sea of Dreamland Sky![8]

This song, too, is followed by a dance, beginning a practice which will distinguish many of Barnet's late extravaganzas. The pattern of choral piece followed by solo song becomes yet another frequently repeated structural element in Barnet's works. As with the extravaganza style in general, Barnet seemed to find successful internal patterns, and repeat them time after time.

With the arrival of D'Artagnan, the element of burlesque finally enters Miladi and the Musketeer, though it becomes convoluted by a typical Barnet "French song," entitled "Ma Chère Paris." This is a duet between D'Artagnan and Miladi, who is also Clearice, Countess de Winter.

D'Art.: In chère Paris across ze sea
Sometime you see

Miladi: An old Yankee!

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[8]Ibid., pp. 17-20.

D'Art.: He's thin and spare
A church pillaire,
With saintly air

Miladi: All bald with care!

D'Art.: He's mild and meek,
But learns to speak
Ze French so queeck!

Miladi: From me one week!

D'Art.: If he can't guess,
With good success,
Ze right address

Miladi: He so express!

D'Art.: He ees not gay,
But vairry stern:
And ef'fry day,
He try to learn!
Someday he'll know
What mean "finesse!"
Someday also,
Ze word "tendresse!"
His A, B, C,
He'll learn! Oui! Oui!

Both: All zis you see
In Chère Paris![9]

Barnet evidently enjoyed throwing French words and accents into his shows; he had previously done so in Tabasco. This device was meant to charm and amuse the audience, as the songs in question had little bearing on the play. The above song is accompanied by a bit of pantomime as well as a dance.

The Three Musketeers are introduced in a song entitled "The Three Musketeers," sung by them to the accompaniment

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[9]Ibid., pp. 21-25.

of the chorus:

Ah-those: Have you ever observed the immegate [sic] effect,
On a concourse of people however select?
It's a singular thing, but it's perfectly true,
That every eye seems to rest upon you,
By you I mean me as I'm sure you do, too!
It's charming when marching to hear ladies rave
"My! Isn't he handsome!
Oh! Isn't he brave!"
It's really quite pleasant one's country to save!

Chorus: Rat-a-tat-tat! Zing boom!
Rat-a-tat-tat! Rat-a-tat-tat!
Zing-boom! Boom! Boom!
Zing boom! Zing-boom! Zing-boom!

Musketeers: You must get up, you must get dress'd,
You must get out my dears:
For ladies all should look their best,
When a musketeer appears!
You must get first a cause that's right,
You must get mad before you fight,
You must get men that fight, at sight
You must get musketeers![10]

The other Musketeers have verses to complement those by Ah-those, but the gist of this musical number is clear from the above. Barnet was attempting to burlesque the famous Musketeers of Dumas by exaggerating their importance and popularity, and making fun of their code of behavior. He seems to have been fairly successful in this song, in spite of the frivolity which he has introduced into the characters of the Musketeers. Such unevenness points out Barnet's

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[10]Ibid., pp. 26-33.

weakness as a creator of burlesque: he lacked the satirical sharpness of a John Brougham or a W. S. Gilbert. Barnet's burlesques are not direct and pointed; they are rather loosely drawn, frivolous attempts to entertain instead of being sharply crafted and witty efforts at parody. Barnet may have been aware of his inability to write a clever burlesque, as he became more interested in extravaganza toward the end of his active career.

Following the Musketeers, D'Artagnan returns to the stage to sing a solo about his exploits, "Bobby and I":

We're Soldiers of Fortune, Bobby and I!
Our life's all kinds of weather:
We've lived and loved, and fought and bled,
And sometimes fled together!
We've drank and slept, and laughted and wept,
And won and wasted treasure!
We've sung and danc'd, and kiss'd and chanc'd,
We had our share of pleasure!

Tho' shy of fair maidens, Bobby and I!
And sometimes lady killers:
We know no rogue, nor thief, nor knave,
We always "cut" such fellers!
We wink and clink, and drink and pink,
But never are we slinking!
We love our host, tho' Bob and I
May "stick" him for our drinking!

Bobby and I, we laugh! Ha! Ha!
Bobby and I, we sing! Tra-la!
Bobby and I, we dance! Voi-la!
Bobby and I, we kiss, Comme-ca!
Bobby and I, we drink! Le Roi!
Bobby and I, we fight! A bas!
Soldier's of Fortune, Bobby and I,
We'll live and die together![11]

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[11]Ibid., pp. 34-37.

This song also ends in a dance. Here Barnet has written a strongly masculine song about comradeship and adventure, which surely must have required the best efforts of a good actor to make lively and believeable. Assuming that Barnet wrote this song without lyrical assistance--there is no such note to the contrary in the vocal score--once again he establishes his capacity to write cohesive lyrics, in spite of the rash of poorly-written songs which have also been referred to.

The last musical number before the first act finale of Miladi and the Musketeer is entitled "Richelieu," and is another example of Barnet's using historical (and literary) characters to his own advantage, especially in bringing them "up to date":

Richelieu: I wish you all to know,
I'm a Card'nal great, called Rishleer!

Chorus: Ritchy Loo! Ritchy Loo! Ritchy Loo!

Richelieu: An ecclesiastic Minister of State,
Called Rishleer!

Chorus: Ritchy Loo! Ritchy Loo! Ritchy Loo!

Richelieu: It was I who said, of my own accord,
The pen is mightier than the sword!
It was I who said, when all looked pale,
There never was no such word as fail!
And it's I who say to all persons here,
That properly pronounc'd I'm Rishleer!
And I'm utterly disgusted with folks like
you who know so much,
Then to call me Ritchy Loo!

Oh! Just like beer rhymes Rishleer!

Chorus: Beer! Beer! On Rishleer!

Richelieu: I leer and jeer! I'm Rishleer!

Chorus: Leer! Jeer! He's Rishleer!

Richelieu: You might call me "Sam," for short,
If depraved "Rich., Old Sport!"
If you're quite the proper sort,
You'll call me Rish Rish Rishleer![12]

Barnet has here chosen not to burlesque the character of Richelieu so much as to play with his name. A dance accompanies this song, as has been the case with most of the numbers in the first act.

The finale for the first act is a combination of reprises and new material. Most of the new material plays havoc with the name of Dumas, as the following lyrics, variously sung by the Musketeers, D'Artagnan, Richelieu, Rochefort, and others point out:

Before another act's recess,
In fight and brawl, or muss or mess,
We'll kill a hundred men, we'd guess!
We can't Dumas and do much less!

Just keep your eye on our address,
For simple dev'lishness, ness, ness!
Mephisto, Dupes and murderess!
We can't Dumas and so much less!

And you'll perceive as we progress,
The kind of stuff that wins success!
When wrongs are howling for redress,
We can't Dumas and so much less![13]

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[12]Ibid., pp. 38-43.

[13]Ibid., pp. 44-52.

Barnet couldn't shake his fascination with puns, which seems to hurt this finale, in spite of its many strong points. The tempi in the music change throughout the number, going from moderately fast to march time to a waltz. The effects on stage change to the accompaniment of this music, as the chorus of soldiers march with swords drawn, and then sheathe their blades to waltz with the chorus girls. The whole picture must have been spectacular, and surely it was what Barnet had in mind as he wrote lyrics which, for the most part, accompanied the action on stage.

The second act of Miladi and the Musketeer opens with a song entitled "The Good Old Days," performed by Gabrielle, accompanied by the Maids-in-Waiting and the female chorus:

Gabr.: When the sporty young man, of our modern days,
Reads the stories of the gay Dumas;
He envies the Knights under Louis Treize,
When they weren't so particular!
When a girl wouldn't bring a breach of promise suit,
And didn't have a prudish idea;
But as one of the girls I am strictly mute,
Of those Knights and the Musketeer.
Oh, the poets all wrote of the good old days
And the gay old Knights commended;
But I'd change those Knights of Louis Treize,
For a night of the year just ended!

Maids: While the men quaff'd their flagons and roam'd those days,
We maids were far from free!
For we had no chance under Louis Treize

To go out on a high old spree!
At the beach we could not display more
than our heels,
Nor out on the links go to drive;
We couldn't go riding in automobiles,
To Shanley's to get a "Broiled live."[14]

Another element which now seemed a sure part of a Barnet extravaganza was a song about the "new girl." Most of his musical works contained such a song, either a solo, duet, or choral piece, which reflected the new social freedoms which women were beginning to win. Note, too, the above line about "riding in automobiles." As the automobile became more popular, the programmes for Cadet shows were filled with advertisements for them, and Barnet included more references to them in his works.

The next two musical numbers in the second act are really specialties, and have no bearing on the action of the play. The first, sung by the Musketeers and D'Artagnan, is entitled "The Idol of the Day," and is a silly song about men and women who are supposedly important and admirable, but really have "feet of clay." The second song, sung by Richelieu, Rochefort, and Miladi, is entitled "On the Wrong Quay," and is a loosely told story about an amateur singer, which, as the title suggests, invited many puns and much shallow word play.

After these songs comes a stirring musical number

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[14]Ibid., pp. 53-57.

about the Musketeers, entitled "One For All, All For One!"

D'Artagnan: When I march out with quiv'ring plume
Young maidens wave a hand!
I am a hero to them all,
I'm He of the Hero Land!
And when I go to hunt a foe,
Perchance I start a dear!
'Tis when I sing a jolly song
Of a careless Musketeer!

The dears! The Musketeers!
"One for all, all for one!"
That's the song of the Musketeers!
"All for one, one for all!"
That's the toast of the cup that cheers!
"One for all, all for one!"
That's the way that we love, my dears!
All for one, one for all, all for one![15]

The music to this song was written by Edward W. Corliss, who had collaborated with Barnet on his previous work, Queen of the Ballet. Corliss wrote the music in march tempo, adding lots of cheering by the chorus. Barnet added the credo of the Musketeers to form the spine of this song, which praises those men. Barnet seems to have done his best writing for this show in songs which involved the Musketeers, who were probably his primary inspiration for the show.

Another number for female chorus follows the above song. Entitled "Such Good Little Girls," it is sung by the Maids-in-Waiting:

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[15]Ibid., pp. 65, 69.

Don't think that we are frivolous, because we sing
and dance,
We're as harmless as the merry meadow lark;
With horrid staring musketeers we seldom take a chance,
And rarely go a-walking after dark.
We mind our mothers, now and then, without a pout or
frown,
And sometimes do exactly as we're told;
We never cry because we have to stay quite late in
town,
In point of fact, we're just as good as gold!

We're such pretty little girls!
Such good little girls!
We're very innocent! Full of merriment!
Flirting's not our bent! Oh, no!
We're such proper little girls!
Such nice little girls!
In fact we'd rather die,
Than to wink the other eye,
Such pretty, pretty, good little girls![16]

This song was, of course, little more than an excuse for Barnet to bring out another singing and dancing female chorus. There is no mention of how many chorus girls made up the Maids-in-Waiting, although a programme from a professional production of the show gives the number at six.[17] Barnet had used this feature of a small female chorus--quartette, quintette, or sextette--several times in his shows, particularly in the extravaganzas (e. g., the bank tellers and directors in Queen of the Ballet). Miladi and the Musketeer opened in the same year as Florodora, but the latter show was given credit for popularizing the sextette (technically

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[16]Ibid., pp. 70-73.

[17]Programme: Miladi and the Musketeer, by Barnet and Heartz, Columbia Theatre, Boston, 28 January 1901, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

a double sextette). Barnet's later shows were criticized for imitating Florodora, though he had frequently made use of sextettes during the 1890s.

E. W. Corliss contributed yet another song to the second act of Miladi and the Musketeer, entitled "Miladi!" It was sung by D'Artagnan and accompanied by the chorus.

In the embers of December,
When the world is wrapped in snow,
Love remembers sweet September,
In the firelight's golden glow,
In an apple orchard laden,
When the birds sing to and fro,
Stands a little blue-eyed maiden
Miladi!

Thus I crown you, blue-eyed maiden
You're my Queen "The Queen of Tarts!"
Tho' your tarts be heavy laden
Let us nobly play our parts!
Love makes May of dark December
Love shall keep our hearts a-glow,
With the song of that September
Miladi!

Miladi Fair has golden hair,
And eyes so blue and heart so true;
I was her beau in the long ago
She loved me and she told me so.
Oh, sweetheart of the summer day
I love you in the same old way;
You promised you would e'er be true,
Miladi.[18]

Barnet's lyrics to this song are a throw-back to his older style of love songs: full of clichés, syrupy emotion, and overbearing rhymes. Perhaps it was written to fill a gap

[18]Barnet and Heartz, Miladi and the Musketeer, Vocal Score, pp. 72-77.

in the show, as the collaboration with Corliss suggests. Barnet, in spite of his growth and maturity in the later extravaganzas, was never far from the awkwardness of his early efforts.

The finale for the second act of Miladi and the Musketeer is a confusing mixture of action and reprise. Without the libretto, the action is difficult to follow, though it involves Richelieu's attempts to capture the English Duke of Buckingham. D'Artagnan apparently accompanies Richelieu, attempting to comfort the Queen before he leaves. The chorus picks up where D'Artagnan stops, with a rousing reprise of the "Rat-a-tat-tat" of the earlier song about the Musketeers. The music, this time by Heartz, changes tempo frequently, mixing together a moderately fast movement with a "Tempo di Schottische," and then accelerating into a curtain-lowering march. Once again, there was room for much spectacle in this finale, and Barnet surely took advantage of it, with the departure by sea of Richelieu and D'Artagnan and the pageantry of soldiers and chorus girls marching and singing in the background. There are many passages of music in this finale which are not accompanied by voices, suggesting a great deal of activity on stage.

The third act of Miladi and the Musketeer is full of specialty numbers. "When Maggie Dooley Scrubs the Floor," the opening number, is a quasi-Irish ballad sung by the chorus and Miladi, praising the work of the said Maggie Dooley.

It includes a dance and has little to do with the show.

Following this opening comes a song entitled "I Told You So!" Sung by most of the principals, Richelieu, Rochefort, the Musketeers, Miladi, and the Queen, this song seems to be about King Louis (of uncertain number):

> When Louis was young and his "Momma's own pet,"
> An apple he started to eat one day;
> But his "Momma" exclaimed "No it isn't ripe yet,
> It'll make Louis sick."
> And he answer'd "Nay, nay!"
> Well Louis knows best,
> And he said "You are right!"
> And started at once on the apple again,
> And he ate it all up;
> But that very same night
> His "Momma" sang Louis this sweet refrain:
>
> "I told you so! I told you so!
> Don't you remember I told you so!"
>
> Little Louis is racked with pain,
> Just loved to hear those words again;
> While his brow was cold and damp,
> And between each little cramp:
>
> "Don't you remember, dear,
> I told you so!"[19]

This song then goes on to talk about Louis growing up and going to work on the Stock Exchange, which seems a very unlikely place for a monarch to find employment. "I Told You So" seems to be more of a specialty number than anything related to this show, and is close in tone to the children's extravaganzas.

The suspicion that the third act of Miladi and the

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[19]Ibid., pp. 94-98.

Musketeer is nothing more than one specialty number after another is confirmed by examining the final three musical numbers of the act. A song by D'Artagnan, "My Heart is Ever True," is sung to womankind in general in the manner of a popular song. Next comes a Ballet number and after that another popular song, "And That's What He Taught Me to Do," sung by Gabrielle. Without the libretto, it is impossible to know if Barnet resolved his plot or merely lost track of it in a whirlwind of singing and dancing. It is curious that he returned to the three-act form after his two previous shows, Simple Simon and Queen of the Ballet, had been written in two acts. This was probably an unintentional statement by Barnet that he was abandoning a tighter, plot-oriented structure for the heterogeneity of extravaganza.

Miladi and the Musketeer was previewed in rehearsal by most of the Boston newspapers, a practice that had been growing over the previous few years. One such article noted that the rehearsals were being held for the second time in the new armory:

> . . . The scene in the big drill hall was not strongly suggestive of a military spectacle. At one end a "life-size" stage had been set up, with primitive "props." A great spread of canvas covered the floor. A dozen adjustable parlor screens of various shades bordered the "stage" on three sides, in lieu of "wings." Between them were wooden boxes, doing valiant service as substitutes for the marble steps

> of a French palace.
>
> In front a row of painted wooden chairs indicated the location, but not the illuminating properties, of footlights. Astride the middle one sat Mr. Barnet, ruling the destinies of three-score players before him with a voice of thunder. By his side stood M. B. Gilbert, who is making limber dancers out of stiff-kneed soldiers. Behind him, to the left, a grand-square piano, with Mr. Heartz on the stool, fulfilled all the functions, and at less expense, of a full orchestra. Mr. Tracy stood near by, waving a baton above an overburdened music rack, in the capacity of musical director.
>
> . . . Twice a week the whole company assembles for a full rehearsal--which means three hours or more of hard work. Then there are numerous small rehearsals of principals and ballet girls beside.[20]

Such accounts of Cadet rehearsals are interesting and revealing. Although they only met twice a week, the work was no doubt intensive, especially given the presence of the composer and musical director. According to another preview, Barnet had

> . . . taken entire charge of every detail of the stage business, so that the play is his sole production in every department.[21]

In addition to giving synopses of the plays and reports on rehearsals, preview articles helped publicize the shows and make them more appealing to potential audiences.

> . . . That eagerly anticipated event, the Cadet production of Robert A. Barnet's musical comedy, "Miladi and the Musketeer," is set for Monday evening at the Tremont Theatre. The interest in the affair is stimulated by the fact that the corps has never before attempted so pretentious a work. The music

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[20] The Sunday Herald, 7 January 1900.

[21] Boston Transcript, 6 January 1900.

> of the piece, which is by Harry Lawson Heartz, with orchestration by George Lowell Tracy, calls for unusual vocal ability . . . [22]

From the above one would infer that this was probably the most demanding show, physically and vocally, that Barnet had yet written.

Miladi and the Musketeer opened on 5 February 1900, at the Tremont Theatre. It ran for one week, as usual, and was greeted with much praise by audiences and critics alike. Perhaps the best criticism of the play appeared in the Boston Transcript the day after the opening. This reviewer addressed himself to the matter of extravaganza in general, and included an examination of the show as well:

> . . . I think Mr. Barnet was wise in going back to the old plan of taking a well-known basis for his book; it gives him two advantages which the modern farce-comedy that sets out entirely on its own feet lacks. In the first place, the audience finds itself at once at home in the thing; in the next place--and this item is the more important of the two--there is a chance for funmaking of the burlesque sort. If the modern farce-comedy, or extravaganza, is noted for anything, it is for its lack of plot, or comprehensible motive for the action; no doubt this lack is no serious blemish, for the chief fun of the thing lies not so much in the story as elsewhere. Still, if no blemish, this absence of plot is never in itself a source of power, of comic effect. But if the author, instead of making up his book out of the whole cloth, takes a well-known story or play, and makes his extravaganza a burlesque of that, he can so ludicrously distort and bedevil the original plot, can so turn it topsy-turvy and eliminate all common sense from it, that the very ridiculousness of his burlesque version of it becomes essentially

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[22] Boston Transcript, 3 February 1900.

> comic in itself. Nonsense pure and simple has not half the zest of that double-distilled nonsense which is the burlesque of what once had sense.
>
> Upon the whole I think that, starting from the elder Dumas's Three Musketeers, and the many melodramas that have been based thereon, with now and then a sly hit at Bulwer's "Richelieu," Mr. Barnet has made up the best book, the most intrinsically laughable, that he has yet turned out. . . . The dialogue is in Mr. Barnet's best vein, full of good hits. His Richelieu--who insists upon not being Richeloo--is simply capital; his verbatim quotations from Bulwer's play come in exceedingly pat; there was no need of burlesquing them, for they are their own burlesque. Timely allusions are not wanting . . .[23]

The first paragraph of the above review is a telling reflection of the popular response to the musical theatre of the time. Most critics and most theatre-goers seemed not to have been too upset when plot was lacking in a piece, so long as "the chief fun of the thing" could be had "elsewhere." Barnet came to realize this, and evidently preferred to tailor his musical offerings along those lines. The unfortunate part of this situation was that New York critics, and to a certain extent, New York theatre-goers, were not willing to be as generous as their counterparts in Boston and in other cities around the country. As the theatrical capital of the United States, New York dictated theatrical styles to the nation. When New York favored one style over another--Viennese Operetta over extravaganza, for example, in the years prior to World War I--the rest of the country was forced to follow suit. Barnet, whose success was enormous

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[23]Boston Transcript, 6 February 1900.

locally (in Boston) but not so great nationally, suffered from the changing styles. He was not, however, merely a local phenomenon.

The Cadet production of Miladi and the Musketeer was a success, and Barnet went about rewriting it for the professional stage. The rights were obtained by one A. H. Chamberlyn, who opened the show in late December at the Columbia Theatre in Boston. The cast for this professional production of Miladi and the Musketeer included Eddie Foy as Richelieu and Eva Tanguay in the role of Gabrielle, the Queen's confidante.[24] D'Artagnan was played by a woman, as were several other officers. One does not know whether Barnet intended that many of his male roles become "breeches parts" or whether they became so as a matter of popular style. The reviews in the Boston newspapers were generally favorable, though some were mixed:

> . . . For its professional presentation the lines and music have undergone some changes, and while the first act is largely as the Cadets played it, the second has been greatly altered, and weakened in the process.
> . . . Mr. Foy's peculiar ideas of fun-making are singularly unsuited to the character which he endeavors to portray.[25]

Both Eddie Foy and Eva Tanguay became stars of vaudeville

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[24]Programme: Miladi and the Musketeer, by Barnet and Heartz, Columbia Theatre, Boston, 28 January 1901, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[25]Boston Transcript, 24 December 1900.

after their experience in musical comedy. Other actors went the opposite route, using vaudeville as a stepping stone to the legitimate stage.

Miladi and the Musketeer left Boston in early February 1901, and opened in New York as My Lady on 11 February 1901, at Hammerstein's Victoria. There is no explanation for the name change. The show was popular, and critics generally agreed on the reason for its success, while pointing out its many shortcomings:

> . . . New York has rarely seen so many pretty girls on one stage as the Victoria's held last night, when "My Lady," an extravaganza, was shown for the first time here.
> . . . The story of "My Lady" followed The Three Musketeers in a burlesque vein. This romance has been used on the stage so frequently that its resurrection at this late day seems untimely to say the least. It has been used for comic opera and burlesque. "My Lady" made no consecutive effort at either of these. Sometimes it was travesty and sometimes romantic operetta.[26]

> . . . If "My Lady" is a go in New York it will be due chiefly to its dazzling display of feminine beauty.
> . . . Most of the music was very good, indeed . . . the score is just what is wanted in a work of this kind. It is light, tuneful, spirited, and so catchy that one can't help remembering it.
> . . . As for the book--well, probably some Mrs. Nation has taken an axe to it ere this, but on the opening night it was a too-long and doleful affair. Taken as a travesty, it was neither comical nor timely. Taken as an extravaganza, it was a tiresome series of ancient jests, stupid lines and unfunny "business."[27]

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[26] New York Sun, 12 February 1901.

[27] Dramatic Mirror, 23 February 1901.

In spite of its weaknesses, My Lady received ninety-three performances in New York,[28] no doubt due, in part, to Hammerstein's efforts at keeping the show up to date.

> . . . A second edition of "My Lady" was produced at Hammerstein's Victoria last evening, the new features of which were the introduction of a lot of specialties by vaudeville performers in the second act. They served to relieve some of the deadly "humor" of the burlesque with which the players in the cast struggled in earnest but somewhat futile efforts to raise a laugh.[29]

In addition to bringing in vaudeville acts, Hammerstein apparently also reduced the ticket prices, as the above article goes on to state. The play itself probably became irrelevant for the audiences, which went to see the variety performers who were part of the expanded second act.

After My Lady closed in New York, its production history is uncertain. There is no evidence of a national tour of the show, nor does it seem to have returned to Boston, a safe refuge for most Barnet shows. A quick note by Douglas Gilbert in his book American Vaudeville, indicates that Eva Tanguay was involved in a 1910 production of My Lady. There is no other evidence to support this revival of the show; Gilbert may have mistaken 1901 for 1910. Also, Barnet was living in New York in 1910, and if the show had

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[28]Gerald Bordman, American Musical Theatre (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 175.

[29]New York Times, 19 March 1901.

been revived then, it is very likely that there would be some evidence of it in the Barnet scrapbooks or papers.

My Lady achieved a modestly successful run in New York, which no doubt added to Barnet's prestige as well as to his income from royalties. The crucial factor in the success of this show was the influence which it seemed to have over the rest of Barnet's active career. Having achieved success with this heterogeneous cross between burlesque and extravaganza, Barnet never again returned to the unity of plot and character which he had learned in the children's extravaganzas. Instead, he continued to expand his style to include new elements of spectacle, and kept doing so until his active career in Boston came to an end.

CHAPTER XII

MISS SIMPLICITY

In 1901, R. A. Barnet provided a musical entertainment for the Bank Officers' Association, a group of prominent young men in the banking business in Boston. This group had its own amateur theatrical organization which had been presenting shows since 1887.[1] In friendly competition with the Cadets, but very much overshadowed by them as a result of the string of Barnet successes, the Bank Officers evidently decided to preempt the Cadet show for 1901 by hiring Barnet to write a musical for their dramatic group. The result was Miss Simplicity, a "musical comedy" with a book by Barnet, lyrics by Barnet, Edward A. Church, and D. K. Stevens, and music by Harry L. Heartz. Additional musical numbers were provided by Edward W. Corliss and Clifton Crawford.

Barnet's association with the Bank Officers was probably very similar to his arrangement with the Cadets, though the details are not as clear. He provided the show in collaboration with the aforementioned artists, probably served as stage director, and certainly lent his prestige to the production. Afterwards, as with the Cadet shows, Barnet revised the piece and sold the rights for professional

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[1] Boston Advertiser, 26 February 1901.

production. The Bank Officers, who may have numbered among their group some of Boston's better amateur actors--as newspaper stories suggest--assumed both male and female roles, as did the Cadets. There is no mention of what the Bank Officers did with the profits which they made on Miss Simplicity, but one can safely assume that at least part of the money went to charity.

Miss Simplicity was anything but simple in its story line. A synopsis was given by several Boston newspapers in articles previewing the show in order to familiarize theatre-goers with the play's rambling plot. In the absence of a libretto, it will be helpful to record one such synopsis.

> The story of the musical comedy concerns the affairs of a little kingdom of Sauterelle, which as the scene opens is preparing to receive a new king. Michel, a sergeant of the king's guard, with a few disgruntled villagers, arrange with Willie Plotsky, a hired anarchist, to remove the new king on his arrival. This new king, Philip Montfort, is a rich young Englishman, who comes to accept his honors as a lark, and brings with him several friends, including some young English girls and their maids, all chaperoned by Lady Bagges. Before Montfort's arrival, Rosalie, a beggar girl, arrives in Sauterelle, hoping to attract his attention and become his queen. But by a compact entered into some years before, Claire de Loinville, daughter of a noble count of Sauterelle, who has always lived in Paris, must marry the first king of the Montforts. She arrives with her English maid, Patty Yarnell. Mlle. de Loinville acts upon impulse, and after travelling from Paris, decides not to live up to the compact. She changes places with Rosalie, and while the latter goes to the chateau to impersonate Mlle. de Loinville, Claire roams the country as Rosalie, the beggar maid. Montfort falls in love with her, but she pretends to be poor and extremely proud, and he poses as a poor peasant and follows her. He is about to start for his rustic life

> when his friends insist that he cannot disregard the coronation. So he orders his man Blossoms to be crowned king, and also to marry the unknown Claire de Loinville. Blossoms is crowned, but as his young woman, Patty Yarnell, is mentally and muscularly his superior, he trembles at the thought of marrying according to his master's orders. His royal life is made weary trying to keep at a proper distance the amorous Claire, as impersonated by Rosalie, allaying the jealousies of Patty Yarnell and trying to placate the conspirators who are plotting against the life of the king. Claire de Loinville, as the beggar maid, is wooed and won by Montfort as the humble peasant, but when she finds that he is the real king he offends her romantic temperament, and she renounces him. Finally, however, she relents and accepts the conditions of their joint inheritance, a crown and marriage. Blossoms succeeds in getting rid of his regal worries, and Rosalie, the real beggar maid, subdues the ferocious anarchist Plotsky, who is found to be far milder than he looks.[2]

Just exactly where Barnet got his plot was a subject of interest for at least one Boston critic, who wrote:

> . . . In this, his latest libretto, Mr. Barnet has left parody for pure imagination again. There is nothing to be said against this; it is only the more difficult line of the two. Did he get his subject out of his own head, or had he French material to work with? Probably the thing is original with him, and the scene being laid in (of course, an imaginary) France means no more than if it were laid in any other country.[3]

Regardless of what inspired Barnet to create this story, the elements of spectacle were built into it: a foreign setting, monarchs and a coronation, mistaken identities, proper English characters, fashionable French characters,

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[2]Boston Transcript, 26 January 1901.

[3]Boston Transcript, 26 February 1901.

English and French maids, an anarchist and his plotting, and several loving couples. This was extravaganza and not musical comedy, but it was successful on both the amateur and professional stages.

Although there is no libretto for Miss Simplicity, there is a published vocal score. The following discussion of the show will be based on an examination of the lyrics. Unfortunately, this vocal score, unlike most others extant for Barnet's shows, does not differentiate between those songs written by Barnet and those on which he collaborated, or which were written totally by others. Therefore, one must keep in mind during the ensuing review that the lyrical assistance rendered by Edward A. Church and D. K. Stevens might have been considerable. It is unclear who wrote what for most of the songs. Such was the trend which Barnet seemed to be following during the later part of his active career.

Miss Simplicity appears in the vocal score as two acts, with twenty-one musical numbers divided fairly evenly between them. The opening chorus is a stirring song entitled "Philippe Comes Today!"

Men: Oh, citizens of Sauterelle,
All loyal men are we!
Whoe'er is King, we'll love him well,
And humbly bow the knee!
Whoever reign, he always finds
Us most entirely true;
We've ne'er been known to change our minds
When we, we had a thing else to do!

Girls: Let ev'ry man go change his mind,
Another plan's to us assigned;
With sunny smiles and summer flow'rs,
We'll make the town like Eden's bowers!
With palm and pine prepare the way,
With eglantine adorn the day!
From wood and vale your garlands bring,
Let roses hail the coming King!

. . . . . .

All: The "King's Own" comes with the great Michel!
Our loyal voices in high chorus swell!
Throw out your flags, let ev'ry one get gay!
We're all imperial on this holiday!
With pride, let ev'ry bosom gush!
The "King's Own" enters like a royal flush!
A full house greets them on their glorious way,
For coronations come not ev'ry day![4]

This song continues through several more verses, varying in tempo and mixing voices of the men's and women's choruses with dancing. The word play in the third verse above, referring to cards, is pure Barnet. It is a lively opening number, concerned more with setting the action of the piece in motion than with setting the scene, and gives notice that Miss Simplicity will be a very lively show. As his sense of the extravaganza matured, Barnet seemed to prefer a spectacular opening number, with mixed choruses and lots of dancing, over a gentler number which either introduced principal characters or gave a romantic introduction to the

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[4]R. A. Barnet and Harry Lawson Heartz, Miss Simplicity, Vocal Score (Boston: White-Smith Music Publishing Company, 1901), pp. 3-12, Music Division, Library of Congress.

location of the piece.

Rosalie, the beggar maid, is the first principal to be introduced in Miss Simplicity, as she enters to sing a song about her ambitions, entitled "Stand Back! Bow Low!"

> Aunt says a King Cophetua a dear, unmarried King,
> Once saw a lovely beggar girl, and did the proper thing;
> He fell in love with her at sight, and on his royal knees,
> Said: "Will you be my wife and Queen," and added, "if you please?"
> The beggar girl was gratified, and answered with a smile,
> "I'm yours, my worthy Sov'reign, if you really like my style!"
> He said: "I like it very much!" And she became his Queen,
> So Auntie says, that "beggar girls should let themselves be seen!"
>
> Stand back! Bow low! Honor to a Queen!
> The merriest, tidiest, loveliest ever seen!
> Now run along get ready for the Coronation show;
> I hope to be your Queen -- tomorrow![5]

This song continues with another verse which does little more than serve as a topical filler. The chorus answers Rosalie's exhortations by repeating the refrain, and then breaking into a dance.

Into the next musical scene of Miss Simplicity come the would-be evil-doers, led by the anarchist Plotsky and the sergeant Michel. The song which they sing, to a choral accompaniment, is entitled "It's Because I Do Not Try," and concerns Plotsky's character and his previous attempts to

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[5]Ibid., pp. 13-18.

spread anarchy.

Plo.: I am an Anarchistic sharp of fierce ferocitee!

Cho.: Ha! Ha!

Plo.: What's that?

Cho.: Ho! Ho!

Plo.: My aim in life is raising kings with swift velocitee!

Cho.: Ha! Ha!

Plo.: What's that?

Cho.: Ho! Ho!

Plo.: With dynamite and bombs and such explosive concentrates
I'm prepared to give a lift to all offensive potentates,
And to do the turn up quickly at the lowest market rates.

Cho.: Hi! Hi!

Plo.: What's that?

Cho.: Ho! Ho!

Mic.: It seems to me I've heard altho' I do not mean to scoff,
In spite of all your deadly plans your powder don't go off!

Plo.: Do you know the reason why?
It's because I didn't try,
For when I try there's nothing that I cannot do!

Cho.: Now we know the reason why!
It's because he didn't try;
For when he tries there's nothing that he cannot do![6]

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[6]Ibid., pp. 19-24.

Plotsky goes on to describe other activities which he is prepared to do, but hasn't yet succeeded in because "he didn't try." This is an amusing song which follows the Barnet pattern of commenting on events or trends, and somehow diffusing their importance with low comedy. Anarchism was a potent force in the world of the early twentieth century, which periodically claimed the lives of prominent personalities. President McKinley was assassinated by an anarchist only six months after Miss Simplicity opened, which may explain why this part of the plot was altered for the professional version of the show, and the character of Plotsky dropped. The name "Plotsky" is pure Barnet.

The aristocratic Claire de Loinville enters next, and sings a duet with her English maid, Patty Yarnell. The duet, entitled "You'd Better Take It Back," is a clever but silly song about quarrels between lovers, having nothing to do with the plot of Miss Simplicity. The same is true for the next musical number, "With All Proprietee!" This is sung by the Montfort party, including such people as Lord Bob, Lady Dorothea, Tammons, and a chorus of English girls and maids. The theme of the song is the sense of propriety which surrounds English people, a favorite subject for American audiences, particularly when approached in an exaggerated way, which is exactly what Barnet and his collaborators have done. Barnet was well aware of the popularity of English comic opera and burlesque in America, and took advantage of

that popularity by borrowing not only from Gilbert and Sullivan, but also from English nursery rhymes, ballads, pantomime traditions, and stock characters.

The action of Miss Simplicity resumes with Claire and Rosalie switching identities. In the guise of a beggar girl, Claire sings a short song entitled "Charity":

> Alone, unfriended, through the town,
> I stray in grief and fear!
> No face I see but wears a frown,
> No gentle words I hear!
> These cheeks once fair and rosy red,
> By hunger now are worn!
> The cheerless street must be my bed:
> My lot's indeed forlorn!
>
> Once I had gowns and jewels rare
> And lived in pride and state!
> Accustomed I to tend'rest care,
> Nor feard the flings of fate!
> Then fell, on my defenceless head,
> Misfortune's cruel blow;
> And now, alas! I sing for bread!
> Ah! bitter is my woe!
>
> Oh, charity! Sweet charity!
> I ask not much for charity!
> A penny here! A penny there!
> I want no more than you can spare
> For charity![7]

Claire evidently sings this to Montfort, as the song seems designed to convince someone of her legitimate poverty. The very next song, entitled "Some Do! Some Don't!," is a duet between Claire and Montfort:

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[7]Ibid., pp. 33, 34.

Cla.: Some like to walk at noonday;
Some like to walk at night!

Mon.: Some do!

Cla.: Some don't!
Some like to sit in darkness,
Some like a dazzling light!

Mon.: Some do!

Cla.: Some don't!
Some like a lot of men about;
Some like just only one!
To call her "Sweetie,"
"Pet" and "Love,"
From rise to set of sun;
Some murmur, "Dear I'm yours for life!
All other men I'll shun!"

Mon.: Some do!

Cl.: Some don't!

Both: Oh! This is a very funny world
It's funny through and through!
It's funny what the people are
It's funny what they do![8]

This is another type of song which seems to appear in most of Barnet's shows: when two people who are to become lovers first meet, they often sing about some odd form of human behavior. Barnet's shows are filled with songs which comment frivolously on the human condition.

With Claire masquerading as a beggar girl, enjoying the freedom of the country and the attentions of Montfort, Rosalie must fill the part of Claire, and does so as she is introduced to the people of Sauterelle--the chorus--in a

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[8]Ibid., pp. 35-37.

musical number entitled "An Innocent City Girl":

Chorus: At last our curiosity will soon be satisfied!
Our eyes with Paris' latest styles will soon be gratified,
For Claire de Loinville, haughty maid, in ev'rything au fait,
Will show us what is what in town, the mode a la Francais!

Rosalie: An innocent city maiden am I
Unused to things bucolic,
The country lads they make me cry
When they're inclined to frolic.
The candy pulls make me afraid,
The straw rides make me tremble,
For I'm an innocent city maid,
And can't my fears dissemble!

The city I miss, it's rumble and jar,
The dear delicious bustle,
I miss the rush of cable car
That keeps one on the hustle.
The bargain sales are my delight,
I miss my daily shopping;
I miss that innocent time at night
When champagne corks are popping!

I pray country boys, be good and not tease,
Nor in your fun be vi'lent!
If ever you tried to suddenly squeeze,
From fright I should be silent.
In kissing games should I be chased
And kissed whene'er you caught me,
I'll struggle a bit, a bit for good taste;
That's what my mama taught me!

An innocent girl from the city am I!
So timid and trusting and dreadfully shy!
The boys in the country are very polite;
But the mooley cows give me a terrible fright:
Because I've been told they will certainly bite
An innocent city maid![9]

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[9]Ibid., pp. 38-45.

Mistaken identify is as much a part of light musical fare as is love, and Barnet's characters seem able to play their assumed parts with as much conviction and light-heartedness as if they were really who they claimed to be.

The masquerade continues as the scenes shift between the romping of Montfort and Claire in the country, and the preparations to crown Montfort's man Blossoms at court. Two musical numbers follow the above in the way of specialties. The first, entitled "The Maid, the Man, and the Microbe," is a trio involving Claire, Montfort, and Patty. As the title suggests, the song has little to do with anything other than a humorous type of nursery rhyme situation. The next song, "Mamie and Jamie," is equally irrelevant. Sung by Blossoms (his first song in the show), Rosalie, and others at court, it concerns the relationship between a certain girl, named Mamie, and her beau, named Jamie. This, too, reads like a nursery rhyme, and lends weight to the argument that Barnet continued to write lyrics in the vein of the children's extravaganzas, although his shows purported to be musical comedies. They were so titled in the published vocal scores.

The finale of the first act of Miss Simplicity is another of Barnet's typically complex musical numbers, featuring most of the principals and all of the chorus in a singing and dancing preparation for the coronation. To that end, Blossoms is continuously praised by the chorus

for his regal bearing, while the anarchistic element plot his immediate downfall.

Chorus: King elect of Sauterelle!
Hear the coronation bell!
Now has come the time to todle:
Crown is waiting for your nodle!
Philippe One of Sauterelle!
Hear the coronation bell!
Philippe One of Sauterelle,
Hear the summons of the bell!
Ding! Dong! Ding! Dong! Ding! Dong!

. . . . . .

Blossoms: There is something rather loyal in my pose!

Chorus: Royal in his pose! Royal in his pose!

Blossoms: And whatever I may I guess it goes!

Chorus: Rather guess it goes! Goes! Goes!

Rosalie: And for elegant demeanor
He's a veritable dream-a
From his gaiters to his royal Roman nose!

Chorus: Royal Roman nose! Nose! Nose!
There is something rather royal in his pose,
And whatever he may say we guess it goes!
And for elegant demeanor,
He's a veritable dream-a
From his gaiters to his royal Roman nose![10]

Even Montfort and Claire join in this finale, singing about their love, as the chorus sings and dances the number to a close. This was obviously a spectacular finale, the kind which Barnet became more and more adept at creating as his experience with extravaganza grew. There are no reprises

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[10]Ibid., pp. 57-69.

from the songs of the first act in this finale.

The second act of Miss Simplicity opens with music. Called "Entr'acte and Opening," this number appears to accompany a dance. Since the children's extravaganzas, Barnet's shows had been getting longer and more musically complex, featuring larger amounts of dance. This second act opening number of Miss Simplicity follows and expands upon that trend.

The first song of the second act is pure specialty. Entitled "Foreign Ditties," and sung by Blossoms, Claire, and the chorus, it includes the ubiquitous Irish ballad, a German-style drinking verse, a humorous English ditty transcribed in Cockney dialect, and a plantation song. These vocal numbers are punctuated by at least four different dances, probably related in style--certainly in music--to the songs which they follow. This number is curious in form and content. Barnet's shows usually contained at least one Irish ballad and some sort of drinking song. The earlier shows usually had a plantation song in them, a holdover from Barnet's minstrel days, while the later shows included some sort of English "manners" song. But never before had Barnet combined all of these types of music into one number, as he did on this occasion.

The next four songs are all specialties, with not the slightest comment on the show. In order, they are: "But He Said It So Politely," sung by Michel, Plotsky, and

chorus; "And You Were Shy Eighteen" sung by the English party (another take-off on English manners); "The Interrogative Child," sung by Plotsky, Rosalie, and two other women; and "The Good Little Sunday School Boy," sung by several principals, the chorus, and accompanied by a closing dance. Without access to the libretto, which (supposedly) shows how they are tied together, these specialties represent a sort of show-within-a-show. It was as if the plot and action of Miss Simplicity had come to a temporary standstill while variety entertainment had been introduced. Such interruption was the nature of most musical entertainments of the era, and Barnet's previous shows were no exception. Barnet continued to expand his shows with more specialties, even in the face of harsher criticism from New York journalists.

The action of Miss Simplicity--as reflected in the vocal score--picks up midway through the second act with a love song, entitled "Rosalie," sung by Montfort to the accompaniment of a female chorus:

There is a girl the sweetest one in all this world
And she is wond'rous fair
Her eyes so blue, her lips so red,
And wavy is her golden hair
Her feet they twinkle in the dance
As the music of the waters play
Her proud head ne'er bends to catch
The low sweet whisper as I fondly say--

Rosalie, the moon is shining
The stars they do glitter bright
Come, my Rose! I am calling
And meet me in the moon's pale light!

Now this dear girl the only one in all the world
Among the girls for me
Is deaf to all my words of love
I'll never marry Rosalie
But her dear face shall be my dream
Always to remind me of this day
You'll then my Rose bend to catch
The low sweet whisper as I'll fondly say--

(Refrain)[11]

This is one of Barnet's better love songs, reflecting a more mature romantic sense than many of his earlier love songs. The tone of uncertainty seems more modern than Barnet's usual saccharine approach to love, with its repetitive rhyming and happy ending.

The next musical number is an interesting throw-back to the Mother Goose shows. "The Nursery Grenadiers," sung by Claire and the chorus, is a straightforward paen to childhood, complete with choral accompaniment which, for the most part, reads: "Too-te-te-toot-te-toot-te-toot!"

In nursery days we children play'd at soldiers big
and grand:
With one or two chairs we build a fort to make a
final stand:
The coal-hod was our maxim gun and gracious how
quick we made them run!
With poker for sword the Captain kills the foe on
ev'ry hand!
Across the floor on hobby horse he leads a gallant
charge,
And followed by little troopers all courageous but
not large;
They seize on grandma's rocking chair surely the foe
is lurking there!

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[11]Ibid., pp. 98-100.

They charge and rally load and fire the Nursery Grenadiers![12]

This song is well written, and, with its military pageantry, must have been quite spectacular on stage. Most of Barnet's extravaganzas include a military number, with a march, and sometimes more than one. Such numbers were not only popular theatrical fare, but were particularly well suited to the talents of the Cadets, with their military training and drilling. It is no wonder that they made such good chorus performers. The Bank Officers had no military connections, and thus the presence of military airs in Miss Simplicity indicates the general popularity of the genre. Moreover, the presence of the above number in this show indicates how indelibly impressed Barnet was with the popular appeal of the children's numbers. As has been mentioned in the discussion of previous shows, Barnet continued to include elements from the children's extravaganzas in the musicals which followed Jack and the Beanstalk and Simple Simon. Eventually, he returned to that genre of extravaganza.

Another specialty follows the above, entitled "Me and You." It is sung by Patty and Blossoms, who seems to have been created purely as a specialty performer in Miss Simplicity. Curiously, Bordman maintains that:

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[12]Ibid., pp. 101-105.

> . . . when Barnet and Heartz first mounted Miss Simplicity in Boston . . . no character called Blossoms was in the cast, and the story centered on a royal romance.[13]

According to contemporary newspaper accounts, especially those which previewed the show and gave a synopsis of the plot, Blossoms was part of the original show. Perhaps Blossoms was not a part of Barnet's original design for the show. Or, Bordman may be completely wrong, which appears to be the case. "Me and You" is yet another English take-off, as a few lines show:

> Blossoms: I've been finkin', Patty girlie, arter all wot 'as been said,
> I've been finkin' till I've fought a little bald spot on me 'ead,
> That this King and Queenly racket ain't a patch on 'Ampstead 'Eath
> Where yer donnah wears yer 'at and you've yer napper in a wreath.[14]

The profusion of Cockney in this show is curious. Perhaps Barnet made an intentional effort to borrow from the English Music Hall, which was exporting its favorite songs and acts to America at the time. Regardless of the motivation, it seems that, once again, Barnet was giving the audiences of his day what they wanted to see and hear.

The plot of Miss Simplicity resumes in the vocal score

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[13]Gerald Bordman, American Musical Theatre (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 180.

[14]Barnet and Heartz, Miss Simplicity, Vocal Score, pp. 106-108.

where it last left off, with Montfort and Claire singing about their love for one another. In a song entitled "When Will My Dream Come True, Love?," the chorus accompanies the two lovers:

Mon.: Last night a vision came to me,
While lost in sleep I lay,
A dream that lightened all my care
And turned night into day;
My longed for Love was by my side,
My lips to hers she drew:
All earthly happiness was mine!
When will my dream come true?

Cla.: Ah! Do I hear the voice of Love
That calls me to his side,
And bids me break my cool reserve,
Dear Venus be my guide!
Now shall your love be told again,
The old and yet the new;
So dearest take me to your heart!
Now has your dream come true?

Mon.: When will my dream come true, Love?
When will my dream come true?
When shall I feel her soft caress
Thrilling me through and through?
When shall my empty heart, Love,
Open it's door anew?
When will she take and keep it, Love?
When will my dream come true?

Cla.: Now has your dream come true, Love?
Now has your dream come true?
Now shall you feel my soft caress
Thrilling you through and through!
Now shall your empty heart, Love,
Open its door anew!
Now will I take and keep it, Love,
Now has your dream come true![15]

This is another good love song, though more repetitive and

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[15]Ibid., pp. 109-114.

much more structurally reminiscent of Barnet's older efforts. It seems, from the vocal score, that the only element of the plot which Barnet cared to further in the second act of Miss Simplicity was this relationship between Montfort and Claire. All of the other numbers appear to be specialties, as if the rest of the cast merely marked time by entertaining, while Montfort and Claire settled their affairs. In fact, the final number listed in the vocal score is a solo specialty for Blossoms, entitled "Don't Mind Me." This is a silly song about several humorous events in the life of Blossoms, the lyrics for which do not bear quoting. Curiously, there is no finale for Miss Simplicity given in the vocal score. Perhaps it was so long and so musically complex that the publishers chose not to print it. Perhaps, with Montfort and Claire united, the finale was merely a reprise of several previous numbers from the show. Whatever the case, the absence of a finale in a Barnet show would certainly be odd.

Miss Simplicity opened at the Tremont Theatre--home of the Cadet Theatricals--on 25 February 1901. Produced by the Boston Bank Officers' Association, the show was well-received by an enthusiastic public, which evidently was able to transfer its allegiance from the Cadets, who were not producing that year, to the Bank Officers. Details of the run are scanty, though it may be assumed that, like the Cadet shows, Miss Simplicity played for one week. Boston critics gave the piece generally favorable notices, once

again seeming to limit their comments because of the amateur nature of the production.

More important than the Bank Officers and their production is the stage history of the professional version of Miss Simplicity. The rights were obtained by the famous comedian Frank Daniels, who had the show revised--most likely by Barnet--to put special emphasis on Blossoms, which role he undertook. Daniels had been a star of light musical fare since 1879, when he "became second comedian of the Gaiety [Theatre in] Boston."[16] Shortly thereafter, he gained fame in New York and London, in plays by Victor Herbert (The Wizard of the Nile, The Idol's Eye) and Charles H. Hoyt (The Rag Baby). Daniels

> . . . had a round, irresistibly comic face, a short, stout body, and most expressive eyebrows. He was a good dancer and singer, and a fine exponent of patter songs.[17]

The plays which Daniels starred in were often written with him in mind, or revised to that end, as was the case with Miss Simplicity. His impersonation of the character of Blossoms added to his reputation, and provided Barnet with yet another hit.

Daniels apparently formed his own company, under the

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[16]Phyllis Hartnoll, ed., The Oxford Companion to the Theatre (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 231.

[17]Ibid.

supervision of producer Kirke La Shelle, and opened a revised, professional production of Miss Simplicity in Allentown, Pennsylvania, on 27 September 1901,

> . . . and after one or two trials at theatrical "dog-towns," it was taken to Baltimore and Washington.[18]

A Baltimore theatre critic found the show quite good:

> "Miss Simplicity," the operatic comedy presented by Mr. Frank Daniels and his admirable company, is high comedy in point of funniness and ranks high as an artistic color scheme. The music, too, is new--actually no melodies suggestive of bygone harmonies, and yet melodious and catchy.[19]

Following a successful road trip, Daniels opened the show in Boston on 21 October 1901,[20] at the same Tremont Theatre at which it had first been presented by the Bank Officers. The show became a big success in Boston, not only because of popular sentiment for Barnet's plays, but also because changes had been made.

> . . . Liberties of some size have been taken with the original book and a large amount of Danielesque business has been added.[21]

> . . . Several changes have been made in the book. The anarchist, who was one of the most important

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[18] Boston Transcript, 22 October 1901.

[19] Baltimore Sun, 1 October 1901.

[20] Boston Transcript, 22 October 1901.

[21] Boston Advertiser, 22 October 1901.

> characters, has been eliminated, and in his stead there is a humorous travesty of a well-advertised personage. There have been several good lyrics added, to which Mr. Heartz has written most tuneful music, the business of the piece has undergone some changes, and while "Miss Simplicity" when first presented was an excellent "musical comedy," it has been strengthened and improved, by the additions and changes, and in view of the constant succession of musical numbers the authors are justified in now calling it an "operatic comedy."
> . . . Everything had to be repeated again and again, Mr. Barnet and Mr. Daniels made speeches, and the audience enjoyed the evening hugely. If a well constructed play, catchy music, good acting, graceful dancing and extremely pretty girls in most bewitching costumes can insure a success, then "Miss Simplicity" is a Success with a capital S, and should run to crowded houses while here.[22]

Popular as the show was, Daniels did not keep it in Boston for very long, but decided to take it on the road for several months before bringing it to New York. For two weeks, beginning 17 November 1901, Miss Simplicity played at the Grand Opera House in Chicago.[23] The playbill for this production reads, "Produced under the personal stage direction of R. A. Barnet."[24] Evidently, Daniels had allowed Barnet to stage the show, either from the beginning or for the Boston run, and liked it enough to take it on the road and to give Barnet credit. This was the first professional directorial credit of Barnet's career. There is no information to indicate whether these duties meant additional royalties

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[22] Boston Transcript, 22 October 1901.

[23] Playbill in the possession of Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

[24] Ibid.

for Barnet.

The pre-New York tour by Daniels and company was very successful, so much so that Daniels

> . . . was besieged by music publishers and ambitious song writers, all of whom wanted him to consider the incorporation of certain new songs into "Miss Simplicity."[25]

There are no indications that Daniels accepted any such offers, though there is some evidence that the show changed a bit either in New York or later.

On 10 February 1902, Miss Simplicity opened at the Casino Theatre in New York. It was produced by Kirke La Shelle, starred Frank Daniels, and credited R. A. Barnet with the staging of the show, which ran for fifty-six performances.[26] The main reason for such a modest run was the harsh criticism from the New York dramatic press, who all agreed with a New York Times critic that Barnet's "musical piece makes the noisiest show in the city."[27]

> . . . Mr. Barnet, who stands convicted upon his own confession of having written the . . . work, has appeared to labor on the principle that care can be routed by noise alone, and that the people who come to witness this production wish to drown their troubles in overwhelming waves of sound. From the

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[25]Boston Sunday Herald, 4 May 1902.

[26]Burns Mantle and Garrison P. Sherwood, eds., The Best Plays of 1899-1909 (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1944), p. 406.

[27]New York Times, 11 February 1902.

> beginning to the end of "Miss Simplicity," crash succeeds din, and din crash, until the ear-drum cracks and the head of the auditor is split. The leading comedian makes his first appearance by falling upon the stage, following close upon the explosion of an automobile; the chorus shrieks the measures of a discomposer by the name of Heartz, who wrote the orchestral noises which accompany Mr. Barnet's libretto, and from that moment, with the exception of intermittent attacks of the "Florodora" sextette in diluted form, we get nothing else than avalanches, explosions, riots, shoutings by the men, shriekings by the women, and general noises in chorus on and off the stage, by everybody connected with the theatre. Wherever noises run short the chorus returns with a "Florodora" imitation to fill in the gaps, but even these are noise and little else.[28]

The harshness of this criticism seems gratuitous. Note the many references to imitations of Florodora, and remember that Barnet had been experimenting with choral pieces--sextettes, octets, and other such arrangements--for years.

Other criticism was less flamboyant, but equally harsh:

> "Miss Simplicity," described as an operatic comedy, by R. A. Barnet (the author of "1492") and H. L. Heartz, came to the Casino on February 10 and proved poor stuff. Nothing much worse, as regards both book and music, has yet been seen in a Broadway house. The story--the old one of the valet masquerading as king while his royal master woos a supposed beggar maid--is nonsensical, and has not the redeeming quality of being clever nonsense. An absolutely vacuous libretto and music so blatant as to almost deafen the unfortunates seated near the orchestra combined to depress and weary the spectator, and it was only by the titanic efforts of the star, Mr. Frank Daniels, whose genuine drollery provided hearty laughter, and dissipated to some extent the

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[28] Harper's Weekly, 14 February 1902.

> growing ill humor of the audience, that the piece was saved from disaster.
> . . . It is possible that Mr. Daniels' fine sense of humor will enable him to purge "Miss Simplicity" of her dullness and transform the piece into a success. As presented by its authors, it will not do so.[29]

Many critics joined the above in calling for Daniels to make significant changes in the show in order to improve it. Evidently, Daniels recognized the weaknesses in Miss Simplicity, and sought to make some attempt to distract the audience from them:

> . . . Throughout the first act he had sung and danced alone or in company with the conventional chorus, and had stuck, apparently, to the peculiar vacuous text supplied by the librettist . . .
> . . . But when the curtain fell on the first act Mr. Daniels emerged from the inanity and chaos of "Miss Simplicity," and, in response to the kindly applause of a friendly audience, he made a speech.
> . . . There is a story running through Mr. Barnet's libretto, but it is not nearly so clear as was the theme of Mr. Daniels' speech, and infinitely less entertaining.[30]

Some New York critics were not as harsh in their assessment of the show, though the weaknesses which others had pointed out were clearly apparent even through faint praise.

> Mr. Frank Daniels introduced "Miss Simplicity" to New York at the Casino last night, and while there are parts of the "operatic comedy" which did not please the hypercritical, still, taken as a whole, it will serve to while away a pleasant hour or two. Mr. Daniels as was, as he always is, funny--very

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[29] The Theatre, 2 (March 1902): 4.

[30] Town Topics, 13 February 1902.

> funny--but the book, which is by Mr. R. A. Barnet, is not as bright as the usual "annual" of the Boston Cadets. The music, by Mr. H. L. Heartz, while pleasing and snappy at times, is not up to the standard which has been set for the yearly music play of the Hub's crack military organization.
>
> The hit of the piece is the speech made by Mr. Daniels after the curtain falls on the first act. It was a delightful monologue, in which "Little Puck" exhausted nearly all the obsolete and unfamiliar polysyllabic words in the dictionary. This speech brought down the house and inspired the thought that when the comedian edits the comedy a la Daniels it will be a thorough success.[31]

This critic was, of course, misinformed about the original production of Miss Simplicity. Note, too, that Daniels' speech sounds a bit like one of Barnet's old minstrel stump speeches. Perhaps Barnet had a hand in the writing of it.

In spite of the efforts of a famous and talented comedian, another Barnet show left New York after a modest run of fifty-six performances. With the possible exception of his one Mother Goose extravaganza, Jack and the Beanstalk, which was successful as a holiday pantomime, Barnet's shows were becoming less popular in New York. The critical attacks were becoming more harsh, and the shows themselves more wildly heterogeneous and spectacular. Almost ten years after 1492, Barnet's shows were bigger and more complex, but not better.

Miss Simplicity returned to Boston shortly after it closed in New York, opening at the Tremont Theatre on

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[31] New York Herald, 11 February 1902.

28 April 1902. Boston critics were mildly supportive in their praise of this final production of the show.

> . . . Although the changes in "Miss Simplicity" since its amateur production are many and serious, it has undergone few alterations during the season's campaign to which it has been subjected by Mr. Daniels and his company. One or two new songs of no special importance have been added, and there have been several newcomers in the cast who certainly, to say the least, deserve no stronger praise than that given to their predecessors last fall. From the purely theatrical standpoints of scenery and costume, "Miss Simplicity" still ranks very high among contemporary productions, so high indeed that it becomes impossible to keep back the thought that libretto and score are frequently inadequate in vigor, humor, and diversity.[32]

Boston still found it difficult to strongly criticize Barnet. Before this run of Miss Simplicity was over, Barnet had another show in New York, and was enjoying the fruits of a busy and profitable year.

The subsequent stage history of Miss Simplicity is not clear. Daniels probably took the show on another tour before disbanding the company. The first tour, particularly in the mid-west, had been quite successful. Daniels never again performed in a Barnet show, perhaps because of the New York reviews of Miss Simplicity. New York audiences were evidently tiring of the hodgepodge musical entertainments which Barnet's extravaganzas represented. While Barnet was a "favorite son" in Boston, where amateur theatricals were strongly attended and the musical offerings were

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[32]Boston Transcript, 29 April 1902.

far less numerous and sophisticated than in New York, the patrons of Broadway could afford to be more discerning in their judgment of what plays to attend. New York producers, however, continued to find Barnet's shows appealing, perhaps anticipating another big hit like 1492. It never came, and soon the producers stopped seeking out Barnet's shows. In 1902, however, Barnet was the most prominent writer of musical entertainment in New England, and even a short run in New York failed to hurt his local prestige.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CAP OF FORTUNE AND THE SHOW GIRL

The year 1902 was the busiest of Barnet's career, and probably represented its high point. The Cadets were in rehearsal for Barnet's new play, The Cap of Fortune and the Show Girl, which opened in February, at about the same time that Frank Daniels and company opened Barnet's Miss Simplicity at the Casino Theatre in New York. In April, Barnet's amateur production of Nicolette, for which he wrote the book and Charles Eugene Hamlin wrote the music and lyrics, opened in Bangor, Maine. In May, the professional production of the year's Cadet show, now titled The Show Girl, opened at Wallack's Theatre in New York, after having completed a successful run in Boston under the management of E. E. Rice. Included in this busy schedule were rehearsals for the Cadet show and the Hamlin opera--Barnet was stage director for both--and revisions for E. E. Rice's professional production of The Show Girl. In addition, Barnet took out a copyright for the title of his next Cadet show, and may have begun work on it, though probably not until after the summer. There is also evidence from programme advertisements and newspaper stories that Barnet was still engaged as the Boston representative

for Ruinart Brut Champagne.

One of Barnet's scrapbooks is full of newspaper clippings from 1902: stories and reviews on The Cap of Fortune and the Show Girl and Nicolette, features on Barnet and his musical and lyrical collaborators, and general information about the Cadets and the amateur company in Bangor, Maine. Barnet's stature in New England was very high, as the Bangor Commercial reported:

> . . . Mr. Barnet probably stands unique in the musical history of the country. No other man living has ever scored so many hits as has Mr. Barnet. He is recognized as the leading author of musical extravaganza in America.[1]

In spite of the sectional bias, there is some validity in calling Barnet the king of extravaganza. Between 1891 and 1906, Barnet produced at least fourteen musical entertainments which could be classed as extravaganzas. There appears to be no other American playwright during that particular period who was more prolific.

For the purposes of this study, Nicolette will not be examined, as the book which Barnet wrote was not printed, though the lyrics of the vocal score, which Hamlin wrote, were published. Barnet was involved in the production of the opera, however, and his role in the production and the critical reaction to the show will be briefly examined before

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[1]Bangor Commercial, 6 December 1901.

discussing the 1902 Cadet show, The Cap of Fortune and the Show Girl.

According to an article about Nicolette which previewed the show, Barnet had met Charles Hamlin a year before. Hamlin

> . . . had been a dramatic and musical critic for ten years on leading New York City newspapers, and . . . is best known in New England as the biographer of Hannibal Hamlin. He is a graduate of Harvard, and was chorister of the class of '84. He studied under Professor Paine and was graduated with honors in music. Mr. Barnet heard his music, and at once agreed to write "Nicolette" with him.[2]

After writing the book, Barnet became involved with setting up the production of the opera in Bangor, and with superintending a show of Gibson pictures there in early December 1901. His commitment to the cultural life of Bangor made him a favorite there, and certainly added to the popularity of Nicolette. Barnet brought in D. K. Stevens, a frequent collaborator on songs for Barnet's shows, to be the musical director of Nicolette.

Bangor newspapers covered the progress of Nicolette with frequent articles, befitting what one paper called "one of the most notable social and musical events of the present season here in Bangor."[3]

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[2]Boston Transcript, 27 March 1902.

[3]Bangor Commercial, 2 April 1902.

> . . . The opera is entitled "Nicolette," and is founded upon the old German legend of Nicolette and Aucassin. The story is what might be expected from the pen of Robert A. Barnet, and the music, though light, is wonderfully catchy and tuneful. There can be very little doubt but the presentation will be the principal musical of the present season.
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> Mr. Barnet will come to Bangor about the middle of February, when the work of rehearsing will at once begin. The opera is to be sung at the Opera House sometime in the month of April.[4]

Hamlin apparently had to finish details on the music for the opera, and Barnet had to rehearse and open the Cadet show, so the uncertainty about the opening date for Nicolette is justifiable.

When the rehearsals for Nicolette began, the Bangor press was there, and an interesting account of the first rehearsal appears in a newspaper article pasted into one of the Barnet scrapbooks. Unfortunately, neither the paper nor the date are given by the usually meticulous Barnet. The article is important, though, for the insight which it gives into his directing technique:

> . . . He assembles the entire company into two semi concentric circles and gives each one a number. Names are temporarily forgotten; each one in the chair is now known by a number. Mr. Barnet enters the numbers in his book of charts. He has worked out diagrams, with a little circle representing all members of the company in their proper places; he has written in the musical score every bit of business for the singer, for the aid of stage manager Dennet. Nothing is left to chance.
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> . . . "Opening chorus," calls Mr. Barnet, and a snappy number is sung . . . Every note means something,

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[4]Bangor News, 7 December 1901.

> a gesture, a look, a move, a pose for every member of the chorus. Mr. Barnet eloquently explains what he wants. He gestures, poses, and sings; and now he does a graceful dance. The chorus is completely under the spell of his magnetic personality and translates his ideas into action with an intelligence that evidently pleases him. But he says nothing; it would not do to praise actors now. He is cautious and conservative. He has the chorus do it over and over again until a smiling nod indicates his satisfaction. . . .
> . . . Mr. Barnet is here, there and everywhere. He seems to size up the actors at a glance, though this is the first time he has seen them play. He draws out their own conceptions of their roles and puts on nice finishing touches. He reads the lines over and by emphasizing other words, reveals a new meaning. He criticizes in such a genial way, and conveys his ideas in such a magnetic manner that there is no possibility of giving offense.[5]

Given his considerable experience to this date, Barnet was probably an exciting and inspiring director. He had been an actor, and possibly had quite a theatrical flair to his direction, as the above article suggests when describing how Barnet sang and danced. The article suggests that Barnet gave his actors their line readings. Working with amateurs, Barnet had probably grown accustomed to their needs, and had developed his technique accordingly.

Barnet's participation in the writing and directing of Nicolette also attracted attention in the Boston press, which described his involvement in Bangor:

> Robert A. Barnet has reached an interesting point in his career as playwright, stage manager and producer

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[5]Unidentified newspaper, Barnet Scrapbooks, Property of Mrs. Virginia Killie, New York City.

> in his new romantic comic opera, "Nicolette." He has struck out in the field of historical romance, and in his dramatic and musical treatment of this theme has returned to the style of those past masters of opera comique, Lecocq and Audran, re-enforced by modern stage business and methods. His subject was taken from the exquisite French legend of the twelfth century, Aucassin and Nicolette, and his purpose was to write an operetta with a strong, well-defined plot, a glowing love story, quaint comedy with characters true to life as stage exigencies would permit, and with music of the simple, direct and tuneful character of "Girofle-Girofla" and "The Mascot."
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> Mr. Barnet has been a close observer of the stage for many years and the writing of "Nicolette" means that he expects to find public taste ripe for this kind of light opera. There is a fashion in dramas as there is in bonnets, and it is the successful librettist who can detect the approaching change in the public taste for things dramatic and musical. Some critics hold that the art of comic-opera writing has been lost since Lecocq laid down his pen and Offenbach and Audran died. But there are others who hold that comic opera is after all going through a ferment in our country and that the precipitate, so to speak, will soon arrive. Some of our composers are too ambitious; they want to write grand opera.[6]

This article is of interest because it seems to predict the popularity of Viennese Operetta which began in America only five years or so after Nicolette. If Barnet was as prescient as suggested above, he still did not change his style of writing for his own shows. By 1907, when Viennese Operetta had become popular in the United States, Barnet's active career as a playwright and lyricist was over.

Nicolette opened on 3 April 1902, at the Opera House in Bangor, Maine. The audience was large, and, according to

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[6]Boston Transcript, 27 March 1902.

Bangor newspapers, the entire run of the show was well attended. The notices were glowing, due in part to the amateur nature of the production. Even Boston papers made mention of the show, adding a few interesting details:

> . . . The performance was by a company of amateurs, chief among whom [was] . . . Frank A. Owen, manager of the Opera House and for years an amateur actor of much prominence.
> . . . The production was for the benefit of the Auditorium, Bangor's festival hall.[7]

Once again Barnet was involved in an amateur theatrical venture from which the profits went to a civic institution. It is nowhere mentioned whether he received a fee for his services or royalties from his book. There is no further information on Nicolette, which ran on a mostly weekend schedule through April 1902, and then presumably retired from the stage.

The Cap of Fortune and the Show Girl was another Barnet show with many collaborators. The music was composed by Harry L. Heartz and Edward W. Corliss, with whom Barnet had already collaborated. Lyrical assistance was provided by D. K. Stevens, who served as musical director on Nicolette. Additional musical numbers were provided by M. W. Daniels and L. S. Thompson. Thompson had written the music for an earlier Barnet show, Prince Pro Tem, and would collaborate with Barnet again. Mabel Wheeler Daniels, who lived from

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[7]Boston Herald, 4 April 1902.

1878 to 1971, was a Bostonian who wrote a great deal of choral music for women's voices. She had written two light musical works, A Copper Complication (1900, originally presented by Radcliffe College) and The Court of Hearts (1901), both in collaboration with one Rebecca Lane Hooper. That Barnet tapped her to provide songs for The Cap of Fortune and the Show Girl in 1902, probably reflects her growing popularity in Boston musical circles. Barnet probably saw her show at Radcliffe--he had seen works by Thompson and Corliss at Harvard's Hasty Pudding Club--and remembered her when it came time to add additional songs to his show. Barnet evidently kept up with the light music scene in and around Boston, as many of his collaborators were young musicians and writers with limited experience at Harvard, Radcliffe, or with local amateur groups. David Kilburn Stevens, only seven years younger than Barnet, went on to collaborate with him on two later shows, and was himself the author of at least twelve light musical entertainments between 1905 and 1936.

Sometime during the rehearsal period, Barnet decided to call the Cadet version of the show Cap of Fortune, and to reserve The Show Girl for the professional title. This study will do the same. Also during the rehearsal period, offers from professional producers for the rights to The Show Girl were being made to Barnet. An unidentified little clipping from a New York newspaper at the time, which appears

in one of the Barnet scrapbooks, had this to say about Barnet and the professional offers:

> R. A. Barnet, the well-known light opera librettist, was in New York last week for two or three days from his home in Boston. While here he received offers from three managers who wish to have an option on the new Barnet piece called The Show Girl, which the Boston Cadets are to produce at the Tremont Theatre on January 30. Mr. Barnet very sensibly refuses to sell an option to anyone. "I did so once," he said. "That was in the case of Simple Simon. I think it predisposed the managers that purchased it against the piece. At any rate they felt badly that they had it and I felt badly that they didn't care to stage it. I lean to the idea that a writer for the stage who has anything worth disposing of need not mortgage it before the first night."[8]

This article sheds some light on Barnet's self-assurance and on the procedures which Barnet followed in order to sell the professional rights to his shows. Possibly, Barnet made regular trips to New York, both to discuss terms for future shows and to check on productions already in the city. By 1902, his contacts there must have been considerable. Unfortunately, there are very few references to Barnet's visits to New York in any of the scrapbooks. It is very likely that Barnet found himself at home in the world of Broadway theatre, especially as his shows were a frequent part of that world. Something convinced him to move to New York in 1907, probably his contacts and the likelihood of

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[8]Unidentified New York newspaper, Barnet Scrapbooks, Property of Mrs. Virginia Killie, New York City.

of success. The above article also explains what happened to Simple Simon after the popular Cadet production of the show.

In the absence of a libretto for Cap of Fortune, a synopsis of the plot is desirable. The following appeared in a preview article on the show, and gives a good idea of the increasing complexity of Barnet's later extravaganzas:

> The new musical piece which R. A. Barnet has written for the Cadets is on somewhat different lines from anything he has yet done for them. "Cap of Fortune," as the new piece is called, is a mystical musical play, to quote the author's description, and has a touch of the fairy or magical element which will prove diverting. The story concerns Lord Cadwallader Dyce, high commissioner of Cyprus, a collector of antiquities, who tries to show the inhabitants that their ideas of the mystic influences which they say exist in Cyprus are erroneous. The first scene shows an open square in the Isle of Cyprus, looking down on the water. There is a French cafe, a flower market, a kiosk, an English inn, a Japanese teahouse, and other buildings likely to be found in a cosmopolitan place, while on the wall is an ancient shrine dedicated to Psyche, who, tradition says, is to appear at this time. When the act opens there are men clustered about the shrine, which seems to exert a strong effect upon them. The girls are unable to get any attention from them and finally an appeal is made to Lord Dyce to explain to the men that they should pay attention to the girls of the day and not to a dead and gone goddess. Then the men show Dyce a book of traditions, which relates in detail all the legends of the place, and proves that the Isle of Cyprus is the isle of mystery, that Psyche is to reappear in the flesh in June, 1901, that the cap of Fortunatus was lost on the island and is still waiting for someone to find it, and other stories of like effect. The strong belief of the inhabitants in the weird influences which surround the island is boldly ridiculed by Dyce, who is a good-natured, sceptical Englishman, without any touch of the mysticism which has such a strong hold on the people. Soon Lady Betty Pringle, his fiancee; Lady Clarissa,

his sister; Captain E. Ross Armor, and other English friends arrive, just as Dyce has discovered a peculiar cap in a niche in the wall. Lady Betty is disgusted because he pays so much more attention to the cap than to her, and demands that he throw it away, which he does reluctantly, for the moment, not intending to lose it. He tells the newcomers about the legends of the place and tries to get Armor interested, with the result that at last Lady Clarissa makes a bet with Captain Armor that he does not dare worship the goddess. Then a stranded theatrical troupe enters, the Sophocles Dramatic Company, direct from Newark, N. J., under the management of Dionysius Lye. Mr. Lye had an idea that ancient Greek tragedy brought up to date would prove popular in Cyprus, and with that end in view had presented "Oedipus, the King," by Sophocles and Dionysius Lye, only to discover that the playgoers of the place wanted something different. Not being able to pay his bills or his players the latter are obliged to remain in their stage costumes till they can get their everyday clothes out of pawn, so Mr. Garrick Forrest Macready, the leading man, appears in the costume of the Ghost in "Hamlet," and Miss Vivien Epps, the leading lady, is in the stage dress of Ophelia. Then later come on Jhonnie Jhones, the property man of the troupe and his four sisters, debutantes, professionally known as the "Rainbow Sisters," and Miss Cecelia Gay, the society show girl of the company, whose parents are highly connected and whose name is emphasized in the advance notices. With these people ready to do anything for a hearty meal, which they have long wanted, it is easy to see how the English play on the credulity of the natives, how the beautiful Cecelia Gay is transformed into the goddess Psyche, how the susceptible Englishmen fall in love with her, and how the whole island is turned topsy-turvy through the pranks and the tricks of the bogus mystics. But there is one thing that greatly complicates matters, and here the author puts in a true Barnetian touch; the cap of Fortunatus is the real, simon-pure, original cap, that whoever wears can have his wishes fulfilled. Everything else in the play is natural, and the action shows the everyday life in an English garrison town, but the magic cap adds to the commonplaceness of things a bit of unreality that is very diverting, in its effects upon the plot and story. Of course, in the end everything comes out all right, the magic cap falls into the hands of the proper owner, and the

> various love affairs are straightened out to the satisfaction of the lovers.[9]

Barnet called this show a "musical play," but the above description seems to set the stage for an extravaganza. Unknown is how Barnet prepared such a complex plot. It evidently took a lot of work, and Barnet was known as a hard worker. According to his son,

> . . . when he wrote he would isolate himself in his studio. Didn't like to be disturbed. If the door to his studio was closed, he was not to be disturbed.[10]

R. A. Barnet, Jr. added an anecdote to the above about an Irish maid working for the family who was hesitant about disturbing the playwright even when a small fire broke out in his house. He evidently concentrated on his work with intensity, both at home and in his warehouse-office in downtown Boston.

The story of Cap of Fortune included all the elements which Barnet found appropriate to extravaganza: a foreign setting, a chorus of native inhabitants with their particular customs, a host of travelling Englishmen, and an itinerant dramatic company. Just as Queen of the Ballet had its second act at the Carnival of Venice, with characters in carnival costumes throughout, the presence of the Sophocles Dramatic

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[9] Boston Transcript, 4 January 1902.

[10] Interview with Robert A. Barnet, Jr., Southport, Connecticut, 21 March 1980.

Company, with its actors in their costumes throughout, gave infinite possibility to the spectacle of Cap of Fortune.

The vocal score for Cap of Fortune, published under the professional title of The Show Girl, lists nineteen musical numbers divided into two acts. The composer for each song is given, but the lyricist is not, and it is difficult to tell how much of a hand Barnet had in the writing of the lyrics for this show. Nevertheless, the lyrics will be examined for the similarities and differences which they reveal from previous Barnet shows.

The opening number of Cap of Fortune is a choral ensemble featuring three choral groups: the "Officers of Fusileers," the "Maids of Cyprus," and a regular chorus of local citizens. According to the Cadet programme, the Fusileers were four in number and the Maids of Cyprus were five.[11] Two other groups, the Royal yachtsmen and the "Rainbow Sisters," formed mini-choruses of four persons each. By using several smaller groups, instead of the usual sextette, Barnet added to the varied possibilities of the musical arrangements, and his collaborators took advantage of the many groups. "Oh Shrine of Psyche" opens the show:

Men: We wish to have it understood,
Although the heavens fall,
That for the lovely Psyche's hand

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[11]Programme: Cap of Fortune, by Barnet, Heartz, and Corliss, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, Boston, 3 to 8 February 1902, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

We're suitors one and all.
The other girls are desperate.
In fact, they're hopping mad;
But that concerns us not at all
Except to make us glad.
Of course, we ALL can't marry her,
For that's against the law.
We may resort to lottery;
Each take a single draw;
The lucky one will wed her
And the rest of us will try
To find an easy means of death
And then lie down and die!

Girls: Although we appear to be merry and gay
And carelessly dance and sing
We cannot neglect this occasion to say
That it really is no such thing.
Our tenderest feelings are flouted and spurn'd
By these silly hobbledehoys,
By Psyche's allurements their heads have been ruined,
You most unaccountable boys!
Oh shrine of Psyche, empty now,
Of all save our poor hearts.
The fervor of our daily vows
Is that which love imparts, imparts,
We humbly seek her fav'ring grace
The sunlight of her smile,
The vision of her peerless face,
And one sweet word the while.[12]

In spite of the fact that these lyrics are quite good, it is clear from this opening that the same frivolous tone which has been part of every Barnet show up to this point will be part of this one, too.

The second musical number of Cap of Fortune is a sailor song, entitled "That's the Way of a Sailor," and sung

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[12]R. A. Barnet, Harry L. Heartz, and Edward W. Corliss, The Show Girl, Vocal Score (Boston: White-Smith Music Publishing Company, 1902), pp. 3-9.

by Betty and Dyce. Barnet was fond of sailor songs and drinking songs, and seemed to do his best to include one or both in each show. This one is very ordinary and is punctuated with frequent repetitions of "Yo ho! Yo ho!" It will not be quoted here, as it could fit into almost any of the Barnet shows. In fact, most of the songs from Cap of Fortune seem to have very little to do with the show, and seem included solely as topical ditties or entertaining ballads.

The next song, a quartette made up of Armor, Dyce, Betty, and Clarissa, takes on the subject of relations between men and women. Entitled "Sometimes--Perhaps!" this song is another typical feature of later Barnet extravaganzas in which an increasing number of loving couples pass through different stages of courtship on the way to a happy ending. The refrain to this song, sung by Betty, gives the generally light tone of the number:

A man: a cab: a soft shell crab:
A bottle and a bird;
A down-cast eye: a melting sigh:
A softly whisper'd word.
A rose: a ring: a dainty thing
Of diamonds and of pearls:
A tiff: "YOU GO!"
The ring? Well, no!
Is that your idea of girls?

A girl: a nook: a moon: a look
When curly head falls here.
Again a walk: an arm: a talk
When "Miss" becomes "My dear!"
A train: a sigh: a tear good-bye,
With vows on the endless plan.

New moon: new girl: new nook: new curl
Yes that's our idea of a man.[13]

This is actually a clever take-off on the usual conflict between men and women, and probably involved a rather physical interpretation for the actors. This is another positive development in Barnet's later songs: they required more acting of the person who sang them instead of the recitation of pretty lyrics.

With the introduction of the Sophocles Dramatic Company comes a song by the characters Jhonnie Jhones and the "Rainbow Sisters," entitled "We Are Trying to Support Our Only Mother."

Jhones: I'm a man of propertee upon the stage,
And these are my sisters four!

Sisters: Yes, we are his sisters four!

Jhones: They are most accomplished ladies for their age.
And I wish that I had some more!

Sisters: He wishes he had some more!

Jhones: They are call'd the Rainbow Sisters because
Prismatic is just the word!

Sisters: The word!

Jhones: There's Lightza, Maerie, Suesann, Jaynne
The smoothest that ever occurr'd!

Sisters: We're the smoothest that ever occurred!

Jhones: 'Lightza thought once on a time that she could act,
She said 'twas an easy game!

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[13]Ibid., pp. 17-19.

Sisters: She said 'twas an easy game!

Jhones: She had Bernhardt on the siding, for a fact!
Ellen Terry was but a name!

Sisters: Ellen Terry was but a name!

Jhones: She starred a week as Lady Macbeth,
Contracted a dreadful cold

Sisters: 'ful cold!

Jhones: An unusual frost prevailed that week,
And Lize, not the tickets, was sold![14]

This song continues, discussing the other sisters and adding a refrain which explains that they support their mother by saving their cash. Barnet's evident love of the theatre prompted him to mix theatrical references into many of his plays, the most obvious being an entire company of actors in this show. It is well to remember that both Sarah Bernhardt and Ellen Terry were leading ladies at the time in which Barnet wrote this show.

The Sophocles Dramatic Company seems to continue their monopoly of the stage with two successive numbers. The first, entitled "Invocation to Pie," is just that, and is very short. It is followed by a longer number, "I'm a Simple Author-Manager," in which Dionysius Lye and his company explain how a musical show is put together. The lyrics bear quoting:

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[14]Ibid., pp. 20-23.

Lye & Co.: Oh! Hi! Hi! Hi! Hello! Hello!
Say, aren't you coming up to our show?
A musical play and lots of girls,
Songs and dances and fluffy whirls!

Chorus: Oh! Hi! Hi! Hi! Hello! Hello!
Of course we're coming to see your show!
We love a good play with lots of girls,
Especially in fluffy whirls!

Lye: I'm a simple author manager of a simple music show.
You'd like to know just how it's made

Tutti: I think we'd like to know.

Lye: I first have pretty maidens who in sextette "tell me true"
If more are left at home who'd "tell me" also, too.

Tutti: Is that all they do? Oh! This is very odd and funny!

Lye: Here are the maids worth all your money!

. . . . . .

Lye: A widow then so chic we have
Or else a knowing miss, who's up to fashion's foolish tricks,

Tutti: We don't quite fancy this!

Lye: Her voice is light but fetching,
And she's very, very wise,
From high societee
She always get a rise.

. . . . . .

Lye: No music show is quite complete
Without a rattling march,
About the soldier coming home

Tutti: All buttons, braid and starch

Lye: The chorus sings ta-ra ta-ra!
Or sometimes tum-ti-tum!

While pretty girls keep time
With dainty feet to drum.[15]

It cannot be proven whether Barnet was attempting to be light-hearted or somewhat truthful in the above lyrics, but they certainly reflect the make-up of most of his shows: female sextettes, at least one very conscious representative of "societee," marches, chorus girls, and a lot of "songs and dances and fluffy whirls." It is ironic that Barnet wrote such lyrics about a show, when the lyrics commented so forcefully on his own style of presentation.

Following the above song is a love duet between Cecelia and Armor, entitled "As the Prince Waked the Princess."

Cecelia: I dearly love the breath of flow'rs
The song of summer's breeze,
I love to dream in fragrant bow'rs
And roam beneath the trees.

Armor: But how may you these joys possess
While magic spells enfold?

Cecelia: It ne'er can be, dear sir,
Unless you thaw me out, I'm cold!

Armor: She's cold! She's cold! Poor thing,
she's cold!
As the Prince wak'd the Princess with
passionate kiss
I fly to your arms, Ah, heav'nly bliss!
If you promise to pay your preserver a
kiss,
I'll thaw you out if cold![16]

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[15]Ibid., pp. 27-36.

[16]Ibid., pp. 37-40.

The song continues, but further quotation is unnecessary as the tone does not change. In flip-flopping between good and bad love songs, Barnet has created more of the latter, and the above is yet another example. Many of the love songs in the later extravaganzas were tinged with elements of the children's shows. The above is a perfect example, containing a prince and a princess, and "magic spells."

The next song is a quartette entitled "The Family Ghost," which is purely for entertainment. After this comes a very simple love ballad, "Psyche," sung by Armor:

> When the sun is touching all the eastern sky,
> When with gold it paints the distant west,
> Ever in my heart there is the constant cry
> For the one that I love best.
> When the stars are winking
> Blinking up above,
> When the moon is making day of night,
> Ever I am thinking of my only love:
> Psyche is my heart's delight.
> When I wander up and down the mountain side,
> When in valleys dim I take my way,
> There the face of Psyche is my only guide,
> Her's the voice that I obey.
> When I wake her memory abides with me,
> Filling all my life with beauty bright,
> When I sleep my dreams of her will ever be:
> Psyche is my heart's delight.[17]

This is the second love song in the act and the second invocation to Psyche as well. But it is the best of both categories, being devoid of awkward phraseology and Mother Goose references. Though it is a song sung to a goddess, it

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[17]Ibid., pp. 45-47.

is simple and direct. Barnet's solo love songs were usually better than his love duets.

The first act finale is a relatively short affair which mixes new lyrics with a few reprises of first act songs. The new verses are hardly worth noting, as the song, entitled "Champagne and Terrapin, Vision Divine," is largely concerned with the menu for an upcoming party. This is probably a fanciful vision on the part of the Sophocles Dramatic Company, who are hungry and without sufficient means to afford such a banquet as described in the lyrics of the song.

The second act of Cap of Fortune is full of specialty numbers, with such titles as: "Where Jasmine Flow'rs Are Twining," "Reggie's Family Tree," "Lover's Lane," "In Gay Japan," "Katrina," and many more. Once again, if one reads only the lyrics from the vocal score, one not only loses the plot of the show, but begins to wonder whether or not the author did so as well. A distinguishing mark of Barnet's later extravaganzas is that the second act falls victim to musical numbers akin to specialties, having no bearing on the plot of the show at all. While the earlier shows of Barnet were able to incorporate specialty numbers--usually of a variety or vaudeville nature--and still proceed with the plot, the later extravaganzas sacrificed plot, not so much for specialty as for spectacle. To that end, there is not one song from the second act of Cap of Fortune which

bears quoting. They are all topical songs, marches, waltzes, and choral pieces which bear no relation to the show, save that its characters are performing them. In the next chapter, the availability of a libretto will allow a close examination of the second act of a Barnet extravaganza in order to see what happens to the plot. In the case of Cap of Fortune, the discussion of the vocal score will end here instead of quoting pages of lyrics which read like so many popular songs strung together in an artificially organized manner.

Cap of Fortune received an enormous amount of rehearsal publicity. Every major Boston newspaper sent its drama critic to cover a rehearsal, and their articles appeared--with synopses and quotes from the book and lyrics--accompanied by drawings of the Cadets and occasionally of Barnet directing rehearsals. Predictions were made that Cap of Fortune would become the most spectacular Cadet show to date, and break all previous records for net receipts. An afternoon dress rehearsal was held at the Tremont Theatre, just before the show opened, to which friends, family, and special guests of the Cadets were invited. This appears to have been a new and very successful idea. It meant, of course, that all regular performances would be attended by paying customers.

Cap of Fortune opened on 3 February 1902, at the Tremont Theatre. The show was a big hit, and Boston drama critics flooded their newspapers with photographs, social comments, and overwhelming rave reviews of the show.

> Cadet week--a notable period in the theatrical and social season--opened most auspiciously at the Tremont Theatre last evening, and the new play of the 1st corps--"Cap of Fortune"--was successfully presented.
>
> It was an artistic, a social and a financial triumph, in which author, actors and audience shared. Although the public has come to look forward with eagerness to the almost annual production of these clever Cadet plays, and has accorded them phenomenal patronage, this last effort may fairly be said to be in every respect a fitting climax to the list of nine comedies which the corps has given during the past eleven years. In each case the patrons have been amused and well entertained, each show seeming to be better staged and to demand more of the company than did its predecessors, and the wonder has been as to what the Cadets would do next. And each year the craze to see the latest effort has grown until the theatre has been crowded to suffocation night after night, and the Cadet armory fund has received a generous addition, and in like proportion has grown the determination of the corps to strengthen the entertainment and better please its friends. The audience of last evening, however, appeared to be, if such a thing was possible, larger than ever before.[18]

Note the social phenomenon which the Cadet shows, according to this journalist, had become. Note also the enthusiasm with which theatre-goers anticipated future Cadet shows. This fact has some bearing on the types of shows which Barnet wrote, and probably explains the increasing complexity and spectacle of these later extravaganzas.

> . . . "Cap of Fortune" . . . is a "thing of beauty and a joy"--for a few hours. It is in two acts; each filled with rollicking comedy, catchy lyrics and dainty costumes, and the plot moves with a swish and a frou-frou, and the display of some lingerie--for how could men ape the daintier sex without a

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[18] Boston Herald, 4 February 1902.

> touch of delightsome awkwardness?
>
> Naturally enough, R. A. Barnet's book is filled with local hits, and the topical songs have a Bostonesque flavor--although lacking the chilly touch of the prevailing east wind. The music by H. L. Heartz and E. W. Corliss is as rollicking and jolly as the book . . .[19]

This critic felt that local hits were a natural part of a Barnet show, as was a "Bostonesque flavor." These elements of Barnet's shows tended to detract from their professional popularity, but Barnet was not merely a local talent. He was a creator of musical entertainments which had toured the country and found success in New York. Still, the content of his shows no doubt was affected by the demands which the Cadets and their followers made upon him.

> . . . "Cap of Fortune" is entitled to be called one of Barnet's best, . . . there is not a dull or a stupid moment possible while the curtain is up.
>
> Everybody laughed hilariously at the comedy element and thoroughly enjoyed the more than a score of musical numbers, nearly every one of which possesses the melodious jingle so prized in popular musical plays.
>
> Mr. Barnet is to be credited with a new departure, in some ways, this year, for, while hitherto the construction of his plays has been such as to emphasize the individual work of a few--generally two or three members of the cast--this year, there is a much more impartial distribution of the opportunities to capture public attention and favor, much of the very best work being accomplished by teams of four or more, who work with admirable precision and harmony, and, as a natural result, reveal considerable talent, which, under the system followed in the past, would have no chance to show itself.[20]

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[19] Boston Journal, 4 February 1902.

[20] Boston Globe, 4 February 1902.

Here, a critic was finally taking serious note of structural experimentation which Barnet had been trying for several years. The small groups of actors--small choruses--provided the lyricist with a greater number of possible combinations for the rendering of his songs.

Critics also described individual costumes, and noted that this show had more of a professional air to it than its predecessors. Credit this to Barnet's direction and artistic design. The whole Cadet production had become incredibly complex. The Cadet programme for Cap of Fortune listed a scene designer, a creator of electrical effects, a creator of mechanical effects, two property people, a company which supplied gowns and hats, another which supplied "men's costumes and appointments," another which supplied "character dresses," and a person in charge of wigs and makeups.[21]

The professional production of Cap of Fortune followed the amateur production closely. Evidently, the publicity about interest in the show on the part of New York producers was true. Barnet sold the rights to his long-time producer and fellow Bostonian, Edward E. Rice, who opened Cap of Fortune under its professional title, The Show Girl, barely six weeks after the Cadet version had closed. On 22 March 1902, The Show Girl opened at Boston's Park Theatre, and was a critical and popular success. Barnet had evidently revised

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[21]Programme: Cap of Fortune, Cadet Theatricals, p. 47.

the show, removing some of the local allusions. He probably didn't change very much, and that which he did change might have been by collaboration with Rice. The two had worked together in like manner before. Remember that Barnet was frequently in Bangor, Maine, at this time, conducting rehearsals for Nicolette. Rice composed entr'acte music for the show which, according to the programme from the Park Theatre, he personally conducted.[22]

Boston drama critics spent most of their columns describing and praising the female performers, while giving over-all good marks to the revised show:

> . . . Among Mr. Barnet's former professional productions none has had a more conspicuous initial success, and there seems to be no reason why manager Rice should not look forward to an immensely popular and financially successful run for the piece.
>
> The women of the cast and of the chorus are in the main simply stunners. It is hard to recall when such a conspicuous aggregation of female beauty has been seen on a local stage.[23]

> . . . Mr. Barnet's book was . . . bright and frequently witty, . . . [and] the music was above the average of such productions . . .
>
> The scenery and properties are the same as used in the Cadet theatricals, but the costuming is entirely new and of the most elaborate and beautiful character.[24]

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[22]Programme: The Show Girl, by Barnet, Heartz, and Corliss, Park Theatre, Boston, Week of 17 March 1902, Barnet Scrapbook in the possession of Mrs. Virginia Killie, New York City.

[23]Boston Sunday Globe, 23 March 1902.

[24]Boston Sunday Herald, 23 March 1902.

Another sign which points to the increasing sophistication of the Cadet shows is the fact that, according to the above critic, many technical elements from the Cadet show were carried over to the professional stage. The gap between amateur and professional was lessening. Indeed, this was further born out by the cast list of the Rice production of The Show Girl at the Park Theatre. Three members of the Cadet production appeared on the professional stage: W. B. C. Fox, who had played the part of Dionysius Lye for the Cadets, was called on to perform the same role at the Park "owing to the disposition of Mr. Charles Wayne";[25] Walter S. Hawkins played Armor in both productions; and a youthful Alonzo Price played the role of Katrina, one of the Maids of Cyprus, in both shows. Price, the son of a Boston actor, stayed with the show when it moved to New York.

It is uncertain how long The Show Girl ran in Boston, but it made its way to New York via a short road trip through the east.[26] Rice's production opened at Wallack's Theatre in New York on 5 May 1902, and ran for sixty-four performances.[27] The New York critics, once more, were less than kind in their judgment of the show:

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[25]Boston Traveller, 24 March 1902.

[26]Dramatic Mirror, 10 May 1902.

[27]Burns Mantle and Garrison P. Sherwood, eds., The Best Plays of 1899-1909 (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1944), p. 409.

. . . The "Cap of Fortune" was once more placed on the busy head of Mr. Edward "Evangeline" Rice at Wallack's Theatre last night by "The Show Girl," Mr. R. A. Barnet's latest musical extravaganza. This musical mixture is just what the play bills say it is--"a jolly bit of Tomfoolery" that will keep you merry for a couple of hours. The dialogue is snappy and at times epigrammic, the action is rapid and the music is sweet and catchy.
. . . The dialogue should be "toned up" as it savors of cheap vaudeville.[28]

. . . Described on the programme as "just a bit of "tomfoolery," the new musical entertainment put forward at Wallack's last night under the comprehensive title, "The Show Girl; or, the Cap of Fortune," is obviously not the sort to invite serious comment.

Judged by the standards of the class into which it seems to fit most naturally--continuous vaudeville--it proved to be neither the best nor worst of its kind.

Any one who is at all familiar with productions of this nature must long since have ceased to expect any great amount of originality to be developed, and the presence of really new features either in comic situations, verbal quips, or musical numbers would occasion extreme surprise.

There was no sensation of that kind last night, unless one may be justified in citing the incident of a man who appeared in the guise of a cat and gave an exceedingly clever imitation of feline playfulness. And that this theatre was for many years identified with what was best in American dramatic art, the necessity for going to such lengths to discover especial achievement must seem--we had almost said--a catastrophe, but that suggests a plagiarism of the peculiar brand of humor in which "The Show Girl" abounds.[29]

It is difficult to be entirely truthful when writing about the class of performance styled "musical comedy," yet truth the readers of this magazine must be told at any cost. Duty, then, compels the frank statement that a poorer and more meaningless spectacle than "The Show Girl" recently presented by Edward E. Rice

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[28] New York Herald, 6 May 1902.

[29] New York Times, 6 May 1902.

> at Wallack's, has seldom been seen on the boards of a first-class New York theatre. True, one does not expect much in productions of this kind, but one does look for a reasonable amount of entertainment, especially from Mr. Rice, whose reputation rests on his dexterity, in the past, in providing good comedians, pleasing stage pictures and bevies of comely ballet girls. One looks in vain for anything of the kind in "The Show Girl."[30]

Some critics felt that the spectacle was the only redeeming element in the show.

The New York run of sixty-four performances was modestly successful in spite of poor reviews, and Rice immediately took The Show Girl on the road, where he had had great success with previous Barnet shows. By November 1902, the show had returned to Boston, where it played at the Colonial Theatre. The following notice indicates that revisions were still going on:

> . . . "The Show Girl" has changed somewhat since the Cadets brought it out, additions to the book and special scenes having been furnished by Louis DeLange. A good many of the original numbers have been dropped and in their places have been interpolated others which are not always an improvement.[31]

Louis DeLange was evidently someome brought in by Rice to help revise the show, as his name does not appear again in connection with a Barnet show.

By early December 1902, The Show Girl was playing at

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[30]The Theatre, 2 (June 1902): 8.

[31]Boston Transcript, 4 November 1902.

Boston's Columbia Theatre. It reappeared in Boston in early April 1903, at the Boston Theatre. Rice probably took the show on the road between these engagements, and used Boston as a home base, as he had done with 1492. The last mention of Rice's production of The Show Girl is in March 1904, when it played at Boston's Majestic Theatre with an entirely new cast. Rice may have taken the show on a national tour in 1903, rather than an eastern or New England tour. In the Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library there is a programme from a December 1906 production of The Show Girl from Greene's Opera House in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.[32] This production does not seem to have been by E. E. Rice, though it may indicate that the play had been toured enough so that it had become popular, and therefore ripe for revival. There is no further mention of the play after 1906.

Assuming that Rice's production of The Show Girl played from 1902 until 1904, Barnet must have received good royalties from the play. The Cadets surely profited from their production of Cap of Fortune, and evidently decided not to produce a show in 1903. The exigencies of producing Cap of Fortune may have persuaded the dramatic committee of the Cadets to rest for a year. Barnet, however, was at the height of his active career, and apparently wasn't ready to

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[32]Programme: The Show Girl, by Barnet, Heartz, and Corliss, Greene's Opera House, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, 4 December 1906, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

take a break in his busy work schedule. When the Cadets decided not to produce, he immediately returned to the Bank Officers' Association for his 1903 show.

CHAPTER XIV

BARON HUMBUG

Baron Humbug, a "musical comedy" based on a Hungarian story, was the show produced by the Bank Officers' Association in 1903. Barnet wrote the book and collaborated on the lyrics with D. K. Stevens. The music was composed by Lewis S. Thompson, who had written the music for Prince Pro Tem, with additional musical numbers by M. W. Daniels, B. C. Henry, E. W. Corliss, and Stevens. The orchestration was by George L. Tracy, who also served the production as musical director.

Stevens, Daniels, Corliss, Tracy, and several others were part of the Barnet team who had helped create the last several Cadet and Bank Officers' shows. They had been working together, in various combinations, for a number of years, as Barnet increasingly concentrated his efforts on writing the book and then supervising the entire production of the shows. It was Barnet's style which provided the unity for this artistic team, and it must be assumed that, as he was the most famous and most prolific member of the group, he acted as principal co-ordinator for the collaborations. Later newspaper articles will comment on the methods which this group actually used in preparing a show, with Barnet writing the book, adding the lyrics in collaboration with Stevens,

and then sending for composers. It would be interesting to know what sort of communication took place among these artists, and what the exact structure of the collaboration was. The only certainty is that the results of their collective labor were shows of similar tone and content.

Baron Humbug was the fifth Barnet play to follow the Mother Goose shows, and the last of the series which will hereafter be referred to as "the extravaganza cycle." These shows, Queen of the Ballet, Miladi and the Musketeer, Miss Simplicity, and Cap of Fortune, have been discussed in previous chapters. Their structural similarities have been noted in passing. Baron Humbug completes this extravaganza cycle, and in many ways sums up the style that Barnet and his collaborative team had developed. At this time, we will discuss not only Baron Humbug, but the extravaganza cycle in general, noting the similarities which bind these shows together as a specific period in Barnet's career as playwright/lyricist.

In the extravaganza cycle, the unity of the Mother Goose plays had been abandoned for spectacle. The number of small choruses had multiplied and the amount of dancing had increased. All of the plays were set in imaginary foreign locations, with appropriate character names and occasional manipulation of language and dialect. Contrived devices were built into the plots of each to provide for "show-within-a-show" spectacle--the Carnival of Venice, the coronation of

Blossoms, the Sophocles Dramatic Company--as costuming and pageantry became important elements of each play in this cycle. Certain types of musical numbers became standard: military airs and marches, Irish ballads, topical songs about the "new woman," and songs about "modern" relationships between husband and wife or lovers. In addition, curtain-raisers and act finales became increasingly longer and more complex, involving almost everyone in the show. Finales were no longer mere reprises of songs which went before, but were usually new musical numbers. The military played an important part in most of the shows in this cycle, and strong elements of the Mother Goose shows were present in each play. The number of musical offerings increased.

Many changes brought about by the extravaganza cycle negated the development in Barnet's style through his early burlesques. Character songs, which Barnet had borrowed to great advantage from W. S. Gilbert, declined in the extravaganza cycle, as choral numbers took precedence. Spectacle took the place of plot in the extravaganzas. Such plot as was thinly pieced together to serve as an excuse for massive amounts of singing and dancing was usually so complex and full of extraneous action and characters that it seemed to be abandoned at various times in order to squeeze in more musical numbers. The songs themselves had less and less to do with the characters or action of the piece, and were usually motivated by contrived suggestions which interrupted

the dialogue. There was no attempt to integrate music with plot in the extravaganza cycle, as Barnet had tried to do in some of his earlier works (Injured Innocents and Prince Pro Tem) and in the Mother Goose shows. In fact, the lyrics to most of the songs from the shows of the extravaganza cycle read more like a collection of unrelated popular tunes than musical numbers belonging to the same show. Most songs in the extravaganza cycle could have served interchangeably from show to show with little noticeable incongruity.

Baron Humbug takes all of the aforementioned elements of the extravaganza cycle to their extreme. Fortunately, it will be possible to examine these different elements in detail because of the availability of a libretto. Barnet had it printed privately, and a copy is on file with the Music Division of the Library of Congress. The ensuing discussion will be based on the libretto, which includes the lyrics to all of the songs.

The first thing one notices in examining the libretto for Baron Humbug is its length. This show appears to be longer than any of the previous Barnet shows, and to contain more musical numbers. The synopsis of musical numbers has twenty entries, but some are double listed. They are of all types: opening choruses, waltzes, trios, duets, marches, and two finales. Most of the songs involve more than two people. The cast list is given in its entirety, and includes a pronunciation guide for the Hungarian names. The principal

characters are: Slipik Guszti (Baron Humbug), Hajnoczy Odon (the rightful Baron), General Dessewffy, Princess Dazikoff, and Countess Sylvia. The Princess has twelve "International Step-Daughters" divided into three Dazikoff houses, from Chicago, Yokohama, and St. Petersburg. There are also two Roumanian Gypsies and a quartette of Magyar girls, in addition to a Gypsy band, Hussars, and Circus performers. Not only has Barnet set this show in Hungary, but he seems to have peopled it with every possible type of personage which that country might offer, and then some. With the presence of these diverse groups of characters, the stage of Baron Humbug is set for extraordinary complexity of action and fantastic opportunities for spectacle. What influenced him to pick a Hungarian story and setting, and was it his imagination alone which suggested such complexity of plot? Barnet filled many pages of his scrapbooks with notes from newspapers and magazines, some of which detailed interesting stories about events in other parts of the world. Perhaps Barnet was ahead of his time, for it wasn't until 1907 that The Merry Widow popularized Viennese Operetta in America, and gave Americans a peek into the grand society of turn-of-the-century Austro-Hungary. Perhaps Barnet was merely seeking another fantastic setting--after Foggia, Sauterelle, the Land of the Giant, and other such fantastic locations--for dances and songs and colorful costumes.

The stage scene for the opening of Baron Humbug is

described in the libretto:

> Scene--The Square at Esztergom. Back cloth showing view of the Danube River and the opposite shore. Stage Left, an inn. Stage Right, barracks. Gypsy girls discovered, dancing; soldiers, grouped and lounging about the barracks' door, are admiring them; The native girls trying to allure the soldiers from the gypsies.
> (Dancing and Vocal Ensemble.)[1]

This opening scene gives notice that the play will be rich in color and pageantry. Soldiers and Gypsies will serve as important elements in choral spectacle and costume variety, and will motivate military marches and czardas respectively. The opening chorus is entitled "Lads Beware the Gypsy's Share," and is full of dancing:

> Have a care, young lads;
> The gypsy girl will throw your hearts away;
> She will love you only for a summer's day.
> (4 bars dance.)
> Here are pretty maidens, all with tender song
> of love's young dream;
> Merry lads attend whenever love's the theme!
> (4 bars dance.)
> Fast let the fiddles play;
> We'll dance as well as they!
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Dance then, while yet we may,
> Driving young love away!
> (8 bars dance.)
> Maidens whisp'ring love's young dream,
> And gay lads listen when love's the theme
> Gypsies throw your heart's away
> And love you but one short summer's day.

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[1]Robert A. Barnet, Baron Humbug (Boston: By the Author, 1904), p. 4.

Fast let the fiddles play;
We'll dance as well as they!
(5 bars dance.)
Gypsies are never true;
Your idle fancy you'll surely rue.
Gypsies are never true;
Your fancy you will rue!
(16 bars dance to a picture finish.)[2]

This is an extraordinarily active opening number, and the accompanying music was very likely Hungarian in flavor, being well-suited to Gypsy dancing.

The plot of Baron Humbug begins abruptly with the announcement that the heir to the Munkacs estate, Baron Munkacs, is missing. Various characters are introduced with conversation intended to remind one that the plot of this play is most incidental to the fun:

Kisfaludy: . . . You're sure you don't know a chap calling himself Jach?

Klimpa: The idea! We know no one south of Tenth Street!

. . . . . .

Klimpa: . . . And Telka! Haven't seen you since Newport. What are you doing here?[3]

Barnet was as wedded to topical conversation and shallow word play in this show as he was in any of his earlier efforts.

The first song of Baron Humbug after the opening involves several principals and most of the chorus. Entitled

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[2]Ibid., p. 4.

[3]Ibid., p. 5.

"Quack! Said the Duck," it is a silly song about a Magyr girl named Jemima and her difficulties in love. Many of the lyrics are "Quack, quack," and the song itself is little more than a brightly entertaining topical love song. What is interesting about it is the segue which Barnet uses to get into a song which has nothing to do with the plot of Baron Humbug:

> Klimpa: The Countess Sylvia! (Throwing a kiss in the air.) I am her devoted! Countess Sylvia is a duck!
>
> Lujza: You gypsy scamp. How dare you call our Countess a duck!
>
> Klimpa: Well, ducks are "kinder" cozy and "sorter" wise.
>
> Zoe: Go on, Klimpa! Tell them about Jemima and the duck.[4]

Notice that Barnet forces into the plot a key word or phrase which then becomes the subject of a song. Some Boston critics felt that this represented integration between dialogue and music, but this is clearly not the case. Barnet merely forced a song into the show with a contrived bit of dialogue having nothing to do with the show. Once the song was over, he picked up the action as if it hadn't been interrupted at all. After the chorus exits, dancing, Janos Kovacs enters and immediately says:

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[4]Ibid.

> So the old estates of Munkacs go begging for an owner, and the rich and noble name of Munkacs is lightly held by a vagabond. Ho, ho! How funny![5]

This is Barnet's structural technique for the extravaganzas: the songs, for the most part, merely interrupted the action of the piece and didn't further it along.

Another contrived element in Barnet's extravaganzas was the frequent improbable use of costume. In Queen of the Ballet, the entire second act took place at the Carnival of Venice, so that all of the performers could be in costume throughout the act. In Cap of Fortune, the Sophocles Dramatic Society had pawned their regular clothes, and were forced to wear their thespian costumes all the time. In Baron Humbug, Countess Sylvia enters dressed as a Roumanian gypsy. Her reason:

> You see, I haven't outgrown my childish passion to "dress up." I used to fool lots of people THEN; I do SOME now. I suppose I ought to be proper and dignified, befitting my birth and station, but I am not like other girls.[6]

This speech prompts the next song, predictably entitled "Not Like Other Girls."

Following another choral piece, "Dear Waters of the Danube Blue," a typical element of the Barnet extravaganza in which the chorus (or sometimes a principal) praises their

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[5]Ibid., p. 7.

[6]Ibid., p. 8.

native land, the hero of Baron Humbug enters. He is Hajnoczy Munkacs Odon (henceforth Odon), the missing heir to the Munkacs Barony, who,

> . . . in ignorance of his title and wealth, has led a life of adventure, and joins the gypsy band, under the name of Jach, to conceal himself from what he believes to be the fatal consequence of a duel.[7]

Odon agrees to become the leader of the Gypsy band, even though he "can't play." Barnet's humor again. Sylvia wanders on stage, and Odon falls in love with her, believing her to be a Roumanian girl because of her dress. Odon is dressed as a Gypsy vagabond. Mistaken identity is another important element in the Barnet extravaganzas. The ensuing love duet between Odon and Sylvia, "Land of the Whisp'ring Sea," reminds one of a previous and similar love duet from Miladi and the Musketeer, "O'er the Sea of Dreamland Sky." Barnet and his collaborators were fond of painting romantic pictures of idyllic lands of love. This one is no different:

Odon:

Far from the busy strife,
Where skies are bluest,
Where love is all of life,
Where hearts are truest;
Pray let me take you there,
Where joy is free,
Land where the lovers meet,
Their constant vows repeat,
Land of the Whisp'ring Sea!

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[7]Boston Transcript, 10 January 1903.

Syl.: Vision enchanting.
All others supplanting!
In my dreaming this land I've seen.

Both: There is the fair land,
Yonder you'll find the rare land;
Days shall be golden, nights of silver be;
Music to wake you,
Care shall at last forsake you;
There lies the haven, Land of the Whisp'ring Sea![8]

There is another verse to this song before Sylvia and Odon take their leave of one another, vowing to meet again.

Another choral number follows, with the Princess Dazikoff and her twelve step-daughters, accompanied by the soldiers, singing "Willing to Try." This topical song, directly following another musical number, serves to introduce other characters onto the stage. This song-stacking technique enabled Barnet and his collaborators to work more musical numbers into a show without worrying about the need to motivate them. In the second acts of the extravaganzas, several songs often followed one another in the manner of a musical revue. Such a structural arrangement precluded the need for real specialties, which had been a characteristic of Barnet's early burlesques.

After the song, Princess Dazikoff introduces her step-daughters to the General and Kovacs with a flurry of typical Barnet word-play. These step-daughters will become involved in one of the many sub-plots of Baron Humbug, though

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[8]R. A. Barnet, Baron Humbug, pp. 13, 14.

their real purpose in the show is as a second female chorus. After their exit, they are followed onto the stage by Crabbe's Circus, whose ring-master, Slipik Guszti, introduces his show with a song, "Oh the Circus Is In Town." This song could precede any circus into any town. In the middle of the song, however, Slipik makes a long speech which will immediately be recognized as a Barnet stump speech:

> Ladies and gents, come to-night to the corner of Latchkovits Avenue and Whookootchy Alley to Crabbe's Circus, and hear the plunk of the Hippopotamus, the mournful voice of the Dodo, the croupy moan of the Scaroo or the sleepy wail of the Dewdad as he scratches his back against the Goo-goo tree. (Some one of the clowns or people hands him a toy animal, all white one side, the other side big black spots. He shows white side out first.) Behold a sample of some of our wonders! The asiatic camel, the automobile of the desert, the animal who differs from man in that he can work seven or eight days without drinking, whereas man can only drink the same space of time without working. (Turning animal around.) Then we have the beautifully freckled Polka-Spotticus, the spotted leopard, who swiped all the spots from Spotless Town and made it famous. Leaving the leopard on one of his spots (put animal on floor and some one opposite side hands him a funny toy elephant), you can call on the elephant; Africanus Scorbuticum; self-working, stem-winding, lockstitch, seven-octave, base-burning, non-explosive and automatic. This animal is rock-ballasted and four-tracked, having one leg at each junction, a peculiarity which he retains even in captivity. The ear mark of the elephant is the similarity of his two extremes; when the elephant wakes in the morning he calls in some friend to tell him which end to wear in front during the day; but if the elephant would only shorten his suspenders about six inches and get his trousers pressed he would bag less at the knee. Many TRUE anecdotes are told of the sagacity of the elephant, all of which are LIES, but he is nevertheless the strongest of all known animals with the single exception of the Limburger Cheese. These are but samples. Come and see the originals, and the greatest

> aquatic act in the world. (Enter Lurline and Crabbe.) Lurline, the Water Queen, and her tank. Lurline! (Lurline bows.) The tank! (Crabbe bows.)[9]

Another chorus of the circus song follows this speech, and all of the performers leave the stage, except for Slipik and Lurline. The stump speech was something that Barnet carried with him from minstrelsy to the end of his career. Not present in all of his shows, it does turn up frequently enough to be identifiable. Moreover, it gives him the indelible stamp of someone who was weaned theatrically on minstrelsy and the old burlesque. It helps explain his peculiar sense of humor, rooted in puns and superficial word-play. Barnet also repeated jokes. Many newspaper reviews mention the "old jokes" which came up frequently in Barnet's libretti. The reference is in part to jokes which were old-fashioned and more suited to the era of minstrelsy and burlesque, but also refers to repetition. Note the following lines from a similar stump speech which Barnet had written in 1893, as part of Prince Pro Tem. The entire speech appears in Chapter V.

> Tompkins: . . . Rosy never forgets an enemy and never remembers a friend. She can work for seven or eight days with drinking, whereas I can drink for the same space without working.[10]

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[9]Ibid., pp. 18, 19.

[10]R. A. Barnet, "Prince Pro Tem," Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

The basic joke is the same in Slipik's speech in Baron Humbug, though it has been improved a bit. In spite of the fact that Barnet collected one-liners, stories, and amusing notes from newspapers and periodicals and then pasted them into his scrapbooks for future reference, he evidently repeated the more amusing jokes in his shows. Barnet's brand of humor seemed well-suited for amateur musicals in Boston, but suffered under critical scrutiny on the professional stage in New York.

With the arrival of Slipik, the action of Baron Humbug becomes more complicated. Odon, noticing a poster announcing that a Gypsy named Jach--himself--is wanted for arrest, persuades Slipik, who cannot read, to take on the name Jach. Slipik agrees to do so, and takes over the leadership of the Gypsy band, who force him to swear an oath: that he will kidnap the Baron Munkacs when he is found. All of this contrived plotting is accomplished with a maximum of typical Barnet puns and superficial word-play.

The plot is further complicated when Odon tries to reveal his true identity--though not knowing he has become Baron--to Princess Dazikoff. This leads to a song, "In Bohemia," in which the mores of that land are fully discussed by principals and choruses of men and women. After this song, Sylvia and Odon flirt a bit, before she asks the General to lock up Odon as a vagabond who has insulted her. But Kovacs has a different plan. He has wagered the General that he

could take a vagabond and, dressing him up, pass him off as a nobleman. (Shaw's Pygmalion was not written until 1913.) As he really is the missing nobleman, Barnet quickly sacrifices this irony in the plot. Barnet's shows never seem to contain the subtlety and strength of plot which make for great drama.

Trivial conversation follows, as the step-daughters of Princess Dazikoff encounter Slipik. The result is a song, and the transition into it is particularly unimaginative:

> Olga: (giving Slipik MS.) Oh, Mister Leader, will you please play this for me? I wrote it myself. See the title: "Only that--Nothing More."
>
> Slipik: You wrote nothing more?
>
> Olga: No, sir.
>
> Slipik: And only that?
>
> Olga: Yes, sir. Have your men play it; I'm going to sing it now.[11]

The step-daughters decide to leave, and Slipik and several others are left on stage to sing the song, which is a topical number not worth recording here.

After the song there is more banal dialogue, in the best tradition of Barnet's surface and topical humor:

> Sleuthers: Is your band engaged?
>
> Slipik: For a Dutch wake Tuesday, an Irish stew Thursday; but you can have them Friday.

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[11] R. A. Barnet, Baron Humbug, pp. 26, 27.

Sleuthers: You don't understand--engaged for husbands. I want husbands--for these girls--for each girl.

Slipik: How many?

Sleuthers: Twelve.

Slipik: Twelve for each girl?

Sleuthers: No, one husband for twelve girls.

Slipik: Take the forward car and get off at Salt Lake City.[12]

This exchange, ending with a joking reference to the polygamy of the Mormons, is representative of much of the dialogue in Baron Humbug, and must be added to the profusion of musical numbers to explain why the show was so long.

Slipik is turned in as Jach, and immediately greeted with the title of Baron Munkacs, as the search had not been to arrest him but to find the rightful Baron. As Slipik exits on the arm of the General, Sylvia and Kovacs enter, discussing the fact that Kovacs' new friend, Count Laborde--who is Odon in disguise--looks like the former self-proclaimed vagabond. Sylvia's transition into the song entitled "The Jack-in-the-Box" is as contrived as the song itself:

Sylvia: Kovacs, you're malicious. That vagabond was NOT repulsive. Anyway, your strange Count looks like him, and when he sort of popped out just now from nobody-really-knows-where, like a Jack-in-the-box, I felt like little Jenny Jill.[13]

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[12]Ibid., p. 27.

[13]Ibid., p. 28.

Once again, Barnet has forced a phrase into the dialogue, and has obtained a song from it. The song, about Jack and Jill, is straight out of the Mother Goose shows, and would have fit better in one of them. It has been mentioned that the Mother Goose shows exerted a powerful influence over Barnet, and on the cycle of extravaganzas which followed Simple Simon. It is not surprising, especially given this Jack and Jill number, that Barnet returned to children's extravaganza for his next show.

The first act of Baron Humbug ends with a reprise of "Land of the Whisp'ring Sea," but not before a confrontation between the false Count Laborde and the false Baron Munkacs gives the title of the show:

General:	. . . Baron Munkacs of Budapest, Count Laborde of Paris.
Odon:	(recognizes Slipik) Why I thought you were--
Slipik:	So did I, but I wasn't. I'm Baron Munkacs.
Odon:	You're Baron Humbug! Humbug![14]

Before any more conversation can take place between the two, the Gypsy band run on stage to remind Slipik of his oath to help kidnap the Baron Munkacs when he is proclaimed. This sets up the necessity for Slipik to participate in his own kidnapping, which is strongly suggested as the curtain falls

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[14]Ibid., p. 30.

on act one.

The second act of Baron Humbug is divided into two scenes, and the first scene, set in the gardens of the Chateau Munkacs, opens with yet another obligatory feature of the Barnet extravaganza, the military march. This one, entitled "The Finest Ever is the Military Beau," involves both soldiers and step-daughters--male and female choruses--as well as several of the principals. The repetitive lyrics of the song compare the soldier to other possible beaux--the banker, the poet, the "silly citizen"--with the conclusion incorporated in the title of the song.

The action of the piece resumes with the General courting the Princess Dazikoff, who reveals a passion for jewels, especially her own. Sylvia enters with Odon, arguing that he is the vagabond, and deserves to be arrested. Odon begins to distribute jewels and pins--borrowed, for the occasion, from the Princess Dazikoff and the General by Kovacs--and everyone stands amazed at his generosity. But Odon is too much in love with Sylvia to deceive her, and admits to being the vagabond, whereupon he exits alone.

The plot of Baron Humbug becomes drawn out and quite silly at this point, as Slipik is dragged in and ordered to pay a three million crown ransom for the release of the Baron Munkacs--himself--as ordered by the Gypsy leader Jach--also himself. Barnet created business appropriate to the situation, with Slipik moving upstage to carry on a pantomime conversation

with himself, and then moving downstage to attempt to borrow the money from the Princess Dazikoff. Slipik is informed that he cannot put up any collateral because the Munkacs estate is depleted at the moment; so he is left alone to face the ire of the Gypsy band, who threaten to cut off his ear in a half hour if he doesn't pay the ransom. Exit the Gypsies, enter circus owner Crabbe leading his daughter Lurline, dressed as a bride, awaiting her marriage to Slipik, which he had promised earlier. Slipik, Lurline, and Crabbe sing a trio entitled "A Water-Sprite," which is loosely about Slipik and Lurline and their relationship. A few lines from the song reveal its general tone:

Slipik: Tho' you are young, you were younger once,
With a figure taut and trim,
When your par-i-ents' moist ambition was
For to get you in the swim.
So they put you in a lobster-pot
And around and around you swam;
Your only pets were a soft-shell crab
And a low-neck, frivolous clam![15]

The song ends with a reconciliation between Slipik and Lurline, but not before Odon returns and orders the Gypsy band to seize the "Baron." Confusion reigns as there is a reprise of the first act song, "Only That--Nothing More," and then a song entitled "Sylvia":

Sylvia: I have often strayed in a garden fair,
Idly passing the hour away,

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[15]Ibid., p. 37.

With a "good-day" here and a "good-bye" there,
    All among the flowers gay;
While the blossoms proud and the blossoms vain
    Close their bold attentions press'd,
And these the words of each floral swain:
    "Choose the flower that you love the best!"

"Sylvia, take the lily, daffodil!"
    "Sylvia, take whate'er the garden grows!"
But Sylvia only shook her little head
    As she kiss'd a simple wild red rose.[16]

This song actually has some bearing on the action of Baron Humbug, as earlier in the show, Sylvia did kiss a flower which had been given her by Odon. A dance follows this song.

The second scene of act two begins after the above number, with the setting changed to the "Old Fortress Visegrad." An ensemble number entitled "Climbs a Rose" opens the scene. Odon sings this song, described as an "adaptation of Hungarian Folk Song and Csardas":

On the rugged mountain side,
    Stands the castle, high above;
Where are now the Barons old,
    Brave in war, true in love?
Underneath the crumbling rock,
While upon the ruined wall,
    To guard their rest, climbs a rose.[17]

The Gypsies enter immediately after this song and begin another one, entitled "No One Ever Died of Love":

No one ever died of love, a silly notion!
    Let us sing and gaily shout!

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[16]Ibid., p. 39.

[17]Ibid., p. 40.

Fish there are a-plenty in the world's wide ocean,
Just as good as ever came out.
What's to-morrow? Sing away! sing away!
Care and sorrow fling away! fling away!
Fish there are a-plenty in the world's wide ocean,
Just as good as ever came out.
What's to-morrow? Sing away! sing away!
Care and sorrow fling away! fling away!
Fish there are a-plenty in the world's wide ocean,
Just as good as ever came out.[18]

Whether the above two songs were translations and adaptations of Hungarian folk songs or whether they were Barnet's versions of the same is uncertain. The tone of them seems to indicate that Barnet and his lyrical collaborators may have borrowed the story of the rose and the lesson of the fish in the sea from Hungarian proverbs. Barnet's scrapbooks are also full of stories and sayings from other countries, which might have been adapted in a situation such as this. The above songs are simpler and more meaningful than any other songs in the show, which might indicate that Barnet borrowed the words or the ideas from somewhere.

The business which follows these songs plunges Baron Humbug back into its endless sub-plots. Slipik attempts to escape from the fortress with the help of Lurline and her father Crabbe. Odon and the Gypsy band intercept this escape effort, and Slipik sings a song about a friend of his, entitled "Pull Me Up, O'Reilly, Where It's Dry." This is the ubiquitous Irish ballad which was present in most of the extravaganzas

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[18]Ibid.

and even the earlier plays of Barnet. This song, about a diver named McCann, discusses life under water, and is really a specialty number.

Another interesting element in Barnet's dialogue is how much parts of it resemble vaudeville routines:

> Sleuthers: Baron! I want you, Baron, to keep your eye--
>
> Slipik: My specialty is ears.
>
> Sleuthers: I want you to keep your eye on some jewels. (pointing to cannon.) They are in there, worth three million crowns. They've been stolen from the Princess. I will restore them, and in gratitude she falls on my neck--
>
> Slipik: I'm looking for three million crowns. Let me have the first fall. (Falls on his neck.) Let me have another fall-- Best two out of three.[19]

Slipik interjects absurdities and physical gags in the manner of a later Groucho Marx. For all the peculiarities in Barnet's sense of humor, there are also elements of the vaudeville sketch: irreverent dialogue, heightened sense of physical business, and the abrupt segue into song through contrived means. This is indeed related to the minstrel style of humor present in Barnet's earlier plays.

The result of the above dialogue is a plunge back into the vagaries of the action of Baron Humbug. Slipik is joined by the step-daughters in a topical song about relationships

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[19]Ibid., p. 44.

between husbands and wives, entitled "That's a Clue." Afterwards, Sylvia and Odon enter, very much in love, to sing "Tell Me Why You Love Me," just after Odon's true identity as the Baron Munkacs has been revealed by Kovacs and the General.

Odon: Kisses by the score,
Thousand times or more,
Then he tells his sweetheart that he loves her well;
Burning vows recite
Morning, noon and night
Till there's really nothing left for him to tell!

Sylvia: Still she wants to know!

Odon: Yes, she wants to know!

Sylvia: Still she's not contented, for she really wants to know!

Both: "Tell me why you love me!" thus her constant cry;
"Is it for my face or for the laughter in my eye?"
And of all the reasons, this will surely do;
"Why, sweetheart, it's just because it's you, you, you!"[20]

In this song, Odon and Sylvia sing about their love through others who are in love. This indirect attack is a different type of Barnet love song, and works very well.

The play might end here, but because Barnet has created so many entangling subplots, the action must wind down and everything end happily. First, the matter of the

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[20]Ibid., pp. 47, 48.

Princess Dazikoff's jewels becomes a bout of confusion, as Odon finds them and decides to hide them. Before they can be returned to the Princess, Slipik makes a fool of himself by trying to recover them, and sings a song entitled "Meet Me Dear on Saturday a Little After Two." As the title suggests, this song has no recognizable connection with the plot.

Finally, the show comes to an end, as Odon, now the rightful Baron Munkacs, pardons Slipik for his masquerade, and everyone sings a reprise of "Land of the Whisp'ring Sea."

Baron Humbug represents the Barnet extravaganza cycle at the climax of its excesses. The amount of superfluous dialogue and music is appalling, which may (or may not) explain why the show was not optioned for a professional production.

The Bank Officers' Association production of Baron Humbug opened at the Tremont Theatre on 2 February 1903. It had been given a public dress rehearsal several days earlier for family and friends of the Bank Officers, as well as for local theatre people and professional associates of the authors. Barnet was in charge of the entire production. The show received popular support, and Boston newspapers praised it in stories which were accompanied by photographs and sketches.

> . . . "Baron Humbug" is certainly an ambitious undertaking for any amateur organization. The music is not of the rudimental kind usually given to such organizations, and to say that the playwright cut out a hard task for the young men is stating it mildly, for it is evident that he intended the production should be on a strictly professional basis, and that he had no idea of "writing down" to his performers.
> . . . In working out the plot the playwright has not always stuck closely to his story, but he has never forgotten that scenes and characters are Hungarian, and in that respect "Baron Humbug" well deserves its descriptive title of "a Hungarian musical play."
> . . . The production is what might have been expected from a manager of Mr. Barnet's experience. Scenery and costumes are all that could be desired . . . [21]

Other critics dwelt at length on the audiences who came to see the show, as well as on the lavish costumes, which were described in detail. Most journalists enjoyed the show, though qualifying that enjoyment by noting the amateur nature of the production:

> . . . As usual in amateur productions of this class, vaudeville features of the more refined sort form the most taking attractions, and they are as a rule performed so well as to receive repeated encores.
> There is a number of topical songs, several grotesque dances and several more serious features in the shape of ballet numbers and semimilitary marches and maneuvers by the chorus, all of which go with the requisite ginger and precision.[22]

Many of the drama critics from the Boston press were unwilling to give lavish praise to the play. The above reviews seem guarded in their favorable notices, but others were more

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[21] Boston Transcript, 3 February 1903.

[22] Boston Globe, 3 February 1903.

direct:

> . . . The story, laid in a nameless Hungarian hamlet, is very thin. The score is neither rich nor original, but it is replete with snap and melody. Some of the lyrics are sprightly and all are euphonious. The lines are rather dull, a fault soon remedied by a clever cast.[23]

Apparently Barnet was skilled in mounting his shows, regardless of how weak they were.

Perhaps the Boston theatre critics were beginning to tire of Barnet's extravaganzas. The reviews for Baron Humbug were favorable, but not enthusiastic, suggesting that the formula which Barnet had built up to this point was becoming too obvious. Possibly Baron Humbug foreshadowed the end of Barnet's active career as a playwright. The play itself, and the critical response to it, seem to indicate that Barnet had to rethink his approach. Barnet may have recognized these signs himself because in 1904 he returned to the Cadets with a children's extravaganza.

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[23] Boston Daily Advertiser, 3 February 1903.

CHAPTER XV

CINDERELLA AND THE PRINCE

Robert A. Barnet's tenth play for the Cadets was Cinderella and the Prince; or, The Castle of Heart's Desire (1904). Written in three acts of five scenes and described as a musical comedy, the music was composed by Louis F. Gottschalk and E. W. Corliss. Barnet wrote the book and collaborated with D. K. Stevens on the lyrics. Additional musical numbers were provided by Stevens, D. J. Sullivan, and J. S. Chapman.

Cinderella and the Prince marked Barnet's return to the children's extravaganza form, which he had abandoned after Jack and the Beanstalk (1896) and Simple Simon (1897). The five shows which followed, as discussed in the previous chapter, made up a cycle of extravaganzas which were heavily influenced by the Mother Goose shows and which included elements of nursery rhymes and children's fantasies. The extravaganzas in this cycle had become increasingly more complex, necessitating greater spectacle, while sacrificing any unity of plot or character which had been partially achieved in the Mother Goose plays. These extravaganzas, while popular as vehicles for the Cadets or the Bank Officers' Association, began to fare poorly on the professional stage:

Frank Daniels had great difficulties with Miss Simplicity; The Show Girl was harshly dismissed by New York critics; and Baron Humbug was not optioned for professional production. Faced with this deteriorating professional response to his works, Barnet evidently sought to return to the form which had brought him success in New York and on the road, and which resulted in repeated revivals in Boston.

The Boston press noted Barnet's return to children's extravaganza with a flurry of preview articles on the 1904 Cadet show:

> One might suppose, after all the years during which Robert A. Barnet has been furnishing plays for the annual theatricals of the 1st corps of cadets, that by this time he would have exhausted the best subjects in juvenile literature, which has habitually been his favorite source of inspiration, yet his latest creation, now in rehearsal by the cadets for production the week of Feb. 1, is a delightful hodge-podge of comic literary characters, dear to us all in childhood, none of which has been utilized in any of the previous works of this author.[1]

Such a hodgepodge was Cinderella and the Prince that Barnet called it "a fairy excuse for songs and dances" on the title page of the published vocal score.[2]

Happily, Barnet had the libretto printed privately, and a copy of it is available through the Music Division of

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[1]Boston Sunday Globe, 3 January 1904.

[2]Robert A. Barnet and Louis F. Gottschalk, Cinderella and the Prince, Vocal Score (Boston: White-Smith Music Publishing Company, 1904).

the Library of Congress. This libretto will form the basis for the ensuing discussion of the show, which will attempt to examine the play, and how it differed from the previous children's extravaganzas. Barnet was, after all, much more experienced in the realm of extravaganza in 1904 than he had been in 1896 when he wrote Jack and the Beanstalk. He also had a lot more artistic assistance for the later show. Barnet and A. B. Sloane had written Jack and the Beanstalk. Cinderella and the Prince was the product of the collaboration of six artists, a practice which Barnet had begun during the extravaganza cycle which immediately preceded this show. It is possible that this very element of a collaborative "team" was primarily responsible for the lack of unity and emphasis on spectacle which the extravaganza cycle had carried to excess in Baron Humbug. Barnet very likely wanted to return to a simpler style of show, with the children's tales providing a stronger shape for the action. It is not clear why Barnet persisted in working with a large collaborative team. Perhaps they had developed a system for the creation of a show which made the process easier. Barnet was fifty years old when he wrote Cinderella and the Prince, and while he was energetic enough to direct, write, design, and continue to represent Ruinart Brut champagne in Boston, he must have given some thought to the efficiency of his many projects, and how best to delegate responsibility in order to produce the best results. The persistent question which runs through this

latter part of his active career is how serious his theatrical ambitions were. Although he must have continued to earn royalties from his shows, the disappointments of the last few plays in the extravaganza cycle must have caused him some concern. Barnet had repeatedly ignored the warnings from critics in Boston and New York, and persisted in writing amateur plays which pleased Boston theatre-goers, but which faced only modest success in the professional theatre. According to many newspaper articles, Barnet followed developments in the musical theatre, and certainly attended local Boston productions, especially at Harvard and Radcliffe. Whether Barnet was at the same time following the professional theatre in New York, or whether he subscribed to theatre periodicals such as The Theatre or The Dramatic Mirror is uncertain. Had he done so, he might not have chosen to write Cinderella and the Prince. But Barnet seemed interested only in sustaining a measure of local popularity, and thus wrote a show which can now be seen as the turning point in his theatre career.

The cast list of Cinderella and the Prince indicates that Barnet had again woven a story out of tales which seem unlikely to coalesce:

Cinderella
Her Prince, Jack
Her Proud Sister, Gladys
Her Other Proud Sister, Minnie
Her Fairy Godmother, Titania

Golden Hair
Her Great Big Bear
Her Medium Bear
Her Little Wee Bear

Santie Claus

Robinson Crusoe
His Man Friday
His Man's Sweetheart, Lily White
His Man's Rival, Saturday

Old Scrooge

Thornie Roseleaf
Blossom Peachblow
Tinkle Bluebell
Dewsie Dewdrop
} First Fairies of Fairyland
Members of the F. F. F.'s

And an Auxiliary Corps of Merry Mortals, Lovely Lasses, Woodland Elves, Mountain Sprites, Fays and Fairies.[3]

This combination of Defoe, Dickens, Christmas, and Fairyland suggests typical Barnet heterogeneity and many possibilities for spectacle. Also, the three-act structure is a return to an older style of show for Barnet, even though the third act of this play comprises only one brief scene.

Cinderella and the Prince opens with a lengthy two-part choral number which introduces the character of Golden Hair. One must assume that this person is different from the Curly Locks of Simple Simon. Barnet borrowed freely from English nursery rhymes and tales as well as from their American counterparts. In this case, Golden Hair is supposed to be the girl whom Americans now know as Goldie Locks, and her

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[3]Robert A. Barnet, Cinderella and the Prince (Boston: By the Author, 1904), p. 3.

story is about some strange "chaps" that she met:

Golden Hair: O, what do you think good fairies!
An adventure I have had!
It has given me quite a dreadful start;
My nerves are very bad.
A moment ago, inconscious, [sic]
I was coming down the street
When I met with some very remarkable chaps,
Who sang me this refrain!

Tutti: She met with some very remarkable chaps,
Who sang her a refrain!

Golden Hair: "Golden Hair, come marry me, and I will love you true;
I've been looking high and low to find a girl like you.
Marry me this morning, or if that's a bit too soon,
Go and tell your mommer that we'll wed this afternoon!"[4]

Golden Hair is referring to her having met the three bears, who enter during the last repetition of the refrain, and explain their human exterior:

Golden Hair: And who are you?

Big Bear: We are the Three Bears.

Golden Hair: The Three Bears?

Big Bear: Yes; fairy spell broken now men.

Medium Bear: Golden Hair, we are madly in love--

Little Bear: Awfully madly--

Big Bear: Awfully![5]

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[4]Ibid., p. 5.

[5]Ibid., p. 6.

Barnet has once again twisted the nursery rhymes around in his own imagination, giving the three bears their manhood. They are pictured in Boston newspapers as very well-dressed English gentlemen. Further evidence of Barnet's playing with the children's tales occurs immediately, as the bears inform Golden Hair that they have come for the wedding of Cinderella and the Prince, and Golden Hair describes the changes which have come over Cinderella:

> The wedding is postponed as dear Cinderella has tantrums. Since her crystal slipper stunt she HAS put her foot in it! (Business of imitation.) "Biggins! My diamonds! Meadows! tell the cook to send me up a bit of quail and Ruinart chilled to eighteen degrees. And Miffins! Call my coach; the canary coach with the ravenblack ponies!" A few weeks ago, if Ella could get an ice cream soda and a trolley car ride, she was in paradise. I hate to talk about my girl friends, and especially my dearest one, but Cinderella--S-S-H! Here comes the Prince![6]

Not only has Barnet changed the character of Cinderella, making her a spoiled brat now that she is affianced to the Prince, but he has put into this show an advertisement for Ruinart champagne, for which company he was still the Boston representative. Here is a perfect juxtaposition of Barnet's strength and weakness. He had a fertile imagination, and exercised it in no better a way than to re-interpret nursery rhymes, changing the characters and their basic natures. Yet he could not escape the local allusions, which critics

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[6]Ibid.

began to find cloying as they persisted in appearing from show to show.

The Prince tells everyone that Cinderella "at heart is all right, but her dear little, sweet little, silly head is turned by her sudden fortune."[7] He then sings a song entitled "Little Polly Wouldn't Play," which is a nursery rhyme tale about two characters who are not in this show:

> Little Jack and little Polly
> Played together by the sea.
> Polly was a captive maiden,
> Jack, the hero, set her free.
> They were constant little lovers,
> Things most rarely went awry,
> But one day they quarreled sadly,--
> Jack made little Polly cry!
>
> Little Polly wouldn't play!
> Took her dolls and went away,
> She was never, never coming back,
> For she simply hated Jack!
> Jacky never moved an eye;
> Never even winked an eye.
> He could wait till by-and-bye,--
> For he knew Little Polly![8]

This song continues through Jack growing up and "cornering the market" in wheat, which brought little Polly back to him. This song seems to fit comfortably into this children's piece, but it really doesn't, having nothing to do with Cinderella and the Prince. Such a song would not have been included in Jack and the Beanstalk, in which most of the

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[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid., p. 7.

songs were motivated by the characters and their actions, and only a few topical songs, more in the way of specialties, appeared in the score. "Little Polly Wouldn't Play" is a continuation of the style which Barnet developed in the extravaganza cycle, and in truth, this song seems to fit better into one of those five works than into the children's pieces. It is motivated in a contrived manner, with the Prince saying that regardless of what Cinderella would do if she showed up on the spot, he "knew Little Polly." The previous children's extravaganzas were partially successful in integrating musical numbers with dialogue and plot. This first solo from Cinderella and the Prince indicates that although Barnet was returning to the general style of the children's extravaganza, that style would be corrupted by the excesses of the extravaganza cycle.

After his song, the Prince is advised to consult Santie Claus about his problems because Santie "sees a great deal of life." But Santie makes a sudden entrance, and sings "What Santie Claus Will Bring," accompanied by the chorus:

Santie: When Santie Claus comes with the Christmas snow,

Tutti: O ho! O ho! O ho!

Santie: Fine presents he'll bring to some folks, I know.

Tutti: O ho! O ho! O ho!

Santie: There's the crusty "old bach," who is
grizzly and grim,
And calls every baby a bore;

Tutti: And what will Santie Claus bring to him?

Santie: Listen--'twill make you roar!

'Tis something to which I should not allude,
But it looks like a bottle of Mellin's Food;
Some beads on a string
And a teething-ring
And that's what Santie will bring him![9]

This song continues through another two verses and refrains, telling about what Santie will bring other people. This is a little better integrated into the script, but not substantially, as the subject matter of the song has nothing to do with the problems of the Prince.

Santie turns out to be a jolly and witty soul, whose puns and bad jokes are straight out of the Barnet lexicon. In the middle of his one-liners, Titania appears. She is Cinderella's Fairy Godmother, and her entrance precedes that of Cinderella. Once again, Barnet has chosen a name from Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, as he had done for the fairies of Jack and the Beanstalk.

Cinderella enters, singing "The Little Mandarin," about a girl and her Chinese doll. This song has no connection with the show, and, interestingly, is not part of the published vocal score. As noted previously, the libretti for Barnet's shows were sometimes different from the vocal scores: some

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[9]Ibid., pp. 8, 9.

songs were present in one but not in the other; others were present in both, but arranged in a different order. Uncertain is whether the libretti which Barnet chose to print privately were published before the vocal scores. In this case, the decision to delete "The Little Mandarin" from the vocal score seems to have been wise.

Cinderella next sparks a discussion which is taken up by all of the women--her sisters Gladys and Minnie, and Golden Hair--about not wishing to rush into marriage before having "seen more of life." Titania, disgusted with the behavior of these mortals, decides to take them all down to the Isle of Juan Fernandez to meet Robinson Crusoe, "where yez can learn from him that anyone--all of yez--can be contInted together--alone--in solitude!"[10] Just exactly where Titania picked up this accent isn't very clear, but the entire company agrees to go, and breaks into a musical number entitled "Down in Juan Fernandez":

Titania: Down in the South Pacific Main,
In latitude thirty-three,

Prince: There is as fair an island as
You ever could wish to see.

G. Hair: 'Twas there poor Robbie Crusoe went,
When from politics he retired,

Santie: The world to shun,
With a goat and a gun,
And a coon that he acquired!

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[10]Ibid., p. 12.

Tutti: Oh! Monkeys, apes and chimpanzees,
Rubber in the rubber trees,
At cockatoos and kalikazoos,
Down in Juan Fernandez!

Cind.: We'll sit beneath the banyan trees,
Where the ripe banyanas hang;

Sisters: Cocoa sip from the cocoanuts,
Where the juicy mangoes mang.

Bears: We'll toast our bread-fruit by the fire,
And plantains plant by day;

Santie: And when it gets dark
The Peruvian bark
Will keep the beasts away!

Tutti: (Refrain)[11]

This scene ends immediately after the song. The spareness of this libretto, in contrast to the superfluous dialogue and situations of Baron Humbug, is noticeable.

The second scene of the first act of Cinderella and the Prince is set on the Isle of Juan Fernandez. Lily White and Friday, both apparently in blackface, sing "Oh, Miss White," accompanied by the chorus.

Lily: Way down in the Jungleland,
Down where the bungababoo in the Jungleland,
Prowls and growls on ev'ry hand,
All through the livelong night.
Then my choc'late honey comes around,
When he finds the signs are right,
And sings a song of Jungleland,
All for his Lily White.

Oh! Miss White! Oh! Miss White!
When you rolls your eyes, you scare away
the hoodoo night.

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[11]Ibid., pp. 12, 13.

You's so polite! And such a sight!
Such a lovely si-i-ght, Miss White!

Down there in the Jungleland,
There in the dusk of the day in the Jungleland,
Then he comes and holds my hand,
Calls me his dark delight.
I don't care what comes a-prowling 'round,
While he holds this lady tight,
And sing a song of Jungleland,
All for his Lily White.

(Refrain)[12]

When Friday enters, during this song, it is clear that Barnet wishes to revert back to blackface minstrelsy as a major element in this show. This supposition is proved during the dialogue after the song:

Friday: Miss White isn't we two engaged into de golden bonds ob padlock?

Lily: We certainly am, Mister Friday.

Friday: Den why was it?

Lily: Why was what?

Friday: Why was what what was?

Lily: What WAS the was?

Friday: Last evenin' I was in Public Alley 4-11-44 to see some alligators, when who should come alligatin' along but youse an' dat Sat'day. I wanted youse ter see I seed yer, still I didn't want dat Sat'day ter see dat I see you saw I seed yer.

Lily: Well, didn't I recordnized yer?

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[12]Ibid., p. 13.

Friday: Yer cert'nly did, Miss White; an' did I say anything dat was meletricious? I simply said, "Miss White, is you leadin' yer little donkey ter pasture?"

Lily: What followed?

Friday: What followed? (business) Lillian Pearline White, you know what followed--a ripe, mellow yam-yam!

Lily: A yam-yam?

Friday: 'Tis one degree stronger den de paw-paw fruit, an' when mellow, has been know ter break up fam'lies!

Lily: Did he hit yer wid a yam-yam? I couldn't see.

Friday: Yer didn't have ter see, my lady: only sniff! He might have smashed me wid a jar ob roseleaves, or 'sassinated me wid a can o' violets, out wid a vintage yam-yam! He aimed ter kill![13]

In spite of the decline of minstrelsy in America, blackface comedians were popular on vaudeville stages around the country, and would continue to be so until the 1930s. Barnet seemed to have been caught between the traditions of minstrelsy, in which he made his theatrical debut, and the new popularity of vaudeville, whose performers kept many of his earlier shows in long runs under the management of E. E. Rice and Oscar Hammerstein. The famous Barnet stump speech, a relic of the minstrel olio, appeared in many of his shows, and generally seemed to fit into the tone of the works. The overbearing amount of blackface material which appears in

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[13]Ibid., p. 14.

Cinderella and the Prince means that Barnet was experimenting with a combination of old and new ideas in order to attempt to revitalize his shows. They didn't appear to work.

Robinson Crusoe enters and sings about himself in a spirited song entitled "I'm the One":

> My name is Robbie Crusoe, I was cast away at sea;
> The crew took to the jolly-boat, all jolly well but me.
> The boat was half-seas over,--full, away up to the brim,
> "We're loaded, boys!" the Cap'n says, and someone had to swim!
>
> And I'm the one!
> I am the one!
> When there's anything unpleasant to be done!
> But when the rocky point we rounded,
> All the crew but one, was drownded!
> I am the one!
>
> I go off on an auto trip, and something fetches loose;
> Then someone's got to crawl beneath and labor like the deuce.
> He's got to poke among the wheels of that accursed machine,
> And get himself all axle-grease and full of gasoline!
>
> And I'm the one!
> I am the one!
> When there's anything unpleasant to be done!
> And if it busts up unexpected,
> For the sky some one's elected!
> I am the one![14]

This song continues through two more verses and refrains, but the above is sufficient to point out another change in Barnet's style from the earlier children's extravaganzas: every song became a topical song, no matter how it began. The first verse of "I'm the One" examines how Crusoe got to

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[14]Ibid., p. 15.

his island. Instead of developing the situation and talking about his life since the shipwreck, Crusoe begins the second verse about driving in an automobile. The third verse of this song is about Crusoe's wife, and the fourth is about playing football. What seemed to matter to Barnet were some amusing lyrics, lots of music and dance, and some change of scenery--all present to entertain the audience. This is certainly a big change from the unity of action and character development of Jack and the Beanstalk.

After the song, Crusoe dismisses the goat and parrot which had accompanied him onstage--further examples of Barnet's practice of writing animals into his shows--and engages in a low comic discussion with Friday, who calls Crusoe "Mr. Corkscrew." Suddenly a group of fairies enter, and announce the arrival of their Queen Titania, who addresses Crusoe:

> Robinson Crusoe, I want no repartee from you. I am Cinderella's god-mother, and having the divil's own time with her and her friends trying to make them continted. I have brought them here to show that you, and solitude, and happiness are one. So bring on your solitude and look happy. Mortals appear![15]

Cinderella and company rush up to Crusoe to ask him questions about his solitude and contentment, and end up by disturbing him and forcing him to leave, in the company of Titania. Cinderella threatens to leave, and the Prince is indifferent,

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[15]Ibid., p. 17.

saying he'll write her a postal card. This motivates a song, "Send Me Love a Postal Card," which is sung by Cinderella and the chorus. The song is unimportant, as it is merely a topical number discussing various situations in which lovers send their loved-ones a postal card, including stopovers in foreign countries. What is important is the business which accompanies this song, and which is described in a stage direction:

> (During song four girls enter, each at the time the different nations are mentioned, dressed in the costume of that nation. They wear silk cloaks the outside being painted to represent postal cards of the nation that each one is dressed for; the inside of the cloak is painted to represent the address side of a postal. Upon the picture side of the cloaks there is painted in script the words: "Cinderella, I love you, Jack," in the language of the respective countries. When refrain is first sung, two letter carriers enter. They have bundle of foreign post cards, they deliver one to Prince and Cinderella, and then scale others out into the audience during singing of refrain only.)[16]

Barnet's sense of spectacle had grown with his experience in the shows of the extravaganza cycle. Whereas Jack and the Beanstalk and Simple Simon had relied chiefly on the nursery rhyme settings and activities--the land of the Giant, the beanstalk, the magic of fairies--in order to provide "built-in" spectacle, Cinderella and the Prince relied on extra chorus girls and such gimmicks as the above to provide added spectacle, which actually had less to do with the show.

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[16]Ibid., p. 18.

Barnet had become too sophisticated for the necessary simplicity demanded of the children's shows.

The stage then clears and Santie enters, "dressed as a missionary." He encounters Friday and Saturday, and another vaudeville dialogue ensues:

Santie: In the disguise of a Man of Peace I can placidly study the Gentle Savage and gain his affections by kindness.

(Fri., Sat., and Lil. sneak on after him as though they had been following him. They are wildly excited in a cannibalistic way, in anticipation of a treat . . . The trio disappear and immediately re-appear with a pot hanging on a gypsy-crane and a lighted fire beneath. Lil. stirs with a big spoon and smoke comes from the pot. With a large salt-shaker she seasons the broth. Fri. and Sat., with long knives in their hands, creep down.

Santie: Never be harsh with the Gentle Savage or you'll get into hot water. The Gentle Savage is a cheeild of Nature; there is a charming abandon about him--mostly abandon of clothes. When you meet the Gentle Savage you never have to say, "I hope to see more of you!"

Lily: (she rings a dinner bell) Hurry up with that soup-stock! De water's boilin'!

(Santie turns and finds Fri. and Sat. on either side of him, brandishing their knives.)

Santie: Gentle Savage, what wishest?

Friday: YOU!!

Santie: What for?

Friday: For dinner!

Santie: Sorry, Gentle Savage, but I have a previous engagement.

Friday: NO you haven't! (business.)[17]

This dialogue continues until Santie throws off his missionary disguise and reveals himself, much to the stupefaction of Friday and Saturday, who have never heard of him or snow or Christmas. This scene ends in a song, entitled "Santie and the Trio," which is strangely not present in the libretto. It is merely listed at this point, and then the dialogue continues. In the vocal score, the song "Put Me in Jail" seems to be in this place, and the lyrics make sense of Santie's peculiar situation:

When a man is up a tree, from his troubles never free,
And when all the wicked fates his peace assail;
After much attentive thought, to this conclusion I am brought:
That the safest place for him is in a jail.
Take a breach of promise case, prison stares you in the face,
If you do not wed a widow far too clever;
She has kissed you, once or twice, and she says "It will be nice
When we're married, we can bill and coo forever!"
O, put me in jail! A good, strong jail!
And fix it so I'll never, never, NEVER get bail!
If I had to wed that dragon
You could bring the hurry wagon!
I would rather take my chances in a good strong jail![18]

This song continues in the same topical manner, once again

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[17]Ibid., pp. 19, 20.

[18]Barnet and Gottschalk, Cinderella and the Prince, Vocal Score, pp. 34-36.

illustrating Barnet's desire to exploit the topicality of his songs and not their relation to the play.

In the libretto, Titania appears on the scene and rescues Santie from Friday, Saturday, and Lily. Friday is disgusted over losing his dinner, and sings a pure minstrel song entitled "Waterml'," which Barnet wrote to be performed in dialect. Another blackface song, it is reminiscent of the Barnet plantation songs, one of which was included in Jack and the Beanstalk.

Immediately after this song, Crusoe and Gladys, Cinderella's "proud sister," enter arm-in-arm, and sing about their love for one another in a song entitled "I Will E'er Be True":

Gladys: Mommer told me not to trust men,
Lover's words are seldom true;
So you must not e'er deceive me,
Or you'll break my heart in two-oo-oo-oo-oo!

Crusoe: Little flutt'ring birdie, fear not!
I will ne'er be false to you.
Hear me swear! Oh, darn! Oh, hear me swear love!
I will ever, never more be true!

Stars may disappear! Sun and Moon grow cold!
Seas may turn to deserts, endless night and earth enfold!
Mountains turn to dust, Nature change deep blue!
Men may come and men may go, but I will e'er be true.

Gladys: No one e'er dared to kiss me,
Dared to take me on his knee.
You're the first man to embrace me,
I'm a maiden fancy free-ee-ee-ee!

Crusoe: Little startled fawn, Oh, truly
I believe you,--Oh, I do!
Hear me swear! Oh, darn! Oh, hear me
swear, love!
I will ever, never more be true!

Tutti: (Refrain)[19]

This is a pleasant love song, the best in Cinderella and the Prince up to this point. It is not as smooth and lyrical as the love songs from Jack and the Beanstalk, which Barnet wrote without the benefit of collaborative assistance.

The above song is followed by the entrance of all the principals, complaining that happiness has ceased to reign on the tropical isle. In typical fairy tale fashion, Titania waves her magic wand and transposes everyone to the Castle of Heart's Desire, "where every longing is anticipated; every wish gratified; where you can be utterly, absolutely--MISERABLE!!!"[20] The mass exodus is accompanied by the finale of the first act, "Oh, Take Us Away to Some Other Shore!"

Titania: Away to the Castle of Heart's Desire,
On a rail-less railway train!
Fired by the heat of a fireless fire,
Across the plainless plain.
And when we get to the doorless door
Of the Castle of Heart's Desire,
We'll camp right down on the floorless floor,
And send a wireless wire!

. . . . . .

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[19]Barnet, Cinderella and the Prince, p. 22.

[20]Ibid., p. 23.

In the Castle of Heart's Desire
All the fairies and fays conspire
Ev'ry sorrowful, secret sigh
E'er 't is uttered, to gratify
If you seek for your lady fair,
Look! She is smiling there.
But beware! lest these spells may tire,
In the Castle of Heart's Desire![21]

This Castle of Heart's Desire seems closely related to the Sea of Dreamland Sky from Milady and the Musketeer and the Land of the Whisp'ring Sea from Baron Humbug. Barnet was now taking his fairy tale characters to a special location which he had developed in the extravaganza cycle, and was no longer interested in keeping them within the realm of the fairy tales. This is yet another development which changed the focus of Cinderella and the Prince from a Mother Goose show to another of Barnet's spectacle-oriented heterogeneous extravaganzas.

The second act of Cinderella and the Prince is set in the Castle of Heart's Desire. An opening chorus of housemaids describe their daily work:

In the morning, sprightly and brisk,
At our work we cheerfully whisk.
In the morning, earning our wage,
Chaff the butler, flirt with the page,
In the evening, pretty and prim,
Take the wraps and smile upon "him."
Tho' the ladies mutter, what then?
In the evening, flirt with the men.

Such is Life,
Ev'ry day Life, workaday Life.

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[21]Ibid., pp. 23, 24.

Be you maid or wife
Life is a strife, workaday Life![22]

This song is followed by a dance. Titania then ushers the "prisoners"--Cinderella, Prince, Golden Hair, Three Bears, Gladys and Minnie--into the chamber, and tells them that they have now reached the Castle of Heart's Desire: "Begin your sintince, and remember, to be contínted you must CUT down your WANTS!"[23]

Here the plot begins to wander a bit, as the Three Bears exit and Crusoe enters, disguised, with a great flourish of business about finally reaching the Castle of Heart's Desire. When asked who he is, he responds with a good song, "I'm a Plain Sea-Faring Party":

Crusoe: I'm a plain sea-faring party,
But I'm anxious to impress
If you think I'm light an' hearty
You have got another guess!
For the ocean's over-rated
An' I'm ready to proclaim
That it makes me sick
And the whole durn trick
Is a bloomin' bunco game!

For they made me work like a heathen Turk,
As all of the crew agree.
An' dash my hat! If I'd thought o' that,
I never'd a' went to sea![24]

Crusoe continues to describe the life of a sailor through

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[22]Ibid., p. 25.

[23]Ibid.

[24]Ibid., pp. 27, 28.

two more verses, while the accompanying chorus "heave and haul to rhythm."

Next, Friday and Lily arrive, and immediately break into another routine. The stage directions set up the routine:

> (Enter . . . Fri. and Lil. with trick prop. luggage. Fri. has on a funny little hat and suit of pyjamas too small for him, particularly short in sleeves and legs of trousers.)[25]

The routine between the two is about the hat, and once again, would fit very nicely into a minstrel olio or vaudeville blackface act.

The entrance of Santie confirms the suspicion that this act of Cinderella and the Prince will be little more than one specialty number after another. Previously, Barnet had moved away from the specialty, in writing topical songs which had no bearing on the action of the plays. Now, however, he was throwing in both unrelated songs and specialty numbers and routines.

Santie sings a song entitled "How I Love to Eat to Music," which is nothing more than a list of dishes and some titles of popular songs to accompany them. After the song, Santie and the fairies, now called "Show Girls" in the libretto, engage in yet another vaudeville-style routine. This act seems to reflect Barnet's attempt to find some

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[25]Ibid., p. 28.

newly-popular form for his musical entertainments: if the children's shows were popular, put in some elements from them. If the spectacle and topical songs from the extravaganza cycle were popular, throw in some of them, too. If vaudeville is threatening to outdraw other types of heterogeneous musicals, build in some vaudeville routines as part of the show. After thirteen years of writing relatively popular full-length musical entertainments, Barnet seems to have found himself suddenly floundering.

Cinderella enters to sing a fairy-tale topical song entitled "Katy Didn't--Katy Did":

> Behind the screen
> Of a forest green
> A katydid lived and throve;
> The popular
> And shining star
> Of all the Kates in the grove.
> But she had a way
> When she sang her lay,
> For which she was often chid,
> One minute 't would be,
> "She didn't!" you see,
> And then she would chirp, "she did!"
>
> Katy didn't Katy did!
> In contradiction the facts are hid.
> 'Tis far from amusing and very confusing
> To find out whether she didn't or did![26]

Here again, Barnet is mixing fairy tale with topical song with his peculiar sense of humor. The song is amusing, but it is nothing more than a specialty in an act given over to specialties.

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[26]Ibid., p. 31.

Another vaudeville-type routine connects the above song with the next one, sung by Crusoe, Gladys, Minnie and the chorus, entitled "How Lovers Sing." The routine and the song are both purely entertainment pieces which have no relation to the characters or plot of Cinderella and the Prince. The same is true of the next song, "Mamie Hadn't Been, You Know, Very Long in Town," sung by Golden Hair and accompanied by the chorus. This song was motivated by a short vaudeville-type exchange between Golden Hair and the Three Bears. After this song comes another vaudeville/minstrel routine between Friday, Saturday, and Lily, ending in an equally contrived musical number, "I Want to Beat Dat Drum." Immediately after this, Santie enters, and, not needing a routine to motivate him this time, sings "Dottie's Dimples," to the accompaniment of the chorus. If all of these specialties and routines aren't enough, who should enter the scene but Scrooge, straight out of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol, to wish everyone "Merry Christmas! Humbug! Ough!!"[27]

The action of the complicated second act comes to a close with a finale entitled "The Midnight Hour is Striking." This song is sung by everyone:

Twelve o'clock! Twelve o'clock! Twelve o'clock!
Twelve o'clock! Twelve o'clock! All is not well--
Twelve o'clock! Twelve o'clock! For Cinderella;
Twelve o'clock! 'T is a knell
For Cinderell-derelle!

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[27]Ibid., p. 37.

Poor little Cinderelle,
Caught as the last stroke fell;
With her pans and kettles she must dwell!
Gone are her fairy gowns, gone are her coach and four
Off flew her luck
When twelve o'clock struck
Flew off--to return no more!
Cinderella-lla did
What her godmother did forbid!
But that doesn't matter,
We're sick of her chatter,
And don't care whether she didn't or did![28]

This is really the only song of the second act which has anything to do with the characters or story of Cinderella and the Prince.

The brief third act of the show opens in Cinderella's kitchen, where Cinderella is "discovered sitting on a stool in the fire-light, sorry and sad. She has on her old ragged dress. Prince and rest of the characters in the background."[29] The vocal score indicates that Cinderella sings a song entitled "Sing Not to Me of Humble Cot." But the libretto opens with a better number, sung by the Prince:

By the slowly dying fire,
Dreary, sad, in mean attire,
Sat a lonely little maid,
Of the shadows grim afraid.
Wishing she were rich and gay,
Dressed in silk and fine array;
A mournful wight
In sorry plight,
This little maid!
Cinderella! Cinderella-ella!

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[28]Ibid., p. 38.

[29]Ibid., p. 39.

Bless the fate
That made you late
And lose your shoe!
Cinderella! Cinderella-ella!
Since your flight
That mystic night
I've loved you true!

Then the Prince rode far and wide,
Seeking one to be his bride;
Found this lonely little maid,
Nevermore to be afraid.
Quicker than the nimblest thought,
Magic, fairy spells were wrought
And changed her straight
To Proud Estate
This little maid![30]

This is a well-written and moving song, catching the spirit of the children's extravaganza, though at the very end of this show.

The grand finale of Cinderella and the Prince is, strangely, a Christmas number, sung by everyone, including words from the poem "'Twas the Night Before Christmas" and lyrics from the song "God Rest You, Merry Gentlemen." There is a great deal of business written into the libretto, but the summation at the end of this number is sufficient to give an idea of what Barnet was attempting to create:

> (The little children wake up and pantomime their astonishment and joy at the presents, finally getting up and dance down, and work up dance and go to the stockings and then take the toys out; and after they have done this, change to big scene and open with big ensemble ballet, vivace, rather like a tarantella. A case of working up to a big climax and a big picture with a corking scene, big properties and light effects.

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[30] Ibid.

> This is the finish of the piece--no more dialogue or anything. I simply bring on principals at the picture finish of the ballet and ring down.)[31]

This is a fascinating bit of Barnet's personal description of the effect he wanted to create at the end of this show. Clearly, he felt it important to build up to a "big climax and a big picture with a corking scene." This is a sense of spectacle which he learned in the extravaganza cycle, and which had not been present in the previous Mother Goose shows. This description may answer some previously-raised questions about the grand finale to shows which listed no such number in the vocal scores. Barnet may have ended those shows, as he did this one, with "no more dialogue or anything," only music and spectacle. Thus, Cinderella and the Prince is brought to a close in a highly different manner than it had begun. This children's extravaganza was more heterogeneous and less unified than either of the two previous nursery rhyme shows, or the five shows from the extravaganza cycle which immediately preceded it.

An interesting article about this show appeared in the Boston Transcript before the rehearsals of Cinderella and the Prince began. Announcing the Cadet show for 1904, this article mentions that

> . . . the music will be chosen from the compositions of several writers, including Mr. Corliss and Mr. Stevens,

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[31]Ibid., p. 41.

> who have in the past written considerable music for the Cadets, while Mr. Gottschalk of New York also has several selections. Among them all they will offer twenty-five or twenty-eight musical numbers, which the dramatic committee will hear and pass judgment upon, selecting from the entire number about twenty or twenty-one compositions for use in the play. The committee already has heard most of the music and is well pleased with it as a whole. . . . There is now under consideration a plan to have one of the acts represent a well-known scene in Boston, which, if finally selected, will give opportunity for an exceedingly handsome setting, representing a place which would add great local color and interest to the play. The third act of the piece will be given over chiefly to spectacular effects, with fine opportunity for magnificent costumes, scenery, dances, etc., and the public, from long familiarity with Cadet productions, may well look forward to something carried out with lavish hand, such as in the past has won a great reputation for the management of Cadet plays.[32]

If this article contains more fact than speculation, then it sheds a lot of light on the organization of the Cadet shows, and helps explain why they were so heterogeneous. If the music was indeed chosen independently of the book and Barnet asked to provide segues between the two, fitting the music into his story, it becomes clear why Barnet's shows appeared as disunified as they seemed from the vocal scores and libretti. The committee process for choosing the music seems plausible in light of the previous discussions of the plays, but it is impossible to know if this was a method which was dictated by the Cadet dramatic committee, or one which was suggested by Barnet, or one which was merely a compromise

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[32]Boston Transcript, 10 October 1903.

between Barnet and the committee. This procedure does not seem to have been the method for the organization of the early Cadet shows, most of which Barnet wrote with only a musical collaborator. Barnet's stylistic weaknesses may possibly be attributed to the Cadet dramatic committee.

Another interesting observation concerns the importance of local color, as mentioned in the above article. The idea of setting one scene from the play in a familiar Boston place suggests even further artistic dictation by the Cadet dramatic committee. The setting of a play is one of the artistic elements which make up a production; choosing a famous place is a contrivance which might fit into the scheme of the designer or the playwright.

Clearly, it is difficult to tell what the policy of the Cadet dramatic committee was without the actual records of that body. The article mentions further that the third act of Cinderella and the Prince would be given over to spectacle. In reality, it was the second act, as the third was quite short. But the fact that theatre-goers expected the dancing, scenery, costumes, and general spectacle which the Cadets were famous for to be present in every show, gives some idea of the pressures which Barnet and the Cadet dramatic committee were under. Clearly, the Cadet dramatic committee was an important force in the Cadet Theatricals, exercising artistic as well as administrative control over each production. Unfortunately, there are no existing letters or scrapbook

entries by Barnet to indicate the nature of his dealings with the committee. He may have had far less control in the formulation of his own shows than this study has revealed. One can only suppose that, whatever the working relationship between the dramatic committee and Barnet, the latter found it compatible.

Cinderella and the Prince was well-publicized during rehearsals. Many drawings, pictures, and accounts of the progress of the show filled the Boston newspapers during January 1904. Barnet was described in his role of stage director, leading the actors through their business and shaping groups of chorus members. The actors were described, particularly the ones that Boston theatre-goers had come to know over the years. The actors portraying women were described wearing "working skirts" in order to get themselves used to feminine clothing, showing that Barnet was sensitive to detail in the preparation of his shows. The armory, where rehearsals had been held for several years, was described in its impromptu role as rehearsal hall. Other details of rehearsals were noted in words and illustration: the music director, George L. Tracy, leading solos and group numbers; property men assigned to keep the many props required for the show organized, and placed where the actors could find them; the prompter, throwing lines to those that stumbled over their words. A page-long article appeared in the Boston Sunday Journal of 10 January 1904, describing every detail

of one certain rehearsal, complete with pictures, cast list, and synopses of scenes. Sunday editions of other newspapers followed suit. Many of the articles touched on the long hours of preparation which went into each Cadet show. By 1904, the Cadet Theatricals had clearly become a major cultural and social event in Boston. The newspaper coverage of the rehearsals was remarkable for its depth of reporting and its persistent updates on the progress of the show. With such coverage provided free of charge by the Boston press, it is doubtful that the Cadets ever had to advertise; and it is no wonder that almost every Cadet show was a sell-out, even at auction prices, which, according to several different articles, could get as high as twelve dollars per ticket, a princely sum in 1904.

Another preview article from the Boston Transcript, this one pasted into one of the scrapbooks without a date, gives another version of Barnet's method of creating a show. The article begins by saying that rehearsals for Cadet shows usually start in October because of their necessarily irregular schedule.

> . . . This necessity creates another--that of having the play, with its two dozen musical numbers, its scheme of business, costumes, scenery, lights and properties, in complete readiness for the final approval of the dramatic committee not later than August, to allow for such changes as are often necessary. Thus it will be seen that, with Mr. Barnet, it is a case of "welcome the coming, speed the parting," for if he begins work on a new piece directly he is through with the latest one, he is

> none too early in his preparations.
>
> The author's first concern is the selection of a subject that is likely to suit the public taste the ensuing year. To do this successfully he must study the trend of dramatic events, take observations, so to speak, and make his important forecast. Having determined on the general character of his play, Mr. Barnet prepares his scenario, decides on the situations that supply occasion for songs and dances and, as the dialogue progresses and the story develops, he and Mr. Stevens exercise their ingenuity in evolving the lyrics, which are turned over to the composers of that year for musical treatment. When a song is set, much time is consumed in judging it from a practical point of view and if, in the author's opinion, it lacks any essential element of success the composer is invited to "try again."[33]

Again, it is difficult to tell whether all of the details of this article are entirely true, though the process sounds plausible. It is a fact that some Cadet shows did not start rehearsals in October, though, as the copyright record has shown, most of Barnet's shows were copyrighted far in advance of their actual opening. Whatever the exact method of creating shows was, Barnet evidently found it enough to his liking to continue it for many years.

Cinderella and the Prince opened at the Tremont Theatre on 1 February 1904. The response was generally favorable. The Boston Globe called the show "a thing of beauty and a vehicle of characteristic Barnet novelties and surprises."[34] Other newspapers were equally enthusiastic:

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[33]Boston Transcript, undated, Barnet Scrapbooks, property of Mrs. Virginia Killie, New York City.

[34]Boston Globe, 2 February 1904.

> . . . In his latest work Mr. Barnet has gone back to the style of some of his earlier successes. He has constructed a piece like "Injured Innocents" and "Jack and the Beanstalk," in which the characters from fairyland and from the land of storybooks, friends of our youthful days whom we learned to love in childhood, are put upon the stage, modernized and vitalized by the spirit of the twentieth century.[35]

> . . . Mr. Barnet has again produced a work that is most creditable, and it was voted a decided success by all in the audience to-night. It is full of bright lines, pleasing songs, and dances. The characters were well contrasted, as is usual.[36]

> . . . As everyone knows by this time, this season's piece is called "Cinderella and the Prince" which immediately suggests a wealth of possibilities. And it should be said at the outset that no opportunity has been missed in assembling the material of which the piece is composed.[37]

There did not seem to be any unfavorable criticism of the play, save a few passing lines such as, "it has no organic structure."[38] Most reviewers simply accepted the thin plot which covered the "fairy excuse for songs and dances." By popular and critical acclaim, Cinderella and the Prince was a success.

The show was not, however, produced professionally. And there does not seem to be any evidence, either in the newspapers or in Barnet's scrapbooks, to explain the reason

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[35] Boston Transcript, 2 February 1904.

[36] The Morning Telegraph, 2 February 1904.

[37] Boston Post, 2 February 1904.

[38] Boston Record, 2 February 1904.

for this. It is possible that Barnet did not write this show with a professional production in mind, although that is hard to imagine about Barnet. Remember that Baron Humbug (1903) had also failed to attract professional producers. Many possible explanations occur to explain this unprecedented fate for Barnet's shows: his shows might have now become poor risks for the professional stage; theatrical tastes may have been moving away from the types of shows which Barnet continued to create; producers may simply have lost interest in Barnet and his stage creations. Other factors might have been involved, such as the panic of 1903, which affected the theatre, and might have made producers more cautious about opening risky shows.

Whatever the case, Barnet failed for the second straight year to have a show optioned professionally. This was the first time he had missed on two consecutive shows since he had begun writing musical entertainments in 1890. The evaluation of this study seems to be similar to the evaluation made by professional producers in 1904: Cinderella and the Prince was not a very good show.

CHAPTER XVI

MISS POCAHONTAS

In May 1904, the Hasty Pudding Club of Harvard University gave the first Boston performance of a musical play entitled Boodle & Co., written for its annual spring theatrical. The book and lyrics were written by one Harold Otis, and a John Hopkins Densmore composed the music. According to Boston newspapers, the show was an ambitious one for a college group, and it was judged not particularly witty.

The Cadet show for 1905, which opened in mid-March, very much later than usual, was Boodle & Co., directed by R. A. Barnet, who was given credit for collaborating on the book.[1] The show was called "a musical play in a prologue, two acts and epilogue,"[2] and the vocal score was published in 1905 by the White-Smith Music Publishing Company. John Densmore served as musical director for the Cadet production.

Boodle & Co. was the first Cadet show which was not originated by Barnet. A preview article described the

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[1]Programme: Boodle & Co., by Barnet, Otis, and Densmore, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, 13 to 18 March 1905, Harvard Theatre Collection.

[2]Harold Otis and John H. Densmore, Boodle & Co., Vocal Score (Boston: White-Smith Music Publishing Company, 1905).

preparation of the play:

> The musical piece "Boodle & Co.," which the First Corps of Cadets will present at the Tremont Theatre for the week of March 13, is one of the best constructed plays that the soldier-actors have yet had for their use. Mr. Barnet worked for a long time with Harold Otis on the libretto before the latter went abroad, with the result that the book is very satisfactory to the dramatic committee of the corps. Mr. Otis, who is a Harvard man, is travelling at present in Europe, but he keeps in close touch with Mr. Barnet and the committee, and has made a number of valuable suggestions which have been adopted.
>
> The story of "Boodle & Co." is told in a prologue and epilogue, which form a complete play in themselves. The two acts of the piece represent a dream which comes to Mr. Boodle, and as they take place in dream-land, where many things may happen, they allow of the introduction of specialties and other dramatic material which has little to do with the play itself.[3]

The article does not give further information about what made the revised version of the play "very satisfactory to the dramatic committee of the corps," though after ten years of working for the Cadets, Barnet surely was an expert in the matter.

The decision to do Boodle & Co. for the Cadets might have come from Barnet. He attended Harvard theatricals regularly, and often gave lyricists and composers for Hasty Pudding shows an opportunity to collaborate with him on a Cadet show. What is unusual in this case is Barnet's taking a whole show and helping to revise it for a Cadet theatrical. One wonders why Barnet did not write a show for 1905. Perhaps

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[3]Boston Evening Transcript, 25 February 1905.

there had been criticism of Barnet's role as "librettist in ordinary" to the Cadets. Perhaps his most recent shows, Baron Humbug (written for the Bank Officers' Association) and Cinderella and the Prince--neither of which were optioned for professional production--were considered inferior. Or, perhaps Barnet simply decided to limit his activities in 1905 to collaborating on a book which had already been written, and then directing the production of the play.

Whatever the reason, Boodle & Co. cannot be considered a Barnet show, and will therefore not be discussed here, except for noting some critical response to the production. Curiously, the Boston press treated the show as one to which Barnet had made a major artistic contribution:

> . . . It cannot be said that "Boodle & Co." is the best constructed or the funniest of Mr. Barnet's librettos. In fact, it is loose-jointed, even for Mr. Barnet, and its comedy lies principally in the personal humor of the comedians, rather than in lines or situations. The opportunity to have made much of Boodle and his dream-wealth is not improved, and at times things get rather thin. But the show element pleases, and that is the main affair in a Cadet production.[4]

For once, Barnet was really not guilty of writing thin material, and could accept the praise for the production alone. It is interesting to note that critics felt the "show element" was the most important feature of a Cadet theatrical.

Most Boston critics agreed that the show was well

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[4]Boston Journal, 14 March 1905.

executed, but was internally weak:

> . . . Frankly, the book of "Boodle & Co.," if it were to be produced by a professional company, would appear as dreary and barren as Desolation Gultch itself, but, as has been said, that point need not be considered now. Some of the situations are clever and good stage business has been introduced in the second act for which Mr. Barnet is doubtless responsible. His experience with Cadet shows enables him to furnish just the amount of stage business that the amateur actors can handle.[5]

> . . . This time the programme consisted of "Boodle & Co.," a comedy that has previously been presented by amateurs, but it has been rewritten and added to, both as regards book and score, until it is in fairly good shape. There is something of a plot, meagre it is true, but telling a story that is a bit reminiscent, and comprising some incidents which vividly call up other musical comedies, . . . but that matters little.[6]

Note how easily Boston drama critics were willing to dismiss the book and plot and often the lyrics of a Cadet show, in favor of describing the stage business and general acting.

There is no explanation given for why this Cadet show opened in mid-March instead of early-to-mid-February, as usual. One possible explanation is the complexity of Boodle & Co. The vocal score lists twenty-six musical numbers, the most of any Cadet show to date. The names of some of these numbers indicate that the formula of fitting unrelated songs into a thin plot had not really changed, in spite of a book originally written by Otis. Such songs as "Whiskey Raw,"

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[5] Boston Herald, 14 March 1905.

[6] Boston Post, 14 March 1905.

"We Hunt to the Cry of Manana," "In Sunny Spain," "Fresh From School in France," "Japan," "The American Girl," "Ma Black Eyed Susan," and "A Social Life is Laden," point to a show of diverse entertainments. According to synopses of the plot, the two acts between the prologue and epilogue were set in "Dreamland," necessitating a lot of specialty numbers and not really demanding too much logical plot development. In this respect, the show probably differed little from the Barnet extravaganza cycle of years before. There is no evidence to suggest that Boodle & Co. was performed professionally.

Less than a month after Boodle & Co. opened at the Tremont Theatre, Barnet took out a copyright for his last Cadet show. Miss Pocahontas, "a musical extravaganza in two acts," was copyrighted on 3 April 1905.[7] In its final form, this play had a book and lyrics by Barnet and one R. M. Baker, and music by D. J. Sullivan. Additional musical numbers were written by H. H. Luther and Carl Wilmore. For both Boodle & Co. and Miss Pocahontas, Barnet did not bring in his usual team of lyricists and composers for collaboration. There is no explanation given in Boston newspapers or in the Barnet scrapbooks for this action.

Miss Pocahontas is described in the published vocal

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[7]Government Printing Office, Dramatic Compositions Copyrighted in the United States, 1870 to 1916 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1918), p. 2871.

score as "an Indian War-Whoop in Two Whoops."[8] This is perhaps a fitting description of the show, which is part burlesque, part extravaganza, and all Barnet. There are twenty-two musical numbers listed in the vocal score, with the second "whoop" (or act) given over mostly to specialty numbers. Without a libretto, it is difficult to know how Barnet structured this piece, and whether he was influenced by the burlesque on the same subject written many years before by John Brougham. The ensuing discussion will briefly examine the lyrics of the vocal score to see if any changes are noticeable in the Barnet style in this, the last Cadet show.

A brief synopsis of the play will be helpful in order to understand the action around which the musical numbers were built, though admittedly, there seems to be little relation between plot and songs.

> . . . The Jamestown Indians are interested in a voting contest to determine the most popular Red Man when Captain John Smith, a burly beau, appears and agitates the dusky maidens. Straightway he is seized and tried after the fashion of burlesque police court performances. He is condemned to die, but Pocahontas saves him by finding in his pocket the coupon Powhatan needs to win the voting contest.
>
> Leaving Capt. Smith as deputy chief, Powhatan goes off to investigate wonders of civilization, taking a gripful of bottled goods. And soon after comes an Irish builder, commissioned to make over the village. In a night he produces a city of

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[8] R. A. Barnet, R. M. Baker and D. J. Sullivan, Miss Pocahontas, Vocal Score (Boston: White-Smith Music Publishing Company, 1906).

> 68-story blocks, bossed by Pooh Bah Powhatan, specifically chief of police. Some children of nature resent the change, but they are vanquished in a single rush by a football team in full dress suits. For the rest, some reflections on the stage; the keen competition of street car conductors, who take passengers by force of arms; Pocahontas' matrimonial perplexities, and incidental stunts.[9]

This sounds as wildly heterogeneous and plot-less as anything Barnet had ever written.

Miss Pocahontas opens with a typical chorus number, this time involving at least three choruses: Indian maidens, English settlers, and Indian braves. The Indian maidens have the first lyrics in the song, and they reveal their passions:

> Dusky Indian maids
> We're Indian maids, Indian maids
> Home's deep forest shades
> Dark sylvan glades,
> Nice promenades, for men and maids!
> 'Way, 'cross big ocean waves,
> Come heap English Braves, sweet English Braves!
> Nice pretty gifts gave
> Made us girls rave,
> Love and behave, Good English Braves!
> Run! Quickly to our covers!
> Here come our Pale-face lovers![10]

Enter the English settlers, knitting and singing:

> We're Settlers, we, of this Colonee!
> Of our job we're getting tired;
> For lonely life, without a wife,

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[9]Boston Daily Advertiser, 6 February 1906.

[10]Barnet, Baker, and Sullivan, Miss Pocahontas, Vocal Score, pp. 3-5.

Is one that's not desired!
For hoe and spade, our hands were made,
Or other task that's fitting;
We despair, when on a pair
Of socks we start a-knitting!
Take up two and then drop three
We've forgotten which;
It's enough to drive you mad!
Now we've lost that stitch!

. . . . . .

Oh! dusky maidens, be not shy!
We promise you no harm.[11]

There follows a musical dialogue during which the settlers give the maidens mirrors. The word "dusky" is repeated many times throughout this play; it was presumably the current term used to describe the coloring of the Indians. The above song continues through many repetitions of various verses, particularly those involving the settlers and their knitting.

After this choral opening, Powhatan enters to sing a character song, explaining who he is and where he came from. The answers to these questions are not at all surprising to Barnet followers:

Powhatan: I'm Patrick Michael Angelo,
Heap Big Chief Powhatan!
An Indian true, as you can plainly see!

Chorus: Hully Gee!

Powhatan: Mee father landed on these shores,
A bonnie Kerry man:
They hailed him, all,
A man of high degree!

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[11]Ibid., pp. 5-9.

Chorus: All agree!

Powhatan: They said: "Oh, stay and be our Chief
And be an Indian Brave!"
And father says: "Bee gorry! so I will!"

Chorus: Good for Will!

Powhatan: "Put on me feathers, beads and stuff
And let the banners wave,
Let the tom-toms play and drink your fill!"

Chorus: Fills the bill!

Powhatan: Play the Star Spangled Banner
And the Wearing of the Green!
And play them in a manner
As smooth as vaseline

Oh, say! can't you see!
That they're hanging all the Redskins
For the Wearing of the Green?
I'll have no Wag-ner-Pull-man
I'll Beet-ho-ven it out here!
No Reuben Stein or I-key Stein
Or Mixed-ale Mey-er-beer!
If you want yer money
Play no ragtime, Oh, mah honey!
Just the Star Spangled Banner,
And the Wearing of the Green![12]

With an Irish Indian Chief full of bad puns, Miss Pocahontas introduces the tone of frivolity which will characterize most of the show.

The next musical number is a song by Pocahontas, accompanied by a chorus of "admiring braves," entitled "Name a Day, Love!" This is a character song for Pocahontas, who follows her father in telling about herself:

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[12]Ibid., pp. 15-18.

Pocahontas: I am a royal Indian maid,
Who lives in this savage land.

Braves: Instead of a wig-wam, she really ought
To live in a mansion grand.

Pocahontas: I have all these Braves enchanted
Heads and hearts I turn and I sway;
They say they don't care Sunday, Monday,
If I'll but name a day!

"Name a day, Love!"
That's what they say:
"Name a day, Love!
Tuesday and Monday
Are both just like Sunday
When by your side!"
"Po-ca-hon-tas!"
That's what they say:
"Po-ca-hon-tas,
Name just one day, Love
And not far away, Love,
When you'll be an Indian's Bride!"[13]

This song, which ends in a dance, is not related to the character songs of Barnet's old burlesques, but is much more akin to the topical songs of the extravaganza cycle which described the "new woman." In this case, Barnet is merely bringing the character of Pocahontas "up to date."

A very short "Indian Chant" follows the above song. Sung by a "concealed chorus of Braves," it is comprised of the following nonsense lyrics:

Mahn-go-tay-see! Pug-ga-wau-gun!
Pud-je-kee-wis! Sah-sah-je-wun!
Dush-kwo-ne-she! Sug-ge-mah!
Mahn-go-tay-see! Pug-go-wau-gun![14]

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[13]Ibid., pp. 19-24.

[14]Ibid., p. 25.

The above seems to owe some rhythmical debt to Longfellow's Hiawatha. Remember that Barnet had used "Excelsior" for the stage, and had been heavily influenced by Edward "Evangeline" Rice. Possibly, Longfellow's poem Hiawatha was consulted for certain details in the writing of Miss Pocahontas. Barnet might have done better with an attempt to burlesque Hiawatha.

The above chant is followed by a simple love song, sung by the character Soangetaha, entitled "Whispering Shade":

Sweet flower of the garden,
Lily pure white
Soangetaha loves thee,
Constant as the north star bright,
His canoe is waiting,
Waiting is the tide,
Come unto his wag-wam,
Come and be his Indian bride!

I wander thro' the forest,
By the Indian sea;
Whisp'ring shades around me,
Softly chant a song of thee.
Wood-dove too is cooing,
Cooing up above,
Just the note I sing, dear,
Simple little note of love.

With a kiss all is bliss
And I will always love you;
Twinkling stars from a-far
Are watching in the sky, blue,
We will spoon while the moon is shining
Never part for my heart is pining
For my own, you alone, my pretty dusky maid!
With a dash and a splash
In my canoe, waves gleaming,
Summer's day flies away
We'll be in Loveland dreaming,
We'll alight in the night, at gloaming
Not afraid lovely maid, thus roaming,
I love you, you love me--in the whispering shade![15]

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[15]Ibid., pp. 26-28.

Barnet was still capable of writing a good love song, but this one, like so many of those in the extravaganza cycle, seems tainted by too much "whisp'ring," "cooing," and "gloaming."

A ditty entitled "A Tip For Little Girls," and described as a song and dance, follows the above love song. This musical number is performed by John Rolfe and Pocahontas, and is really a topical song about girls all over the world. A number entitled "Welcome to John Smith," an "Ensemble and Recitative," piece follows. Most of the lyrics to this short song read: "Sound the tom-tom," "Shout a welcome," and "Sound for John!"[16] At the end of the song, Smith enters and thanks everyone very much for welcoming him. Then he sings "John Smith," accompanied by the chorus:

Smith: When but a lad in British Isles,
I had a loving way.

Tutti: When a lad in British Isles.

Smith: I had "affairs" of skittish styles
Before I learnt to play.

Tutti: Had "affairs" of skittish styles.

Smith: My first sweetheart was aged three;
We madly loved; I, her; she, me;
In lover's lane, I met "My Jane"
And called her Little lamb!"
I had other loves at eight and ten
And later loved so often when,
They said at home: "You'd better roam"
And here I am, I am!

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[16]Ibid., pp. 33, 34.

Tutti: You called her Jane?

Smith: In Lovers' Lane.

Tutti: They said at home?

Snith: I'd better roam.

Tutti: And here you am, you am you am, you am!

Smith! John! Smith!
How we idolize you, dear John!
Though a picturesque liar
From love we'll expire
Unless you will cuddle us, John!
Pocahontas can never be to you, John
The same clinging ivy as one of us fivey
Of course you are "On!" John![17]

This song continues through three more verses, all as inconsequential as this first one. The refrain is taken up by the chorus after Smith sings it solo. This is a pleasant introduction for Smith, but not at all the strong character song which had once been used to introduce most of Barnet's principal characters.

A very lengthy "Ghost Dance" follows Smith's song. There are no lyrics to this number, only five pages of music. This is followed by a song entitled "In a Jewelled Grotto," sung by John Smith and Pocahontas, to the accompaniment of a chorus of Braves.

Smith: Draw near, my Braves, while I spin a yarn,
As the ev'ning sprites flit round,
How it happen'd off of a coral reef
With all sails set, homeward bound.
In the star-board watch I heard a voice,

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[17]Ibid., pp. 35-39.

That sang as we went along;
On the bow I saw a mermaid perch'd,
And this was the siren's song,

(Refrain:) In a jewell'd grotto
Far beneath the sea,
Come and be my sweetheart;
Love, I'll wait for thee.
Pearls are there for treasure,
All you may possess;
I shall be thy slave, Love,
Bound by thy caress.

As I went to fondle her in my arms
In the foaming wave she dove,
Then she threw a kiss from a billow top
Said: "Come to me, come, my love!"
With a fearful crash we struck a reef,
The mast went by the board;
But the siren's voice I still could hear,
As the waves around me roared:

Pocahontas: (Refrain, from off-stage)[18]

Like previous Barnet songs which featured such places as the "Sea of Dreamland Sky" and the "Land of Whisp'ring Sea," this jewell'd grotto speaks of love in an idealized location. Still, it is a well-written song, and one of the best in this show.

The finale of the first act of Miss Pocahontas is another long and musically complex affair involving almost everyone in the cast. Without a copy of the libretto it is very difficult to follow the action which takes place, accompanied by music and spectacle. Smith is crowned Indian Chief Pro Tem while Powhatan takes a brief leave of absence. There is much wooing of Indian and English maidens, and

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[18]Ibid., pp. 45-50.

various choral salutes to individual characters. There seem to be no reprises in this finale, which is in keeping with the Barnet extravaganza cycle, in which finales were used to advance the action of the piece, and not to repeat musical numbers from the act. This finale takes up twelve pages in the vocal score.

The second act (or whoop) of Miss Pocahontas begins with a long "Dance of the Woodland Sprites." This is the second long dance number in this show, which is evidence that Barnet was adding new features to his musical entertainments even as his popular theatrical career was coming to a close. While there is a lot of dancing in the shows of the extravaganza cycle, there never occur two long dance numbers in any one show, unless the previous vocal scores did not include all of the dance music. Most of the dancing in the extravaganzas took place during or at the end of the regular songs.

The first song of the second act of Miss Pocahontas is entitled "Mama, Do Not Leave Your Pappoose." This is basically a quartette, with solos interspersed:

Solo:	Mama do not leave your pappoose boy
Quartette:	Leave your pappoose boy
Solo:	For he is your honey and your joy
Quartette:	And your honey joy
Solo:	Leave him not alone in this great tree

Quartette: This great family tree

Solo: Or wee pappoose will boo, hoo-boo-hoo-hee!

Quartette: Pappoose will boo-hoo-hee!

Solo: Swing along-a baby swing along!
Sing a song-a maybe sing a song
Linger longer shady linger long
While she's gone a-shopping gone yer Mama
Little fire flies light yer burn yer clothes
Little "skeeters" bite yer bite yer nose
Little goblins fright yer, pinch yer toes,
Come back to yer pappoose won't yer Mama?[19]

This song bears a distinct relation to the Mother Goose shows, and serves as an example of Barnet's strength in writing children's songs.

What follows, however, is an example of Barnet's fondness for the specialty, as there are three Irish songs in a row: "The Night Shift," "Mickey O'Toole," and "Katie Carney." He had included at least one Irish specialty in most of his shows, but never before had there been so many in one show--and this one, about Indians.

Other specialty numbers follow the Irish medley in quick succession: a song entitled "In a Motor Car," about America's newest craze, and one which Barnet had been able to exploit since the automobile first became popular: "The Drama," a "song and pantomime" about the theatre, continuing Barnet's tradition of musical numbers which commented on the popularity of show business; "The Huskin' Bee," which seems

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[19]Ibid., pp. 66-70.

to resemble some sort of primitive American folk song; "Then I Became the Manager," a song which John Smith sings about himself and which bears a distinct resemblance to W. S. Gilbert's "When I Was a Lad" from H. M. S. Pinafore.

Toward the end of the second act there is a song entitled "In a Dory," which seems to pick up a thread of the plot of Miss Pocahontas. This is a love duet between Soangetaha and Jane. It was written by Carl Wilmore (music) and Harry H. Luther (lyrics).

The next musical number, also by Wilmore but with lyrics presumably by Barnet, is a solo for Soangetaha entitled "The Twang of My Trusty Bow":

> Where the forest glade makes the noon day shade
> Here my arrow heads I weld.
> So the flint rock ledge I hammer an edge
> Till the echoes wake the dell.
> Let the roebucks fear, if the sound they hear
> For my arrows swiftly go.
> When the shaft I free, there's a song to me
> In the twang of my trusty bow!
> Nush-ka nush-ka! Nush-ka nush-ka!
> Yo! Ho! For my trusty Bow!
> Not an arrow as swift as mine!
> Twang! Twong! There's a merry song
> In the sound of my bow string fine!
> And bird and beast together fall
> For I've sinews strong as have hunters all.
> Yo! Ho! There's death to the foe
> In the twang of my trusty bow![20]

Finally, here is a real song about Indians, a strongly masculine number, which must have been enhanced by the presence

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[20]Ibid., pp. 107-112.

of an actor costumed in Indian attire and holding his bow and arrows.

The last musical number in the vocal score of Miss Pocahontas is a topical song entitled "Won't You Say: 'Yes' to Me?" In it, Pocahontas sings to her "seven admirers" about the type of modern girl she is. This has nothing to do with the show and will not be quoted here. There is no act finale printed in the vocal score, which once again brings up the question of whether the publishers felt that the number was unnecessary, or whether the finale was merely a reprise of several melodies from the act or some other kind of Barnet specialty affair.

Miss Pocahontas was the last show which Barnet wrote for the Cadets, and, according to existing evidence, the final Cadet show in the series which had begun in 1890 with Injured Innocents. Miss Pocahontas was a weak show, plagued by specialties, in which Barnet attempted to return to burlesque, but was too much committed to other formulas to make a successful rediscovery of the method for creating good burlesque. This show was not a fitting end to his successful career as the guiding spirit of the Cadet Theatricals, perhaps the most popular and successful series of amateur dramatic entertainments in the United States during the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries.

Miss Pocahontas opened at the Tremont Theatre on 5 February 1906, and ran for the customary one week. Largely

motivated by the announcement that it would be the last Cadet show, Boston drama critics once again found praise for Barnet and his work:

> . . . the production proved itself another one of Barnet's successes.[21]

> . . . In many respects this is the best of their entertainments, for there is no limit on the fun-making features of the show.
> . . . In a word, Boston's Cadets have done splendidly in their last work. Its fun is wonderfully amusing, and its catchy music, the best they have had for a long time, will be whistled and played for months to come.[22]

> . . . The story of "Miss Pocahontas" is of the usual Barnet order, which means that it is very fragmentary and merrily nonsensical. No attempt at plot has even been hinted at, but the various characters famous at the time of the John Smith-Pocahontas-Powhatan episode at Jamestown have been introduced, together with many more whose origin was the prolific brain of Mr. Barnet.[23]

The Boston Transcript made special mention of the end of the Cadet cycle, as well as attempting to compare Barnet's Miss Pocahontas with John Brougham's earlier burlesque about the Indian princess:

> . . . There could be no better illustration of the way in which fancies for theatrical entertainments have changed than by a comparison of "Miss Pocahontas" with her stage ancestor, the "Pocahontas" of John

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[21] Boston Journal, 6 February 1906.

[22] Boston Transcript, 6 February 1906.

[23] Boston Post, 6 February 1906.

> Brougham's days. Our grandfathers would have opened their eyes wide with astonishment could they have seen the wonderful finery of scenery and costumes upon the stage last evening. They would have missed the stale and complicated system of puns which was supposed to be the only style of dialogue for a burlesque libretto, but they would have found vastly more entertainment in the nonsense and absurdities of the Cadet comedians.
> . . . What will a Boston winter be without Cadet theatricals? Possibly that question helped to cause an increase in the large audience which filled the Tremont Theatre to overflowing last evening on the occasion of the opening of the week of "Miss Pocahontas," which is announced as the last of the series--last for some time at least. For more than fifteen years the Cadets have enlivened Boston winters by their extravaganzas, and from "Injured Innocents" down to "Boodle & Co." they have given jolly shows, jingly comedians, dazzling ballets--dazzling, when one considers that every dancer was a man--stunning beauties, and have started many an extravaganza on a prosperous course upon the professional stage.[24]

The Cadet programme for Miss Pocahontas listed all of the eleven Barnet shows which had preceded this one, and said that the total amount of money realized from the presentation of the eleven shows was $216,055.[25] This figure presumably refers to the money which went into the armory fund after all the expenses had been met. Considering that each of the plays was presented for one week only, this made an average of just under twenty thousand dollars profit per show.

The author of the Cadet shows and the man primarily responsible for their continued success, was given a testimonial

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[24] Boston Transcript, 6 February 1906.

[25] Programme: Miss Pocahontas, by Barnet, Baker, and Sullivan, Cadet Theatricals, Tremont Theatre, 5 to 10 February 1906, p. 56x, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

on 7 March 1906, at the Tremont Theatre. Barnet was honored by a production of Miss Pocahontas, in which most of the Cadet performers took their original roles, with some replacements listed in a printed programme for the event, part of which is pasted into one of the Barnet scrapbooks, the whole being available at the Harvard Theatre Collection. The programme does not reveal any special ceremony, nor does it mention any further honor being paid to Barnet. This special production of Miss Pocahontas was, as it had been during its run at the Tremont the month before, under the direction of Barnet.

Miss Pocahontas was optioned by a professional producer, but not for over a year after the Cadet production. An agreement in possession of the Barnet family, dated 1 May 1907, states that one A. M. Pelletreau of Detroit, Michigan, engaged the services of R. A. Barnet

> . . . to produce upon the stage, revise and re-write the musical extravaganza "Miss Pocahontas", to furnish all the necessary costumes, scene, and party plots for its production, attending to all such usual detail in production. And as salary for such services rendered, the party of the first part (Pelletreau) agrees to pay to the party of the second part (Barnet), a sum equal to two percent (2%) of the gross receipts from the performances of said musical extravaganza, "Miss Pocahontas", so long as said party of the first part holds the rights to perform or to have performed said Musical Extravaganza; said salary to be paid weekly.[26]

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[26]Agreement in possession of Robert A. Barnet, Jr., Southport, Connecticut.

Barnet was bound by contract to serve as producer as well as stage director for the production of Miss Pocahontas outlined above. Unfortunately, it is difficult to follow the course of this production, or to know if Barnet was actually paid for his services.

According to an article on file at the Harvard Theatre Collection which was clipped from an unidentified Chicago newspaper and dated 11 June 1907,

> . . . "Miss Pocahontas" was presented at the Studebaker Theatre, Chicago, by Elgie Bowen and her company on 10 June.
> . . . "Miss Pocahontas," the new extravaganza produced at the Studebaker last evening, is rich in possibilities, but just now it is weighted down by an oversupply of deadly humor. It is to be hoped that the load will be lifted speedily, for there are decidedly original ideas in the general plot, and if the librettist had been able to realize them fully the result unquestionably would have been one of the most original and entertaining of recent musical plays.[27]

According to the same article, Walter Jones, who had played King Ferdinand in 1492, played the role of John Smith, while Elgie Bowen played Pocahontas. The references to the "deadly humor" and unrealized potential of the show might mean that Barnet had not fully revised the play. After all, the Chicago opening date occurred only six weeks after Barnet had signed the initial professional agreement. This did not allow much time for casting, rehearsing, costuming, designing the set

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[27]Unidentified Chicago newspaper, 11 June 1907, Harvard Theatre Collection.

and properties, and shipping the show out on the road.

The next reference to Miss Pocahontas is a programme from the Willis Wood Theatre in Kansas City, where the show opened on 2 September 1907, for a run of one week. The programme reads, in part:

R. L. Giffen presents
The Comedy Opera Company
of New York
in

"MISS POCAHONTAS"

> A bit of foolery, music and movement, which makes no dramatic pretensions, has very little reason and not much rhyme, and whose only "mission" is to add "Just a little bit more" to the gayety of nations. A certain event in American history is supposed to be mixed up somewhere in the "plot."[28]

The cast is nearly the same as in the Chicago production of June, with a few changes; most notably, Marie Dupuis was now playing the role of Pocahontas. It is unclear whether the aforementioned A. M. Pelletreau was associated with R. L. Giffen. It is also unclear whether The Comedy Opera Company of New York was a permanent organization or one which was put together for this show. Whatever the actual organizational details were, it is clear that Miss Pocahontas played a modest national tour before opening in New York.

On 28 October 1907, Miss Pocahontas opened at the

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[28]Programme: Miss Pocahontas, by Barnet, Baker, and Sullivan, Willis Wood Theatre, Kansas City, 2 September 1907, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

Lyric Theatre in New York. Gerald Bordman describes the inauspicious timing of the show's opening:

> Boston still remained a production center, and one week after The Merry Widow arrived, the Boston Cadet Corps brought its latest effort down to New York. Miss Pocahontas played havoc with a favorite bit of American folklore, turning Captain John Smith (Walter Jones) into a braggart, condemned to die or marry a withered old Indian crone. He chooses death. Pocahontas (Marie Dupuis) rescues him, though she really loves John Rolfe (George Fox). Pow-Ha-Tan (George Le Sori) was given an Irish father to fill the need for a traditional musical clown. New Yorkers didn't take to the show and it was withdrawn after two weeks.[29]

The popularity of The Merry Widow overshadowed much of the musical fare on Broadway during the 1907-08 season. One newspaper suggests that Miss Pocahontas was actually a fill-in for a show which had failed. Another newspaper called it a fill-in for another show in rehearsal. Regardless of its status, Miss Pocahontas was generally dismissed by New York critics as being commonplace, old-fashioned, and rather poorly written. An astute review of the show appeared in The Theatre magazine after the production had left New York:

> An opera which abandons its story half way and degenerates into a variety performance is something that trifles with the public and is amazing for its imbecility and effrontery. There is an odd hallucination among some people of the stage that they can justify any production by inserting in the bill a descriptive note of this kind: "A bit of foolery, music, and movement, which makes no dramatic

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[29]Gerald Bordman, American Musical Theatre (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 237.

> pretensions, has very little reasons and not much rhyme, and whose only 'mission' is to add 'just a little bit more' to the gaiety of nations. A certain event in American history is supposed to be mixed up somewhere in the 'plot'." If a play or an opera has no dramatic pretensions of any kind it has no business on the stage. There is really no half-way ground. A play or an opera, if it is to interest as a play or an opera, must necessarily have dramatic form: without it it may be a variety entertainment. It must be one or the other. There is a tendency toward the episodic in playwriting at present, but the proper skill can make those episodes coherent so that there is no difficulty in classifying the production. "Miss Pocahontas" does make pretensions to being an opera and to having a story, and no disclaimer in a prefatory note can dispose of this fact.[30]

Most critics seemed to agree that there were good possibilities in Miss Pocahontas for a first-rate burlesque, if only the piece were revised. But by this time, Barnet's active career as a playwright had come to an end, and he had problems of a different nature to solve. It is possible that Barnet expected more of his producers. E. E. Rice took the responsibility for revising and adding to Barnet's shows when the two had collaborated in the past. The revisions kept the shows "up to date," if not always fresh.

It is uncertain what happened to the production of Miss Pocahontas after it left New York, though it may have resumed its road tour with some success. There is no further evidence of the show returning to Boston.

Miss Pocahontas was revived in December 1913, at the

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[30]The Theatre (December 1907): xix.

Castle Square Theatre in Boston. Actor-manager John Craig produced the show; he had been responsible for a major revival of Jack and the Beanstalk in 1910. The production was co-directed by Robert Baker--presumably the same man who had collaborated on the book and lyrics of the play with Barnet--and featured, in a very small part, an actor by the name of Alfred Lunt.[31] The Boston press greeted the show warmly and with nostalgia:

> "Miss Pocahontas," the sixth annual holiday extravaganza at the Castle Square Theatre since John Craig has been manager, will be put on Tuesday evening for a brief run. This was one of the Cadet shows, written by Robert A. Barnet and Robert M. Baker, with music by D. J. Sullivan.[32]

> It was on a Christmas Eve in the fifties that John Brougham brought out his famous burlesque of "Pocahontas," which held the stage for many years, and it was while Robert A. Barnet was writing extravaganzas for the Cadets that the playwright, with the assistance of Robert Baker, made a burlesque on early American history entitled "Miss Pocahontas." . . . Once before has Mr. Craig taken a "Cadet show" and mounted it for the amusement of his patrons during the Christmas holidays, and last night at the Castle Square he brought out "Miss Pocahontas," with proper attention to scenery and appointments.
>
> "Miss Pocahontas" is an entertainment built for amusement purposes only, although it perhaps may be classed as a play, as there is a semblance of a plot.[33]

Barnet's Cadet plays seemed to suit nostalgic holiday revivals

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[31] The Castle Square Theatre Magazine, Week of 29 December 1913, Harvard Theatre Collection.

[32] Christian Science Monitor, 20 December 1913.

[33] Boston Transcript, 24 December 1913.

in Boston.

There is no further evidence regarding Miss Pocahontas. For Barnet, the show marked the end of his career as a recognized and produced playwright, in spite of his move to New York in an attempt to re-establish his credentials in the professional theatre.

CHAPTER XVII

BARNET IN NEW YORK

After Miss Pocahontas, Barnet remained in New England for two years before moving his family to New York. However, the Barnets did not live in Boston during this time, possibly because of economic difficulties. In an interview, Robert A. Barnet, Jr. had this to say about that period in his life:

> . . . The family went through a crisis in 1906, '07, '08, . . . The older brother [Swasey] got TB and had to go to Saranac . . . and the family was broken up. Father's success was no longer recognized.[1]

It is uncertain whether the financial panic of 1903 hurt the elder Barnet, who was, according to his son, investing his money very badly. But the panic of 1907, which Samuel Eliot Morison called "the worst between 1873 and 1929,"[2] apparently hurt Barnet very badly. According to his son,

> . . . Father got hurt . . . [in] the 1907-08 panic . . . Father was the type that . . . he wouldn't take advice. He wouldn't take advice on finances. And if he had just left his money alone, and left it in the banks, he'd have been better off than what he did. He thought

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[1]Interview with Robert A. Barnet, Jr., Southport, Connecticut, 21 March 1980.

[2]Samuel Eliot Morison, The Oxford History of the American People (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 828.

> he had a chance to get into the change in the theatre. He didn't foresee what movies would do to the theatre. His thinking was the old theatre . . . [3]

The younger Barnet doesn't say what his father did with his money, but he is a competent source for comments on finances. Robert A. Barnet, Jr. was formerly employed by the State of New York in the Department of Banking.

The events following the panic of 1907 are outlined by the younger Barnet. After his father's finances "blew up," his grandfather, Dr. Charles Emerson Swasey, a New Hampshire physician, died (in May 1907). At that time, the Barnet family was living in Barnstable, Massachusetts. Eight months later, Dr. Swasey's wife, Susan Gresham Buck Swasey, also died. Mrs. R. A. Barnet thus inherited from her parents,

> . . . a certain sum. It wasn't very much, and, this is my theory, this money was used to get father straightened out. Part of that money was used to buy the cottage in Osterville, free and clear. So, we moved into that cottage; we used it in the summer, and we stayed there, 1907, '08, and . . . sold that cottage to come to New York.[4]

Although the exact dates are uncertain, the above story seems to check out when compared against the Government Copyright Record. The following entries appear as dramatic works written by Barnet. Note the dates and places of residence for Barnet.

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[3]Interview with Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

[4]Ibid.

The Yankee Princess; Hungarian operetta by R. A. Barnet. (c) R. A. Barnet, Osterville, Mass. 23 January 1908.

Miss Lent of Lloyds; a farcical comedy in three acts, by R. A. Barnet. (c) R. A. Barnet, Barnstable, Mass. 9 May 1908.

That Girl O' Mine; in two acts, by R. A. Barnet and Manuel Klein. (c) R. A. Barnet, Osterville, Mass. 12 August 1908.

The Star Spangled Baron; a musical play, by R. A. Barnet. (c) R. A. Barnet, Osterville, Mass. 1 October 1908.[5]

It is uncertain whether any of these plays were actually performed, though some evidence points to a local Boston production of That Girl O' Mine. The Barnstable address during 1908 may have been an office, or some other such business connection which Barnet had established when living there the previous year.

The Barnet connection with Osterville goes back at least to 1906, when Barnet produced a play there which he had written the year before. Down on the Cape, "an original comedy drama written by R. A. Barnet and R. M. Baker,"[6] was a four-act play about life in a small New England town. Baker had collaborated on the book and lyrics for Miss Pocahontas, and it is likely that this play was written just after the Cadet show opened--or perhaps during the long rehearsal period just prior to its opening. A preview article

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[5]Government Printing Office, Dramatic Compositions Copyrighted in the United States, 1870 to 1916 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1918), p. 2871.

[6]Boston Sunday Globe, 19 August 1906.

in the Boston Sunday Globe gives the cast list for Down on the Cape and a short synopsis of the action of the play. The show was apparently a melodrama--it may not have been a musical--and included a knife fight and a drowning incident. The amateur production, directed by Barnet, was scheduled to open on 23 August 1906, and had been long sold out, according to the Sunday Globe article. Down on the Cape was apparently sponsored by the village improvement society of Osterville, and may have been commissioned in order to help raise money for the town, or for some project sponsored by the town. The article ended by saying:

> . . . This performance is given for the purpose of copyrighting the play, which is later on to be given an elaborate professional production. Copyright performances of new plays have frequently been given in England. This will, so far as is known, be the first copyright performance in this country where the roles have been taken by local characters seen in the play.[7]

Barnet also appeared in the play, in the role of Captain "Bill" Hersey, apparently because the original performer--perhaps the real Captain Hersey, if the above account is true--didn't want to play the part.[8] If, indeed, Barnet wrote a play about Osterville and peopled it with its actual inhabitants, he must have been familiar with the town, and may have spent summers in the family cottage before 1906.

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[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid.

Sometime in 1908, the Barnet family moved to New York, and according to R. A. Barnet, Jr., occupied an apartment at 137th Street and Broadway.

> . . . Father had come to New York with the idea that he could win his way into the theatre business, but the character of the theatre had changed . . . so much, that his services weren't any longer demanded . . . We didn't have a very close relationship with our father after 1908.[9]

It is difficult to follow the elder Barnet's career upon his arrival in New York. There are several documents which give some interesting information about his attempts to re-enter the world of professional theatre. His difficulties are painful to follow, but his persistence and his constant desire to resume his career as a playwright are admirable traits of his energetic character.

Robert A. Barnet, Jr. suggests that his father was given an office space in the backstage area of Daly's Theatre by a man whom Mr. Barnet identifies as Daly's brother-in-law, Jim Duff. Whether this information is wholly correct or not, there is evidence which shows that the elder Barnet used Daly's Theatre as a temporary business address.

The rights to Barnet's Queen of the Ballet had been bought by Augustin Daly shortly before he died in 1899. Barnet may have become familiar with the Daly organization through this connection. An autographed photo of Daly is

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[9]Interview with Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

part of the Barnet collection of prominent theatre people who knew and worked with the playwright. The other bit of information is a rejection letter from the Klaw and Erlanger organization. This letter reads:

New York, July 13th, 1909.

Mr. R. A. Barnet,
Daly's Theatre, City.
Dear Mr. Barnet:-
Messrs Klaw & Erlanger have asked me to return the manuscript of "CAPTAIN CY", which I am mailing to day, care Daly's Theatre.
The play has been carefully read and like [sic] very much, the only objection being that it is not of that class of plays that they are producing.

Very truly yours,

B. D. Stevens[10]

This letter shows that Barnet was using Daly's Theatre as his business address, and that he was trying to get back into active work as a playwright. Klaw and Erlanger had been the professional producers of Jack and the Beanstalk. There is no manuscript copy of Barnet's play Captain Cy among the Barnet family papers.

The next update on Barnet's attempt to get a play produced is another rejection letter, this time from (and signed by) David Belasco:

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[10]Letter in possession of Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

August 31, 1911.

Mr. R. A. Barnet
47 W. 29th St.,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Barnet:-

I read your play with much interest and pleasure. It is very sweet and idyllic, but next season I purpose to devote to big physic [sic] questions.

Of course, I shall always be pleased to read anything you may care to send me.

Faithfully,

David Belasco[11]

It is uncertain what play of Barnet's this refers to; it is also unclear what connection Barnet had with Belasco. None of Barnet's shows were produced by Belasco, but Belasco apparently had assisted in some way in the Clinton Prison production of Barnet's Jack and the Beanstalk in 1902. Possibly, Barnet may have been introduced to Belasco through mutual theatre friends, though the cordial tone of Belasco's letter seems to indicate more than just a casual acquaintanceship between the two.

Three years later, Barnet received another rejection letter from Belasco:

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[11]Letter in possession of Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

Dec. 11, 1914.

Mr. R. A. Barnet
213 W. 85th St.,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Barnet:-

I am glad to have your letter of December 10th, but I would not be interested in a musical play under any circumstances, but as you already know, whenever you have a drama, I shall always be pleased to read it.

With best wishes,

Faithfully,

David Belasco[12]

Again, there is no information about what play this might have referred to. Nor is there any further information about what Barnet's activities were between the years 1908-14. He was evidently writing plays, but was not having any success at getting producers to produce them. He was also changing addresses quite frequently. Barnet was sixty-one years old at the time the First World War broke out, still interested in the theatre, but not having any luck in selling his plays.

The next logical step would have been for Barnet to find some sort of regular employment, and there is evidence that he did just that. Says Robert A. Barnet, Jr.:

> . . . [Hugo] Riesenfeld was managing the Rialto [Theatre], and knew father. And father wrote some of the lyrics for songs . . . which Hugo Riesenfeld either wrote or had written, as themes for the

[12]Letter in possession of Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

> Rialto Theatre. Father was involved in the activities of the moving picture shows and theatres in New York. . . . But father wouldn't change his business . . . I tried to talk to him and he flew at me . . . I said, "this business you're in, why don't you get out, it's not getting you anywhere. Why don't you get into something else." He became a clerk, handling the music of the Rialto, Rivoli, and Capitol . . . They grouped all the music for all the orchestras in those theatres, and father was the librarian. He had to file all that business and keep it in order . . . And he didn't get very much for doing it.[13]

In 1915, S. L. "Roxy" Rothafel converted Oscar Hammerstein's Victoria Theatre into the Rialto movie theatre.[14] Sometime thereafter, Barnet found work there through his friend Riesenfeld. It is uncertain exactly when he went to work there, or how long he remained. In a letter dated 21 January 1919, Barnet wrote to his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Robert A. Barnet, Jr.:

> . . . I am still digging away at the Rialto Theatre in the Music Library. My friend, Riesenfeld, has been made Managing Director and I am going to try to sand-bag him into fixing my position on a basis of permanency, with increased emolument--with a loud accent on the "emolument."[15]

Two months later, 30 March 1919, Barnet wrote a letter to his son, Robert, Jr., saying: "Still go to Rialto afternoons."[16]

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[13]Interview with Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

[14]Mary C. Henderson, The City and the Theatre (Clifton, New Jersey: James T. White and Company, 1973), p. 279.

[15]Letter in possession of Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

[16]Letter in possession of Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

Evidently, he was still working there part-time, and had not convinced Riesenfeld to give him more permanent work. Three years later, in October 1922, Barnet received a slip from the Commissioner of Jurors, County of New York, marked "Trial Juror." On it he certified that his business address was "Rialto Theatre, Times Square," and his occupation was "writer."[17] Barnet was almost seventy years old at the time, and there is ample evidence that he was still writing.

A contract between Barnet and the White-Smith Music Publishing Company of Boston, the company which had published the vocal scores to most of his musical entertainments in the 1890s and early 1900s, was drawn up and signed on 18 March 1924. It concerned the rights to publish Barnet's song, "If I Were a Rose." Barnet agreed to sell the rights to this song to the White-Smith Company in exchange for "a royalty of four cents (4¢) per copy on each and every copy sold by the company of said work, after the first 100 copies have been sold."[18] The White-Smith Company, represented by its president, C. A. White, in this deal had full rights over foreign publication and use, and stipulated that it "is authorized to distribute gratis and without payment of royalty as many copies of the said work when published as it may deem desirable for the purpose of advertising and introducing the

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[17]File on Robert Ayres Barnet, Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

[18]Contract in possession of Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

same."[19] One copy of the contract was drawn up on stationery bearing the letterhead:

The Rialto
Times Square

The Rivoli
Broadway at
49th Street

The Criterion
Times Square[20]

Evidently, Barnet was still employed at the Rialto in 1924, at the age of seventy-one. There is no further mention about how much Barnet received in royalties from this song. Nor is it certain if this was the only song which Barnet sold during his tenure at the Rialto.

Two years later, Barnet signed an interesting contract with an agent by the name of Nicholas deVore on 26 April 1926. The heart of this agreement reads:

> It is hereby agreed that for and in consideration of the sum of One Dollar in hand paid the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, the author does hereby sell, assign and transfer to the agent, all his rights, title and interest as regards all forms of performances for broadcasting, by radio, or wires, or by the combination of both wired and wireless transmission, in and to the following works:
>
> Jack and the Beanstalk
> Three Little Lambs
> 1492
> Show Girl
> Miss Simplicity
> Milady
> Cinderella and the Prince
> Miss Pocahontas
> Tabasco
> Excelsior, Jr.

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[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

Baron Humbug
Prince Pro Tem
Nicolette[21]

Barnet was to be given a yearly balance sheet giving the total amount collected, and was to receive seventy-five percent of that amount. The agent was to receive twenty-five percent. Barnet thus sought to exploit his shows in broadcast form, though it is very unlikely that anything ever came of this. No receipts or annual statements from the agent deVore are among the Barnet papers. It is uncertain who still controlled the stage rights to the shows, though it was probably the many different producers who had bought them to begin with. Barnet was still hoping to make money from his previous work, though in a different medium.

The last evidence of R. A. Barnet's attempts to prolong his career in the theatre are two plays which he wrote in 1926 and in 1927. Both were written under the pseudonym Colby French, which Barnet got from his father, James Colby Barnet, and mother, Jane Ann French Barnet. Both of these plays survive in typescript form, in the possession of Robert A. Barnet, Jr. The first, entitled Fighting Bob, is an adaptation of Richard Brinsley Sheridan's eighteenth-century comedy, The Rivals. Barnet condensed the play into three acts, and provided lyrics for a composer to develop into songs. Barnet articulated his intentions in a "Fore-Word"

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[21]Contract in possession of Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

to the play:

> I have endeavored to adapt the brilliant comedy of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, "The Rivals", to a modern stage form suitable for musical setting without marring the smartness of the dialogue, weakening the values of the situations or changing the characters of Bob Acres, Mrs. Malaprop, Sir Lucius O'Trigger, Lydia Languish, Captain Absolute, Sir Anthony Absolute, Lucy or Fag. The long, original scenes between Faulkland and Julia have been, however, very materially cut and all the soliloquies and asides of the original have been eliminated. The five acts and fourteen scenes have been condensed into three acts and three scenes. In Act II a new character has been introduced: "Beau Popinjay", the Master of Ceremonies, drawn freely from that of Beau Nash ("The King of Bath, the Despot of Fashion") and speaking some of Nash's celebrated jests. The introduction of Ballet, songs, etc., were a feature of the Assembly Balls under Beau Nash's regime. The lyrics are submitted tentatively, to be taken out or changed at the wish of the producer and composer.
>
> "Colby French"[22]

Barnet apparently wrote this play over a period of two years, as the third act bears the date 1927 on its copyright page. Barnet secured two copyrights, one in 1926, and the other in 1927.

As Barnet described in his "Fore-Word," Fighting Bob is little more than Sheridan condensed, with lyrics added. The lyrics are not at all as good as Sheridan's words, and it is not surprising that no mention is made by Barnet of his having found a composer to set the lyrics to music. It is highly unlikely that the play was ever produced, or even

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[22]Robert A. Barnet, "Fighting Bob," 1927, in possession of Mrs. Virginia Killie, New York City.

submitted for consideration. It will not be necessary to discuss this play further, as it represents an idea on Barnet's part which did not come to fruition. But it is Barnet at age seventy-three still attempting to find the right formula for a new theatrical hit. As in his Cadet days, Barnet first went to a piece of existing literature, though not in an attempt to burlesque it as he would have done in the 1890s. Here he wanted to use the words and situations and characters which Sheridan had created for his own purposes.

In 1927, Barnet wrote another play entitled Huggin Court. The surviving typescript, in possession of the Barnet family, shows a musical play in two acts, which, as the title page relates, revolves around

> a shallow court of buildings that once were stables and have been made into attractive living quarters by a group of wage-earning girls. It is suggested by "Sniffin Court" off 36th Street, near 3rd Avenue, New York City.[23]

The wage-earning girls are: Peggy, an aspiring artist; Marion, a writer of commercial poetry and an aspiring playwright; Norah, a society columnist for a local tabloid; and Prudence, a dressmaker's manikin. Into the lives of these girls step many men, including: Jeremiah Huggin, landlord of Huggin Court; Percy Caxton, a divinity student aspiring

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[23]Robert A. Barnet, "Huggin Court," 1927, property of Mrs. Virginia Killie, New York City.

to wickedness; Dick Wellington, a fast-talking man-about-town; and Babe Crawford, an "enfant terrible" who arrives on the scene as Peggy's somewhat mature ward. These eight characters provide most of the action for the play, along with a group of lesser characters. The play itself is basically a light farce-comedy on the order of plays by Charles H. Hoyt (e. g., A Bunch of Keys). This is a play with music, and there are at least fourteen musical numbers written into the typescript. Most of these are duets between one guy and one girl, and for the most part they seem to be fairly well integrated into the action of the play.

Huggin Court appears to be totally original, and was probably based at least partially on Barnet's musings and wanderings in his neighborhood; he lived on East 33rd Street at the time, not far from the court which served as the inspiration for the play. Huggin Court was written twenty years after the last Cadet show, and bears a marked difference in style from Barnet's previous musical entertainments. For one thing, this play has a coherent plot, which, though frivolous at times and weighted by an unnecessary subplot, nevertheless continues through to the end of the piece, without becoming bogged down in any second act specialties. In fact, there are no specialty numbers in the whole piece, though several songs have less to do with the plot of the play than others. The characters in Huggin Court are much more sharply drawn, and their dialogue is better written

than anything Barnet had previously produced. There are still traces of the Barnet pun and superficial word play, but only in passing, and no more than in most light plays of the time. The dialogue is better developed, and strays less from the action of the piece than in previous Barnet shows. There is a great deal of stage business written into the play, and in the second act, Barnet, ever the stage director, actually put in groupings for several key moments in the action. At the end of the first act there is a dream sequence, in which Peggy sees her ward (and future lover) Babe have his head cut off. This dream sequence is a sophisticated conception for Barnet, being something related to the action of the piece and not pure spectacle.

There are, however, elements of Huggin Court which hearken back to Cadet days. On the very first page of the play, the name Tommy Tompkins is mentioned. He was, of course, the hero of Barnet's Prince Pro Tem. Shortly thereafter, an Irish subplot touches the action briefly and tangentially. This is the only remnant of the Irish ballads and characters which plagued all of Barnet's burlesques and extravaganzas. Also, the theme of the "modern girl" is present throughout this piece, as it had been in many of Barnet's previous works, though here there are no songs dedicated to outlining the proper behavior of said "modern girl." As in many Cadet shows, a representative of society is present in Huggin Court, in the person of Mrs. Gramercy,

who promises to help Peggy in her career as artist. Barnet evidently took her name from a fashionable area in New York, as he had borrowed names from Boston in his earlier days. The second act of Huggin Court opens with a familiar stage direction:

> Huggin Court transformed by Huggin into a Venetian scene by the use of Italian Garden stone benches, seats, vases (flower filled), many varied Venetian-Florentine lanterns of different sizes and shapes, decorative hangings, etc.[24]

In this case, however, we do not have another Carnival of Venice, as in Queen of the Ballet, but merely a fancy party to entertain the visiting Mrs. Gramercy. It is interesting to note these elements which had once been so much a part of Barnet's plays, and see the changes which had come over the playwright in twenty years.

Barnet may have also learned from the films of the Rialto Theatre, which he probably attended while working there. There are marginal notes throughout the play which give notations for musical interludes, and seem to suggest that Barnet had become more sophisticated in his knowledge of and appreciation for music. The lyrics for Huggin Court are simple but undistinguished. One is reminded of the fact that Barnet had had little to do with the writing of lyrics during his last half dozen or so shows with the Cadets. It will be

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[24]Ibid.

remembered that he had many collaborators on those shows, and it is likely that Barnet concentrated mostly on the book, and not much on the lyrics.

Huggin Court is a charming musical play, and there is evidence that, this time, music was composed. An agreement filed on 26 April 1927, gives Barnet the rights to one-half of the royalties from Huggin Court, with one-quarter each going to Flora Vicars and Oscar Bradley "for the performing rights of the music."[25] There is no evidence that Huggin Court was ever performed or published, and later that same year, on 25 November 1927, Oscar Bradley signed an agreement to cancel the April agreement. In this later action, Barnet bought "the unpublished manuscripts of music entitled: 'IN THE CANDY SHOP' "EV'RYBODY WANTS A SWEETHEART' 'VENETIAN SEA' 'KISS AND NEVER TELL.'"[26] There is no further explanation of what these manuscripts contained, nor who wrote them. They might have been, in part, works by Barnet, or works that he was interested in revising.

There are no further records on Barnet in the family collection. He died in New York on 26 June 1933, at the age of seventy-nine.

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[25]Agreement in possession of Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

[26]Agreement in possession of Robert A. Barnet, Jr.

CHAPTER XVIII

CONCLUSION

Robert Ayres Barnet was a prolific writer of extravaganzas for the American musical stage between 1890 and 1906. During that sixteen year period, Barnet collaborated on fifteen major shows, ten of which were produced professionally. He was the leading playwright in Boston during his active career, and collected royalties from shows which were produced in New York and throughout the country.

In attempting to sum up Barnet's career, one must remember the type of person he was, as reflected in his life and work. The son of a man whose business connections brought him into contact with the theatre, Barnet was himself a businessman whose interests in amateur dramatics and charitable endeavors led him to a career as a playwright. His avocation thus became his vocation. Weaned on post-Civil War American theatre styles--the burlesques of John Brougham, the pantomime of George L. Fox, minstrelsy and variety--Barnet combined elements from all of these to create heterogeneous musical entertainments well-suited to the audience expectations of the 1890s. The last decade of the nineteenth century represented a "coming of age" for America, as she put behind her

the scars of the Civil War and the tenets of the Monroe Doctrine, and emerged into the twentieth century as a fledgling world power. The new patriotism and social consciousness called forth during this era were reflected in Barnet's works. His association with the Boston Cadets, his persistent use of military themes and airs, his glorification of the chorus girl and the "new woman," and his constant desire to be "up to date," all reflect Barnet's awareness of the era. Only when styles began to change (when Viennese Operetta began to dominate the American musical stage in 1907) and financial difficulties began to plague Barnet, did his prolific career as a produced playwright begin to wane.

Judged by today's standards, Barnet's shows were rather inconsequential, loosely-connected excuses for singing, dancing, and general spectacle. There was little serious attempt at unity of plot or character, and the jokes read as limited examples of minstrel wit. There seems to be nothing to distinguish them from other musical offerings of the period, save Barnet's most popular work, 1492, which capitalized on historical good fortune (the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of the New World) and the adroit manipulations of producer Edward E. Rice, to produce one of the era's longest-running and most popular shows. Otherwise, New York critics generally dismissed Barnet's shows, though New York theatre-goers appeared to enjoy the specialties and the chorus girls.

Barnet's shows, however, were overwhelmingly popular

in Boston, where critics and theatre-goers alike praised and patronized their productions, whether in amateur form with the Cadets or in professional form under the management of local or New York producers. According to the evidence, Barnet's shows were also very popular on the road, in major American cities. Barnet's lack of recognition by theatre historians may possibly be explained by the limitations of existing studies on the American musical theatre of the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries. Newer studies, such as Gerald Bordman's The American Musical Theatre, in which Barnet is frequently mentioned, are beginning to pay more attention to the earlier forms from which the American musical comedy of the twentieth century emerged. Such attention should bring about the "rediscovery" of an R. A. Barnet.

In the writing of his plays, Barnet was strongly influenced by several factors. The first was minstrelsy. Barnet had participated in several amateur minstrel groups as both writer and performer before turning to playwriting. Under the guise of the character which he called Professor Samuel Howla, Barnet entertained and became popular with Boston audiences. The stump speeches which he wrote for this character, and the general sense of humor which he developed through minstrelsy, not to mention the variety of songs which he became familiar with, strongly affected his later playwriting. Barnet's produced plays were full of

minstrel wit, plantation songs, and an occasional stump speech, as well as specialty acts. Minstrelsy dogged Barnet's creative work, and was involved in the disharmonious structure of most of his plays.

Another important influence on Barnet were the works of the English comedy genius Sir William S. Gilbert. This author of the Bab Ballads, and collaborator on the Savoy operettas, left an indelible mark on light musical entertainments of the late nineteenth century. His output, which included plays as well as the aforementioned operettas and ballads, was enormous. He was, in addition to writing, the stage director for most of the operettas. Barnet was frequently compared to Gilbert: he, too, was a writer of enormous energy, as well as a stage director and an actor. But there the comparison ends. Gilbert's wit was refreshing and satirical; his musical shows were tightly structured with well-developed plots and characters. He collaborated with a single composer, Sir Arthur Sullivan, and benefited greatly from Sullivan's genius and from the strength of consistent teamwork. Barnet's wit consisted of puns and the shallow word play of minstrelsy; his musical shows were loosely structured, wildly heterogeneous affairs, succeeding more because of their specialty acts and numbers rather than plot and character. He collaborated with many composers, offering some their first opportunity to write a full-length show, but he never achieved the sense of steady teamwork

which helps to create better works. Furthermore, Barnet borrowed heavily from Gilbert: he copied the typical Gilbert character song; he paraphrased passages of Gilbert's choral introductions; he created comic opera heroes in the Gilbertian mold. Barnet, however, was no American Gilbert, as he was sometimes called by the admiring Boston press.

Yet another influence on Barnet was the late nineteenth century American movement toward local color in literature and drama. Here, though Barnet never achieved the stature of Mark Twain or Augustus Thomas, his shows nevertheless did contain elements of local color and characteristic American flavor. Barnet wrote his plays initially for Irish Boston, and the Irish characters and ballads throughout the body of his work are many. Local scenery was also an important element in some of Barnet's shows, as Boston newspaper descriptions point out. But Barnet's localisms, like his minstrel wit, elicited some harsh criticism. The "tall tale" aspect of some of Barnet's shows further illustrates the playwright's concern with American literary trends. Though Barnet never took advantage of his fascination with the nursery rhyme to write an American "tall tale extravaganza," he did suggest the possibilities for such a type of show through several of the characters which he created, such as Tommy Tompkins from Prince Pro Tem.

Barnet was further influenced by history and literature, particularly in the writing of his early plays, many

of which were termed burlesques. Injured Innocents was a travesty of the English ballad "Babes in the Wood." Columbus' discovery of the New World, and comments by such writers as Washington Irving, provided fuel for the creation of 1492. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem "Excelsior" gave Barnet a starting point for Excelsior, Jr. Alexandre Dumas and Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton provided literary material which inspired Barnet's Miladi and the Musketeer. But Barnet's principal influence from literature might be considered Mother Goose. The nursery rhymes and children's stories which inspired Jack and the Beanstalk, Simple Simon, and parts of Cinderella and the Prince had a direct influence on all of Barnet's later plays, including the five-play extravaganza cycle (1898-1903). Nursery rhyme characters and situations were perfectly suited to Barnet's sense of musical extravaganza. The unity of plot and character, and the imaginative weaving together of seemingly disparate tales, made Jack and the Beanstalk one of Barnet's best and most frequently revived plays. That he never further developed the potential which he displayed in Jack and the Beanstalk may be attributed to Barnet's willingness to satisfy the popular demands of his audience.

Possibly, Barnet was not truly a first-rate theatre talent. He was a businessman with modest amateur dramatic experience who suddenly found himself, at the age of forty, the author of America's most popular play, 1492. As the

royalties began to pour in from more than 450 performances in New York and years of touring the country, Barnet decided to concentrate his energies on playwriting, while maintaining secondary business interests as an importer of French champagne. He became a theatre man by chance, but once committed, devoted his considerable energies in that direction. Essentially, however, he was an amateur dramatist, and in spite of local fame, he worked and waited forty more years until his death in New York, in 1933, for another professional hit to match 1492.

Barnet's shows were generally simple in structure, though they began to grow more complex at the end of his active career. As his sense of spectacle developed, Barnet took advantage of the opening chorus to introduce both his setting and his many performers in as lavish a manner as possible. Act finales also became musically complex, as Barnet was often motivated to use them to further the plot rather than simply to repeat songs from the act which was ending. The number of musical offerings increased, from approximately fifteen in the 1890 production of Injured Innocents, to about twenty-seven in the later extravaganzas. The character songs which Barnet developed from Gilbert in the early burlesques and children's shows were largely abandoned in the extravaganza cycle. They had become strong lyrically, but Barnet seemed to lose interest in creating weighty characters. Barnet's love songs, which early on were

influenced by grand opera, remained a weak element throughout his shows. He consistently wrote better love songs for one voice, but even these were overloaded with sentimentality, childishly simple rhyme schemes, and ponderous repetition of stock phrases expressing ideal love. Barnet wrote his best love songs in Jack and the Beanstalk, but thereafter seemed content to substitute more topical love ballads--often not related to the situation in the particular show--for a genuine song between the characters involved.

Barnet's characters seemed to be reflections of himself: full of energy but not particularly focused. Many, such as Tommy Tompkins from Prince Pro Tem, and Slipik, the Baron Humbug, were partly minstrel performers, as was Barnet. His male characters were generally better drawn than his female characters, who were often mere love interests. When Barnet's plays were performed professionally, many of the male leads, such as H. Wadsworth Excelsior and Jack (from Jack and the Beanstalk) were played by women as "breeches" or "trousers" roles. Barnet's best characters were those eccentrics who peopled most of his shows: the two ruffians from Injured Innocents, the Grand Vizier (which he wrote for himself) from Tabasco, the golfing trustees Brassie Bulger and Willie Putter from Queen of the Ballet, and My Man Blossoms from Miss Simplicity. These characters, along with most of the characters from Jack and the Beanstalk--Barnet's strongest show in terms of character development and his most Gilbertian

in that way, also--shared acommon bond of creative inspiration which represented the best of Barnet's efforts as a playwright.

The plots which Barnet created became thin and meandering in the second or third acts, when the specialties took over. His ideas for shows were generally good, but Barnet rarely developed the plots, with the exception of Jack and the Beanstalk.

The overwhelming plot destroyer of Barnet's shows was the specialty. At first, Barnet was influenced by minstrelsy, and the hodgepodge mixture of songs and dialogue of the olio. Later, Barnet came under the spell of vaudeville, with specialty performers following one after the other in a barrage of songs and comic dialogue. Specialties were a major part of every Barnet show, with the possible exception of the 1890 version of Injured Innocents. Barnet structured his plays around them, allowing the plot and the development of character to be interrupted by the flurry of songs and dances. The amount of dancing in his shows increased many times from Injured Innocents to Miss Pocahontas; in the extravaganza cycle, hardly a musical number went by without the accompaniment of a dance. In Cinderella and the Prince, one of Barnet's last musicals, almost the entire second act was given over to specialties, the likes of which were not far removed from a typical minstrel olio. Barnet seems to have come full cycle, from minstrel performer through playwright and back to minstrelsy. That he would allow his plays

to suffer the incursions of the specialty and even designate the plays occasionally as mere "excuses for singing and dancing," points out his desire to please his audiences.

Barnet, however, was a recognized professional playwright. His shows were produced by some of the most important people in theatre: Edward E. Rice, Oscar Hammerstein, and Klaw and Erlanger of the Syndicate. Many of his productions were successful in New York and in road tours around the country. Barnet's shows provided important and profitable popular successes for the major professional theatres in Boston. Barnet provided character vehicles for some of the more important actors of his day: Fay Templeton, Frank Daniels, Marie Cahill, and Madge Lessing. He was recognized throughout New England and in some New York theatre circles as a major contributor to the American musical theatre.

In the final analysis, Barnet's works were as topical as the songs and specialties of which they were composed. As an amateur playwright, stage director, costume designer, and actor, he was extremely successful. As an energetic and charitable individual who devoted his considerable energies to entertaining people, he gained a large measure of well-deserved local celebrity. As a professional playwright, librettist, and lyricist, Robert Ayres Barnet was an important transitional figure who contributed to the development of the popular American musical theatre, and is deserving of attention and recognition for his large body of work.

APPENDIX

STAGE WORKS OF ROBERT AYRES BARNET

Title	Date	Collaborator(s)	Amateur Producer	Professional Producer
Injured Innocents	1890, 1891	music: Carl Pflueger	Boston Cadets	(no professional production)
1492	1892	music: Carl Pflueger	Boston Cadets	Edward E. Rice
Prince Pro Tem	1893	music: Lewis S. Thompson	(no amateur production)	Robert A. Barnet
Tabasco	1894	music: George W. Chadwick lyrics: Edward A. Church	Boston Cadets	Thomas Q. Seabrooke
Excelsior, Jr.	1895	music: George L. Tracy	Boston Cadets	Edward E. Rice
Jack and the Beanstalk	1896	music: Alfred B. Sloane	Boston Cadets	Klaw and Erlanger
Simple Simon	1897	music: Alfred B. Sloane	Boston Cadets	(no professional production)

Title	Date	Collaborator(s)	Amateur Producer	Professional Producer
Queen of the Ballet	1898	music: Edward W. Corliss lyrics: Frederic W. Arnold additional musical numbers: Alfred Norman G. L. Tracy H. L. Heartz Hastings Weblyn	Boston Cadets	(Augustin Daly)* Edwin Knowles
Miladi and the Musketeer	1900	music: H. L. Heartz lyrics: W. M. Browne Ogden Ward additional musical numbers: G. L. Tracy E. W. Corliss D. K. Stevens R. G. Morse	Boston Cadets	A. H. Chamberlyn Oscar Hammerstein
Miss Simplicity	1901	music: H. L. Heartz lyrics: Edward A. Church D. K. Stevens additional musical numbers: E. W. Corliss Clifton Crawford	Bank Officers' Association	Kirke La Shelle

Title	Date	Collaborator(s)	Amateur Producer	Professional Producer
The Cap of Fortune and The Show Girl	1902	music: H. L. Heartz E. W. Corliss lyrics: D. K. Stevens additional musical numbers: M. W. Daniels L. S. Thompson	Boston Cadets	Edward E. Rice
Baron Humbug	1903	music: L. S. Thompson lyrics: D. K. Stevens additional musical numbers: M. W. Daniels B. C. Henry E. W. Corliss D. K. Stevens	Bank Officers' Association	(no professional production)
Cinderella and the Prince	1904	music: Louis F. Gottschalk E. W. Corliss lyrics: D. K. Stevens additional musical numbers: J. S. Chapman D. J. Sullivan D. K. Stevens	Boston Cadets	(no professional production)

Title	Date	Collaborator(s)	Amateur Producer	Professional Producer
Boodle & Co.	1905	music: John Densmore book and lyrics: Harold Otis	Boston Cadets	(no professional production)
Miss Pocahontas	1906	music: D. J. Sullivan book and lyrics: R. M. Baker additional musical numbers: H. H. Luther Carl Willmore	Boston Cadets	R. L. Giffen

*died before producing show

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