Maria Serena Marchesi

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Dir. Resp. (aut. Trib. di Verona): Guido Avezzù
P.O. Box 149 c/o Mail Boxes Etc. MBE150)
Viale Colonnello Galliano, 51, 37138 Verona (I)

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5 November 1866

1.1 *Henry Irving and The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*

The night of Monday 5 November 1866 was rather cold and windy in London. The day had been cloudy and overcast, and yet the theatres were full of activity. At Drury Lane, Phelps was playing Faust, at the Olympic Alfred Wigan was acting in Dickens and Collins's play *The Frozen Deep*, with Lydia Foote – an actress "known to be apt for serious and earnest parts, who has sometimes mind in her voice and speech in her face" (Morley 1974: 309) and who was also the celebrated playwright Dion Boucicault's latest romantic interest (Fawkes 2011: 163) – in a supporting role. At the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Boucicault himself was starring in his latest success, *The Long Strike*, together with his wife, the long-suffering Agnes Robertson. At the Haymarket, Charles Mathews was starring in *The Critic*.[1]

[1] See "Meteorological Observations" for the preceding week in *The Morning Post*, 12 November 1866, and the theatrical notices from the contemporary press, e.g. *The London Daily News*, 5 November 1866. Even setting aside this particular night, the 1866 season highlights are impressive and crowded with names that are now part of theatrical history. Besides Boucicault's *Long Strike*, which ran from 15 September with Dion Boucicault, John Emery and John Cooper at the Lyceum Theatre, there was Boucicault's *The Flying Scud or Four-Legged Fortune* at the Holborn Theatre from 6 October, and from 27 October Lydia Foote and Dominic Murray in Wilkie Collins's *The Frozen Deep* at the Olympic Theatre. Lastly, on 29 December, the first comedy by W.S. Gilbert, *Dulcamara or The Little Duck and the Great Quack*, opened at the St James's Theatre, with Miss McDonnell, Miss Addison and Mr Charles (Tanitch 2010: 206-9).

All quotations from and references to British Victorian newspapers are taken

At the St James's, a young actor with moderately good looks and already in possession of a certain provincial renown, went on stage to play the part of Rawdon Scudamore, the villain in one of Dion Boucicault's latest plays, the newly renamed *Hunted Down, or, The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*. When the curtain fell, the audience knew that something momentous had happened: they had witnessed something unprecedented. As often happens in the wake of such critical moments, there are several anecdotes and famous words by famous people. These are often too good not to be spurious, but one episode that can be found in many sources has a peculiar ring of truth about it, and it may be worth mentioning here:

> George Henry Lewes, the essayist and critic, visiting the theatre with George Eliot remarked: "In twenty years he'll be at the head of the English stage." To which George Eliot replied: "He is there, I think, already". (Anonymous 1939: 53)

Writing many years after he had seen the London première of *Hunted Down*, Clement Scott, by then a broken man, in exile on the Continent, still remembered that first night and wondered:

> I suppose that we did not quite know why Henry Irving was so good. I for one felt it was something I had never seen before . . . I have thought it all over since, and have arrived at the conclusion that it was the early dawn of strong, natural action in drama. Irving was one of the very first to break the captive fetters of the artificial school. It was not only that he looked Rawdon Scudamore so well, or dressed the part so correctly, but he seemed the absolute man that Boucicault described. It was not acting as we knew acting then. (Scott 1986: 2.4)

Rawdon Scudamore was not Irving's first part within the St James's company. He had been there for some weeks already, and played minor roles, such as Doricourt in *The Belle's Stratagem*, and other lesser roles. Neither was it the first time Irving played Scudamore: the play, with its first title *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*, had had a provincial début in Manchester, with Irving as Scudamore,

from the online British Newspaper Archive (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk).

alongside Kate Terry,[2] and the aforesaid Lydia Foote, who was also a veteran in Boucicaultian roles.[3] But he had come to London to play Scudamore, and maybe he had played Scudamore in Manchester with the hope of gaining the influential Irish playwright's recognition, so that one day he could come to London and play the role that had been such a major success in the provinces.

1.2 *Henry Irving and the St James's Theatre*

By the time he met Irving, Boucicault was in his forties and already a celebrity. Only a few years before, in 1860-61, he had achieved a resounding success with his play *The Colleen Bawn*. The play had run at the Adelphi Theatre, London, for nearly a year – the first long run in theatre history – and, due to its unprecedented success, Boucicault had received a share in the management of the theatre from Benjamin Webster (Fawkes 2011: 125-8). Nevertheless, nearly twenty years before, his beginnings had been those of a provincial actor, until 1841, when his comedy *London Assurance* was accepted by Charles Mathews and Madame Vestris for the Covent Garden Theatre (Rowell 1972: 17-40). The comedy was an instant success, and besides being his first great professional achievement, thanks to Madame Vestris's stagecraft, with its pioneering realism in stage properties and scenery (Rowell 1972: 35), it also proved to be an

[2] Kate Terry was "considered by some, including her father, to be one of the best young actresses on the stage. She appears to have been perfect for playing the pure young heroines of the time. In 1867 she met and married Arthur Lewis in the teeth of his family's opposition, and was wafted from the background of theatrical digs to the heights of Campden Hill, where she lived in great grandeur with relays of servants. The play *Trelawny of the Wells* is supposed to have been based on Kate's romance". Kate Terry was the grandmother of Sir John Gielgud (Bingham 1978: 65; Holroyd 2008: 49-51).

[3] Fawkes 2011: 163-4. According to *The Era*, 5 August 1866, *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh* premièred at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, on Monday 30 July 1866. Mary Leigh was played by Kate Terry, John Leigh by J.C. Cowper, Clara by Lydia Foote, Lady Glencarrig by Miss Bufton, Mrs Bolton Jones by Mrs Stephens. Still according to the same source, on that occasion "Miss Terry made the 'hit' of her career". Lydia Foote had played Ducie Blennerhasset in the first London run of *The Colleen Bawn* at the Adelphi Theatre in 1860 (Rowell 1972: 176).

important influence on Boucicault's later experiences as a director.

Sir Squire Bancroft, who knew him well, observed that at this early stage of his career, Irving "was by no means himself, . . . he had a strong smack of the country actor in his appearance, and a suggestion of the type immortalized by Dickens in Mr Lenville and Mr Folaire" (qtd in Craig 1930: 25). Still very much unlike his mature, iconic self, by 1866 Irving had been performing in provincial theatres for several years, and had been experiencing the typical routine of a stock company actor, based on the managers' practice of continuously varying the bills, often at very short notice. That was the common lot of the provincial actor: even an ex-child performer like Marie Bancroft recalled her days in provincial theatres – in particular at the Edinburgh theatre under Robert Wyndham – as a necessary "apprenticeship", because a young actor would play "every line of character in the theatrical pharmacopoeia, from farcical comedy to high tragedy . . . before settling on the branch of art in which to seek and work for future excellence", in other words, as she put it, "I was made Jack-of-all-trades, acting anything and everything" (Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 14). Her husband too had, as a young actor, played "all sorts of parts in nearly every kind of play" (ibid.: 68). He recollected playing 346 parts in four years and four months (ibid.: 80). As for Irving, he played 667 roles in his working life (Saintsbury 1939: 409), 588 before he was engaged for *Hunted Down* (Anonymous 1939: 56).

It was a very demanding routine: the average actor was required to be word-perfect in an incredibly vast number of roles, often at very short notice, and he also had to provide his own costumes and accessories, often at considerable expense. For this reason, some actors ran into debt.[4] Speaking at a dinner of the Royal General

[4] Due to Richard Prince's later notoriety as the murderer of William Terriss, the Adelphi leading man and Irving's friend and former associate, some of the pleading letters he wrote to the Actors' Benevolent Fund have been preserved. Prince was an unsuccessful actor with mental problems, whose already precarious sanity was finally destroyed by his lack of recognition. Some time before he murdered Terriss in a fit of insanity, Prince had asked for the Fund's assistance, recalling how he had been left destitute, among other reasons, by the need to provide his own costume for the role of some aristocratic characters (Rowell 1987: 70).

Theatrical Fund in 1875, Irving described the predicament of the provincial actor "who has to play lords, dukes, and electors, and Counts Palatine and dress them all himself" (qtd in L. Irving 1989: 70). The anxious hunt for cheap costumes is also described by Marie Bancroft, in a touching passage from her memoirs where she recalls how, looking for cheap boots for a burlesque – when, as a teenage actress, she was trying to secure an engagement and was desperate for money – she ended up purchasing the boots of a dead child performer (Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 18-20).

Swords and rapiers, for instance, "the essential furniture of romantic drama" (L. Irving 1989: 56), were often required and rather expensive items. This may be one of the reasons why in later life Irving became a keen collector of this kind of theatrical paraphernalia, acquiring, for instance, the sword and poniards that had belonged to the likes of Edmund Kean (L. Irving 1989: 284, 477).

When in 1856 the eighteen-year-old Henry Irving – then still John Brodribb and a junior clerk in the City – received £100 from an uncle, he invested some of it in buying the tools of the trade he had chosen: "[W]igs, buckles, lace, feathers, sham jewellery, and, last of all, three swords" (L. Irving 1989: 61).[5] Then, on 11 September 1856, he joined the stock company of the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Sunderland (ibid.: 64-7).

After a season in Sunderland, in January 1857 Irving went to Edinburgh, working at the Theatre Royal and the Queen's Theatre. In the two and half years he spent in Edinburgh, he played over four hundred different parts (ibid.: 91, 94).

Irving's first appearance on a London stage took place during the autumn of 1859, at the Princess's Theatre with Augustus Harris. The experiment proved a total fiasco (ibid.: 95). He had been assigned a minor role in John Oxenford's *Ivy Hall*, which opened on 24 September 1859, and was an adaptation of Octave Feuillet's *Le roman d'un jeune homme pauvre*. Austin Brereton, in the fragment of the authorized biography of Irving he published in 1905 – revised and heavily annotated by the actor shortly before his death – wrote that, when he joined the cast of *Ivy Hall*, Irving

[5] For a touching account of this episode, see ibid.: 60-1.

> discovered that he had only six lines to speak in the opening part of a four-act play – truly, not an encouraging beginning for an ambitious actor who had come to London with some reputation and with the applause of Edinburgh still ringing in his ears. So he obtained his release from his three years' contract – although the manager advised him to remain – resolved not to play in London again until he felt that he could do so with justice to himself. (Brereton 1908: 8)

Thus, he left London and from December 1859 to the following Easter he was at Dublin's Queen Theatre, afterwards joining the company of the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, where he worked under Edmund Glover (L. Irving 1989: 95-7). At Glasgow he made the acquaintance of one of the greatest actors of the previous generation, Charles Mathews *fils*, "who became one of his best and staunchest of friends" (Brereton 1908: 9).

In the late summer he left Glover and went to Manchester, where he was engaged by a manager once referred to as "arrogant, overbearing" – John Knowles, of the Theatre Royal (L. Irving 1989: 104). Irving remained with the Theatre Royal company from September 1860 to 1 April 1865, supporting the likes of Edwin Booth, E.A. Sothern, and Gustavus Vaughan Brooke, and playing his first Hamlet and Robert Macaire, a role that he was to reprise several years later with great success (Brereton 1908: 10; L. Irving 1989: 107-17). It was in Manchester, while playing Hardress Cregan in *The Colleen Bawn*, that he first met Dion Boucicault.

But Irving's promising career in Manchester was cut short by a quarrel with Knowles, which originated in a very peculiar episode. Irving and two friends had been privately performing mock-séances in order to expose a troupe of fraudulent mediums, the Davenport Brothers, who were creating a sensation in Manchester – and in the rest of England – at the time. When asked by Knowles to repeat the mock-séance professionally at the Theatre Royal, Irving refused, and Knowles, enraged, sacked him (L. Irving 1989: 119-22).

Thus, the young actor's peregrinations resumed: in April 1865 he left Manchester for Edinburgh (where, at the Prince of Wales's Operetta House, he again played Robert Macaire) (Brereton 1908: 10), then he found work again in Manchester, Bury, Oxford,

Birmingham, all in a few weeks, then he went to Liverpool, to Douglas, Isle of Man, then to Liverpool again (at Alexander Henderson's Prince of Wales's Theatre from 15 January to 28 July 1866), where, as a character actor in a stock company, he "had his full share of unemployment" (L. Irving 1989: 126; Brereton 1908: 10) and poverty, until, early in July 1866, he received a letter from Dion Boucicault.

1.3 *Irving and Dion Boucicault*

> We cannot regard Mr Irving as a tragedian. He is a versatile character actor, who, like Fréderick Lemaître, plays everything, but shines chiefly in character parts. Fréderick was equally great in 'Ruy Blas' and 'Robert Macaire'; Irving is equally great in 'Louis the Eleventh' and 'Jeremy Diddler'. But Fréderick was not a Talma, and Irving is not an Edmund Kean.
>
> (Boucicault 1926: 54-5)

In April 1876, Dion Boucicault's revision of his own play *Louis XI*, undertaken specially for Irving, opened at the Lyceum Theatre. Irving, of course, was starring in the leading role, which had been Charles Kean's great success in the 1850s (Fawkes 2011: 202). Irving and Boucicault were to meet again many times in the following years, and the actor was to achieve some of his greatest successes in plays by Boucicault, like *Louis XI* and *The Corsican Brothers*. Together, in 1882, they even tried to promote the foundation of a School of Dramatic Art and gave lectures at fundraising events held at the Lyceum (Fawkes 2011: 220-1). The glamorous surroundings and the fashionable audience of those Lyceum events were very distant from the atmosphere of the author and the actor's first meeting, which had taken place in a provincial theatre many years before.

Irving had first met Dion Boucicault in April 1864, when the Irish dramatist was directing the Manchester production of his greatest success, *The Colleen Bawn*, perhaps the most popular play of the 1860s both in Britain and America (Diamond 2004: 224-7). Irving – then still a member of the Theatre Royal company – had been cast as the remorseful and conspicuously ineffective semi-

villain of the piece, Hardress Cregan, and he had rehearsed the part "under the eye of its irascible author … Boucicault, who found fault with the whole company, had no word of praise for the young actor" (L. Irving 1989: 113-14), but he remembered Irving in due course.

The letter Irving received in Liverpool at the beginning of the month of July 1866 was an offer of employment. In a masterstroke of type-casting, Boucicault, two years after *The Colleen Bawn*'s Manchester run, was now offering the actor who had played Hardress Cregan the role of "a heartless scamp named Rawdon Scudamore" (*The Era*, 11 November 1866), the equally ineffective villain of his new play, *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*.[6]

Irving was to become one of Boucicault's pet villains: the playwright chose him again in 1869, to act the part of Compton Kerr, the villain of the piece in *Formosa, or, The Railroad to Ruin*, at the Drury Lane Theatre, premièring on 5 August 1869: it "ran for one hundred and seventeen consecutive nights" (Brereton 1908: 13; L. Irving 1989: 159). The play caused much controversy for its treatment of the prostitution theme, which was considered scandalous at the time (Diamond 2004: 234).

Laurence Irving's pathetic account of how Henry Irving, early in July 1866, while he was still in Liverpool, living from hand to mouth as an actor in a stock company, received the fatal letter from Dion Boucicault, is worth quoting in full:

> He took a hasty glance at the signature – Dion Boucicault. The writer was about to produce a play in Manchester in which he believed there was a good part for him. Suddenly the colour of Irving's world was changed. He knew instinctively that this particular crisis was over. He was so certain of it that when he scribbled the reply in the stage-door-keeper's box, he had the presence of mind to accept Boucicault's offer on the condition that, if the play was sufficiently successful in the provinces to justify a London production, he should play the part in town. (L. Irving 1989: 126-7)

The version of events given by Laurence Irving is accepted by

[6] Bingham makes the point that "presumably when he was having some difficulty in casting his new masterpiece, [Boucicault] recalled Irving. He was a stop-gap villain who could fill the bill – at least in Manchester" (Bingham 1978: 59).

many critics, but by no means by all.[7] The crucial evidence points in another direction: the manuscript submitted by Boucicault to the Examiner of Plays on 30 July 1866, that is on the opening night of the Manchester run, already stated clearly that the play was destined to the St James's Theatre, London, but, whereas it mentioned some of the actors that were meant to be part of the London cast, it left a blank next to the dramatis persona of Rawdon Scudamore (Boucicault 1865). Irving was not mentioned as yet, which means that Boucicault had not made up his mind at the time and that Irving – desperate for money – must have accepted the Manchester role unconditionally.

Thus he returned to Manchester, this time not to the Theatre Royal, but to the Prince's Theatre, where *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh* opened on Monday, 30 July 1866. The leading role was given to Kate Terry, the sister of Ellen Terry, the woman whose partnership with Irving was to establish the myth of Lyceum drama.[8]

The Manchester show was a great success and even if the praise went almost universally to Kate Terry, Irving too received enthusiastic reviews:

> Mr Henry Irving as the rascally Scudamore was little short of perfection. Being an old favourite in Manchester he received an enthusiastic reception. . . . There was a very great house on the evening

[7] For example, Madeleine Bingham: "When Boucicault asked Irving to play Scudamore, the young actor had been long enough on the stage to know that if the word of princes is not to be relied on, the word of authors and theatrical managers is even less stable. He agreed to play the part of Scudamore with the proviso that should the play succeed with the public and be brought to London he should remain in the part. He was beginning to feel the extent of his power" (Bingham 1978: 59). Barry Duncan maintains that it was Boucicault's decision: it was the playwright who "stipulated Irving's engagement as director and as actor of the part he had created" (Duncan 1964: 126).

[8] "Mr Boucicault, with the unerring faculty he possesses of doing the right thing at the right moment, availed himself of the termination of Miss Kate Terry's engagement at the Olympic Theatre to secure her services for his new drama, which was received with rapturous applause, and Miss Terry made the 'hit' of her career . . . Indeed, we overheard Mr Boucicault say, on leaving his box, that this scene was, in 'acting,' equal to the finest effort of Rachel" ("Mr Boucicault's New Drama, 'The Two Lives of Mary Leigh', at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester", *The Era*, 5 August 1866). See also Brereton 1908: 11.

> of the production of the new drama, and the author and most of the performers were called before the curtain, Miss Kate Terry especially receiving enthusiastic applause. (*The Era*, 5 August 1866)

Boucicault liked overseeing the provincial production of his plays. Squire Bancroft recalled how during the Birmingham run of *The Trial of Effie Deans*, the author actually coached him in his part (Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 73). Thus, it was under the jealous eye of the playwright that Irving created the part of Rawdon Scudamore. The importance of "creating" a part was discussed by the actor at length, some years after, referring to his own experience in the smash-hit *The Bells* (1871). His reflections – which would probably have horrified the despotic Boucicault, had he heard them – can also be fairly applied to his creation of the role, and even to his approach to the text in his capacity as the stage manager of the London production of *Hunted Down*:

> My own conviction is that there are few characters or passages of our great dramatists which will not repay original study… There is a natural dramatic fertility in everyone who has the smallest histrionic gift; so that, as soon as he knows the author's text and obtains self-possession, and feels at home in a part without being too familiar with it, the mere automatic action of rehearsing and playing it at once begins to place the author in new lights and to give the passage being played an individuality partly independent of, and yet consistent with, and rendering more powerfully visible, the dramatist's conception. It is the vast power, a good actor has in this way, which has let the French to speak of creating a part when they mean its being first played. (Qtd in L. Irving 1989: 190)

In September 1866 Irving took his benefit – selecting one of the typical Victorian "double" characters that later on were to become his trademark, Bob Brierly, the Ticket-of-leave man, an ex-convict who strives hard to remain honest despite being threatened and blackmailed and who has to cope with the shame of his past:

> [the benefit] of Mr Irving, as we stated last week, came off on the previous Wednesday, and the pieces chosen were the *Ticket of Leave Man* and [James Kenney's farce] *Raising the Wind*. In the former Mr

> Irving appeared as Bob Brierly, in which character he displayed an amount of pathos, and an assumption of such genuine rusticity, so different from his usual line of business, that we feel bound to credit him with an amount of versatility much greater than we could have previously believed. (*The Era*, 2 September 1866)

Shortly after, Irving left Manchester. However, as mentioned above, when he moved to London he did not play Rawdon Scudamore immediately. On joining the St James's Theatre company he first played Doricourt in Hannah Cowley's *The Belle's Stratagem*, opening on Saturday, 6 October 1866, because the production of *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh* had to be postponed,[9] very likely because Miss Herbert was more at ease with lighter comedy characters than the tormented Mary Leigh, or perhaps, being the manageress, she refrained from interrupting a successful trend for her theatre.[10] Even

[9] The decision to postpone the play must have been a sudden one. Unnervingly, the newspapers went on announcing its première on different dates (for example, it was said to be opening on Saturday, 3 November 1866 (*The Era*, 21 October 1866) and on other dates as time went on. It was at the very last, a few days before the opening, that the correct date of the première was given (for instance, *Lloyd's Weekly*, Sunday 4 November, announced its opening for "tomorrow, Monday", at very short notice indeed).

[10] "Under the management of Miss Herbert good fortune seems to have dawned upon this Theatre, which for so many years was unoccupied by Managers, and partially forgotten by the public. The result of her last campaign was, we are glad to believe, perfectly satisfactory in a material point of view, while the fact of Miss Herbert having raised the establishment to a proud position it never previously occupied is beyond dispute. The fair Lessee's experiment was a bold one; but her earnest desire to promote a love and appreciation of the 'old comedies' was at one understood and recognised by those hosts of playgoers, who can now see them performed in almost unbroken succession. Miss Herbert's policy is certainly sound, and is apparently a settled one, for she recommences here with one of the most popular and celebrated comedies of bygone days, *The Belle's Stratagem* . . . The greatest actresses of a past generation have been indebted to this character for much of their popularity; but the oldest playgoer could not surely call to mind any more thoroughly graceful, feminine, and refined reading of the part than that given by the Manageress". Miss Herbert was styled by the journalist "an actress in the school of legitimate comedy" ("Reopening of St James's Theatre", *The Era*, 14 October 1866).

in the light role of Doricourt, the newcomer received some praise:

> Among the new members of the company is Mr Henry Irving, the Doricourt of the evening. Mr Irving is easy and gentlemanly in his manner, and in the scenes where he assumes madness took the audience by storm. He was called on, and has certainly secured his position here by this one impersonation. Mr Irving is an extremely careful actor, and will probably be found a great acquisition to the Theatre. (Ibid. *The Era*)

With its new Dickensian title, *Hunted Down*, it opened nearly a month later, on 5 November 1866. Irving was also appointed stage manager of the theatre, which in Victorian terms meant that, to all effects, he was the director of all the St James's Theatre productions (Brereton 1908: 11; Bingham 1978: 60-1).

The fascination exerted by Scudamore on contemporary spectators is revealing: Boucicault had created a controversial villain, full of doubts but remorseless, witty and endowed with a cynical sense of humour: in many ways, an eminently likeable villain. At least, this was the character presented on the London stage, as it was modified by the author himself – most likely tailored to the actor's abilities – during the run of the play. It was a lesson that turned out to be useful to Irving in later years, when it came to developing his famously multifaceted, controversial villains. Writing on the nature of villainy on stage, in response to some observations of the great French actor Coquelin, Irving reflected:

> M. Coquelin . . . seems to allow to idealism only a very small place in his philosophy. Not the least striking illustration of this defect is his proposition that a hideous soul should have a hideous body, and that Mephistopheles should therefore be represented as an image of deformity. History and fiction alike rebel against such a dictum . . . The greatest infamy in Italian history smiles down upon us in old picture galleries from the perfection of manly dignity and the most delicate loveliness of woman. M. Coquelin's conception is as primitive as the orthodoxy which used to insist that the devil wore horns and a tail. (H. Irving 1926: 48-9)

The keynote of Irving's reading of the character of Rawdon Scudamore was restraint. This was something really unusual given

the role, which would certainly have been easy to play in the traditional melodramatic school, as the contemporary critics immediately noticed:

> This kind of villain we have seen upon the stage more times than we care to mention, and at least twice within a year or two at the St James's Theatre. Mr Boucicault, however, has varied his villain by inspiring him with a love for Mary Leigh, and making his growing affection more annoying to that bewildered creature than his former cupidity. ("Drama: St James's", *London Daily News*, 6 November 1866)

Boucicault had "varied his villain" – as the reviewer quoted above put it – thanks to his experienced hand and his truly remarkable perceptiveness in casting: the audience and the reviewers were struck by Irving's new way of presenting the evil character in the piece, probably partly because the natural, unaffected style he adopted gave the Victorians a glimpse into the banality of evil. *The Era*'s reporter was truly impressed by this toned-down villainy:

> Mr Henry Irving, whose embodiment of Scudamore obtained for him high praise when the piece was first brought out at Manchester, has quite justified the expectations raised respecting his performance in town. The character is one likely to tempt the representative into all the perils of exaggeration; but Mr Irving contrives to render the part forcibly dramatic without making the least approach to the extravagances of the old Coburg School. He has acquired the art of making his features express as much as his lips, and of this faculty the actor makes an equally dexterous and discreet use. (*The Era*, 11 November 1866)

Another reviewer wrote:

> The villain, Rawdon Scudamore, is played by Mr Henry Irving, who strove hard to make the most of a very disagreeable part without descending to the blue-fire level. ("Drama: St James's", *London Daily News*, 6 November 1866)

Hunted Down is also important because it was one of the earliest productions directed by Irving, certainly the first he directed for a London audience. Even though the possibilities of free choice for

a director were extremely limited at the time,[11] Irving made use of the freedom left to him by the all-seeing Boucicault, who evidently trusted him. His notes to the promptbook show that in many ways it was an embryonic version of the directing methods of his later Lyceum productions. This is perceivable, for instance, in his search for realism in the smallest details, such as sound effects or the characters' business. While discussing his later and more famous production of *The Bells*, Irving stressed the importance of extremely realistic sound effects, such as the right way to create the impression of sleigh bells approaching and departing (L. Irving 1989: 190-1). Irving's painstaking search for the right sound effects in order to bring to life his own idea of realism – unconventional, even startling for a Victorian audience – can already be detected in his stage manager's notes to *Hunted Down*, where even the noise made by workmen moving a picture down an off-stage staircase takes precedence over the main characters' dialogue on stage, when necessary (see below). Gordon Craig, who worked at the Lyceum and was naturally very close to Irving, as he was Ellen Terry's son, stated that doubtless, as a director, Irving was indebted to his long experience as the typical Victorian leading actor,[12] but he was also much influenced by Boucicault: "From Dion Boucicault I think he

[11] Referring to the production of Sheridan's plays, Bram Stoker alluded to the extremely codified system to which the St James's Company adhered at the time when Irving was part of it: "This adherence to standard 'business' was so strict, though unwritten, a rule that no one actor could venture to break it. To do so without preparation would have been to at least endanger the success of the play; and 'preparation' was the prerogative of the management, not of the individual player. Even Henry Irving, though he had been, as well as a player, the Stage manager of the St James's Company and could so carry out his ideas partially, could not have altered the broad lines of the play established by nearly a century of usage" (Stoker 1906: 2-3).

[12] "It was the custom in and before Irving's day for the actor of the chief role, whoever he might be, when rehearsing a new play, to call the tune and set the pace. So that Irving, who since 1864 had been playing chief roles, had also slowly developed the craft of producing a play, side by side with the craft of acting it. By the time he came to produce *The Bells*, he had been some eight years an actor producer, and as a production *The Bells* was a masterpiece, as well as a masterly performance" (Edward Gordon Craig, qtd in L. Irving 1989: 91).

derived a good deal. I believe that one of the things taught by Boucicault was the importance of making a theatre pay. He was an experimenter – and so was Irving" (qtd in L. Irving 1989: 131). The Irish playwright's ideas often were too innovative for the times, and perhaps this is one the reasons why he often struck his contemporaries as eccentric and kindly autocratic. The Bancrofts recollected him at work on his own comedy *How She Loves Him!*, produced by them in 1867, directed by the author, and starring the ubiquitous Lydia Foote:

> Boucicault's accomplished power as a stage-manager is too well known to need our praise, and it was a lesson to young managers to sit under him. Sometimes, however, he would change a fragment of the stage business, previously arranged, for the worse – not perhaps an altogether unknown weakness with dramatic authors; there was, we thought, a distinct instance of this at the end of the first act of *How She Loves Him*, which at last got very muddled. An idea struck one of us which was a distinct improvement on what had been rehearsed, but we hardly, in those days, liked to interfere with such an autocrat, kind as we had always found him. (Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 112)

Irving, who "always found implications that no other actor could perceive" (Saintsbury 1939: 404), was a very careful director, as the careful organising of all the characters' movements on stage in his notes to the promptbook shows (see below). There are no contemporary observations on what he did as the stage manager of the St James's Theatre – he was far too obscure at the time – but from the attention to detail that can be perceived in his notes to *Hunted Down*, what Edward Gordon Craig wrote about his Lyceum productions can fairly be applied to his work in 1866:

> When he did love a piece it began to glow. Oh, not alone his own role – that of course – but everyone's role – and every scene – every bit of scenery and every light – I've used the words "affection" and "love" and they are the only two which are rich enough to say what his thought and touch did. And I would prefer to leave the word *art* and artistry out of it – since I believe that as with some few great artists those things actually never occurred to him. (Edward Gordon Craig to Laurence Irving, 23 May 1949, qtd in L. Irving 1989: 203)

Hunted Down ran till 8 February 1867. Irving's next important role with the St James's was that of another melodrama villain in *Idalia*, the stage adaptation of one of Ouida's novels. In April 1867 he was described as giving "a very forcible character study of Count Falcon", the villain in question, naturally with Miss Herbert – the St James's manageress – in the leading role (*The Era*, 28 April 1867):

> Then came Count Falcon in "Idalia," taken from one of Ouida's novels – another dreadful St James's failure – an evening of mishaps, brilliantly related by Charles Wyndham, who was in the cast with Irving. Accidentally, some water had been spilt on a rustic bridge, over which various characters had to pass. The water became frozen, and as each of the important people crossed the bridge, he or she slipped, slid, sprawled, and finally came to grief, much to the delight of the audience. Amongst the "trippers" were Henry Irving and Charles Wyndham. The frozen pool sealed the fate of "Idalia" . . . (Scott 1986: 2.16)

After a brief engagement at the Théâtre des Italiens in Paris during the Paris Great Exhibition, Irving rejoined Miss Herbert for a Provincial tour (L. Irving 1989: 138-50). Virginia Surtees recalls how Irving quarrelled with Louisa Herbert because he had taken up an engagement with the Prince of Wales's Theatre, Liverpool, during the summer of 1868, and he would not have been back in time for the St James's Autumn rehearsals. Thus, according to Surtees, Irving lost his stage manager position and began acting minor parts at the St James's (Surtees 1997: 77-8).

According to Laurence Irving, Irving left the Saint James's Theatre because of a disagreement about his salary (L. Irving 1989: 142-3). In his account there is no trace of the quarrel reported by Surtees.

Irving's stay at the Saint James's theatre is one of the least documented periods in his career. Bram Stoker's celebrated *Recollections* cover a later period, even though Stoker saw Irving on stage for the first time in Dublin during an Irish tour the latter took with the Saint James's company.[13] Shortly before his death, the actor

[13] "The first time I ever saw Henry Irving was at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, on the evening of Wednesday, 28 August 1867. Miss Herbert had brought the

had been revising a draft of an authorized biography, by Austin Brereton. The book was left unfinished due to Irving's death, so the narration stops shortly after the St James's period. Nevertheless, having been revised by the actor himself, it is probably the most reliable source on that particular phase.[14]

Irving played a variety of roles with the Saint James's company. From October 1866 to November 1867 he performed characters as different as Doricourt in *The Belle's Stratagem*, then Rawdon Scudamore, Harry Dornton in Holcroft's *The Road to Ruin*, the O'Hoolagan in *A Rapid Thaw*, Joseph Surface in *The School for Scandal*, Robert Macaire, Count Falcon in *Idalia*, Charles Arundel in *My Aunt's Advice*, Robert Audley in *Lady Audley's Secret*, Harry Thorncote in *Only a Clod*, Charles Torrens in *The Serious Family*, Felix Featherley in *The Widow Hunt*, Charles Mowbray in *A Tale of Procida*, Ferment in *The School for Reform* (Brereton 1908: 73). Some of these roles, notably Robert Macaire, but also Robert Audley, are in line with Irving's future career as a tormented, almost Byronic hero (Irving reprised the role of Macaire – the cynical criminal who pretends to be a gentleman – even during his Lyceum years), some, like Count Falcon, are typical melodrama villains, others are distinguished by a brilliant vein of comedy which in later years was to become less apparent.

The years 1866-67 were not entirely focused on the Saint James's. Irving also worked in other theatres, had his first professional encounter with his future leading lady Ellen Terry, and a brief working experience in France. Brereton's fragment of authorized biography recalls how *Hunted Down*

> had a very successful run, and was succeeded, on February 9th, 1867, by a revival of *The Road to Ruin*, in which Irving acted Harry Dornton. This was followed, on March 3rd, by a comedy, in two acts,

St James's Company on tour, playing some of the Old Comedies and Miss Braddon's new drama founded on her successful novel, *Lady Audley's Secret*. The piece chosen for this particular night was *The Rivals*, in which Irving played Captain Absolute" (Stoker 1906: 1).

[14] The book contains also a facsimile of the page from the typescript referring to the first performance of *Hunted Down*, with Irving's own handwritten comments and revisions.

adapted from Victorien Sardou's *Le Dégel*, by T.W. Robinson, entitled *A Rapid Thaw*, in which Irving played a fortune-hunting Irishman named O'Hoolagan. . . . In July of this year (1867), it may be noted, he acted, for five weeks, in Paris, at the Théâtre des Italiens, with E.A. Sothern. On December 26th, at the Queen's Theatre, Long Acre, he played for the first time with Miss Ellen Terry, acting Petruchio to her Katherine, in a condensed version of the *Taming of the Shrew*. On January 8th, 1868, he acted Bob Gassitt in the first performance in London, at the same theatre, of Henry J. Byron's drama, *Dearer than Life*. So successful was the play that it enjoyed the long run, for those days, of three months. On April 11th, Irving made a hit as Bill Sykes in a dramatic version of *Oliver Twist*, and his benefit at the Queen's Theatre – where, as at the St James's, he was stage-manager – took place on June 1st, when he acted Charles Surface in the *School for Scandal*. On the 5th of the same month, he appeared at the Haymarket Theatre, in a benefit performance, as Cool in *London Assurance*. (Brereton 1908: 11)

Chapter 2

Hunted Down

2.1 *The Play*

> The plot turns upon the now familiar subject of bigamy, and the bigamy of Mary Leigh is only saved from being bigamy by the previous bigamy of her first bigamous husband.
>
> (*London Daily News*, 6 November 1866)

> I am not a tragedian.
>
> (Boucicault 1926: 57)

Hunted Down is the story of Mary Leigh, a young woman who lives in ultra-Victorian domestic bliss with her doting and slightly effeminate husband John, a painter and Royal Academician, and their two children, till she is found out by Rawdon Scudamore – her previous husband, whom she had believed dead. Scudamore, a gambler and an adventurer, at first merely blackmails her, threatening to expose her bigamy, then he tries to seduce her while she is a guest at the country house of her sister-in-law, Lady Glencarrig. Mary resists the attempted seduction and proposed elopement, and in the end order is restored by the intervention of Clara, Rawdon's true wife, who up to the last scene had passed for his mistress.

The audience that packed the London theatre was handed a programme that read:

First Act	The Home of Mary Leigh. A picture by John Leigh R.A. 'Shut in with flowers and spanned by a cloudless sky' A Dark Shadow is flung across the painting.

SECOND ACT	*Scene 1.* Scudamore's lodgings – The Gambler's Home. *Scene 2.* The Bowling Green at Mount Audley
	The Pursuit John's picture becomes faded and the colours fly.
	Scene 3. The Shrubbery – Mary is Hunted Down.
THIRD ACT	The Dark Shadow is dissolved and John Leigh's picture is restored.

(Qtd in Bingham 1978: 59)

The Saint James's production probably recycled some of the scenery made for the successful production of *Lady Audley's Secret*, which had been staged three years previously under the management of Frank Matthews.[1] One of the reviewers stated it clearly, and took the opportunity to criticise this fact and Miss Herbert's ineptitude at the same time:

> The scenery appears to be made up in a great measure from *Lady Audley's Secret*, but having noted this fact, we may say that no scenery could be more effective for its purpose. The lime-tree walks, now called laurel shrubberies, and the Gothic libraries, now called bay rooms, are constantly tempting Miss Herbert into what is called "statuesque noting," but she will learn one day that a few minutes of real emotion are worth a thousand poses under a thousand limelights. ("Drama: St James's", *London Daily News*, 6 November 1866)

Even the fact that Boucicault took the step of changing the name of Lady Glencarrig's country house from Thorpedene to Mount Audley strongly – and perhaps a trifle ironically – points to the borrowing. It must have been an experience from which Irving learnt much, especially when a few years later he had to convince Colonel Bateman to stage a low-cost *Hamlet* for himself, using backdrops taken from earlier Lyceum productions (L. Irving 1989: 240-1).

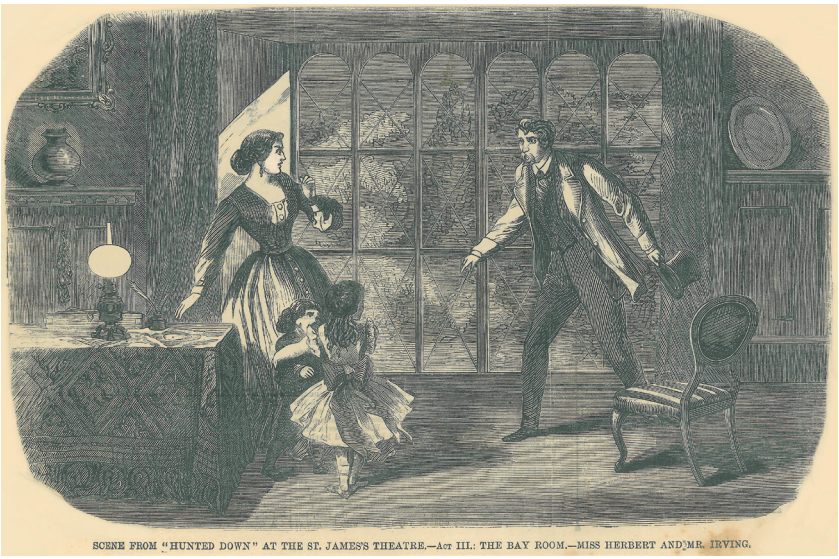
The late Sixties were a time of experimentation in the field of realistic staging. When *Hunted Down* began its London run, Tom Robertson's experiments were still in the – near – future, but Boucicault

[1] William Beveley painted some of the scenes: "The library in Act 1 and the lime-tree walk in Act 2. Three other scenes, however were painted by Fenhouillet and two by Fenton" (Duncan 1964: 118).

had already had some experience in that direction under Charles Mathews, and, anyway, the trend was in the air, especially in the field of melodrama, within whose boundaries Boucicault's works can sometimes be placed: Victorian melodrama was a genre that had a powerful influence on the development of modern stagecraft, because the melodrama audiences' demand for ever increasing realism was very strong (Booth 1965: 63-6). Melodrama aimed to enact a spectacular kind of realism, and Boucicault was not behind the times in this field, with his experiments in visual effects in *The Colleen Bawn* and *The Corsican Brothers*. On the other hand, the search for an illusion of commonplace reality, with the focus on a kind of domestic, subdued realism, was also developing fast: Tom Robertson's *Caste*, which struck the Victorians for its innovative "distinct stride towards realistic scenery" (Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 110), had a very long run from April 1867 at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, culminating in a tour to Liverpool and the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, before resuming its London run on 28 September (incidentally, it was replaced at the Prince of Wales's by one of Boucicault's plays) (ibid.: 106-12). But Boucicault himself, even though he claimed that his work was different from Robertson's, more romantic, more idealised, was a pioneer in that field. In 1868 he wrote that "Robertson differs from me, not fundamentally, but scenically; his action takes place in lodgings or drawing-rooms – mine has a more romantic scope" (qtd in Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 118), and yet his Irish plays had distinctly realistic settings from the start, even *The Colleen Bawn*. And when, years later, in *The Shaughraun* (1874) he had the female lead discovered making butter on stage at the opening of the play, it must have been, to his contemporaries, a shock comparable only to that provoked by Alison with her ironing board in *Look Back in Anger*, nearly a century after.[2]

The only surviving image of a scene from *Hunted Down* (from *The Illustrated Sporting News*, 17 November 1866) shows an extremely realistic setting, with Rawdon Scudamore confronting a distressed Mary Leigh in a gloomy night scene, in an upper-class mansion with glazed windows and the light of an oil lamp on stage

[2] Claire Ffoliot, the main female character in the play, was played by Ada Dyas; for more on this actress, see below.



"Scene from 'Hunted Down' at the St James's Theatre: Act 3, The Bay Room: Miss Herbert and Mr Irving", *The Illustrated Sporting News*, 17 November 1866 (author's collection).

– a fitting interior for the scene of the attempted seduction in Act 3. And the other scenes must have been equally realistic, even if set in the more stylish surroundings of Mount Audley and the shabby chic home of the *roué* Scudamore, if the contemporary reviewers are to be trusted.

In his classic work on Dion Boucicault, Hogan wrote that "*Hunted Down* has another magnificently named villain in Rawdon Scudamore, but not much else", reflecting that although the play "has no sensation scene, it can hardly stand on its literary merits" (Hogan 1969: 70). Not all the contemporary reviewers would have agreed. Unsurprisingly, the most enthusiastic praise came from the radical weekly *Reynolds's Newspaper*, at the time still directed by its founder George W.M. Reynolds, radical journalist and sensation novelist *ante litteram*, who had shocked the British public two decades before with his *Mysteries of London*:

> Mr Boucicault's star is still in the ascendant . . . transplanted to the London stage, where, we suspect, it will take root and flourish for some time. . . . There is nothing of the sensational school in

> the play, but, from first to last, the interest of the story is sustained with striking ability. All the characters are drawn in a masterly manner; none are the conventional beings so often figuring on the boards, but fresh studies from new models. The dialogue is penned in Mr Boucicault's best style: terse, telling, and without a superfluous word, having some sharp touches of satire, and containing many happy thoughts. The piece is likewise perfectly constructed: every situation forwards the action of the plot, and enhances the interest felt in the development of the story. (*Reynolds's Newspaper*, 11 November 1866)

A clear majority of the critics praised the play. One of them, after the Manchester première, wrote:

> The drama exhibits the "sensation" dramatist in a new and very unexpected field. No plot can be more free from effort, or occasion for scenic display. It is a simple domestic story, involving characters drawn from every-day life. The language is clear and vigorous, and possesses that quality in which this author is remarkable – we mean cleanness and clearness. There is not a word too much, nor a thought out of its proper place. (*The Era*, 5 August 1866)

Another, writing during the London run, observed: "The dialogue has been elaborated with great care, and the literary merits of the drama are greater than its constructive merits" ("Drama: St James's", *London Daily News*, 6 November 1866). The critic for *The Era*, writing about the London version, was more enthusiastic:

> The management of the plot is another proof of Mr Boucicault's unrivalled power as a constructive dramatist, and the literary merits of the dialogue are worthy of his reputation as a writer of smart, telling sentences, in which there is not one word more than is absolutely required. (*The Era*, 11 November 1866)

Other critics, notably the *Morning Post* critic, exalted the beauty of the production but damned the play outright; he wrote that, despite "the brilliancy of the acting, or the picturesqueness of the scenery", the play was

> in all respects so inferior to Mr Boucicault's other productions that it puzzles one to think it can have proceeded from his pen. The dialogue is heavy, and there is positively no dramatic action. . . .

> the chief defect of the story is that it is so needlessly lugubrious. From first to last there is not a gleam of sunshine in it. It is painful and depressing to witness the poor wife's hopeless misery, and all the more so that we perceive that there is no cause for it. A few words of explanation would at any moment suffice to clear away all suspicion and set her conduct in its true light. (*Morning Post*, 6 November 1866)

The chief defect of the play, according to adverse contemporary critics, was its gloominess: "No more sorrowful story than that upon which the plot is based has been witnessed in our time upon the British stage", wrote the journalist quoted above, but even favourable critics noted the darkly ominous atmosphere.[3] Most likely, they simply found it disturbing – a play "which weighs on the imagination like a nightmare" (*Morning Post*, 6 November 1866) – fundamentally, because the social and existential issues it raised were not easy to solve and were seldom put before a Victorian audience without the moralising influence of the bourgeois authorial hand that meted out just retribution to all deviant characters One exception was the group of Frenchified sensation novelists like Reynolds, whose paper, not by chance, was loud in its praise for the play. Boucicalt here, as we shall see, is dangerously non-committal about issues that affect what could be called a Victorian ethical standpoint.

If it is true that, as Hogan and others observe, this is not a play of literary distinction, it is also true that it was praised by its contemporary critics and audience as a wonderful *show*. As one contemporary reviewer put it, "The story is so crisply told in action that the mere outline we have given would convey no notion of the strong effect produced by the representation" (*The Era*, 11 November 1866). Besides,

> there can be no doubt whatever that success is due to the interesting story which the dramatist has selected, still more to the ingenious manner in which he has worked up his materials, and not least

[3] Even the otherwise favourable critic of *The London Daily News* observed that "the interest throughout is too glum and too unrelieved by any comic play of character" ("Drama: St James's", *London Daily News*, 6 November 1866).

> the excellent acting of all concerned in the representation. (*The Era*, 11 November 1866)

The mere reading of the text does not do justice to the excellence of the production as a whole, and to the impact of the play in production, which is now, sadly, lost. "The dramatist, to succeed, must amuse" (qtd in Fawkes 2011: 58), Boucicault once wrote. It is not merely a bitter reflection on the cheapness of the public taste, but also means that the paramount importance of the reception of a play in performance is a characteristic of all Boucicault's dramatic productions, and one could apply to *Hunted Down* what the dramatist himself wrote of his first success, *London Assurance*: "It will not bear analysis as a literary production. In fact, my sole object was to throw together a few scenes of a dramatic nature; and, therefore, I studied the stage rather than the moral effect" (Boucicault 1987: 27).

As to the birth of the play, Boucicault himself wrote years later:

> At a dinner party which took place in 1866, the question was discussed as to the value of the literary merit of a play that had recently been produced. One side maintained that the literary element in a drama was rather an impediment than an assistance to popular success.
>
> "Gentlemen," said the host, "Will you permit that this question be settled practically? I propose to write three new pieces; one a society drama, relying mainly on its literary treatment; the second a domestic drama; and the third a sensation drama. The pieces shall be produced at the same time, and I guarantee that the success of each shall be in reverse ratio to its merits."
>
> The proposition was received with roars of laughter. Nevertheless, the three pieces were written. "Hunted Down" was the society drama; "The Long Strike" was the domestic play, and "Flying Scud" the sensation piece. They were produced simultaneously in October, 1866. (Boucicault, qtd in Hogan 1969: 70)

The playwright's version of these events, however, cannot be accepted unconditionally. The three plays did run together in London during the Autumn of 1866, but *Hunted Down*, which premièred in London in November, not October, had already opened in Manchester during the summer.

Despite the simplicity of the plot, it involves most of the typ-

ical elements of melodrama and sensation novels, such as secret marriages, bigamy, *coups de théâtre* based on agnition, and so on (Diamond 2004: 189-217), *Hunted Down* is a complex play. Its complexity derives in the first place from Boucicault's skilful handling of *all* the characters, including the lesser roles, which are neatly characterised and never typified, with a decidedly realistic effect.

Another reason for the play's complexity is its variety of indirect references to themes and events that a contemporary audience would easily have recognized,[4] and which sometimes gives to the whole surprisingly sinister undertones, especially as far as the character of Rawdon Scudamore is concerned.

The first of these sinister echoes is the reference to a notorious murder that would have been immediately recognisable by a contemporary audience, due to its sensational resonance: the Palmer case. William Palmer, a doctor from Rugeley in Staffordshire, was a compulsive gambler, who had virtually left his medical practice in order to spend most of his time at the racecourses with his gambling companions. He practically earned his living by successfully betting at the races. Despite having married for money, after a persistent losing streak and several forgeries, he found himself in desperate straits: he was heavily in debt both with his gambling companions and the moneylenders. His indebtedness led him to murder: he insured the lives of some members of his family – who died shortly after being insured – and, when these murders proved insufficiently rewarding, he poisoned John Cook, one of his racecourse friends and gambling companions, in order to steal the money he had just won at the Shrewsbury races and cancel his own debt from the murdered man's betting book. This last murder proved Palmer's downfall, as he was discovered and condemned to death.

The trial of William Palmer, who was hanged at Stafford in 1856, was given unprecedented press coverage, and Palmer's story, widely popularized, came to be universally known in Victorian England.[5] Racecourses and betting, as well as forgeries and marriages

[4] On the importance of contemporary events in Boucicault's plays, see Fawkes 2011: 96.

[5] For details of the Palmer case and its resonance in Victorian popular culture, see Flanders 2013: 258-73.

of interest, are an important element in *Hunted Down*. Early in the play we learn that Mary's father had met Rawdon Scudamore at the races, and that Mary had been compelled to marry him in order to save her family from bankruptcy, by allowing Scudamore to get the money allotted to her on her wedding day by her mother's legacy. When the play begins, he has just returned from France – where he has been absconding due to some forgery he has committed – he is still a gambler, and racecourses feature prominently in the action of the play.

In creating a villain that has such strong connections with the turf, Boucicault very likely had Palmer in mind. The case of William Palmer had been one of the most impressive "sensations" of the 1850s, and its memory still lingered, even many years later.[6] As Flanders writes, "the sporting connection was, indeed, among the elements of the case that continued to fascinate" (2013: 271).

The "sporting connection" was very much on Boucicault's mind at the time for other reasons, too. The year 1866 saw the production of one of his hits, *The Flying Scud*, which was licensed only a few months after *Hunted Down* and written during the same period.[7] *The Flying Scud* is "A Racing Drama", as the subtitle reads – it inaugurated the popular genre of the "racing melodrama" – (Diamond 2004: 232, 245), and the parallels and similarities are manifold. Tom Meredith is the son of Colonel Meredith, "a great racing man" and becomes a "poor tenant" of the man that had formerly been his "stud groom". Tom is evicted from the cottage by the ruthless heir to his landlord, his nephew Grindly Goodge. The latter is a gambler in his turn and tries to seduce Katey, Tom's fiancée. And all this makes it to the first scene of Act 1. The whole play, whose celebrated sensation scene was the enactment of Derby Day, is set in a world where horse races, gamblers, and forgeries play a very important part, as they do in *Hunted Down*.

Hunted Down, or, The Two Lives of Mary Leigh has more points in

[6] Some critics maintain that as late as 1876 Charles Bravo tried to poison his wife with antimony in imitation of Palmer's method (see Bridges 1970: 301-2).

[7] W.B. Donne's authorization reads: "Received Sept 29 [1866], Licence sent October 9" (Boucicault 1866b).

common with the genre of the sensation novel than with that of the sensation play, of which, after all, Boucicault was the acknowledged master.[8] Unlike the typical sensation play, there is no spectacular element in it, no breath-taking scene. Instead, like the typical sensation novel, it deals with the labyrinths of human relationships and the mysteries that lie beneath a respectable bourgeois home.

The play's stylistic similarities with the genre of the sensation novel were acknowledged by contemporary reviewers:

> Those who go to the theatre expecting to see a drama full of sensational incident or genial humour, such as they have been accustomed to expect from Mr Boucicault, will be slightly disappointed. *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*, the title under which, we believe, the piece was acted at Manchester last summer, with Miss Kate Terry in the part now sustained by Miss Herbert, is what would be called a drama of intense interest, bearing a strong resemblance to the Lady Audley school of pieces, and a stronger resemblance to a play called *The Dark Cloud*, by Mr Arthur Sketchley, which was produced a few seasons back at this theatre. (*London Daily News*, 6 November 1866)

Actually, the malicious hints at Boucicault's plagiarising – often very accurate – were somewhat out of place here. *The Dark Cloud* does have a spotless heroine haunted by the ghosts of her past, but the threat of the *revenant* husband is defeated by the fact that, unlike Rawdon Scudamore, he is very much dead before the rise of the curtain, and the happy ending is secured by the comic man and his wife, two former Australian expats. *The Dark Cloud* had been

[8] On Boucicault's pre-eminence in the field of sensation drama, see Diamond 2004: 224-38. On the definition of sensation play, see ibid.: 218. The thematic differences between sensation drama and sensation novel are not always easy to define, and were certainly not clear to the Victorians. Writing in 1865, Morley complained: "Nobody can feel less mercifully than I do towards some of the claptrap dramas of Mr Boucicault, and the corresponding school of fiction. Always, however, the complaint should be not of their strength of incident, but of their poverty of wit. The sort of 'sensation' novel or play against which protest cannot be too constant and too strong, is that which depends wholly upon the heaping of crime, mystery, and surprises, and relies on tricks of plot or stage-effect, without making any use of the story as means for the subtle development of character, and without any charm of wit or wisdom in the language through which all is told" (Morley 1974: 302).

produced at the St James's theatre, under the management of Frank Matthews, on 3 January 1863. The cast included Frank Matthews as the good-humoured *deus ex machina* Dr Mc Tab, his wife, Mrs Frank Matthews, as, appropriately, the character's wife Mrs Mc Tab, and Miss Herbert as the long-suffering and much-abused heroine, Mrs Caroline Granville.

The vogue of sensation novels was at its peak in the 1860s, and many stage adaptations were produced in that period. The St James's prima donna, Miss Herbert, had recently been the most successful Lady Audley on stage, receiving a touching congratulatory letter from the author of the novel, Mary Elizabeth Braddon. Even setting aside the expediency of recycling the scenery from the *Lady Audley's Secret* St James's production, it must have been partly in order to exploit Louisa Herbert's success in that role that Boucicault renamed "Mount Audley" the country house where most of the play takes place, and which was originally called Thorpedene (see below).

There is another important connection with the character of Lady Audley: the Pre-Raphaelite element. Mary Leigh is a painter's wife and occasional model. Hers is a Pre-Raphaelite beauty and the two actresses who starred in the role certainly reinforced the impression. The first, Kate Terry, like her more famous sister, was a Pre-Raphaelite type – and sat for several paintings of that school – and the second, Miss Herbert, was considered by Rossetti to be the ideal Pre-Raphaelite beauty, the "number one stunner", as he put it (see below). In the novel, Lady Audley's portrait, painted by one of the Pre-Raphaelites, gives back the image of an ethereal but disturbing beauty:

> Yes; the painter must have been a pre-Raphaelite. No one but a pre-Raphaelite would have painted, hair by hair, those feathery masses of ringlets with every glimmer of gold, and every shadow of pale brown. No one but a pre-Raphaelite could have given to that pretty pouting mouth the hard and almost wicked look it had in the portrait. . . . Her crimson dress, exaggerated like all the rest in this strange picture, hung about her in folds that looked like flames, her fair head peeping out of the lurid mass of colour, as if out of a raging furnace.
>
> Indeed, the crimson dress, the sunshine on the face, the red gold

> gleaming in the yellow hair, the ripe scarlet of the pouting lips, the glowing colours of each accessory of the minutely-painted background, all combined to render the first effect of the painting by no means an agreeable one. (Braddon 2007: 57-8)

Thus, Pre-Raphaelite beauty is certainly a powerful visual link to Lady Audley, added to a more practical one, i.e. type-casting: Miss Herbert had been the most celebrated stage Lady Audley; that was her role *par excellence*. Consequently, it is very likely that Boucicault, consummate show-businessman as he was, had the actress in mind even as he wrote the play. We might even hypothesise that he had the famous London actress – and the London run – in mind from the start: after all, Kate Terry, the Manchester Mary Leigh, had been Miss Herbert's understudy.[9]

However, there is a significant difference between the sensation heroine type and the character of Mary Leigh, which probably has something to do with Miss Herbert's on-stage and off-stage quest for respectability (see below). It should be noted that Mary Leigh, unlike Lady Audley and most sensation heroines, is very much in the pattern of the notorious Victorian "angel in the house". She apostrophises the clumsy and uxorious John Leigh and her – to modern ears, unbearably peevish – children as: "Best of husbands! Best of children! Oh, my happy, happy home! – the casket of those jewels I wear upon my heart. Every object here is the witness of my joys; and so each and all of them are precious to me".[10] Sensation heroines, conversely, tended to be rather loose in their morals or else, if sympathetically depicted, they were much more akin to the late Victorian "New Woman" than to the mid-Victorian domestic ideal.

And yet, there is something strikingly un-Victorian deep inside the characters in this strange play. The action steers clear of the sex issue as far as the relationship between Rawdon and Mary is concerned: Rawdon clearly states that he had deserted his bride immediately after the marriage ceremony, in the vestry itself ("that was

[9] On the textual evidence supporting this particular point see above.

[10] Victorian sensibilities differed from ours. *The Era* styled Willie and Maud "charming little boy and girl" (*The Era*, 11 November 1866).

all right; just as soon as the ceremony was over, and I had collared the certificate, I returned the female I had borrowed for the occasion to the paternal nursery and embraces", *Hunted Down*, 1.1) and, when the two meet again, their exchanges, to all Victorian purposes, are extremely chaste, even though it should be mentioned that their undertones sound decidedly sadomasochistic to twenty-first century ears. The characters do, however, show a subtly expressed but very significant disregard for Victorian moral conventions in many scenes, where the pathos of the action would have made the audience forget for a moment their Victorian propriety. The first instance of this is Mary Leigh's attitude towards Clara. Up to the last scene, everything points to Clara's being Rawdon Scudamore's mistress, and yet from the start Mary's approach to her is completely devoid of the prudery that might be expected from a Victorian Angel in the House towards a fallen woman:

> You are silent (*taking her hand*). Clara, are you a married woman? (Clara *withdraws her hand and retreats.*) Pardon me. I ought not to ask the question – for if you are, it is an offence, and if you are not, it may be a reproach. (*Hunted Down*, 1.1)

Even more anti-Victorian is John Leigh's reaction to the revelation of his wife's bigamy. After reading Mary's old letters to Rawdon – which clearly imply that his own marriage is bigamous – John Leigh accepts bigamy in the name of something higher than human laws, and thus apostrophises Rawdon Scudamore, who is appealing to the letter of the law, and trying to take Mary's children with him:

> John. Lay but a finger on them, or on her, and by Heaven your insult will make her your widow! (Lady Glencarrig *and the party hold* John *back.*) This woman is mine! – given into my hands by Him who made her. These are my flesh and blood. The law cannot unmake them, and shall not tear them from me, while I have life to stand before them and defend my own. (*Hunted Down*, 3.1)

The fact that the villain of the piece is also the character who has the law on his side is a theme that haunts Boucicault's plays, especially his Irish plays: it can be found in *The Colleen Bawn*, *The Shaughraun*, and *Robert Emmet*, only to quote the most renowned. The only irredeemably evil character in *The Colleen Bawn*, the vil-

lain of the piece, is Mr Corrigan, "a Pettifogging Attorney", as the List of Characters reads, who is threatening ruin on the Cregans "by rights" (*The Colleen Bawn*, 1.1, in Rowell 1972: 180), whereas in *The Shaughraun* Corry Kinchela is a sexually predatory villain who uses the law for his own ends. To complete the picture, the playwright's most endearing heroes are outlaws – "that poaching scoundrel – that horse stealer, Myles na Coppaleen" (*The Colleen Bawn*, 1.2, in Rowell 1972: 186), Conn the Shaughraun and his friend Robert Ffoliot – a poacher and an escaped convict – and of course Emmet, but the list could be made much longer. Mid-Victorian popular melodrama, as is widely recognised, had a tendency to enlist in the ranks of its villains some characters that possessed economic power rather than pride of birth – danger usually came from the wicked steward or factory owner instead of the typical early Victorian wicked, seductive squire (Booth 1965: 62-4). Boucicault's peculiarity is that of presenting, with remarkable insistence, villains that derive their power and their villainy from the observance of the law and heroes that follow another law, be that the code of honour – as in *The Corsican Brothers* – the law of Nature, which in Boucicault approximately corresponds to a vaguely Christian moral set of values (as in *The Octoroon*, besides the present play) or, last but not least, the good of their country or their country's traditions, as in his Irish plays and, again, in *The Corsican Brothers*. This characteristic might indeed have something to do with the playwright's deeply felt Irishness: the law is something that belongs to a foreign power, and is therefore perceived as alien and threatening.

Hunted Down is set in England and the only touch of Irish local colour is Lady Glencarrig's married name, but it perfectly fits in with Boucicault's axiological pattern. Besides being very much at odds with the law, John Leigh's reaction clashes with Victorian moral standards, and it also defies the rules of the sensation genre, which in this predicament would have demanded an outraged husband to expel his guilty wife out of the sacred domestic sphere (after all, this is precisely what happens to Lady Audley and partly to Aurora Floyd, just to mention two of the most famous sensation heroines).

Boucicault's decision to rename his play *Hunted Down* was prob-

ably motivated by a variety of reasons, not all of which can be classified under our contemporary notion of "artistic" reasons.[11]

Notoriously, during the Victorian age the stage enjoyed a very peculiar status as far as copyrights were concerned (Booth 1965: 49-51). It must be remembered that the bulk of Victorian drama consisted in adaptations from the works of French playwrights, and that the practice was so widespread that many contemporary editions of Victorian plays needed to specify on the title page that the play was "new and original", i.e. not an adaptation from the French. This is precisely what Boucicault did in this case, stating clearly: "A New and Original Drama in Three Acts".[12] For an English playwright, acknowledgement of his source was extremely rare – John Baldwin Buckstone and, later, Dion Boucicault himself were among the very few playwrights who occasionally acknowledged their sources, though not always accurately.[13] He maintained, in a passage that sounds as brazen as Oscar Wilde's famous "Of course I plagiarize: it is the privilege of the appreciative man" (qtd in Beckson 2005: 1), that writing a play

> is a trade like carpentering. Originality, speaking by the card, is a

[11] "Retitling and revising was a common Boucicault trick. By skilfully ringing the changes and perhaps doing a small amount of rewriting, he could more than double the life of a play. Each new town thought it was seeing a new piece, and even a failure, with a new name and a few alterations, could be given another try out and a second lease of life. Only much later did the critics wake up to what he was doing and, to the charges of plagiarism from the French, add the charge of plagiarism from himself" (Fawkes 2011: 90). The practice is worth noting here, even though this is not entirely the case with *Hunted Down*, as the London audience were perfectly aware of the previous Manchester run of the play under another name, as the contemporary reviews show.

[12] Boucicault 1865. Townsend Walsh wrote that the play had a French original, *La femme à deux maris*, very likely meaning Pixérecourt's 1802 play by that title (Walsh 1915: 112). There are a few parallels, indeed, between the two plays (bigamy, the dead husband and ex convict recalled to life), but truly this kind of themes can be found in countless melodramas, and the differences between the two works, from the setting, to the characterisation, to the plot itself, are too many to allow the hypothesis of a direct filiation.

[13] On the accusations of plagiarism directed at Boucicault throughout his career, see Fawkes 2011: 81-3, 92, 99, 101.

> quality that never existed. An author cannot exist without progenitors any more than a child can. . . . I am an emperor and take what I think best for Art, whether it be a story from a book, a play from the French, an actor from a rival company… I despoil genius to make the mob worship it. (Qtd in Walsh 1915: 97-8)

For most of the Victorian age, the payment of copyright duties to the French author of a play produced in England would have been considered downright astonishing. The British dramatists themselves were paid very little, at least until Dion Boucicault began his campaign for the establishment of strict rules to guarantee a fair system of royalties.[14] Considering the unfair treatment playwrights received compared with that of leading actors, he wrote:

> It appeared to me that the literary element ought to be placed on an equal footing with the artistic, and I set myself the task of raising my profession to the only standard which the English mind applies to everything – the standard of money. (Qtd in Fawkes 2011: 68)

Paradoxically, though, fierce campaigner as he was for the rights of dramatists, Boucicault was not the strictest adherent to copyright laws.[15] He was, above all, a consummate show-businessman, with

[14] He succeeded, at least in America, where it was partly due to his influence that on 18 August 1856, "Congress passed an amendment to the 1831 Copyright Act" (Fawkes 2011: 90). "Throughout his career, Boucicault fought hard and long to establish the rights of the dramatist and was involved in frequent litigation. Looking back, it may seem that he was cruel and relentless, hounding even managers who had gone bankrupt and were in jail, for the sake of a few pounds and a principle. But it was a principle in which he believed passionately, for which someone had to fight, no matter how unpopular it might make him, before the theatrical conditions were established that would allow writers such as Ibsen, Pinero, Wilde and Shaw to flourish. Boucicault was that man" (ibid.: 92).

[15] According to Fawkes, the practice of plagiarism from the French "raised issues of morality that were to reverberate throughout [Boucicault's] long career. He had tried . . . to write plays worthy of the name drama, to follow in the footsteps of Wycherley, Congreve, Sheridan and Goldsmith, but the public demanded French melodrama. His dilemma was increased by the fact that he always lived well above his income and to make money he had to give the public what it wanted. When he finally decided to give up trying to be original, he found he could complete a translation or adaptation in a matter of days and

an infallible eye for the public taste. Thus, his decision to rename the play *Hunted Down* may have been motivated by the success of Dickens's short story of the same title, which had been published in *All the Year Round* only a few years before.[16] Dickens's story is completely different from the play – whose sources are to be found elsewhere – but Boucicault must have sensed that, for a London audience, the Dickensian title would have been more alluring than the original one.

The play in its early form, with the title *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*, did not differ much from the final version that was re-titled and performed at the St James's Theatre. The printed edition was published after the London run, but if we consider the manuscript that was sent to William Bodham Donne, the Examiner of Plays, on 30 July 1866 we can catch a glimpse of what the original version – the one that was performed by Irving and Kate Terry prior to the London transfer – must have been like. The title page reads: "*The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*. A New and Original Drama in Three Acts by Dion Boucicault" and the date is "December, 1865".[17]

The differences between the Manchester and the London versions reveal the radical revision of the play by its author, who had a new audience in mind and who was – notoriously – not new to such practices. As is well known, his play *The Poor of New York* underwent countless relocations and revisions during its tours (Fawkes 2011: 148-9).

Starting as early as the end of the first act, which closed on Rawdon darkly brooding (and pocketing the money), left in command of the stage, the audience showed its enthusiasm: "The curtain [at the end of Act 1] falls on a fine piece of acting, which brought Mr Walter Lacy, Miss Herbert, and Mr Irving quickly before the footlights to receive an emphatic round of applause in acknowledgment" (*The*

the pattern was set for the remainder of his career" (Fawkes 2011: 53).

[16] Charles Dickens's *Hunted Down* was first published in *The New York Ledger* in three instalments in 1859 and reprinted the following year in *All the Year Round*. The American publisher had paid Dickens £1,000, an astronomical sum for a short story (Allingham 1859).

[17] W. B. Donne duly noted: "1866, St James's Theatre, Received July 30. Licence sent – 31" (Boucicault 1865).

Era, 11 November 1866). The character played by Henry Irving, Rawdon Scudamore, underwent significant changes in being transferred to London. He became more complex and more passionate. In the original, for instance, there was no trace of Rawdon's desperate declaration of love to Mary Leigh in 2.3. Spotted by Fanny, the children's nurse, during a scene from which Mary was absent, in speaking to Lady Glencarrig, he said no more than: "I beg pardon – I fear I am trespassing on private grounds" (*The Two Lives of Mary Leigh* 2.3).

At the outset Rawdon was more stereotypically villainous,[18] but his exchange with Clara in 2.1 of the original was permeated by a chilling heartlessness and a surprisingly modern cynicism, which, in the final version, was cut – probably unwisely – by Boucicault:

> Clara. Rawdon, you loved me once.
> Rawd. Ravenously, until my passion was overfed.
> Clara. You have starved mine.
> Rawd. That is what has kept it alive. Had I loved you, you would have cut me long ago; a woman's heart, like any other joint, keeps longest in the cool. There, go and order hot water and my boots. (*The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*, 2.1)

In a way, the change in the character of Rawdon foreshadowed the change in the career of Henry Irving: from the stereotypical villain of melodrama to the refined complexities of the dark, tormented heroes of his later career.

The ending of the play differed too. *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh* closed on a playful note, and the last scene was less charged with emotion than in the final version:

> Mary. Can you forgive me, John?
> John. Oh, what a luxury it is to have somebody to forgive! My breast feels like an empty barn; its wide doors gape to receive a harvest of love! Come, and be gathered into my heart!

[18] To this first version of the character of Rawdon, Rahill's observations on Irving's early career may be applied: "In the sixties this actor was a reliable heavy who had acquired a modest reputation as an interpreter of 'bad men in good society,' such as Compton Kerr, the sleek, shakedown artist of *Formosa*, and Rawdon Scudamore, of Boucicault's *Hunted Down*" (Rahill 1967: 209).

Mary. Stay.
Mrs B.J. I think that after such a separation he is entitled to a second honeymoon.
John. Let us have one a month!
Mary. You forget something. I do not feel that I am your wife yet.
John. Eh?
Mary. (*Holding out her hand.*) Marry me again, John; have I the right to wear it? (*He places the ring on her finger. They embrace.*)

Boucicault's plays could be controversial at times. The Lord Chamberlain's Examiner of Plays marked some passages from *The Long Strike* very heavily (the marks in the manuscript are so heavy that they display a violent emotion in the writer), adding a note which read: "N.B. For Manchester read Lancashire", thus cutting out all allusions to contemporary political issues.[19] Notoriously, Boucicault's lyrics to *The Wearing of the Green* were so politically explosive that the song was banned after the Fenian bombings of 1867 (Fawkes 2011: 170; Walsh 1915: 103-5). In 1863 the playwright even wrote to Disraeli to obtain the release of Irish political prisoners (Fawkes 2011: 170), and in the Eighties he wrote a strongly anti-imperialistic pamphlet, *A Fireside Story of Ireland*, which was distributed during the run of his Irish plays (Fawkes 2011: 219-20).

2.2 *The Promptbook*

The present text is based on Henry Irving's promptbook, which can be considered the most reliable version of *Hunted Down, or, The Two Lives of Mary Leigh* as it was played at its first London performance and during the St James's Theatre Company run, which are the main subject of this study.

The promptbook is in the British Library Manuscript collection. Even though unpublished, the text is not, strictly speaking, a manuscript; it is printed only on the recto of each page, as was the common practice at the time, both for promptbooks and for plays to be submitted to the Lord Chamberlain's Examiner of Plays. It contains

[19] The play was otherwise left unaltered and licensed for performance at the Lyceum Theatre on 8 September 1866 (Boucicault 1866c).

a large number of notes, in two different hands, one of which, by comparison with some of the promptbooks from the Lyceum Theatre productions and with other specimens of Irving's handwriting, is doubtless Irving's.[20]

The extent to which Irving's notes actually modify Boucicault's text is considerable, and that stands as a proof of Boucicault's faith in the younger man. The playwright, the first to insist on being consulted on the production of his own works (Fawkes 2011: 87), was indeed notorious for his stormy relationship with actors – being an actor himself probably did not help – especially when they wanted to alter his plays. He once told the great Charles Mathews: "I want no one's opinions but my own as to the *consistency* of the characters I draw – *your* business is to utter what I create" (qtd in Fawkes 2011: 57; emphases in the text).

The manuscript of the promptbook, which is now held at the British Library (ADD. MS. 80780 3006E) comes from the collection of Clement Scott, via an auction: there is still a blue cardboard strip reading: "sale lot no. 81/1 Christie's New York".[21]

A note on the title page states that the promptbook originally belonged to Dion Boucicault. In all probability, it was handed over by Boucicault to Irving – which would have been a sensible move, as the actor was the stage manager of the London production, while Boucicault was busy elsewhere, as mentioned above – and Irving must have given it to Clement Scott, who was closely acquainted with him. A handwritten note by Clement Scott refers to the early

[20] Clement Scott, the owner of the manuscript, stated that it contained Irving's notes. See below.

[21] An old typewritten slip of paper, in all likelihood dating from the time of the auction, briefly describes the manuscript: "SIR HENRY IRVING'S FIRST SUCCESSFUL APPEARANCE IN LONDON. / PROMPT COPY OF THE PLAY / BOUCICAULT, Dion / Hunted Down; / or, / the Two lives of Mary Leigh. / a drama: in three acts. / by Dion Boucicault. / December, 1865. / Thin 12mo; large paper with margins printed on one side of the page. / Bound in half red morocco, pebbled cloth sides, entirely uncut. /A UNIQUE COPY, with most interest author notes, and corrections and dramatic and stage directions in the autograph of the author. / At the top of the first page the author has printed the following: / PROPERTY OF / DION BOUCICAUTL ESQ / PROMPT COPY." A transcription of Clement Scott's note and a list of the characters follow.

part of the story of the manuscript, but does not clarify how Scott came to be in possession of it. Given the intimacy between Irving and himself, he might have received it as a gift from the actor. The note reads:

> The original prompt copy. This was the play in which Henry Irving met the first success of his London career.
> He had created the part of Rawdon Scudamore in Manchester and was brought to London by Dion Boucicault to recreate it in London.
> I was present on the first night and made Henry Irving's acquaintance shortly afterwards. C.S.[22]

Scott himself is not very clear on the subject, elsewhere simply stating: "I am fortunate enough to possess Boucicault's 'prompt copy' of *Hunted Down*, where I see jotted along the margins all Irving's admirable business" (Scott 1986: 2.3).

The relationship between Irving and Clement Scott deserves to be discussed in some detail.

Scott (1841-1904), a collector of theatrical memorabilia and a literary critic of distinction, was a friend of the actor, and their paths crossed very often, both at a professional and a personal level.

As Scott himself recalls, the two met for the first time during the run of *Hunted Down* (see below). Indirectly, he was the cause of Irving's ill-fated marriage. Scott, at the time the dramatic critic of the *Sunday Times*, had been flirting with Irving's future wife Florence O'Callaghan. One day in 1867, as Irving was going to Scott's house for the first time, he rang at the wrong door, after stopping at Florence's house. Both Irving and Florence had been invited to the party, so they naturally decided to go together and in this way they became acquainted (L. Irving 1989: 135). Afterwards Scott became engaged to George Du Maurier's sister, and, probably in order to clarify his own relationship with Florence O'Callaghan by clearing the path for his actor friend, with whom the girl was already infatuated, he revealed to her that Irving's love story with the actress

[22] "C.S.": Clement Scott. Manuscript note by Clement Scott, one of the previous owners of the promptbook. On Clement Scott and the vicissitudes of the British Library promptbook (Add. Ms. 80780 3006E), see above.

Nellie Moore – according to some biographers, Irving's only true love – was over (L. Irving 1989: 143).

Almost invariably favourable to Irving, and even enthusiastic in his praise, Scott also worked for the *Daily Telegraph*, *The Observer* and other newspapers, until Irving himself bought a magazine, *The Theatre*, and handed it to him in 1879. Thus, the magazine – and Scott himself – became the medium through which Irving voiced his own ideas, until the magazine was sold in 1889 (L. Irving 1989: 349-52).

Immensely influential, Clement Scott was the most important critic of the old school during the late Victorian era, until 1898, when he "committed professional suicide" by attacking the stage as a profession morally unfit for women. The ferocious retaliation that followed this article – sadly, led by people that had been begging for his favour up to that moment – forced him to resign from his post of theatre critic for the *Daily Telegraph* and flee to the Continent. Only Irving stood by him (L. Irving 1989: 614-16). Embittered and impoverished, Scott died a few years later.

2.3 *Note to the Text*

On the cover leaf of the British Library manuscript several handwritten notes refer to the incidental music. The first reads: "Hearts and Homes suggested for music. N.R.H.",[23] whereas the following

[23] Unidentified initials. In all likelihood the note refers to the ballad *Hearts and Homes*, lyrics by Charlotte Young, music by John Blockley. The lyrics celebrate the quintessentially Victorian myth of the sanctity of Home: "Hearts and Homes, sweet words of pleasure, / Music breathing as ye fall; / Making each the other's treasure, / Once divided losing all. / Homes ye may be high or lowly / Hearts alone can make you holy. / Be the dwelling e'er so small / Having love it boasteth all. / Hearts and homes, sweet words of pleasure, / Music breathing as ye fall; / Making each the other's treasure, / Once divided losing all. / Hearts and Homes. Hearts and Homes. / Hearts and Homes, sweet words revealing, / All most good and fair to see, / Fitting shrines for purest feeling, / Temples meet to bend the knee, / Infant hands bright garlands wreathing / Happy voices incense breathing. / Emblems fair of realms above. / "For Love is Heav'n, and Heav'n is love" / Hearts and Homes, sweet words of pleasure,

one, in Henry Irving's handwriting, indicates "Hearts & Homes / The Spell Is Broken / I'll Speak of Thee / Smiling Faces". Actually, the latter tune was not included in the play.[24]

Boucicault, who claimed that "plays are not written; they are rewritten", had the habit of altering them during their run, sometimes radically (Fawkes 2011: 156-7). Therefore, the passages from the original version of the play, entitled *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*, which were omitted or modified in the move from Manchester to London, can be found in the footnotes.

As mentioned above, the promptbook, in typically mid-Victorian fashion, is printed on the recto of single sheets carefully bound together. There are several handwritten comments (stage directions or alterations to the printed text), in two different handwritings. One is definitely Henry Irving's [I], the other is very similar to Dion Boucicault's, and in the circumstances may be positively identified with his [B]. Irving scribbled hasty comments in pencil – most likely in the theatre, in the heat of his supervision of the rehearsals in which he was also participating as an actor – whereas Boucicault used a pen and made more leisurely and extensive alterations. Handwritten comments and additions are here shown in square brackets.

Boucicault's notes mainly refer to textual alterations that almost invariably have something to do with the musicality of a particular line, or the expediency of quickening up the pace of the action at some important moment. They show his inexhaustible creative vein and his sense of a play as something that grows organically, thanks to the contact with the audience and the specific abilities of the

/ Music breathing as ye fall; / Making each the other's treasure, / Once divided losing all. / Hearts and Homes. Hearts and Homes" (Young-Blockley). The choice of this tune is a proof of Boucicault's genius for show business: to him, who came from a spectacularly dysfunctional family and was everything but a family man as an adult, the words must have sounded as surreal as they do to our modern sensibilities, and yet he chose this melody which, particularly when it was distorted by an *agitato* tempo, would have conveyed to the audience the sense of a threat to something they really prized, thus increasing the suspense and involving them in the action.

[24] On the others, see below.

cast They must have been penned while the author was supervising the earliest stages of the London production. As stated above, very soon Boucicault left Irving in charge of production at the St James's. Irving's notes reveal the painstaking accuracy of the young stage manager, who took care over the smallest details referring to the music, the noises, the position of the actors, the pace of the action, the realism of the attitudes. It is the earliest instance of Irving's craftsmanship as a director, so very Victorian and yet so strikingly modern: something that would be recorded in detail many years later in his celebrated Lyceum productions, but already very much alive as early as 1866.[25]

[25] Irving's abilities in selecting the incidental music for his Lyceum plays are stressed by Stephen Cockett, who writes: "Irving's instinct for the use of music within the performance event has been overshadowed by critical interest in his skills as actor and manager. Yet, more than any other theatrical figure of his time, he advanced the interrelationship between music from the pit and action onstage. In the first place, he eschewed the standard practice of underscoring every character entry and sensational stage business with 'hurries', 'melos' and sentimental hymn-like tunes, and he employed some of the finest composers of his day who could write without resort to musical cliché. But, more importantly, he applied an unerring sense of how music could make a distinctive contribution to the effect he was trying to create for his audience, and evidence suggests that he achieved this without the aid of a musical ear. He knew when the music was inappropriate, and would say so, and would pass deserved compliments when the music was 'right', but communicating exactly what he wanted the music to *do* was far more of a problem" (Cockett 2008: 136).

Critical symbols

(*aaa*) text in italics within round brackets: stage direction.
<aaa> letters, words or passages added by conjecture when the editor believes that something has been omitted.
[[aaa]] text that has been eliminated by the author.
aaa additional insertion or replacement. The latter cases are preceded by the replaced text within double square brackets [[aaa]].
[I] identifies additions and/or deletions by Irving or in Irving's handwriting.
[B] identifies additions and/or deletions by Boucicault or in Boucicault's handwriting.

List of abbreviations in the stage directions

(Right and Left are to be considered the right and left of the actors on stage).

B1E	First entrance, back
C	Centre
C.D.	Centre door
L.	Left
L.H.	Left Hand
L.H.D.	Left Hand Door
L 2 E	Left Second Exit
R.	Right
R.C.	Right of Centre
R.H.	Right Hand
R.U.E.	Right upper entrance
Xit	Exit
X	Cross
X^{s}	Crosses
X to L	Crosses to the Left
xs to R & L	Crosses to the Right and to the Left

HUNTED DOWN,

OR,

THE TWO LIVES OF MARY LEIGH

CHARACTERS

JOHN LEIGH, R.A.
RAWDON SCUDAMORE
WILLIE LEIGH (their son)
SERVANT (Leigh's Thomas)
SERVANT (Scudamore's Jane)
SERVANT (Glencarrig's James)
PORTERS
MARY LEIGH
CLARA (a model)
LADY GLENCARRIG (Leigh's sister)
MRS BOLTON JONES
FANNY (Nurse)
MAUD LEIGH Leigh's daughter

*Property of Dion Boucicault Esq.re
Prompt Copy of* [B]

HUNTED DOWN;
OR,
THE TWO LIVES OF MARY LEIGH.

A DRAMA: IN THREE ACTS.
BY
DION BOUCICAULT.

December, 1865.
Produced St James's London, 5 November 1866

CHARACTERS:

JOHN LEIGH, R.A.		*Mr Walter Lacy*
MARY	His Wife.	*Miss Herbert*
WILLIE and MAUD	His Children	
LADY GLENCARRIG	His Sister	
MRS BOLTON JONES	An Acquaintance	*Mrs Frank Matthews*
RAWDON SCUDAMORE	A Broken-down Gambler	*Mr H. Erving (*sic*)*
CLARA	A Model	*Miss Ada Dyas*
FANNY	(Nursery maid)	*Miss Marion*
Ser*vants*		

SCENE ----------*London, at the present time.*

ACT 1 (*Carpet Down*)

SCENE------ *A Room in Mr Leigh's House. Door* L.H. *opens on the Hall and leads to exterior. Very large Door,* R.C., *leads to Mr Leigh's Studio, which is seen within. This Door is curtained. Door* R.H. *leads to the interior of the House. On a table,* R.H., *a breakfast is laid.*

(*Enter from the Studio two* PORTERS *carrying a wooden case.* JOHN LEIGH *follows them.*)

JOHN. Gently! gently! my good man, do have a little feeling, and consider what that case contains.

Much noise* – L *of the corner* L*; Mind noise [I]

PORTER. Well, it's a pictur, ain't it? One would think by the way you go on about it that it was a baby. (*They bear it out slowly* L.H. *Door.*)

JOHN. So it is – it is a baby – it is my offspring. My head was big with it for months. I yearned over it, troubled over it, joyed over it, nursed it, slept with it (*returning to door*), and now it is torn from me by a purchaser.[1] (*Crying after them.*) Take care of that corner. Ah! The brutes.

(*Enter* MARY LEIGH. *She advances behind him.* *R *door**)

MARY (*embracing him.*) John, dear, has she gone – has she relieved the house of her presence?

JOHN. She! who?

MARY. My rival in your faithless heart. The image that has filled your mind day and night for the last five months – your picture. (*They advance.*)

JOHN. Ah! Mary, if you could feel as I do, when the child of my brain is taken from me! But you can! yes; you also are a parent! think of

[1] "Noise". A vertical line indicates that the noise – probably violent hammering – was to continue during the whole of John's lines from "So it is" to "a purchaser". It must have been extremely realistic and attests to Walter Lacy's vocal powers in being able to keep it in the background.

your own little ones – ours – eh? If two monsters in human shape were to come here with a cart, and pack up our Willie, or our little Maud, and carry one of them away to – to a hanging committee, how would you feel? Well, then, how can I, under similar circumstances, restrain the natural emotions of a man – and a mother?

MARY. I know I am a fool, dear, but I can't endure you should have a thought I do not share.

JOHN. Oh! there! if you could only retain that expression of love until I can catch it, what a study!

MARY (*turning away pettishly.*) Then you shan't have it – you don't know how to catch it. Do you think that I want my emotions exposed at the Royal Academy? I positively will not sit to you any more; either my face or my figure is sure to be found in every picture you produce. They are all *me.* I am penetrating your style – one journalist calls me "your method"; another calls me "John Leigh's School".[2]

JOHN. Well, I can't help it. Mary, I love you to my fingers' ends; they think of you as I touch the canvas, and your features will grow under my hand (*embracing her*).

(*Enter* SERVANT *with tea urn* *L *Door** [I]*, and a second servant with dishes, which they place on the breakfast table.* *R* [I].)

MARY. Hush! (*Extricating herself.*) Speaking of models, Mr Leigh, I have not seen Clara this morning. It is something unusual that she should be late. (*She makes the tea.* *R.C.* [I])

JOHN. Yes; my dear, want and sorrow are always punctual.

MARY. Poor girl! how came she to offer herself for a model? Neither her features nor her figure bespeak such an occupation.

[2] Louisa Herbert was a Pre-Raphaelite beauty and model. Even though John Leigh is not a Pre-Raphaelite, but a Royal Academician, Boucicault seems rather to have had Dante Gabriel Rossetti in mind, and the obsessive recurrence of his wife's face in countless paintings. The playwright seems here to be aware – and slightly critical – of one of the less immediately perceivable characteristics of the Pre-Raphaelites in general and Rossetti in particular: their stereotyped women, something that modern critics tend to underline, but that was far from obvious in 1866.

John. I took her not for form, but for expression. Suffering had made a mould of her face, it had lain so long there.

Mary. Oh! John, how cruelly you speak. Could your kind and gentle heart make a market of this girl's misery?

John. Bless me! Now you mention it, perhaps it was heartless. I recollect how at that moment I was full of my Virgin Martyr.

Mary. Why, I sat for that figure.

John. Yes, for the beauty of form, my love; But I wanted Clara's face for the resignation. I remember the first time I met her. It was one morning while walking off a fit of fastidiousness – airing my seedy brains. A face passed me – the face I had vainly longed for. I ran after it, and passed it again. Yes, I was not mistaken; there was the loving mouth, the eyes so full of gentle resolution – there was the tint *, the tone* [B][3] of suffering. She went into a grocer's shop; I followed, and as I sat in a dark corner, with what a glow of satisfaction I contemplated my living dream. Never thinking of what a brute I was. (*Rising and walking about.*) But there's the selfishness of artists. Once a man gets inside himself, he has no feeling for any one else.[4] I'm a monster!

Mary. If you call my husband names I'll throw something at you. Come, sit down and finish your breakfast.

John. Mary, dear, when Clara comes you must speak to her; you can draw from her the cause of her distress, and we may be able to alleviate it.

Mary. And spoil her expression?

John. Who speaks cruelly now?

Mary. I do; for you are the best and gentlest creature in the world. And why don't you speak to Clara?

John. I should break down – hurt her feelings, perhaps – make a

[3] "Tint" is underlined with a red pencil, "the tone" was added in pencil, using the margin.

[4] Erased: "I neglect you for my pictures, and I delight in this poor soul's misery, while rendering my canvas woman beautiful with her tears". The passage sounded – perhaps still sounds – slightly morbid, definitely inappropriate to Walter Lacy's stage persona.

mess of it certainly; but you can manage it nicely; you have such a composed air; you know how to resent an affront or bestow a favour with propriety; but I am so wanting in personal dignity, that if any one injures me I want to ask their pardon for it: and when I do a service I feel humiliated by the obligation I confer. I suppose I am a fool.

MARY. Heaven grant *such folly* [B] [[that it]] [B] may run in the family! (*Enter* FANNY, *the nurse, and the two children,* WILLIE *and* MAUD, *R *Door** [I], *dressed for walking.*) Ah! my darlings, going out to walk? Come here, Willie. (*Kneels, and re-arranges the hat and necktie of the boy*) Has he been a good boy, Fanny?

WILLIE. Yes, Ma.

JOHN (*who has taken* MAUD, *tries to re-arrange her toilette, and puts it all awry*). They are always good; it is their little natures to be so. Who ever painted a child with a bad expression?

FANNY. Well, sir, I don't think you are improving Miss Maud, by no means.

JOHN. I beg your pardon – it don't look right.

FANNY. No indeed, sir (*re-arranges Maud's hat*).

JOHN *crosses to the window.* *L.C.* [I]

JOHN. I hope it is not going to rain. Fanny, mind, if it rains, get into a cab at once.

FANNY. Yes, sir.

WILLIE (*aside to* MAUD). Ask Pa for sixpence to buy toffee.

MAUD. No – you ask Ma.

WILLIE. No – she won't. Pa will. (*Runs up to* MRS LEIGH.) Good bye. (*Plays with* MRS LEIGH *to distract her attention, while Maud pulls down* JOHN *and whispers to him.* JOHN, *looking cautiously to see that he is not observed, gives* MAUD *a piece of money.* MAUD *runs to* FANNY.)

MARY. Stay, miss. What has your papa given you? Let me see it. (MAUD *opens her hand.*) Half-a-crown! John, I am ashamed of you.

JOHN. Ahem! how are they to pay for the cab, dear, in case it rains?

Mary. Was that what you wanted it for, Maud?

Maud. No. *It was to buy toffee.* [B][5]

Willie. And it wasn't Maud's fault, I told her to ask for it.

Maud. I don't want it, Ma, if you don't wish me to have it.

Mary. No. Keep it – but let me see that you know how to spend it. There, now, run along.[6]

John. And take care of the crossings.

Exeunt, the children running out, Fanny *following. *Door* L. *Music. Lively.** [I]

(*Looking after them.*) Gently! Oh, my gracious! can't they walk down stairs? They'll break their little necks. Oh dear! (*runs to the window.*) There they go.

Mary. John, we are very, very happy in our children. Everybody loves them.

John. How could they help it? They take after you, and everybody loves you.

Enter Servant, *with coat and hat. *Door* L.*

[5] The line was originally spoken by Willie immediately after, as can be seen both in the printed promptbook and in *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh.*

[6] In the original *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh* "There, now . . . " is missing. Instead, there was a saucy intervention by Willie, followed by a hint of Fanny's personal story. The character of Fanny lost some of its depth in its transfer to London. The passage read:

Willie. We'll buy Fanny a new bonnet, to go out on Sundays to see her cousin, the butler at Number 6.

Fanny. Oh, Master Willie.

Willie. It is true, papa, and she has refused to marry him too – because she would have to go away and leave me and Maud.

John. Is this true, Fanny?

Fanny. Yes – sir – if you please.

Mary. How can we requite such devotion? (*Takes her hand.*) I cannot tell you how we feel –

John. I feel for the butler, your cousin. Could not we engage him in the house?

Fanny. No, sir. Thank you. It is bad enough as it is.

Mary. You are right – hold your tongue, John. There, now, run along.

SERV. It is eleven o'clock, sir.

MARY. Eleven! and you have an appointment at the Palace at a quarter past.

JOHN. Dear me! (*pulls off his dressing-gown and puts on his coat*) and they are so dreadfully punctual themselves! If I am a minute late, I shall feel as if I was going to be committed to the Tower. There, that will do.

MARY. Have you got your handkerchief? (*Feels in his pockets.*) Yes, there it is. And your purse? – you always forget that. Where's your watch?

JOHN. I must have left [[something]] it on my dressing table.] (*feels for it, and finds it in his trowsers* [*sic*] *pockets.*) There *it is,* now I am all right.

MARY. Stop! Where are your gloves? Oh, what a man it is!

SERV. They are on the hall table, ma'am.

MARY. Send for a cab immediately.

Exit SERVANT. *L*

MARY (*brushing him and looking him over*). Pull down your wristbands.

JOHN (*pulling them down*). There, can I go now? I have barely time, and (*taking out his watch*) I would not keep her Royal Highness waiting for – oh! (*falls on a chair*) it is half-past [[6]] *12*!

MARY. Half-past [[6]] *12*! Nonsense. I forgot to wind your watch last night.

JOHN. It gave me such a turn.

MARY. Never mind. There! (*settles his cravat and gives him a kiss.*)

JOHN. Good-bye, darling. Now I'm off.

MARY. Stop! – your collar is up behind. (*She pulls it down and brushes him off.*) Good-bye, dear! Bless you for the dearest, simplest of hearts. (*She kisses her hand to him from the window. Advancing.*) Best of husbands! Best of children! Oh, my happy, happy home! – the casket of those jewels I wear upon my heart. Every object here is the witness of my joys; and so each and all of them are precious to me.

Enter Servant*s *to clear breakfast* L*

Serv. Miss Clara, madam, came in just as master went out. (*Goes to remove the breakfast.*)

Mary. He has left a message for her. Say that I will see her.[7]

Exit Servant. *L*

Poor child! what kind of home is hers? I was like her once – long ago, before I met John, when I was poor.

Enter Clara. *L 2 E*

Clara (*curtsying* [*sic*]). You desired to see me, Mrs Leigh.

Mary. Come near me, Clara.

Clara (*approaching*). Thank you, ma'am.

Mary. I wish to serve you. Will you return the kindness I feel by telling me how to accomplish my desire?

Clara. I am very grateful to you, ma'am – indeed I am.

Mary. Then let me be grateful to Providence for this opportunity. We have for some time regarded you with sincere interest. Your appearance denoted much and long suffering – your reserved and gentle manners have won our tender and sincere regard. I feel that you are above our pity; but I hope you are not indifferent to our sympathy. So, Clara, I do not stoop to you, for I was once as poor, and perhaps as unhappy, as you are now. Look on me, then, as a woman with a woman's heart, yearning to comfort and console a suffering sister. And this is a woman's hand held out to help her.

Clara. God bless you, Mrs Leigh (*kissing her hand*), but you can do nothing for me (*turns away*).

Mary. Do not say so – your tears belie your words. I can wipe them away.

Clara. But not the cause of them.

Mary. Perhaps you have parents who may be ill and in want.

[7] In *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*: "Say that I will see her. You may leave those things".

CLARA. I am an orphan, I thank Heaven.

MARY. You have a child sick, it may be.

CLARA. Oh that I had! – oh that I had! – something that would let me love it; a little thing that could not know its own misery – [[something]] too young to be false, too weak to be cruel.

MARY. Ah! you speak of a husband – this is your sorrow – you have loved – poor girl, has he forsaken you?

CLARA. No. He – he has returned.

MARY. He has been absent, then – he left you.

CLARA. He – lived abroad, in France, for many years: he – could not return.

MARY. Why did you not follow him?

CLARA. He would not let me, and so I was alone. Oh! those years of solitude – that long, long gloom!

MARY. Which his return has not dispelled; is it not so? You are silent (*taking her hand*). Clara, are you a married woman? (CLARA *withdraws her hand and retreats.*) Pardon me. I ought not to ask the question – for if you are, it is an offence, and if you are not, it may be a reproach.

CLARA. Whatever I am – think of me, madam, as one beyond the reach of help – whose heart is the prey to a lingering but mortal disease, that leaves it capable of but one feeling – resignation (*going, returns hastily*). Yes! – and gratitude. (*Kisses her hand.*) God bless you, Mrs Leigh. (*She goes into the studio.*) *R.C.*

MARY. When a woman loves a bad man, as her passion is without reason, her devotion is incurable. Poor helpless Clara, you are right. Money cannot comfort you, and sympathy would irritate, not console you.[8]

Enter SERVANT. [L]

SERV. Lady Glencarrig, ma'am, and Mrs Bolton Jones. *(*xit*)* [I]

MARY (*aside*). Lady Glencarrig at half-past eleven o'clock!

Enter LADY GLENCARRIG *and* MRS B. JONES. *L *Music. Agitato** [I]

[8] Here a little circle in red pencil indicates background music.

(*meeting them*). This is an unusual hour to see my grand sister-in-law abroad.

Lady G. I must rely on this lady to justify an untimely intrusion.

Mary. – Intrusion! You are my husband's sister, Amelia; the place I occupy here was once yours, but I hope you do not cease to regard this house as your second home. Pray be seated. I regret that Mr Leigh is not at home.

Mrs B.J. Hush! my dear, it is quite as well he should be out of the way. Are we alone? Pardon my discretion. (*Goes softly to* L.H. *door, opens it, looks out, closes it.*) There are some subjects that require concealing. (*Goes to* C.D., *looks into Studio.*) There is a young person there; will you allow me to make her safe? (*Exit into Studio.*)

Mary. For Heaven's sake, Amelia, what does she mean?

Lady G. This woman, who has vainly manœuvred to obtain a footing in our society, has discovered circumstances connected with your past life, by aid of which she hopes to force an entrance to my drawing-room by the back stairs.

Mary. Circumstances connected with – my – past life! (*Sits.*)

Lady G. Yes; antecedent to your marriage with my brother. She called on me this morning,[9] and introduced the subject in a manner so offensively familiar, that she led me to presume you were in her power. Look into your former life, Mary and tell me: have you any disclosure to fear? (Mrs Leigh *gazes into* Lady Glencarrig*'s face and is unable to speak.*) Hush! – your pale face and trembling lips answer me! Sit down! – speak as little as you can! – and leave me to guard you in the first moment of weakness, when you might betray more than she can otherwise discover.

[9] In the original version Lady Glencarrig was somewhat more abrupt from here on: "She called on me this morning. By her familiarity I concluded that you were in her power, but to what extent I failed to elicit. I accompany her here, not to intrude on your affairs, but to guard you in the first moment of weakness, when you might betray more than she can otherwise discover. You are pale. Sit down. Speak as little as you can, and be calm" (Boucicault 1865: ff. 7-8).

Re-enter MRS B. JONES *R.C.* [I] *preceded by* CLARA, *who goes off at* L.H.D.

MRS B.J. The young person will wait in the hall. (*Looks out at door* [[R]] *L* H., *then closes it.*) So now we are secure. (*Aside, after looking at* MRS LEIGH.) She has been put upon her guard. Ahem!

LADY G. My sister is a surprised spectator of your mysterious manœuvres, and we await their explanation with equal curiosity.

MRS B.J. I hope, my love, you feel assured that you are in the presence of two sincere friends.

LADY G. Who, being incapable of playing cat and mouse with your feelings, and having no impertinent curiosity to satisfy ---------

MRS B.J. Charmingly expressed on my behalf, dear Lady G. I could not have made my motives so clear.

LADY G. You do yourself injustice, dear madam; any one can see through them.

MRS B.J. (*Aside.*) One for me.

LADY G. So we come to the point.

MRS B.J. At once. This morning I received the visit of a gentleman calling himself the Count de Willidoff.[10] I presume you know the person?

MARY. I – I never heard the name before.

LADY G. She never heard of such a person.[11]

MRS B.J. Indeed! I think, my dear, you will remember him presently. He stated that he had lately returned to England after an absence of many years, and had been at great trouble in discovering a lady in whom he was deeply interested. He at length succeeded in tracing her into my family, where some years ago she was

[10] The name Count Willidoff may have been inspired by that of the Chevalier Wykoff, a notorious adventurer of the time. On Wykoff as the inspiring model for Irving's characterization of Digby Grant in *The Two Roses*, one of his early successes, see L. Irving 1989: 165, 253-4; Bingham 1978: 77.

[11] This line was missing from the original (Boucicault 1865: f. 8).

received as governess to my children. He then described your appearance.

Lady G. I am at a loss to conceive why you did not give him my sister's address.

Mrs B.J. Your ladyship shall hear why. To confirm the identity, he produced a packet of letters, and selecting one of them, he asked me if I recognized the handwriting; it was undoubtedly yours, my dear, but signed with the initials M. S. Now, as your name was Hollister, and that name does not[12] begin with an S, I naturally glanced my eye over the contents of the note; it was full of such reproaches as left no doubt concerning the relations subsisting between the writer and her faithless correspondent.

Lady G. I presume you returned the letter to him, with the assurance that you were not acquainted with any lady in such a position?[13]

Mrs B.J. Yes – that is – thank you – ahem! – words to that effect. But he did not seem to share my conviction, although I added that Miss Hollister, my governess, now occupied a very distinguished standing in society as the wife of an eminent and wealthy artist. To this piece of information he replied with a singular ejaculation; it was a prolonged but significant whistle – a vulgar apostrophe which obliged me to bring the interview to a close.

Lady G. *Well,* [I] is that all?

Mrs B.J. Well, yes; I may say it is (so to speak) all. (*Aside.*) This woman disconcerts me excessively.

Lady G. I really cannot see how all this concerns Mrs Leigh.

Mrs B.J. I feared – that is, I thought –

Lady G. What?

Mrs B.J. I felt – as it were – a – upset; indeed almost as distressed as our poor Mary seems to be now.

[12] "Not" is heavily underlined.

[13] In *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*: "Lady G. So, needing no more to feel satisfied of the gentleman's mistake, I presume you returned the letter to him, with the assurance that you were not acquainted with any lady in such a position?" (Boucicault 1865: f. 9).

LADY G. Then pardon me for assuming to speak for her, for in her astonishment under such an imputation she could not be trusted to temper her disdain.

MRS B.J. I hope she will appreciate the anxiety which prompted me to – to –

LADY G. Precisely; but while indulging your kind solicitude to protect her against some indefinite scandal, you forget that you give it entertainment and credit. (**both rise**) [I][14]

MRS B.J. Me, my dear Lady G! [*sic*] me injure the darling precious dove!

LADY G. You are incapable of it; so let us speak of it no more. There are subjects which no woman of refinement can discuss without offence to the dignity of her sex and to the delicacy of her own mind.

MRS B.J. Quite so.

LADY G. If this extraordinary person you have alluded to should trouble you again, do not hesitate to give him my sister's address.

MRS B.J. Oh, you think –

LADY G. Certainly – refer him to Mr Leigh; and now let us take leave of my sweet Mary. You will pardon us, my love, for this irruption on your seclusion. I am sure we owe you a thousand apologies.[15] There – don't say a word more; we understand your feelings; their expression would only distress us both – would it not? *(*During this Mrs. B. J. tries to approach Mary but is prevented by Lady G.*)* [I]

MRS B.J. Oh, immeasurably. (*Aside.*) Her ladyship entertains her own suspicions, nevertheless. I will wait and have a talk with Mary alone.

LADY G. *rings the bell.*

LADY G. My carriage will leave you at home.

[14] Heavily underlined in red pencil.

[15] In the original: "You will pardon us, my love, for this irruption on your seclusion. There – don't say a word more" (Boucicault 1865: f. 9).

Mrs B.J. My dear Lady G.! I must protest –

Lady G. However mistaken in your apprehensions, I cannot but acknowledge your zealous interest in our family concerns, which is so manifest in all this.

Mrs B.J. You are too good – but if you would –

Enter Servant *L.*

Lady G. Pardon me. You must allow me to show you this mark of my esteem. (*To the* Servant.) My carriage for Mrs Bolton Jones. Good morning.

Mrs B.J. I could not deprive your ladyship –

Lady G. On the contrary, you confer on me the pleasure of testifying my regard. Farewell!

Mrs B.J. Your ladyship overwhelms me.

Lady G. Good morning.[16] (*Lady G. conveys her out of the room, followed by Servant. Mary, who has maintained an affected composure, now [[falls, with a groan, with her face on the]] *leans against*[I] *table.*) *R.*

Lady Glencarrig *reappears and closes the door.* *L* *She is pale, and has lost her composure.*

You may speak now, madam. The woman of whom this Count is in search is yourself?

Mary. Yes.

Lady G. And these letters were written by you?

Mary. I – I – Yes –

A Pause. *(Lady G. *sits* L.)* [I]

Lady G. I decline to believe it. Imposture cannot counterfeit virtue as you have done. *(*x to* L)* [I]

Mary [[*rising*]]. Lady Glencarrig, I was married, ten years ago, when barely sixteen years of age, to a gentleman named Rawdon Scudamore. He was on the turf. Having won a large sum from

[16] A small circle, followed by "agit." indicates that here the music, in *agitato* tempo, was to begin.

my poor father, I offered my fortune – a few thousand pounds inherited from my mother – to discharge the debt; but the money being settled on me was only accessible to a husband. On the day of our marriage, even in the vestry, when I had signed the register, this man deserted me.

LADY G. Rawdon Scudamore! – where have I seen that name?

MARY. In connection with a forgery[17] committed by him, after he had squandered my fortune. He was arrested in Paris; the officers were returning with him to London, when, while crossing the Channel, he leaped overboard at midnight and perished. I was in mourning for my father when the news reached me that I was a widow. Penniless, and with a name so infamous that I was requested to quit my lodging to preserve the character of the house, I went out to seek my bread in the streets of London, with none to take me by the hand but One, and He led me to your brother. That is all.

LADY G. Did my brother know these antecedents when he married you?

MARY. That I was a widow – Yes – but no more.

LADY G. Why did you conceal the rest?

MARY. I was about to tell him, when, seeing the pain these memories inspired, he said, "It is not for me to make you remember your sorrow, but to make you forget it."

LADY G. You should have told him, nevertheless.

MARY. I had not the courage to do it.

LADY G. Then you must do so now (*a pause*). Who is this Count who seems to be in possession of your letters?

MARY. His name is unknown to me, but my husband had many associates into whose hands my letters may have fallen.

LADY G. This man then relies on your present position and my brother's untainted name to make a market of your past.

MARY. No! I have wiped that stain away; for years I hoarded every shilling I earned, every pound that John gave me, until I had

[17] Here "forgery" is heavily underlined for expressive purposes.

bought up and destroyed the forged paper; no proof remains of that wretched business.

Lady G. None but the indelible infamy. You cannot buy up that, nor drown it in the sea, nor hide it under another name. This Count must be dealt with.

Mary. His object is to sell the letters.

Lady G. *(*xs* to R & L)* [I][18] But ours is not to buy them. He will find you out. Give him an interview. I shall take care to provide that the proper authorities shall be present yonder in the Studio. Those letters are your[19] property, and any transaction, under threats, he may propose, must render him amenable to the law. Leave it to me. The letters shall be restored, and this man's mouth more effectually closed than if you filled it with bribery.

Re-enter John Leigh*, followed by* Clara*, who passes into the Studio* *R.C.*

John. Mary,[20] my darling, congratulate me! Amelia, my dear, give me joy! This has been a lucky day; I can scarcely contain myself! As I returned from the Palace I was button-holed by [[Tom Grant]] *Flatou* [B],[21] the picture dealer. What do you think he offered

[18] It is a very realistic and unconventional attitude for a Victorian play and it expresses the character's anxiety in a very effective manner.

[19] Here "your" is underlined in red pencil.

[20] "Mary" is underlined in pencil.

[21] In *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh* the name was Flatou, as in the handwritten correction here (with no specification of "the picture dealer": Boucicault 1865: f. 12). Boucicault always had an eye for local and contemporary details that might have involved his audience. 'Tom Grant' is a fantasy name, whereas Flatou was a real picture dealer, who had closed his gallery a few months before the opening of *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*. *The Morning Post*, 26 March, 1866, read: "The largest and most important sale of modern pictures which has taken place for a long time past was completed on Saturday last, at the auction rooms of Messrs. Christie, Manson, and Wood's, King's Street, St. James's. The collection was the well-known one of Mr Flatou, who, after exhibiting it for a considerable period at his gallery in the Haymarket, has retired from business" ("Sale of Mr Flatou's Pictures", in *The Morning Post*, March 26, 1866). Boucicault, a keen collector of paintings and curiosities, was – in the brief intervals between his successive bankruptcies – certainly well

> me for my "Death of Jane Shore?" – five thousand pounds. I told him he was mad. He said that was his business. I said I could not take advantage of his temporary aberration of mind, but he absolutely dragged me into his banker's and wrote a cheque for five thousand pounds, and made them cash it, and here's the

acquainted with the gallery, perhaps also with the man, as his sympathetic – even affectionate – presentation of Flatou in John Leigh's lines suggests.

The subjects depicted in Flatou's paintings are very like those John Leigh mentions here: the typical Victorian historical scenes that were dear to Royal Academicians and eminently marketable, unlike those of their contemporary avant-garde, the Pre-Raphaelites. The article enumerates: *No Escape*, by Landseer, *How the Little Lady Sat to Velasquez*, by J. Archer, *From the Crusades*, by F.R. Pickersgill, *The Lady of Shalott*, by T. Faed, *The Puritan Suitor*, by J. Archer, *The Tower – February 1553 – The Last Relics of Lady Jane Grey*, by W.J. Grant, *The Troubadour*, by A. Elmore. Flatou probably also commissioned the painting *Life at a Railway Station* to W.P. Frith, paying £10,000 for it (*The Manchester Courier*, 29 December 1860). The painting must be *The Railway Station*, which is now at the Royal Holloway College, University of London.

Flatou died the year after the sale, and he must have been still rather affluent after his retirement, since his home was situated in an upper-class area of London. His obituary reads: "Flatou. On the 10th Inst., at his residence, 49, Porchester Terrace, Hyde Park, Louis Victor Flatou, Esq." (*The Era*, 17 November, 1867). Porchester Terrace was an elegant, though not too stylish address. The family of Wilkie Collins, for instance, had lived there in the Thirties.

Flatou married at least twice. His first wife died in Edinburgh in 1847. One "Eliza, wife of Louis V. Flatou", died at 19, South Castle Street on January 22, 1847 (her obituary can be found in *The Caledonian Mercury*, 28 January 1847). His second wife survived him and was at the centre of a dispute about his legacy, the records of which throw also some light on Flatou himself, who, besides being an art dealer, must have been some kind of high class money-lender: "Sir J.P. Wilde gave judgment in the disputed will case of 'Flatou *vs.* Joel and Others'": Flatou's widow – whom he had married in 1848, and who must have been an intelligent woman, and also rather tough for a Victorian lady, had helped him with her taste in choosing the pictures, as the contemporary source states clearly. She "propounded as sole executrix a will of the 2nd of September, 1867". Disputing her claim was Mrs Joel, Flatou's sister. Flatou was "a Polish Jew. . . . He was at one time in poor circumstances, and in 1854 was not worth £5", but by 1867 he had accumulated £50,000. "According to [his sister]'s suggestion he was worth double that amount, and had amassed it by dealing in money as well as in pictures". In the end, Flatou's widow won the case (*Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 16 July 1868).

money. I can't believe my eyes. (*He exhibits the crown of his hat full of bank notes.*) Here, let me lay it all on the floor and look at it.

Lady G. Ah, you great, simple child.

John. Look at Mary. She is so confounded that she cannot throw her arms around my neck and wish me joy. (Mr Leigh *embraces her.*) Ah! here is my gold mine! Amelia, I am only a copyist. She sat for my "Jane Shore" – it was her five thousand graces that gave the thing its value and made these five thousand pounds. Here, my darling, take a handful, buy yourself something to remind you of the occasion. I say you shall. How obstinate she is! There! (*He stuffs them into her work-table. She embraces him.*) What's this, eh! She's crying precious tears of joy over my fortune! Here! Give me every one of them! (*Kisses her face.*)

Lady G. (*Aside.*) Poor girl! It is a hard trial for her, but it must be done. (*Aloud.*) Well, John, dear, [[(*rings the bell*)]] I must leave you, and I think Mary has something to tell you. I presume my carriage has returned.

John *(*Calls off*) Lady Glencarrig's carriage.* [B] Good bye, my dear.

Lady G. (*Crossing to* Mary, *and stooping as if to kiss her.*) Good bye. (*Aside.*) Tell him all, and at once. [[*Enter* Servant]][22]

Mary. Yes.

John. Allow me. (*Offers his arm to conduct her to the carriage.*) Oh, by the way, Amelia, I am painting a fresco for the House of Commons. Subject – Queen Eleanor and Fair Rosamond.[23] I want an

[22] As in Boucicault 1865: f. 12.

[23] In *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh* the passage read: "Allow me. What a magnificent creature you are, Amelia! If you would only sit to me for Zenobia, or Boadicea spurning the Roman Empire, what a subject for a sensation picture! And what an instep you have for the part! Whenever you paint Pride, you must throw it into the nostril, the neck, and the instep". The allusion to the two rebellious queens, with its possible political implications for the Irish writer – both queens rebelled against a foreign rule – is replaced in the final version by a reference to the story of Queen Eleanor and Fair Rosamond, which is certainly rather risqué for Victorian standards, being a tale of adulterous love, but does not allow any political implication (especially in a painting devised for

Eleanor; something lovely, full blown, and resolute; would you mind giving me a sitting? You have a sensation face for the very occasion I depict. It is at the moment when Rosa –------

LADY G. Will you take me to my carriage, or will you not?

JOHN (*striding off with her*). This woman has no enthusiasm. [[(*The* SERVANT *follows them out*)]]

MARY. Tell him all – and at once. Yes! if he must know it – it is better he should learn this shame from my lips. I have deceived him, and this is my expiation. It must be done, for the truth's sake, and he must suffer for my wrong.

What can I plead? My love! – no – for I have had no faith in his! Oh! had I loved him with all my heart, he would have found my sorrow in it long ago.

Re-enter John Leigh. *L.*

JOHN. She is off – and now you want to tell me something, eh? Well, stay until I have put these things away. I shall not be a minute. (*Takes up his hat and is going off* R.H.) Oh, there's a poor devil down stairs – he looks like a broken-down tradesman. I found him hovering about the hall door. He asked to see you; so I told Robert to show him up; and if he is distressed, recollect, my darling, how good Heaven has been to us – send him away happy. (*Exit.*) *(R *door*)* [I]

MARY. This poor creature needs your compassion less than I do. He is not poorer than I am, John! And when I come, a beggar to your heart, will it be closed to me? No – no – you will take me into its shelter and cover me with a great love – the more tender because I feel I am unworthy of you. (**Music. Bold.** [I] *Enter the* SERVANT*, followed by* RAWDON SCUDAMORE. *L.* *The Servant looks at him suspiciously and exit. Rawdon, after a moment, looks after him and closes the door.*) This is the person John spoke of. (*She averts her head, while she wipes away tears and composes her face.*)

the House of Commons, as John Leigh states here). Boucicault had to be very careful of all kinds of political innuendoes when planning a London production, witness the censor's note to *The Long Strike*, on which see above.

RAWD. Mary! (*she starts up*) – Mary! (*She turns, and utters a suppressed cry.*)

MARY. Rawd – Rawdon! (*She tries to support herself by a chair, but sinks beside it; it reverses, and she falls at full length in a swoon.*)

RAWD. (*Raising her up.*) She has fainted – devil take it. This is not what I wanted.

Enter CLARA *from the studio.*

CLARA. I heard a cry, and what seemed – Oh, sir, what is the matter with Mrs Leigh?

RAWD. Clara!

CLARA. Rawdon! How came you here?

RAWD. What's that to you? Mind your own business. Is there no water in the room?

CLARA. Yes – in the studio. (*Going up.*) Shall I not ring for assistance?

RAWD. No, I tell you. Do as you are told – bring me a glass of water. (*Exit* Clara) *R.C.* She is recovering. (*Places her in a chair.*) She will be all right again in a minute. Egad! I bowled her over, though, didn't I? (CLARA *returns with a tumbler of water.*) There – give it to me. What brings you here?

CLARA. I am Mr Leigh's model.

RAWD. Oh, are you? (*Sprinkles* MRS LEIGH*'s face.*) It is well you are good for something. Take yourself off home.

CLARA. But I –

RAWD. And no words about it either – cut! I'll tell you about this another time.

CLARA. Shall I send up the servant?

RAWD. You had better not. Do as I tell you, d'ye hear? – and quickly, or you know what'll happen. (*Gives* MRS LEIGH *to drink.*)

CLARA. I'm going, Rawdon.

RAWD. Well, then, be off.

CLARA. Heaven help me! (*Exit* L.H. *door.*)

RAWD. There – she'll do now. She will recover better without me.

(*Retires up a little*) I'm too much for her nervous system just at present. (*He walks about watching her. After some sobbing breaths, Mary weeps convulsively.*) So, there she is; well, I should have passed her in the street, and never recognized in this lovely woman the pale and lanky school-girl I married ten years ago for the sake of her three thousand in Bank-Stock – that was all right; just as soon as the ceremony was over, and I had collared the certificate, I returned the female I had borrowed for the occasion to the paternal nursery and embraces. Is it possible that this noble-looking creature is my wife?[24] (*Walks about, looking about the room – at last arrives opposite to her.*) Well ------

MARY. Rawdon, Rawdon Scudamore!

RAWD. Your husband; do not flinch at the word, and do not think that I come to disturb you. No. You may consider me dead, as dead as you like.[25] But I dare say you would like to know what I mean by being alive. I'll tell you. *(*Sits.*)* [I] While the police were conveying me to London, some watchful associates of mine planned my escape; they hired a fishing-smack at Boulogne; and when I took my header in the mid channel, [[I took their signal for my plunge]] favoured *by* the darkness of the night, reached their boat and escaped, and a few weeks afterwards I turned up in Lyons as the Count Willidoff.[26] But,

[24] In the original Rawdon was definitely more abrupt. He sounded very much like a stereotyped scape-gallows in the manner of Bill Sykes: "So, there she is; well, I should have passed her in the street, and never recognised the pale and lanky school-girl I married ten years ago for the sake of her three thousand in Bank-Stock. How I growled over it – over the girl I mean, not the Stock – that was all right; just as soon as the ceremony was over, and I had collared the certificate, I returned the female I had borrowed for the occasion to the paternal nursery and embrace. Ten years have improved her. No wonder! She seems to be in clover here! (*Walks about whistling and looking about the room – at last arrives opposite to her.*) Well; can you see me now?" (Boucicault 1865: f. 14).

[25] "Consider me dead, as dead as you like; there, you see I am accommodating. But I dare say you would like to know what the deuce I mean by being alive" (ibid.).

[26] "I'll tell you. Some watchful associates of mine planned my escape, and when I took my header in the mid channel I had assistance floating near me,

although dead, I could not keep quiet: I soon got into a fresh scrape and caught it that time. His Majesty, the emperor, found me in board, lodging, and clothing for seven years. Then my pluck gave way, and I should have gone all to the bad, but for one woman who stood by me like a trump: she sent me every sixpence she could earn, and crept over twice a year to my prison to see me. At last, I was set free, but there was a tick against my name in France, and the existence of that forgery hung over my head here; that kept me dead until I discovered, to my joy, that some benevolent friend had paid off my little impediment.

Mary. I – I paid it.

Rawd. You did not suspect that this proceeding would bring me back to life.

Mary. Had I foreseen this result I should have paid it all the same.[27]

Rawd. Oh! *(*Rises*)* [I][28] if I had as much luck in cards as I have in women!

Mary. Merciful heaven! What am I to do? *(*Rising*)* [I]

Rawd. Be calm, to begin with, and consider yourself quite secure. Our secret belongs to you and me alone. I don't suppose you will blow it, and I'm sure I shan't.

Mary. I do not understand you.

Rawd. Of course not; you are a little bothered still: unable to see where you are.

and took their signal for my plunge, favoured by the darkness of the night, I escaped, and a few weeks afterwards I turned up in Lyons as the Count Willidoff" (ibid.).

[27] In *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*, again, Rawdon sounded downright villainous:

> Rawd. How wrong that was; it brought me back to life; and you destroyed it, I'll bet.
>
> Mary. Yes –
>
> Rawd. How imprudent; you might have put me under again. Why, it was my tombstone. Mary. Had I foreseen these results . . .
>
> (ibid.: f. 15)

[28] In the original: "Trumps again! Lord, if I had as much luck in cards as I have in women!" (ibid.: f. 14).

MARY. I am, as you say, stunned. I – I cannot think – *(*Sits* L. *of Table*)* [I]

RAWD. Naturally enough; then let me think for you. Now, see here, rely on me. I ask no better than to leave you alone;[29] but the fact is, on arriving in England three months ago I found myself broke; then I thought of you; not that I expected to get anything out of you; so at first I took little interest in the pursuit, but as I was baffled or recovered the scent it became quite an exciting chase; you were never in sight, but I felt like a hound on your track. I persevered, and here we are.

MARY. Hunted down, hunted down. [[(*Falls in chair.*)]]

RAWD. This Mr Leigh is rich. A few hundred pounds will be a fortune to me; nothing to you.

MARY. (*Starting up.*) Nothing to me! You propose, then, to sell me to this man, and this is nothing to you! But to me, oh, to me it is horrible! Ah, I forgot; you said you felt like a hound. You cannot understand me.

RAWD. No. I'll be hanged if I can.

MARY. Do you think I can share this man's home now, when every day becomes an imposture and every hour a crime?[30] Do you think that, to insure myself against partaking of your infamy, I will consummate my own?

RAWD. By Jove! I did not think you would look at it in this way. I did not know you.

MARY. How should you? You deserted the child that you had married: you left her at the altar, and when I became the wife of another, I felt that the only thing I had to thank you for was your contempt.

RAWD. And you are resolved, then, to relinquish your position here?

MARY. I am resolved to acquaint Mr Leigh with every circumstance attending it.

[29] "leave you alone, for it is not my interest to kill the golden goose; but the fact is" (ibid.: f. 15).

[30] The original version was more explicit in its reference to sex: "when every day becomes an imposture and every night a crime" (ibid.).

Rawd. Are you mad or a fool?

Mary. A fool, in your sense – I am an honest woman.

Rawd. I see your motive. This is your revenge on me.

Mary. No! it is my love for him. The confession is no insult to you – it is no degradation to me.

Rawd. You will think better of this. You will reflect before you take this suicidal step, for it is suicide.[31]

Mary. Be it so. Let me die at once, and not by inches, as you would have me do. I will leave his house, where I have been a blessing. I will not remain in it when my presence is a curse. *(*Throws herself in chair L. then rising*)* [I] I have been your victim: *(*Music.*)* I will not be your accomplice.

Enter Fanny *with* Willie *and* Maud *L*; the children run to* Mrs Leigh. *L. Fanny *picks up hat, puts it on Chair** [I]

Maud. Oh, mamma; dear mamma!

Willie. Who is that gentleman?

Mary. Take the children away, Fanny.

Rawd. No. I beg you to leave them here a little while. I must insist.

Mary. Go, then: go, Fanny. I will ring for you. (*Exit* Fanny. *R. *door**)

Rawd. I don't think you have quite decided on leaving this house. Have you taken everything into consideration? (*Points to* Willie *and* Maud.)

Mary. My children!

Rawd. What will become of them?

Mary. I will – relinquish them to – to him, and for their sakes he will pardon their mother the desolation she has brought upon his home. In their love he – he may be happy – without being guilty.

Willie. Oh, mamma, why do you cry?

Maud. Dear mamma *do not cry* [B].

[31] "For it is suicide" was not in the original (ibid.: f. 16).

RAWD. You are mistaken in one little arrangement: you dispose of those children as if their destiny were not in my hands.

MARY. What do you mean?

RAWD. I mean that they are mine.

MARY. Yours?

RAWD. Mine. *You are my lawful wife.* [B] The law gives me power over you and your offspring; and both you and they abide my will. Since you are resolved, so am I. They go with me.

MARY. Never! I would sooner kill them than entrust their lives to your keeping.

RAWD. Then let me remain the stranger I have ever been to you and to them. I ask no better than to leave you free for life. Make your choice, and quickly. *(*agitato. "Hearts & Homes" agitato to End of Act*)*[32]

MARY. There, don't cry, Willie; don't cry, Maud. There! (*She hastily dries their tears and her own.*) If I am guilty, it is for their sakes – not for my own – God knows, not for my own. (*She goes rapidly to the drawer, and taking the money left there by John Leigh, she throws it on the table before* SCUDAMORE.) There, sir, is my price. Take it, and begone. He has bought me of you. (*She embraces her children*)

(SCUDAMORE [[*takes the money and as he goes out*]] **places notes in his pocket* the curtain falls. *to music** [I])[33]

End of Act I.
[Time: 42 minutes]

[32] In the original version Rawdon was more threatening, and took an attitude similar to the one he shows with Clara:

RAWD. "I ask no better than to leave you free for life. If you refuse –

MARY. If I refuse you take your bond. The pound of my flesh cut from my breast nearest to my heart.

RAWD. Choose their fate, and choose quickly" (ibid.: f. 17).

The echo from *The Merchant of Venice* was cut from the London version, and with it also the somewhat sadomasochistic undertones of the exchange.

[33] Again, the original was more linear: "he has bought me of you, and

ACT 2[34]

Scene 1 – *Scudamore's lodgings. A Fashionable Apartment.* Rawdon *is seated at breakfast,* R.H. *Folding doors,* R.H. *in* F. *Door,* L.H. *in* F. **Windows Pract.*[35] *Fire Place R** [I].

Clara. May I come in?

Rawd. Is that you? Yes, come along!

Clara. I was tidying your bedroom – and see what I found on the mantel-piece – this heap of gold and notes. How can you be so careless?

Rawd. My run of luck for the last three months has been stupendous. I broke the bank at Gully's last night – and there's the plunder.[36]

Clara. Where shall I put it? (*puts them on mantelpiece*)[37]

Rawd. Anywhere! in the slopbasin – or keep it if you like. What time did I come home?[38]

Clara. A little before six.

Rawd. Pretty well screwed, wasn't I?

Clara. Yes; a policeman brought you to the door.

Rawd. I have not the smallest recollection of leaving the gaming-table,[39] but I must have been full of money – and as I was

I have the right to despise you. (*She embraces her children*) (Scudamore *takes the money and goes out.*)" (ibid.: f. 17). In the London production, Scudamore remains onstage as the curtain falls, no longer a villain who sneaks out, but a dark hero on whom the first act closes. Irving's own passage from melodrama villain to Byronic anti-hero is all here.

[34] A little circle, indicating music, "to open", which means that some unspecified incidental music was used to open the second act.

[35] Practicable windows.

[36] "I broke the bank once more at Nobbley's last night – and there's the ruin" (ibid.: f. 17).

[37] Stage direction missing in the Manchester version (ibid.: f. 17).

[38] In the original version "last night" comes after "home" (ibid.: f. 17).

[39] In the Manchester original, "Nobbley's" instead of "the gaming table"

surrounded by my friends, I suppose I had the instinct to give myself in charge.

CLARA. What a life! what friends!

RAWD. Hollo! what have you to complain of? Don't you share my luck?[40]

CLARA. I would rather share your life. I did so when we were poor.

RAWD. So you do now! I have introduced you to all my swell friends.

CLARA. How am I regarded by them? Their manner and conversation show[41] that they do not respect me.

RAWD. You are a prude.

CLARA. No. I am your wife – but your friends do not believe it, or they would not behave in my presence as they do.

RAWD. I can't help that. The fact is, my dear, you married above your station.[42] You were born in a back shop and reared on a door-step. I picked you from behind a counter, where you had imbibed no tastes above tea and shrimps, nor any ideas of life beyond a Sunday out. I suppose that my friends perceive you are not the figure for my wife.[43] Then you confirm their suspicions by being so spoony on me – that don't look right.

CLARA. I can't help showing that I love you.

RAWD. Then don't blame fellows for drawing unfavourable conclusions! Why don't you keep in the background?

(ibid.: f. 18). As in the case of "Gully's", I have been unable to trace the reference to any historical gaming house, either in London or in Manchester.

[40] In the original version, after Rawdon's line "Don't you share my luck?":

CLARA. You think that money supplies every want.

RAWD. In point of fact, yes – in point of sentiment, no" (ibid.).

[41] In the original: "shew" (ibid.).

[42] Rawdon's line "The fact is, my dear, you married above your station" was not in the original (ibid.). The character played by Irving became more stylish in the London run of the play.

[43] Here "I suppose that my friends perceive you are not the figure for my wife" replaces the original "I have no doubt that my friends don't believe I was such a fool as to marry you" (ibid.: f. 18). As in the alteration mentioned in the previous note, Rawdon sounds more upper-class in the London version.

Clara. I want to be with you, dear; (*going to him*)[44] ah, Rawdon, you loved me once.[45]

Rawd. Don't be a fool, Clara, you know I love you now!

Clara. Yes – as the dog at your feet, but not as the woman in your heart.

Rawd. Have I not been kinder to you during the last two months than ever?

Clara. You have been studiously kind – but there was more pity than love in your caress. Oh, I had rather you slapped my face and meant it, than kissed me and didn't.

Rawd. Why did I not mean it?

Clara. Because you are in love with another woman.

Rawd. What put that in your head?

Clara. The instinct of a hungry heart; for two months past you have had a secret from me – something you are afraid to tell me.

Rawd. Afraid!

Clara. Yes; it is connected with Mrs Leigh[46] – with that secret of her past life, which she paid you to preserve.

Rawd. And which I could not reveal to you without breaking faith with her.[47]

Clara. That is true.

[44] Stage direction missing from the original version.

[45] The following exchange was different in the original:

Rawd. Ravenously, until my passion was overfed.

Clara. You have starved mine.

Rawd. That is what has kept it alive. Had I loved you, you would have cut me long ago; a woman's heart, like any other joint, keeps longest in the cool. There, go and order hot water and my boots. *(She is going)* Come here – *(he looks at her.)* Poor little Clara!

Clara. Why do you look with pity on me? What have you done? You throw your money into my lap – what do you want to pay me for? Rawdon – you – you do not love someone else? (ibid.).

[46] In the original there were traces of a previous name for the protagonist of the play: "Mrs Dayes" (ibid.: f. 19).

[47] Here a cross in pencil follows, which may mean a pause for emphasis.

RAWD. Are you satisfied?

CLARA. No.

RAWD. Why?

CLARA. You are too anxious that I should be. Six months ago, had I asked your secret, you would have told me to mind my own business! Had I doubted your word, you would have thrown that teapot at my head. There's something wrong (*to herself*) with you, Rawdon – and there's a woman at the bottom of it! (*Exit,* [[L]] *R.* *door*)

RAWD. She is right. I am in love – ay, like a fool.[48] The money I received from Mary Leigh brought me luck at the gaming table and on the turf. She became associated with my good fortune, until I found myself looking for the face of my victim in the park and at the opera. I craved to see her. I went to her house – the knocker was muffled, and the street was littered down! I was not surprised when they told me she was dying of brain fever, but I felt sick – and then I knew I loved her. Night after night I hung round that house while she recovered slowly. Then this woman took possession of me. I was her master; but at last she obtained a mastery over me – even though I knew she loathed me. I wrote to her. She refused to see me. I wrote again insisting. She left town. I have written to her address in the country – for see her I must, come what may.[49]

Re-enter CLARA, R. *door.*[50]

[48] Instead of "She is right. I am in love – ay, like a fool", in the original Rawdon said: "Does it shew? Then out with it. I am in love – ay, like a madman – a wolf – a fool – all three in turn" (ibid.).

[49] Instead of "Then this woman took possession of me. I was her master; but at last she obtained a mastery over me – even though I knew she loathed me. I wrote to her. She refused to see me. I wrote again insisting. She left town. I have written to her address in the country – for see her I must, come what may", in the original version Rawdon's lines are: "I didn't. I got worse – infernally worse. Then I wrote to her. She refused to see me, I insisted. She left town. I have written to her address in the country – for see her I will, come what may" (ibid.).

[50] Stage direction "R. *door*" not in *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh.*

Clara. Your room is ready now.

Rawd. There were no letters for me this morning?

Clara. Yes – there was one – did I not give it to you? Oh, here it is, amongst these notes.

He tears open the letter – discards the envelope and reads.

Clara. What's the matter? any bad news?

Rawd. Nothing that concerns you. (*Goes to a desk on table* L.H. *and locks up the letter in it.*) Is my valise packed?

Clara. Yes.[51] Are you going out of town?

Rawd. For a day only. I am going down to Newmarket on some turf business. I shall be just in time to catch the 4.5 train. (*Exit,* R.[52] **Music. Scud‹amore's› air.**)

Clara. He is deceiving me. (*She picks up the envelope.*) That is the hand writing of a woman. Here is the postmark! "Mount Audley"[53] – where is that?

Enter a Servant.

Servt. If you please, ma'am, a lady desired me to give you this card.

Clara. A lady! (*reads the card.*) Mrs Bolton Jones. Show the lady in.[54]

Enter Mrs Bolton Jones.

[51] *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*: "Clara. Yes. It remains just as it came from Doncaster last Friday. Are you going out of town?". The reference to the northern racing town of Doncaster was locally relevant during the Manchester run, but it was removed from the London version.

[52] In the original: "*Exit*" (ibid.).

[53] In the original: "Thorpedene" (ibid.: f. 20). The references to Mount Audley were added as a homage to Louisa Herbert's previous success as Lady Audley, and perhaps also because part of the scenery belonging to the production of *Lady Audley's Secret* had been reused for the setting of *Hunted Down* (see above).

[54] In *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*: "You are quite sure it is me she wishes to see?" (ibid.).

MRS B. J. I believe[55] I have the pleasure of addressing Madame de Willidoff?

Exit SERVANT.

I have taken the great liberty of – excuse me, but are we quite alone? The matter I come upon is of the greatest delicacy. It involves the happiness of a most charming family, whose welfare has, I fear, been sadly compromised by a foolish and very weak woman.

CLARA. In what way am I connected with this business?[56]

MRS B. J. You are not aware of a certain – ahem –relation subsisting between your husband and Mrs Leigh.

CLARA. Pardon me, I am aware of it, madam; and Mrs Leigh may rely on my husband's word to keep her secret.

MRS B. J. I do not presume that he would publish the matter – but you seem strangely indifferent to his conduct.

CLARA. Indeed I am not. I cannot defend it.

MRS B. J. You astonish me.[57]

CLARA. I know that my husband received a sum of money from the lady.

MRS B. J. A sum of money![58] has it come to that? so then this establishment is maintained at poor John's expense! Oh, the fool; why did he not take one of my girls? it serves him right! but dear, dear, what a scandal!

CLARA. Explain yourself.

[55] In the original version: "Quite sure, if I have", instead of "I believe I have" (ibid.).

[56] After this question, the original is different until "I do not presume" (ibid.): "MRS B. J. Let us hope that this sad affair has not gone so far but that it may be hushed up by mutual friends. CLARA. I beseech you, madam, to speak out. What affair do you mean? MRS B. J. Are you not aware of a certain – ahem – relation subsisting between your husband and Mrs Dayes? CLARA. Yes, madam; and Mrs Dayes may rely on my husband's word to keep her secret".

[57] "You astonish me – you cannot know –" (ibid.).

[58] In the original: "Ah" instead of "A sum of money!" (ibid.).

Mrs B. J. Impossible – to you! A woman who can live as you confessedly do on the dishonour of a worthy family cannot comprehend the language or the feelings of a lady. [[(*Crosses to* L. *corner*)]]

Clara. Who can live as I do!

Mrs B. J. Yes, on the salary paid by a guilty wife to your husband.

Clara. Oh, my God – (*staggers back*) – what do you mean?

Mrs B. J. Since you state that he receives a stipend from Mrs Leigh, I presume you must know that he was her lover many years ago – before her marriage. His relations with her[59] have been renewed within the last three months, and this unhappy woman has become estranged from her family; she avoids the companionship of her husband – shuns the sight of her dear children – and maintains a correspondence with this – person. *(*x* R.)*

Clara. Is that lady in London now? (*rises, and to* [[R.]] *L.* *table.*)

Mrs B. J. No; she is at Lady Glencarrig's country seat.

Clara. Where is that?

Mrs B. J. At Mount Audley – in Sussex.

Clara. Mount Audley![60] (*presenting the envelope.*) Do you know that handwriting?

Mrs B. J. Certainly – it is hers.[61] I ought to know it. She was governess in my house for two years.

Clara. Hush – here he is. (*X*[s] R.)

Mrs B. J. He must not recognize me.[62] *(*Music. Sits L of Table R.*)*[63]

[59] "He was the lover of Mary Dayes many years ago – before her marriage. Those relations" (ibid.), instead of the more offensive final version: "Since you state that he receives a stipend from Mrs Leigh, I presume you must know that he was her lover many years ago – before her marriage. His relations with her".

[60] This exclamation is missing in *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh.*

[61] "it is that of Mary Dayes" (ibid.: f. 21).

[62] Not in *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh.*

[63] A small circle, indicating incidental music, followed by "Scud", meaning the tune associated with the character of Scudamore.

Enter RAWDON *R. D. *in* H*[64] *in travelling dress.* MRS B. JONES *draws down her veil.*

RAWD. (*speaking as he enters.*) Get me a Hansom cab and take that valise down stairs – (*sees* MRS B. JONES). Oh, I beg pardon. I was not aware ---------

CLARA (*presenting him).* The Count de Willidoff! (CLARA *crosses down* [[L]] *C*)

MRS B. J. I came to inquire after the character of a servant. I fear my visit is not opportune.

RAWD. Not at all, if you will excuse me. By-bye [*sic*], Clara – there is the cab. I shall barely be in time – good morning, madam. (*Exit,* L. *Door.*[65]) *(*music stops*)*.[66]

MRS B. J. He did not recognize me! (*Crosses to* L. *corner*)[67]

CLARA (*advancing to the window and lifting it*). He said he was going to Newmarket. Hush! I would hear what direction he gives to the driver. (*A pause.*) Victoria Station, Brighton line! Ah! he is going to see her! (*She sits down overcome* [[L. *of table*]].)

MRS B. J. The wretch has deceived this poor girl! I beg your pardon, my dear, for misunderstanding your character.

CLARA. You were quite justified in thinking me a fit companion for – oh! (*covers her face with her hands and bursts into tears.*)

MRS B. J. Poor dear! this is very distressing. Oh, what abominable wretches these men are![68] Why were the things ever brought into the world? Thank Heaven I have nothing but daughters!

[64] Not in *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh.*

[65] "L. *Door*" not in *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh.*

[66] The music had to continue until this point, as a vertical handwritten line along the margin shows. Thus, the background music began just before Rawdon entered and ended at his exit: a considerable emphasis was put on the character.

[67] Stage direction not in *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh.*

[68] "Oh, what an abominable wretch the man must be", Boucicault (1865: f. 21) clearly decided at a later juncture to extend the criticism to the whole of mankind.

Clara. (*starting up.*)[69] 'Tis she is to blame! She, with the happy home, the fond husband, the dear children – she had all! I had but this one thing to love – worthless, perhaps, but it was mine – and she has taken it from me. (*Crosses* [[R. *and to*]] *to* L.)[70]

Mrs B. J. I[71] have no proofs yet. Do not let us be precipitate.

Clara. Proofs! The letter contained in this envelope is in that desk. (*Takes a knife from the breakfast-table.*) I saw him lock it up there, after reading it.

Mrs B. J. My dear! What would you do? You are not going to break open your husband's desk? What will he say when he finds you out?

Clara. He will say nothing. Perhaps he will kill me.[72] (*Forces open the desk.*) So much the better. Here – here it is. (*Reads.*) "I cannot see you. You have made me the most wretched of women. I cannot endure this life. I turn away with a sick heart from the loving face of my husband. The kisses of my innocent children are reproaches to me – but if you come, I will bear this life no longer. I have told you my resolve. I shall leave my home."[73]

Mrs B. J. That is pretty plain.[74] The infatuated woman is going to elope! What is to be done?

Clara. I will go to Mount Audley. (*Exit* R. *door*)[75]

Mrs B. J. I shall accompany this young woman (*a bell is heard to ring violently*). **Bell** [I] She must be mitigated. A little sympathy will induce her to confide in me. She is violent. (*Looks into the desk.*) Very violent. Has she overlooked any other inflammable matter? Here is the very bundle of letters the wretch showed me three months ago.[76] Good! I secure those also. There is nothing else – no – nothing. (*She examines the desk furtively.*) There is

[69] Direction missing from *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh.*
[70] Stage direction missing from *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh.*
[71] "we" in the original (ibid.).
[72] "Nothing. He will kill me. (*Forces open the desk.*)" (ibid.).
[73] "(*She drops the letter*)" (ibid.: f. 22).
[74] "and he has taken her at her word" (ibid.).
[75] "(Mrs Bolton Jones *picks up the letter.*)" (ibid.).
[76] "Three months ago" not in *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh.*

my entrée to the circle into which I do so long to be received! There is my open sesame to Mount Audley! A family secret, well preserved, is a latch-key to any society. I don't think my Lady Glencarrig will be able to pooh-pooh me out of her house after this! She won't be able to courtesy this down! No amount of style, no width of crinoline can cover this in! I shall restore these letters to our poor, weak, deluded Mary – and keep a copy[77] of them. (*Crosses to* [["L. *corner and to* R."]] *L.*)[78]

Re-enter CLARA *dressed in her bonnet and shawl, tying her bonnet, and puts her head on her hand on mantelpiece.*

CLARA. Will they never bring that cab? – (*goes to door.*) (*Calls*) Jane! I forgot she has gone for it – (*walks about and then sits down and cries*).

MRS B. J. Ah, poor dear – I can feel for you. This is what we have all to go through with husbands. They will retain their single blessedness on the sly. I've had my troubles. Jones was a bachelor for five years after we were married, and I never knew it.

Enter Servant.

JANE. The cab is at the door, ma'am. (*Exit.*)

MRS B. J. Take my arm. Don't fret – but consider the hold this discovery will give you in future over the wretch.

[77] "Keep a copy" is underlined with a pencil for emphasis.

[78] "There . . . copy of them" the passage is absent from the original, where Mrs Bolton Jones states: "I don't think my Lady Glencarrig will be able to poo-pooh me out of her house after this! She won't be able to courtesy this down! No amount of style, no width of crinoline can cover this in! But it must be kept closely hushed up in the family. If it gets abroad, it will be taken out of my cultivation by that greedy public. I have the only proof – such a family secret, well kept, is a latch-key to any society". The outspokenness of Mrs Bolton Jones, with her reference to female underwear and the female body, remained in the text for the London performance. It was rather brave of Boucicault to leave such an allusion – and of Donne, the Examiner of Plays, to leave it uncensored – because the reference to underwear was not allowed in polite conversation and certainly not on stage during Victorian times, witness the Abbey theatre riots for the word "shift" in a play by another Irishman, John Millington Synge, four decades later.

Clara. Oh, madam, I love him! (*Exit.*)

Mrs B. J. Ah, there I had the advantage over you. I never loved Jones. (*Exit.*)[79]

Scene 2 – *The Garden at Mount Audley.*

Enter John Leigh *with* Maud *and* Willie. *L. *Child.'s air for change**[80]

John. There, my darlings, we can play here, and then your little voices will not disturb poor mamma! (*He carries a box containing a game of soldiers.*) There is your box of soldiers – now let us spread the field of battle. (*He sits,* R.H. **and Children** *open*[[s]] *the box*).[81]

Willie. (*Pulling out a toy.*) What's this?

John. That? well, my dear, let me see! I think it is a whistle. (*Blows into it.*) It produces no sound; but probably it was so constructed to render it innocent in the hands of children.

Maud. Why, papa, it is a cannon!

John. Bless me! so it is! it is a cannon! I never should have guessed it – what an imagination [[the]] *this* child must have!

Willie. There's the castle! and here's a general!

John. Ah! that's a general – is it? Why so?

Willie. Because he's the biggest. (*They set the game on the ground,* R.H.)

Enter Lady Glencarrig, L.H.

Lady G. (*aside.*) There he is, playing nursemaid as usual to his children.

John. (*Holding up a toy.*) Now, what is this instrument of torture? – a blunderbuss!

[79] From "*Re-enter Clara*" to "I never loved Jones": the passage is absent from *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh.*

[80] "*Enter* John Dayes *with the children*" (Boucicault 1865: f. 21).

[81] Evidently, it was originally John himself who opened the box.

MAUD. That's a trumpet.

JOHN. Oh! a trumpet! very well, you shall be the trumpeter, and you shall blow the signal for the battle to begin. (*Gives her the penny trumpet.*)

LADY G. John, have you seen Mary to-day?

JOHN. Yes. She kissed her hand to me from her window.

LADY G. She is so much stronger that I have prevailed upon her to join our dinner party this evening.

JOHN (*looking up*). Perhaps then I had better not appear. You know that my presence affects her nervous and susceptible condition. When I approach her she trembles, and the most trifling caress seems to cause her pain.

LADY G. The brain fever has shaken her system very severely.

JOHN. Her mind is so weak and tender that she cannot endure the presence of her children.

WILLIE. Now the battle is ready – blow away, Maud – come, papa (*they play*).

LADY G. John, you must be aware of the cause which led to this disorder?

JOHN. How should I, Amelia?

LADY G. If you are deceiving me, let me tell you that your reserve is needless. I am aware of that unhappy business.

JOHN. What unhappy business?

LADY G. (*aside*) She has not confessed to him? – what can be the motive of her silence?

WILLIE. Bang! (*Shoots cannon*). Oh, what a miss! – now, papa, it is your turn.

LADY G. You recollect, John, on the day you sold your picture, when I left you alone with Mary, I told you she had something to communicate to you.

JOHN. Yes; but when I returned to find her, she had retired to her bedroom with a bad headache, and on the same evening the fever declared itself.

Lady G. And since then she has made no disclosure of the painful circumstances she revealed to me?

John. How like her that is! She has reserved a sorrow all to herself! (*To* Maud.) Ah! my darling, I hope you will grow up like your mother.

Lady G. My dear brother, I fear that Mary's present state of mind is caused by her irresolution. She has not the courage to avow to you a secret connected with her past life.

John. Then why should I know it?

Lady G. Because it concerns her reputation. She confessed it to me – why has she concealed it from you?

John. She has a good reason for her silence, and will speak at her own time.

Lady G. It is my duty to tell you, John.

John. Pardon me, Amelia, I cannot listen to anything affecting my wife, except from her own lips.

Lady G. [[You are right, dear, as you always are.]] I should speak to her, and shall do so at once.

Enter a Servant *with a salver, on which is a card.*

Lady G. (*takes it and reads aside*) – "Mrs Bolton Jones and Madame de Willidoff." Where are these ladies?

Servant. They are waiting outside in the fly, my lady, as brought them from the station. I told 'em I didn't know as her ladyship were at home.

Lady G. Beg them to walk in. *(*Exit* Servant)* (*Aside.*) Madame de Willidoff! what can this visit portend?

(*Exit* [[*followed by* Servant]].)

Willie. I say, papa, I know what made mamma ill: it was that gentleman who called. You recollect, Maud?

Maud. Yes; but he wasn't a gentleman, Willie, 'cause he made mamma cry.

John. Made mamma cry?

Willie. Yes; and she gave him money to go away. Bang! (*shoots.*)

Oh, there's a good shot! I've knocked over your castle, papa!

JOHN. Who could that gentleman have been? Oh, I remember, – it was that poor tradesman who was seeking charity. To be sure; I told mamma to give him some money. I suppose he told her some piteous story about his sufferings, and touched her susceptible heart (*he plays*).

WILLIE. Oh, no; he told her that Maud and I were his children; and he wanted to take us away – didn't he Maud?

MAUD. Oh, Willie! – you know that Fanny said mamma would be very angry if you spoke of that gentleman.

WILLIE. Oh, it don't matter speaking to papa, does it? Bang! (*shoots*). Ah! I hit you that time.

JOHN. My dears, you must be very careful how you chatter. You take up things all wrong; and you might make great trouble. Fanny was right when she said you should be – silent.

WILLIE. Oh, papa! how pale you are.

Re-enter LADY GLENCARRIG.

LADY G. John, you must send away the children. I – I must speak with you. There, run along, Willie. Take your toys into the summer-house yonder. That's a good boy.

[[MAUD (*pointing off.*) Who are those ladies?]]

LADY G. [[Never mind, dear.]] There – away with you.

(*Exeunt* WILLIE *and* MAUD *with the toys.*) *B.1E. *Music**

JOHN. Well, Amelia?

LADY G. Oh, my dear brother, a fearful disclosure awaits you – for heaven's sake summon all your fortitude to sustain this calamity, the heaviest a man can suffer.

JOHN. It concerns my wife, then?

LADY G. Yes; and you must listen to it. You must, John; an accusation has been made which must be answered.

Enter CLARA *and* MRS BOLTON JONES.

JOHN. Clara! I am glad to see you.

CLARA. I fear that you will not say so, Mr Leigh, when you learn the

motive of my visit.

Mrs B. J. Good evening! – what a perfectly charming place you have here – delightful!

Lady G. Thank you. (*Aside.*) She has the insensible cheerfulness of a surgeon in the presence of agony.

Clara. Mr Leigh, I am here in the hope to rescue from utter ruin one very dear to you. Not for her sake, I confess it, but for yours and for the sake of your dear children.[82]

John. What do you mean, Clara?

Clara. Read that letter. *(*X*[s] *to* Leigh. *Music: Tremolo,* [[*Hearts*]] *"I had a Flower".*)* [B][83]

[82] Here Irving changed the order of the exchanges:
[3] John. Clara! I am glad to see you.
[4] Clara. I fear that you will not say so, Mr Leigh, when you learn the motive of my visit.
[1] Mrs B. J. Good evening! – what a perfectly charming place you have here – delightful!
[2] Lady G. Thank you. (*Aside.*) She has the insensible cheerfulness of a surgeon in the presence of agony.
[5] Clara. Mr Leigh, I am here in the hope to rescue from utter ruin one very dear to you. Not for her sake, I confess it, but for yours and for the sake of your dear children.
The altered order prolongs the suspense, because Clara's revelation is delayed by the others' somewhat irrelevant interventions.

[83] In all likelihood it is the ballad *The Blighted Flower*, lyrics by John Hazlett, music by the Irish composer M.W. Balfe. It should be mentioned here that Balfe was an acquaintance of Boucicault and the two had tried to write an opera together as early as 1843. In the end it was Julius Benedict and not Balfe who set to music Boucicault's greatest success, *The Colleen Bawn*, in what became – and still is – a very popular opera, *The Lily of Killarney* (Fawkes 2011: 122). The words of the ballad read: "I had a flower within my garden growing / I nourished it with fond & anxious care, / Rich in each charm of nature's own bestowing, / Of tints unrivalled and of fragrance rare. / In evil hour there came about my dwelling, / One who had blighted many a flow'r before. . . . / He saw my gem, all other flowr's excelling, / He smil'd upon it, & it bloom'd no more! / He saw my gem in innocence excelling, / He smil'd upon it, and it bloom'd no more! // Next day I found it withered and degraded, / Cast by the spoiler carelessly away; / Its freshness gone, its varied beauties faded, / Despis'd, forsaken, hast'ning to decay, / Vainly I strove the fading sparks to cherish, nought now remains of what was once so dear, / Only with life shall fond remembrance

JOHN. (*reads the letter addressed by Mary to Scudamore*). I – do not understand it.

(R.C.) CLARA. That letter was addressed by your wife to my husband.

JOHN. Your husband?

CLARA. On receiving it this morning he left our home, and I believe he is now in the neighbourhood.

JOHN (*bewildered*). But – who – who is he? what does he seek?

(L.) MRS B.J. He seeks your dishonour, Mr Leigh. The infatuated lady whom you married has discovered in the Count de Willidoff a former lover, with whom she has established clandestine relations, and whom she has supplied with sums of money.

JOHN. It is false – it is – (*he remembers the story told by his child and stands speechless.*)

CLARA. It is too true, Mr Leigh.

JOHN (*recovering himself, and with assurance.*) It is false. *(*Music Ceases abrupt.*)*[84]

MRS B.J. Look there, John Leigh. Do you refuse to believe your own senses?

JOHN. No, for they tell me that this woman has lived face to face and heart to heart with me for ten years. That life now rises up before me, and looking with its honest happy eyes into mine, it says as you do. Look there, John Leigh, do you refuse to believe your own senses? *(*Xs to* R)*

CLARA. How he loves her! Oh! how he loves her!

JOHN. Stay! I forgive you that you should doubt her. I – I do not

perish, / Or cease to flow the unavailing tear. / Only with life shall fond remembrance perish or cease to flow the unavailing tear." (Hazlett and Balfe). The choice of this particular music is significant: it is a ballad of seduction and degradation, and the audience would probably have recognized it as such even from the tune. The use of this recognisable tune as a substitute for a monologue – which would have sounded unrealistic – is a very interesting device to show the inner thoughts of John Leigh: from the initial, inevitable, suspicion to the decision to trust his wife, as shown by the music's ceasing abruptly.

[84] As in other cases, the duration of the music is shown by a vertical line on the right of the text. "Abrupt" is underlined.

reproach you that she has not inspired you with my faith in her. You say she gave your husband money! it may be so! She has been mad of late. This letter is of her writing. If it is coherent then – it is the cunning of a distempered brain. Her reason is unfixed, but oh! her heart is firm – honest, and mine.

(L) Mrs B.J. Was she mad ten years ago, when she wrote this bundle of letters to this same person? – (*produces the letters.*)

Clara. (*intercepting.* **X to his* L*) Oh, madam, if you can entertain no admiration for this man's noble faith in the woman he loves, have you no pity?

(L.C.) Mrs B.J. I have the highest regard for Mr Leigh – but what are we here for? *(*X* C)* If our dear Mary be subject to fits of periodical insanity, in which her malady takes this peculiar turn, I am sure no one will lend more implicit belief to that theory than I shall, and no one will work harder to put that version of it into circulation.

(R.C.) Lady G. (**advancing and** [I] *taking the letters.*) This, then, is the correspondence submitted to you three months ago – you have read it, I presume?

Mrs B.J. I only dipped into it. I had not time to ----------

Lady G. Will you be kind enough to leave me with my brother? I will join you in the drawing-room.

Mrs B.J. Come, my dear. (*Exit* Clara *, L* Mrs B. J. *returns.*) A charming young person; but I have elicited from her that her name is not Willidoff; and, altogether, she is so reserved, that I doubt if she is the fellow's wife at all. *Coming my Love.* I mention this, that if your ladyship should[85] extend your hospitality to me, it would be as well not to – you understand – she does not expect it – she can go back in the fly. *(Coming My Love. Coming. [[(*Exit*)]] (*Exit* L C).* [B]

Lady G. John, these letters were written by your wife many years ago, and are said to contain proofs of her unworthiness; take them, brother, and place them before her.

John. What for? To accuse her that I may gratify my curiosity? I

[85] "Should" is underlined in red pencil.

have none! Or, to satisfy doubts I do not entertain, I must retail the suspicions of this [[lady]] *woman* [I]? Oh, Amelia, to suspect the being we love is the meanest infidelity. I cannot do it.

LADY G. For her sake you must. These circumstances demand explanation. It is not enough that your wife is[86] innocent – she must appear so.[87] And your delicacy only cherishes the scandal.

JOHN. You are right, my sister, as you always are. I will go to her.

LADY G. *(*aside*)* I cannot reconcile the story she told me with her subsequent conduct. Yet – can she be false – and base? *(*Music. "I'll Speak of Thee"*)* [I][88]

JOHN. Do not degrade your mind with such thoughts. They insult me. Go, sister! I will join you presently. (*Exit* LADY GLENCARRIG.)

JOHN. How shall I unfold this to her? – Heaven inspire me! Oh, if she should suspect for a moment that I doubt her – our hearts can never be one again! – never. (*Exit.*) *(L.)*

[86] Underlined in red pencil: "is".

[87] Underlined in red pencil: "appear".

[88] The music lasted until the shifting of the scene (the customary vertical line runs parallel to the text up to the description of the following scene). In all likelihood it was the ballad *I'll Speak of Thee, I'll Love Thee Too*, lyrics by Maurice M.G. Dowling, music by Maria B. Hawes. The words read: "I'll speak of thee, I'll love thee too, / Fondly, and with affection true; / Pure as yon sky's celestial blue… / My love shall be, My love shall be, / In sunshine and tho' clouds shall low'r / In mirth, and sorrow's sadd'ning hour; / While mem'ry lives, and life has power, / I'll speak of thee, I'll speak of thee, I'll love thee too, / Fondly, and with affection true; / Pure as yon sky's celestial blue, / My love shall be, My love shall be. // Thro' youth's gay scene, in riper age, / In later life's concluding stage, / Dying shall thoughts of thee engage… / My memory, my memory, / Remember then remember me, / remember all I've said to thee, / and my responsive pledge shall be, / I'll speak of thee, I'll speak of thee. / I'll speak of thee, I'll love thee too, / Fondly and with affection true. / Pure as yon sky's celestial blue, / My love shall be, My love shall be" (Dowling and Hawes 1839).

Scene 3 – *Another part of the garden near the house. Night.* Mary *and* Fanny *are discovered. A garden seat* L.H. *(*R.H. *– a clump of bushes) – a laurel shrubbery. *Lights to Down**

Fanny. The evening is closing in, ma'am, you have scarcely time to dress for dinner.

Mary. To-night I re-enter society! Have I the right to mingle with these people? How can I sit amidst them and accept their attentions bestowed on John Leigh's wife?

Fanny. Oh, my dear mistress, why do you torture yourself in this manner? Misfortune is no shame.

Mary. Then why do I cower before it? In the ravings of my fever I betrayed to you the fatal secret of my past life.

Fanny. And I know it is very wrong, ma'am, that I should stand as I do between husband and wife, hiding you from him as I may say, and carrying a secret that belongs to him and not to me. Oh, tell him, mistress, do tell him.

Mary. I have tried, and I – I cannot! No – I cannot bring my tongue to utter these words. Another has the right to take me from you, John; our happiness has been a crime – innocent hitherto, henceforth our love is guilt – your children are my shame.

Fanny. All that[89] you could not help, ma'am; but deceiving your husband is what you can[90] help.

Mary. I know it; he is my dupe, for if he knew the truth he would not consent to lead this life, from which, poor as it is, I cannot part. I cannot consent never to see him again, never again. And our little ones! Oh! merciful Heaven! what is to become of me – of me, and of my innocent children?

Fanny. You cannot conceal your position much longer. That man will hunt you down, and master will learn the truth from his lips, which should have come from yours.[91]

[89] Underlined in red pencil: "that".

[90] Underlined in red pencil: "can".

[91] Underlined in red pencil: "hunt"; "will learn the truth from his lips, which should have come from yours".

MARY. I will tell him. The words will part us! Heaven inspire me how to utter them.

Enter JOHN LEIGH. *(L. 2nd. *X down* R.C.)*

Ah! (*sinks back on the seat when she sees him.*)

JOHN. I – I hoped to find her better this evening, Fanny.

FANNY. *(*X*[s] *to him*)* So she is, sir, much better, and wishful to see you. – where shall I find Master Willie and Miss Maud, sir.

JOHN. Yonder in the summer-house. (*Exit Fanny *at Back* L. 2**[92]*) Mary!

MARY. John!

JOHN. How long it is since we have been alone together! – how very long!

MARY. Yes.

JOHN. You do not know what life is to me without you?

MARY. You have had the children with you.

JOHN. In them I love you and know how much I love you. By their years I count the debt of happiness I owe you, and by their growth I see its increase.

MARY (*aside*). Courage, I must break it to him. (*Aloud.*) But, John, if my – my health required my absence abroad for some time – if the – the doctor ordered me to the south of France or to Madeira, you could not desert your profession and give up your life – we should be obliged to part then.

JOHN. Never, Mary, never – to separate from you would be my death.

MARY. The children could not accompany us.

JOHN. Dearly as I love them, they are only a part of you. Where you go, I must go. The air you breathe can alone sustain my life.

MARY. Oh! no! no! I cannot! I cannot (*embraces him*).

JOHN (*aside*). Now must I tell her! How my heart trembles! (*Aloud.*) Mary, if – if you heard – if they told you that many years ago I

[92] From the second door on the left at the back of the stage.

had loved another woman -----[93]

Mary. I should not believe it.

John. But if you – you saw – the proofs (*holds the letters behind him.*)

Mary. Proofs! I do see them. I have seen them. They are in my arms.

John. And if I confessed -------

Mary. Confessed!

John. Ay! if I said, that I still maintained that love in secret – that I had deceived you ---------

Mary. I should think you were false only in saying so.

John. Could nothing shake your faith in me?

Mary. Nothing, John! nothing!

John (*concealing the letters*). Nor mine in you, nor mine in you! (*Embracing her*) – my own Mary – my blessing! *(*Music. Agit. "I'll Speak of Thee"*)* [I]

Mary. No! no! do not touch me. I – I am not yours! Your blessing? No – I am your curse!

John. Mary!

Mary. You will learn to reproach me for my love, to think my constancy is my chief guilt, and the happiness I have bestowed upon you is the great misfortune of your life.

John. You are mad to speak so.

Mary. Would that I were, John! Would that the words I am about to utter were my last, and with your wretched wife could be buried the sorrows of your future. Listen to me *(*Bus.*)* [I],[94] nay, do not hold me to your breast. I cannot stab you while in my very arms. Listen, John, I am – I ----------

(Rawdon Scudamore *appears in the shrubbery* R.H. *in the bright moonlight, while* John *and* Mary *are in the shadow of the tree* R. *He looks round.* Mary *recognizes him and utters a faint cry.* Raw-

[93] "Woman" is underlined with a red pencil.

[94] Business. It is marked by two crosses before and after "Listen to me": in all likelihood John Leigh embraced Mary while she spoke those words.

DON *perceiving* JOHN LEIGH *disappears.* MARY*, recoiling towards* L.H.*, falls on the garden seat.*)

MARY. There! there!

JOHN (*supporting her.*) Mary, for heaven's sake, be calm! You are killing yourself. (*Enter* FANNY L. [[H]] *L.*) Quick, Fanny, she has fainted. I fear that a relapse has occurred. Remain with her, I will send my sister to you. Get her quickly to her room, I will ride over to Crawley for the doctor. (*Exit.*) *(*Music Changes to Scuda*)*[95]

RAWDON *reappears and advances.*

RAWD. Mary, pardon me if I have *not* kept my word. I could not resist the attraction of your presence.

FANNY. Sir, do you not see that she is insensible?

RAWD. No; she recovers! Do you hear me, Mary, 'tis I, Rawdon.

FANNY. Ah! ----- (*retreats a step.*)

RAWD. You know, then, the relation I bear to this lady?

FANNY. Yes.

RAWD. Then leave us!

FANNY. No; I know enough to remain.

RAWD. Mary (*taking her hands passionately*), think what you will of me, regard me with hate as you must, I cannot resist the charm you have exercised over my heart. I cannot forego the rights you have given me over your life. (*Enter* LADY GLENCARRIG.) Yes, I am jealous of this man who calls you his. You are mine, for I love you passionately.

LADY G. Release that lady, sir. [C.]

FANNY. Lady Glencarrig.

LADY G. (*to* FANNY). Go! I will see to your mistress. (*Exit* FANNY.) you are the Count de Willidoff, I presume?

RAWD. I was unaware that I was known to your ladyship.

LADY G. Too well known, sir. I decline to permit my house to be

[95] The music changed to the unidentified motif connected with Scudamore.

used for your clandestine meetings. Yonder is the gate!

Rawd. You are not perhaps aware -----

Lady G. Sir, your absence will be more grateful to me than your excuses.

Rawd. As you please. (*Bows and exit.*) *(R.U.E.)*

Lady G. (*regarding* Mary, *who has been gradually recovering her senses.*) Her guilt is beyond all doubt, and that servant was her accomplice. (*Walks up and down while* Mary *revives, and looks at her with a vacant gaze of half consciousness.*) Are you sufficiently recovered to attend to what I say?

Mary. To what you say? Yes – what?

Lady G. I trust you will consider it unnecessary to practice further on my credulity, when I inform you that I was fully aware how deeply you had deceived your husband, before I became a witness of your perfidy.

Mary. (*half conscious.*) Yes.

Lady G. It is well you have the grace at last to confess it. You have brought desolation and shame to your own home but you shall not bring disgrace to mine.[96]

Mary. Yes. (*answering mechanically.*)

Lady G. You will find some pretext to excuse yourself from joining my table this evening.

Mary. Very – well –

Lady G. I presume that you feel the necessity of leaving my house?

Mary. Yes; I – I am going – I am going away.

(*She goes up with wavering steps, as one who is dazed, leaning on a tree for a moment. She utters a low, wailing cry, and passes on towards the house.*)

End of Act
Time 40 Minutes

[96] A red dot here probably indicates a pause meant to emphasise the importance of the moment.

ACT 3 *(*"The Spell Is Broken" to open*)* [I].[97]

SCENE – *The same Evening: Mrs Leigh's room. A large *practicable** [I] *window at the back overlooking the garden.* MARY *is seated at a table* R. *of* C. *writing, a shaded lamp before her. A pause. She writes.*
**Floats ½ Down*
*Borders ¾ – . – **
Enter FANNY L.H. *door, which she locks behind her.*

MARY. Well?

FANNY. Mr Leigh is in Lady Glencarrig's room. I gave him your message.

MARY. That I begged not to be disturbed this evening?

FANNY. Yes.

[97] The note is followed by a small circle indicating music, as was customary. The tune may be identified with two different ballads. The first could be *The Spell is Broken – We Must Part*, words and music by Juliet Bellchambers (afterwards known as Mrs J.J. Nicholls). The lyrics read: "My heart is like the faded flow'r, / Whose beauty lost, and sweetness flown; / forgot, neglected in the bow'r, / Is left, by all, to die alone. / And thus am I, all hope is o'er, / That hope so cherish'd in my heart; / I dare not wish to see him more, / The spell is broken – we must part. / The spell is broken – we must part. // I thought he lov'd – I was deceiv'd, / Oh! would that we had never met! / For tho' he is no more believ'd, my heart refuses to forget. / And yet, alas! I must not tell / The grief that rends my aching heart; / Adieu for ever, fare-thee-well! / The spell is broken – we must part. / The spell is broken – we must part" (Bellchambers). The second ballad that could be the one alluded to here is *Farewell, the Spell is Broken: Ballad*, by Maud Vernon, whose words read: "Farewell, the spell is broken, / The dream of bliss, is past, / Still, I'll fondly prize each token, / And love thee, to the last. / As the sunshine, to the flower, / So was thy dear smile to me. / When first we met, from that bright hour, / I lov'd, I lov'd, but thee. / Language had no part, / Words could but faintly tell, / The love, thou would'st impart, / Those eyes, revealed too well. / Ah! couldst thou search this heart, / In this bosom, thou would'st see, / Reflected, on each part, / The love I feel for thee. / Then though the spell is broken, / And the dream of bliss is past, / Still, I'll fondly prize each token, / And love, yes, love thee, to the last" (Vernon 1862).

Mary. What did he reply?

Fanny. Nothing, ma'am, his head was bent over a bundle of letters which he appeared to have just opened, with the intention of reading them.

Mary. My letters written years ago to Rawdon! They contain the sad history of that other life. Well – their perusal will spare me a bitter confession. (*She resumes her writing.*)

Fanny. I hope the children have not disturbed you while I have been away?

Mary. No – they have been very good! Have you locked that door?

Fanny. Yes, ma'am. (*Exit* R.H. *door.* **"Sweet Home"*[98] *A pause, during which Mary writes. Then she reads.*)

Mary. "I am now going away from you, and we shall never meet again. Never! Because I shall always love you, and my love has now become a sin. I should like to see the children sometimes; but perhaps it is better they should be taught to believe that I am dead, and live in ignorance of their disgrace. If so, I beg you to send them once a month to attend the service at old Hampstead Church. There I may watch them unseen, and mingle my prayers with those of their innocent young hearts. I shall resume my teaching. And now, and once for all, farewell! God bless, watch over, and help you! I must remember, my own dearest one, that it is to preserve our love pure and worthy of the past we part now and for ever.

Your most unhappy Mary."

(*She takes off her wedding-ring.*) My wedding-ring (*kisses it*). I have no right to wear it now. (*Writes.*) I send you back my wedding-ring, but in memory of the love I have borne you, I beseech you give it to me again, that I may wear it upon my heart, if I have not the right to wear it upon my hand. (*She folds it in the letter, and then lays down her head upon it, and weeps.*)[99]

[98] The customary little circle indicates music.

[99] A vertical line runs parallel to the text, indicating that the music ended here, or most likely after the words: "your most unhappy Mary": a pencilled note in Irving's handwriting reads "stop" after those words. "I send you back . . . upon my hand" missing in the original version.

(*Rising*) Fanny!

Enter FANNY R.H. *Door.*

FANNY. Yes, ma'am.

MARY. Are the children asleep?

FANNY. No, ma'am. I have not undressed them yet.

MARY. At what hour does the mail-train pass to-night?

FANNY. To London?

MARY. Yes.

FANNY. At about a quarter-past ten, I believe, ma'am.

MARY. Take this letter to Mr Leigh. (FANNY *unlocks door* L.H. *and is going.*) Stay, Fanny, here is the key of my jewel-case. This opens my wardrobe at home; give them to your master to-morrow. You have been a faithful and good girl, Fanny, I wish I could reward you with more than my gratitude.

FANNY. Ah, ma'am, I spend my wages, but I can never spend the grateful looks that you and master have paid me for my service to your children.

MARY. You have my address?

FANNY. Yes.

MARY. You will write to me every week, and on the first of each month you will come and see me. Mr Leigh will not forbid you, I am sure.

FANNY (*weeping.*) Yes, ma'am.

MARY. Then there is nothing else, but – to – to – say, good-bye. (*She presses her hand.*) Good-bye![100]

FANNY *goes out rapidly,* *L* *unable to repress her sorrow but unwilling to exhibit her tears. (*MRS LEIGH *puts on a shawl and bonnet.)* A quarter-past ten. It is now half-past eight, and I have five miles to walk to the station. There is no time to be lost (*goes to the window and opens it.*) By this balcony I can reach the lawn, and find my way to the road through the shrubbery-gate. I must lock this

[100] This exchange between Fanny and Mary was not in the original version, where Fanny exited after Mary's order to take her letter to her husband.

door. (*Locks* L.H. *Door. Goes to* R.H. *Door*). Willie, dear – Maud – come – come here.

Enter the Children Willie *and* Maud. **Door* R. 2*

I am going away, and I shall not see you again for a very long time; so you will be very good children, will you not?

Both. Yes, mamma.

Willie. Is papa going too?

Mary. No; that is, I hope not. I hope he will not send you away from him. Poor papa has had a great [[tedious]] misfortune. He is very sad; and when you see the tears in his eyes you must love him very much. That I am sure you will. Good-bye, Maud, darling (*kisses her*). Dear me, how your hair does grow! It wants cutting again. This lock is very troublesome[101] (*reaches a scissors from the workbox, and cuts a lock of the child's hair off*). There, that is better (*she places the lock of hair in an envelope, and then in her bosom.*)

Willie. But why must you go away, mamma?

Mary. You will soon be going to school, Willie, and you must be so good, and work so hard, that papa will be proud – no – he will never be pr – proud of you – but he – he will feel you are not a trouble to him.

Willie. Indeed I will work very hard. See, here is the sum I did to-day (*takes a slate from the table*). There, Fanny says there is not one mistake in it. (Maud *goes up and fetches her copy-book*) **Music: Banks and Braes**[102]

Mary. May your life be as faultless, my child!

[101] "Tedious" was also to be found, as in the original version.

[102] In all likelihood, *The Banks o' Bonnie Doon*, lyrics by Robert Burns: "Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon, / How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair; / How can ye chant, ye little birds, / And I sae weary, fu' o' care. / Thou'lt break my heart, thou warbling bird, / That wantons thro' the flowering thorn: / Thou minds me o' departed joys, / Departed — never to return! / Aft hae I rov'd by Bonie Doon, / To see the rose and woodbine twine: / And ilka bird sang o' its Luve, /And fondly sae did I o' mine; / Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose, / Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree!/ And may fause Luver staw my rose, / But ah! he left the thorn wi' me".

MAUD. Look at my copy, mamma.

MARY (*reads.*) "Honour thy father and thy mother."[103]

MAUD. And there's no blot – see!

MARY. No blot! no blot! (*she covers her face.*)

WILLIE. Dear mamma, what is the matter?

RAWDON *appears at the window,* *C* *and enters.*

MARY. It is nothing, dear – nothing. There, kiss me, Willie – again! Come, Maud, to my heart. Good-bye – good-bye! I must be gone. (*She meets* RAWDON.)

RAWD. Mary!

MARY. You here!

RAWD. You were going.

MARY. Yes; I told you what I would do if you persecuted me. Well, you have come, and I am keeping my word.

RAWD. Good. I will accompany you.

MARY. It is useless. I have no money now; I shall never have any.

RAWD. I do not come for money.

MARY. Return to your room, my dears; go in there. Fanny will come to you presently. (*She leads them into room,* R.H. *and closes the door.*) Now, what do you want?

RAWD. What do I want?

MARY. Yes; what have you come for?

RAWD. That is a strange question from a woman to her husband.

MARY. Say her creditor.

RAWD. There is the money I took from you. (*Throws some notes on the table.*) It was my poverty urged me to a deed for which I merit your contempt.[104]

[103] A vertical bar, probably indicating a dead pause, precedes "thy mother", which is heavily underlined.

[104] Consistently with Rawdon's evolution from *The Two Lives of Mary Leigh* to *Hunted Down*, this part read much differently in the Manchester version:

RAWD. That is a strange question from a woman to her husband.

MARY. Say her creditor.

Mary. I do not ask your motives for the past. What do you want here?

Rawd. I want to share my fortune with you.

Mary. Thank you, sir, I can accept nothing from you, not even your name.

Rawd. You can accept your children.

Mary. What can you want with them, unless you want to sell them to their father as you sold me?

Rawd. They are his on one condition, that you are mine.

Mary. What do you mean?

Rawd. Listen, Mary. You have resolved to leave this house – and I am resolved you shall. I saw you but once, and that, in an interview in which I inspired you with hate – you inspired me with love.[105]

Mary. Ah! (*recoils from him.*)

Rawd. For the first time in my life I resisted a passion – and for the first time felt its power and my weakness. Mary, I come to claim you!

Mary. Me – me!

Rawd. You are my wife!

Mary. Never! (*a knocking at* L.H. *door.* John Leigh *outside calling* "Mary! Mary!") Ah! (*she runs to it and throws it open. Enter* John.) Defend me against that man! (*she falls at his feet*).

Enter Fanny *(Fanny *X*s[106] *behind into Room* R.* [I], Lady Glencarrig, Mrs Bolton Jones, and Guests. *(*Servants with Candles. Lights to Up*)* [I]

Rawd. Do not make me a hard one. I have no wish to harm you. And if your position is intolerable, it is no fault of mine.
Mary. I never blamed you for it – but for the use you made of it.
Rawd. I was poor then; now I am rich, and above doing a mean thing.
Mary. Then what do you want here?
Rawd. I want to share my fortune with you (Boucicault 1865: f. 25).

[105] "Me" is heavily underlined.
[106] Exits.

JOHN. Not there, Mary – no, rise up and stand beside me,[107] (*he raises her.*) I have read these letters – written to that man many years ago. Look in my face, my own one – my unhappy one. I pity, I love you more. *(*Servants put down Lights*)* [I]

RAWD. Since you know so much – (*Enter* FANNY, *with* WILLIE *and* MAUD) – you know my authority. She is my lawful wife – and these (*advancing to* FANNY) –

JOHN. Lay but a finger on them, or on her, and by Heaven your insult will make her your widow! (LADY GLENCARRIG *and the party hold* JOHN *back.*) This woman is mine! – [[was]] given into my hands by Him who made her. These are my flesh and blood. The law cannot unmake them, and shall not tear them from me, while I have [[a]] life to stand before them and defend my own. *(MRS B. JONES *goes up.*)*[108]

LADY G. (*advancing to* MRS LEIGH.) I have done you wrong. Your unhappy story is known to all here, and it fills us with pity and respect. [[You are a good woman. Oh,]][s] Misfortune is no crime! Forgive me, [[my]] sister; my house is your home whenever you please to make it so. [[ALL THE LADIES (*advancing.*) And so is mine – and mine.]]

MRS B. J. Come and stop with me, my dear; and I should like to see that person set his foot inside my doors.[109]

RAWD. To-morrow I shall come furnished with legal powers to enforce those claims you set at nought; then we shall see which of you can test[110] my right.

Enter CLARA *L.*.

[107] "beside me, as an honest woman should (*he raises her*). I have read your letter, and these also – written to that man many years ago – confirm the story you told my sister. Look in my face, my own one – my unhappy one. I pity, I love you more. Do I respect you less?" (ibid.: f. 32).

[108] In the Manchester version Rawdon replied: "I know how to enforce my rights, and the opinion of society will bring you to your senses" (ibid.: f. 33).

[109] Heavily underlined: "person". In the Manchester version Lady Glencarrig replied: "Society, sir, does not respond to your anticipations" and Rawdon darkly hinted that "Then the law will. To-morrow" (ibid.).

[110] "Contest" (ibid.).

Clara *(C.)* I can, Rawdon, and I must.

Rawd. Clara!

Clara. I shared your guilty secrets. I was your passive accomplice. I consented to the silent shame you made me endure because you were ashamed to own me, but my life is a share of yours, and I defend my life against that woman who has supplanted me in your heart. I am your wife. (*Turning to* Mr Leigh.) I have been so for twelve years past.[111]

Mrs B. J. Then, when the monster married our dear Mary he was guilty of bigamy, not to speak of obtaining that poor girl's fortune under false pretences. *(*X*^{s} *to* Mary)*

Rawd. (*to* Clara.) So you have played the game against me. You shall pay dearly for your triumph. (*Exit.*) *(L.)*[112]

John. There, dearest, do not weep so; don't tremble; the danger has passed away.

Lady G. (*to* Clara.) My poor girl, we owe this escape from peril to you, you must desire to leave this hateful life.

Clara. No, I thank you kindly; *(Lady G. *retires*)* he is my husband, I must follow him; he could not get on without me, for he loves me sometimes.[113] Good-bye, Mrs Leigh (*going*). *(*X*^{s} L)*

[111] "Clara. I cannot help it – I must speak. I have shared your guilty secrets that I might be your companion in all. I have been your silent accomplice because I loved you. I could have shared your prison if they had let me. Have I ever betrayed you? Then why do you betray me now? As this man clings to his – and protects his love – so have you roused me to protect mine. I am your wife (*turning to* Mrs Dayes) I have been so for twelve years past" (ibid.).

[112] "So you have played the game against me. You have won it, but you shall pay dearly for your triumph" (ibid.).

[113] This was considered by Clement Scott one of the most moving moments in the play. Many years after he had witnessed the first London night of *Hunted Down*, he wrote:

> "I shall never forget his last exit, handsome-looking devil as he was, when he scowled at the sad, pale faced wife, and hissed, "So you have played the game against me! You shall pay dearly for your triumph!" Clara – an artist's model – prepares to follow her husband, but her friends entreat her to leave him, saying, "The brute will kill you!" But, with an air of beautiful resignation, Clara replies,

MRS B. J. But the brute will kill you.

CLARA. I had rather die so than live away from him.

LADY G. My poor girl! And notwithstanding all his guilt – his infidelity, you love this man?

CLARA. Yes. (*Exit.* *L.*)

MRS B. J. Ah, these are the sort of women that spoil the men. Oh, I wish he had me for a month! *(*X*s *Down* R.)* [I]

MARY (*to whom* JOHN *has been showing the letters.*) And did no evil thought of me – no suspicion cross your mind?

LADY G. Not a shadow, Mary. Few husbands would have shown such confidence in their wives.

MRS B. J. Very few indeed – mine wouldn't.

JOHN. Few husbands have such wives.

MARY. I have not deserved your faith, for I had not faith in you, or I had spared you and myself all this suffering by a frank disclosure.[114] Oh, [[had I but trusted him that trusted me]] *had I but trusted him that trusted me* [I],[115] I ne'er had made him suffer

"No, I thank you kindly. He is my husband. I must follow him. He could not get on without me, *and he loves me sometimes*. I had rather die so than live away from him!"

What a life's poem is contained in those words, "He loves me sometimes!" and what will not good women endure for that occasional spasm of affection? (Scott 1986: 2.3-4).

[114] Heavily underlined: "a frank disclosure".

[115] The ending in the original version was somewhat different:

JOHN. There, dearest, do not weep so; don't tremble; the danger has passed away.

MARY. Oh, how I thank Heaven for it, and for these (*embracing her children*) my precious ones.

MRS B. J. It was a monstrous narrow escape, though, and you owe it to me, who brought down this charming girl.

JOHN. Clara, you shall leave this life, which must be detestable to you. We will provide for you.

CLARA. No, sir, I thank you kindly; I must follow him. I shall suffer for all this, but he could not get on without me, for he loves me sometimes. Good-bye, Mrs Dayes (*going.*)

MRS B. J. But the brute will kill you.

wrongfully. One word – the truth – let it be timely spoken, will rescue many a heart from being broken. *("*Hearts & Homes*")*[116]

Curtain
Time: 19 Minutes

*1 Act 42 Minutes
2 – . – 40 – . –
3 – . – 19 – . –
1 hour 41 Minutes.
With Waits 2 hours 6 Minutes
St James's Theatre London, 5 November 1866.*

Clara. I had rather die so, than live away from him.
Lady G. My poor girl! And notwithstanding all his guilt – his infidelity, you love this man?
Clara. Yes. (*Exit.*)
Mary. Can you forgive me, John?
John. Oh, what a luxury it is to have somebody to forgive! My breast feels like an empty barn; its wide doors gape to receive a harvest of love! Come and be gathered into my heart!
Mary. Stay.
Mrs B. J. I think that after such a separation he is entitled to a second honeymoon.
John. Let us have one a month!
Mary. You forget something. I do not feel that I am your wife yet.
John. Eh?
Mary (*holding out her hand.*) Marry me again, John; have I the right to wear it? (*He places the ring on her finger. They embrace.*)
END. (Boucicault 1865: ff. 33-4).

[116] A little circle indicates music.

Chapter 3

Cast and Credits

The often complicated interconnections between Victorian theatrical companies and theatrical families – even if only strictly legitimate families are considered – come to light every time one looks at a single company of the time. The story of the St James's Theatre is no exception. In 1866 the St James's Theatre was managed by Louisa Herbert, but it had changed several managers from its opening in 1835. First there had been its founder, the tenor John Braham, who had converted an old hotel into a prettily chic theatre, decorated with fake Watteaus and other rococo paraphernalia, then many other managers, male and female, had come, among which John Hooper, Laura Seymour, Alfred Bunn, Frank Matthews. It changed its name at least three times, from St James's to The Prince's Theatre – following Victoria's marriage to Albert – to The French Theatre, from 1842 to 1854, when it hosted companies of French actors, among them, briefly, in 1848, Alexandre Dumas's Théâtre Historique, after the anti-French campaign led by Charles Kean, Benjamin Webster, John Baldwin Buckstone and Charles Mathews. Dumas himself was not in London, dedicating his energies elsewhere, to fighting on the Parisian barricades. It then passed to Mrs Seymour, who was close to Charles Reade, in 1854, then to F.B. Chatterton, who employed Mrs Frank Matthews and Nellie Moore (Duncan 1964: 107), then in 1860 to Alfred Wigan, who likewise employed Mr and Mrs Frank Matthews (Fitzgerald 1900: 5-9; Duncan 1964: 14-16, 57, 60-70, 82).

Starting at Christmas 1861, the theatre was directed by George Vining, who, besides Mrs and Mr Frank Matthews, employed Louisa Herbert, and Kate Terry as Herbert's understudy. One night in 1862 Kate had to replace Herbert in Horace Wigan's *Friends or Foes*

(adapted from Sardou), and her success was so great that she was immediately appointed by Tom Taylor as the leading lady of the Olympic Theatre (Duncan 1964: 114). The year after, at Christmas 1862, Frank Matthews replaced Vining with a company which included Miss Herbert and Ada Dyas (Fitzgerald 1900: 9-10).

It was during Matthews's management of the St James's Theatre that Louisa Herbert achieved her greatest success, as Lady Audley in George Robert's adaptation of Mary Elizabeth Braddon's novel, on 28 February 1863, with Frank Matthews playing Luke Marks (Fitzgerald 1900: 9-10).

As a play, *Lady Audley's Secret* was more sensational than the sensation novel from which it originated:

> It is only in two acts; and the putting of the superfluous husband into the well follows so closely on the bigamy, the glow of the arson, again, so closely on the stain of murder, and the interesting heroine goes mad so immediately, with the glow of the house she has burnt yet on her face, and the man she has burnt in it dying on a stretcher by her side, that the audience has a pudding all plums. (Henry Morley, qtd in Fitzgerald 1900: 11)

The play brought Frank Matthews considerable financial success:

> In April, 1863, Henry Morley, commenting on the success of this venture, said: – "Mr Frank Matthews produced the best new plays he could get of a creditable sort, and though they were not bad, and were acted well, I saw one evening his curtain rise to an audience of five in the stalls, seven in the dress-circle, and thirty in the pit! He is now acting to crowded houses "Lady Audley's Secret," and a burlesque of Mr Boucicault's "Effie Deans". (Fitzgerald 1900: 11)

After Matthews, Benjamin Webster became the lessee of the St James's Theatre, with a company that included Mr and Mrs Charles Mathews, Mr and Mrs Frank Matthews, and Miss Herbert, producing plays by Boucicault – *The Fox Chase* – and also Frank C. Burnand's burlesque of *Faust*, with Mr and Mrs Charles Mathews, and Palgrave Simpson's *Sybilla, or, Step by Step*, with Mr and Mrs Charles Mathews and Mr and Mrs Frank Matthews in the cast (Fitzgerald 1900: 11; Duncan 1964: 109).

After Benjamin Webster, Louisa Herbert became the manager

of the Theatre from 1866 to April 27, 1868, when she ended her management by staging *The School for Scandal* and *The Happy Pair*.[1]

By considering the historical data, it becomes easier to understand how the personal and professional relationships between the members of the cast of *Hunted Down* at times appear to be rather complicated. For example, Miss Herbert, by then the manager, had earlier been a colleague of Ada Dyas under Frank Matthews, whose wife was now in her company, playing a secondary role. Under Alfred Wigan, Louisa Herbert had been in the Saint James's company with Nellie Moore (Irving's first love and former colleague), Kate Terry and Ben Terry, the father of Kate and Ellen (Duncan 1964:110-11). Walter Lacy, who had spent decades on the stage, had worked earlier in his career with nearly all the members of the *Hunted Down* cast. Even Irving, who was still a bit of an outsider, had played the same role of Rawdon Scudamore with Kate Terry – Miss Herbert's former understudy at the St James's and the sister of his future leading lady – in the title role.

Moving on now to the promptbook, the dramatis personae on that fateful night were listed in order of the importance of the performer, not, as was customary, after separating the male from the female performers. It is intriguing to see how only a few years later the order would have been considerably different. The name

[1] Duncan 1964: 12-14. "The two years of management inaugurated in 1866, stand out prominently in the records of the theatre. Miss Herbert's Genius and beauty, which had previously endeared her to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, now for the first time found full scope. For the first time, too, the brilliant work of Henry Irving began to attract the attention of the 'bright-eyed minority' so soon to swell into that 'blear-eyed majority', whose approval was to sweep him into his rightful place as head of his profession. Boucicault it was who brought him up from Manchester to play Rawdon Scudamore to the Mary Leigh of Miss Herbert in 'Hunted Down', and nobly he vindicated the dramatist's judgment. A series of revivals of old comedy, including 'The Belle's Stratagem', 'The Rivals', 'Road to Ruin', 'School for Scandal', and 'She Stoops to Conquer', followed during the next eighteen months with varying success. Irving and Miss Herbert raised a critical storm by their new readings of Joseph Surface and Lady Teazle, but the voice of so shrewd a judge as Henry Morley turned the balance in their favour; and there were no two opinions as to the unsurpassed quality of their Doricourt and Letitia Hardy" (ibid.: 13).

of Irving (mis-spelt "Erving"), as the character actor, appears in the middle, after those of the long-forgotten leading man and leading ladies of the time. He is still no more than the villain of the piece. In discussing, section by section, the characters and the actors who appeared in the London première, I have followed the order to be found in the promptbook.

3.1 *John Leigh – Walter Lacy*

> The part of the genial, trusting, and somewhat foolish artist is given to Mr Walter Lacy, who looks manly, but scarcely as simple as his words and actions would have us believe.
>
> ("Drama: St James's", *London Daily News*, 6 November 1866)

Almost all the members of the cast of *Hunted Down* crossed Irving's path again in the following years. Some became lifelong friends. One of these was Walter Lacy, who is the only member of the cast besides Irving who made it to the *Dictionary of National Biography*. On the night of November 5, 1866, Lacy played the role of John Leigh.

Writing many years later, Ellen Terry defined Walter Lacy as "the William Terriss of the time", meaning the 1860s (Terry 1933: 24). It is hard to imagine now how this could be. Many readers probably only have a vague notion of who William Terriss was, perhaps merely identifying him with an urban legend: the ghost that haunts Covent Garden Underground station in popular imagination. Nowadays many are unaware of his iconic status in late Victorian England, which went far beyond the idea of a matinée idol, and was perhaps more akin to hero worship. Terriss, Irving's second lead in many Lyceum productions and the handsome, dashing hero of Adelphi melodramas, was an actor who led an adventurous life that culminated in a violent death, and had an array of admirers ranging from stage-struck teenage girls to the slightly less gullible George Bernard Shaw. On the other hand, if we look at the very few surviving photos of Walter Lacy taken during the 1860s,[2] all we can

[2] Now in the National Portrait Gallery collections. There are several earlier photos of Walter Lacy taken when he was playing John of Gaunt opposite

see is a tall middle-aged man, with an athletic build and a double chin that denotes a marked penchant for the pleasures of the table, and a serenely pleasant face – every inch the figure of a respectable bourgeois, with nothing adventurous or really attractive about him, as one could expect from Ellen Terry's comparison.

The decision to cast him in the role of John Leigh should, however, give us pause. It is a part that requires a considerable amount of bourgeois steadiness, true, but also an unconventional, devil-may-care side, and, definitely, personal appeal. After all, Mary Leigh is undeniably, even obsessively, in love with him, not with the younger, rakish, and darkly handsome Scudamore. And John Leigh, on his side, is very far from the conventional melodrama husband – Mr Carlyle from *East Lynne*, to name the most notoriously prude among them – when he throws all Victorian caution to the winds and is ready to accept his wife's bigamy and keep her as she is, no questions asked. John Leigh's is a role that no conventional – no mediocre – actor could have undertaken with ease, and the choice of Lacy was significant: he was an ex-beau that must have retained some sort of sex appeal, at least according to Victorian standards, but also a professional with decades of solid experience.

Another thing that certainly qualified Lacy for the part of John Leigh was that he had starred in several very important productions of Boucicault's plays: he had been in the cast of the first run of one of his earliest West End works, *Woman* (1843) (Fawkes 2011: 51), then in *The Prima Donna* (1852), and he had also been a celebrated Château Renaud in *The Corsican Brothers*, opposite Charles Kean, for whom the play had been written. Two years after *Hunted Down*, in 1868, he was Bellingham in the first run of *After Dark* (Knight 1901).

Lacy, "a respectable light comedian" (Knight 1901), was endowed with an "enormous versatility" (*Los Angeles Herald*, no. 100, 8 January 1899). This enabled him to play roles ranging from light comedy wits to melodrama villains, even such difficult roles as that of Château Renaud, which is one of the most complex and

Charles Kean as Richard II. It must be added that the make-up required for the role – thick wig, artificial beard and eyebrows – makes it very difficult to divine the actual features of the man.

multifaceted villains in Victorian drama. He was known in real life as a witty person, with a surprisingly avant-garde approach to acting, as one of his few surviving letters shows:

> Speaking of some of his own performances, he thus related his different methods of dining: "When I played 'Bluff Hal,' sir (Henry of England), I drank brown porter and dined off British beef; but if I had to act he Honourable Tom Shuffleton, I contented myself with a delicate cutlet and a glass of port which resembled a crushed garnet, and then sallied on to the stage with the manners of a gentleman and the devil-me-care [*sic*] air of a man about town". (Walter Lacy, letter to Squire Bancroft, 1873, qtd in Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 198-9)

Lacy belonged to an earlier generation to that of Irving and Terry. He had been friends with some of the most relevant playwrights and actors of the Forties and Fifties, like "Frederick Guest Tomlins, Howe, [Robert] Strickland, Mark Lemon, Sheridan Knowles, Leman Rede" (*Los Angeles Herald*, no. 100, 8 January 1899) and was still a friend of the survivors of a previous age, men such as "Old Mr Keeley, Buckstone, Walter Montgomery, Sothern", with whom he used "to have supper in the coffee-room of the Café de l'Europe", near the Haymarket Theatre (Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 112). When, a few days after the opening of *Hunted Down*, a matinée performance of *The School for Scandal* was held as a benefit "for the sufferers from the late fire at the Standard Theatre", Lacy took part in it, alongside older actors like Phelps and Wigan (*The Era*, 18 November 1866). Irving, a newcomer to the London scene, did not participate.

At the time, Walter Lacy was part of the London theatre world, a closely interrelated milieu permeated by fierce rivalries but also by a strong sense of solidarity. The Standard, Shoreditch, had burnt down on 20 October 1866; no lives had been lost, but its manager, Mr Douglass, and all the theatre employees had found themselves in serious difficulty (*South London Chronicle*, 27 October 1866). Charity events of this kind or celebrations of fellow-performers were not rare among the close-knit London theatrical community. A few years before, in 1858, on Charles Kean's farewell night at the Princess's Theatre, Walter Lacy had been with Frank Matthews

and Ellen Terry – just a little girl at the time – in Edmund Yates's farce *If the Cap Fits* (Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 63), and in 1852 he had been in the St James's company at the benefit for the Bateman children – twenty years before they all found themselves working together at the Lyceum Theatre (Duncan 1964: 90).

Born in Bristol in 1809, Lacy – whose real name was Walter Williams – did not come from an acting family. He was the son of a coachbuilder, and had originally been trained to become a doctor. His provincial début took place in 1829 in Edinburgh, and he toured the provinces before his London début at the Haymarket, on 21 August 1838, as Charles Surface, according to one source (Knight 1901), or in *The French Spy* with Madame Céleste in the 1830s, according to another (Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 198).

He lived at 38, Montpelier Square, Knightsbridge (Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 198), a very respectable upper-middle-class neighbourhood then as now, with his actress wife, Harriet Deborah Taylor (1807-74); they had married on 22 June 1839. He had been second lead to Charles Fechter in *Ruy Blas* at the Princess's Theatre in 1860 (Morley 1974: 220) and worked with Helen Faucit at Sadler's Wells in 1854 (*Los Angeles Herald*, no. 100, 8 January 1899). A few years later he was Prince Henry to Phelps's Falstaff at Drury Lane (1864) (Morley 1974: 275). More significantly, he worked under Charles Kean at the Princess's Theatre during the Fifties (Knight 1901), and these were indeed his memorable years, when he was constantly second lead to one of the men who shaped theatre history:

> he was John of Gaunt in the famous revival of Shakespeare's 'Richard II,' and Edmund in 'King Lear,' when Charles Kean was the king and Kate Terry, Cordelia. His Gratiano, in the 'Merchant of Venice,' was also much admired, and as Château Renaud, in 'The Corsican Brothers,' he divided the opinion of old critics between his performance and that of Alfred Wigan. It was generally thought that Walter Lacy's was the best . . . (*Los Angeles Herald*, no. 100, 8 January 1899).

He was also a veteran of the St James's Theatre, having started to work there as early as 1839, under the management of Mr Hooper, who also engaged famous performers like Alfred Wigan and the beautiful but ill-starred Laura Honey, besides "Van Amburgh

and his famous troupe of lions" (Fitzgerald 1900: 5) – those were indeed rougher times for an actor to live in, long before the advent of mid-Victorian respectability largely brought about by Irving himself – and in later years he had been again at the St James's under Miss Herbert, starting in 1865, in roles such as Flutter in *The Belle's Stratagem*, the play that immediately preceded *Hunted Down* (Duncan 1964: 125), besides other productions staged under the management of Miss Herbert, amongst which *Hunted Down* took pride of place, as something the Victorian reviewers – even from America – invariably felt had marked a turning point:

> In 1865 there was a memorable performance of 'The School for Scandal' at the St James theater. Miss Herbert was Lady Teazle, Frank Matthews Sir Peter, Mrs Frank Matthews Mrs Candour, and Walter Lacy Charles Surface. In 1866, at the St James theater, still managed by Miss Herbert, we have the 'Belle's Strategem,' with Miss Herbert as Letitia Hardy, Henry Irving as Doricourt and Walter Lacy as Flutter. In the same year and under the same management, came the celebrated 'Hunted Down' that brought Henry Irving to the front rank of ambitious actors. Irving was Rawdon Scudamore and Walter Lacy John Leigh. (Los Angeles Herald, no. 100, 8 January 1899)

Before his comeback to the Lyceum in the Seventies, Lacy had left the stage for some years to teach elocution at the Royal Academy of Music (Knight 1901). Lacy's role at the Lyceum was actually a very important one: besides supporting Irving in productions like *The Lady of Lyons* (1879), where, as Colonel Damas, he was second lead (De Cordova 1939: 151), he was also, as Ellen Terry recollected, "adviser to Henry Irving in his Shakespearean productions" (Terry 1933: 123). Terry remembered him as a part of her own past as child performer, decades before she reached the Lyceum and stardom, styling him "that very Walter Lacy who had been with Charles Kean when I was a child" (ibid.). Lacy, who had been in the London theatrical world long before Irving got there as an outsider from the provinces, now helped him with his store of experience with the most celebrated Shakespearean director before Irving: Charles Kean:

> as Château Renaud . . . he gave all his experience to William Terriss when he played the part at the Lyceum, under Henry Irving. In fact, he was consulted again and again by Sir Henry Irving and Miss Ellen Terry, whenever a Shakespearian play was in contemplation, for he and his wife, who was an admirable actress, had a complete record of the whole of the Macready and Charles Kean period. (*Los Angeles Herald*, no. 100, 8 January 1899)

At the end of his life, having become old and feeble, he moved to the coast, as many Victorians did, in search of healthier air. He died at Brighton, where he had taken a house at 13 Marine Square, on 13 December 1898 (Knight 1901). His obituary from *The Era* makes a touching reference to his connection with Irving:

> Death of Mr Walter Lacy. . . . some time ago the burden of years began to tell heavily, and he became so feeble that he was unable to leave his chambers. He has lately been residing at Brighton, and on Saturday he had an apoplectic stroke, and, though for a time he rallied somewhat, he succumbed on Tuesday. The news of his death has been received with expressions of sincere regret by his numerous friends, amongst whom Sir Henry Irving held a foremost place. . . . The funeral will take place to-day (Saturday), at Brompton Cemetery. (*The Era*, 17 December 1898)

During Lacy's final period at the Lyceum, Ellen Terry had testified her esteem for the older actor by choosing him as a teacher of elocution for her son Edward Gordon Craig (Eynat-Confino 1987: 18). Thus, the old world of early Victorian theatre, where thespians and troupes of lions could appear together in the same bill, contributed to the education of one of the men who was to shape the twentieth-century idea of the stage. More mundanely, the legacy of Walter Lacy was still visible in the next century: his grandson, Charles Oswald Williams (1864-1924), was a famous conjurer in the early twentieth century and the author of the classic handbook for beginners *Hints to Young Conjurers* (Williams 1919).

3.2 *Mary, His Wife – Miss Herbert*

Mary Leigh's role was played by Louisa Herbert, one of the very few Victorian female theatre managers and a famous Pre-Raphaelite beauty. Louisa Herbert was also a woman of less than Victorian morals. Some style her a high-class courtesan.

Her antecedents are not very clear: the actress herself was inaccurate in her recollections. Born Louisa Maynard probably in 1831,[3] she had been briefly married to Edward Crabb, a London stockbroker (Surtees 1997: 20), and alternated work in the theatre with a fairly respectable bourgeois life first in Onslow Terrace, South Kensington, then in the stylish area around Hans Place, Chelsea – still one of the most sought-after addresses in London – up to the day when, in a scene that would not have been out of place in a Victorian sensation novel, her husband was discovered in the arms of the family housemaid. Louisa had only recently given birth to a son – Arthur Bingham Crabb, born 4 April 1857 (Surtees 1997: 30) – and was still recovering from a difficult childbirth. After a time of cruel mistreatments at the hands of her husband, she was deserted by him and, left without resources, took to the stage, or, at least, decided to become an actress for good, since apparently her début had taken place years before at the Lyceum Theatre in 1847 (Surtees 1997: 20; Bratton 2011: 152-3), and she had already worked as an actress: in 1855 she had joined the Strand Theatre company, then the Aldwych Theatre under Alfred Wigan, afterwards joining the Olympic Theatre company, still under Wigan (Surtees 1997: 21-5; Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 74).

In September 1860, when Alfred Wigan took over the St James's Theatre, Louisa became his female lead, working with Kate Terry and Nellie Moore (Surtees 1997: 50-3). She remained with the St James's company when the theatre was taken over by George Vining, in 1861, and later by Frank Matthews. It was under Matthews's management that she achieved her greatest success, as

[3] Not even Virginia Surtees, her great-granddaughter, is certain about the date of Louisa Herbert's birth, about which, understandably, the actress was never clear (Surtees 1997: 15-18).

the ethereal and psychotic Lady Audley in one of the many stage adaptations of Mary Elizabeth Braddon's best seller *Lady Audley's Secret*, written by George Roberts, which had a good run, starting on 28 February 1863 (Surtees 1997: 53-61; Duncan 1964: 116-19).

The novelist herself was impressed by Louisa's rendering of the part, and wrote to her in a letter: "your grace and self-possession, your charmingly distinct articulation, and the ever varying expression of your face, invested Lady Audley with all the attractions and emotional force necessary to the captivating influence which she exercises over all with whom she has to deal" (Mary Elizabeth Braddon, qtd in Yates, "Miss Braddon and Miss Herbert", *Liverpool Daily Post*, 24 August 1863).

As Ellen Terry recalled her, Herbert "was very tall, with pale gold hair and the spiritual, ethereal look which the aesthetic movement loved. When mother wanted to flatter me, she said that I looked like Miss Herbert! Rossetti founded many of his pictures on her, and she and Mrs 'Janie' Morris were his favourite types" (Terry 1933: 54).

The exterior may have been ethereal, but inside she was 'made of steel', as her photos eloquently suggest: deprived of the angelic touch the Pre-Raphaelites lent her, Miss Herbert's photos invariably show an extremely beautiful woman with a cold, slightly cruel stare. More significantly, her remarkable toughness is shown independently by her lifestyle, which seems to have been based on the systematic exploitation of the men that were smitten by her considerable beauty. After separating from her husband, she began another uncommonly successful career, that of a kept woman. In 1859 Louisa had an illegitimate son by John Downes Rochfort, an Irish protestant and "a talented amateur artist in pottery" (Surtees 1997: 33), the man who was "soon to become her lover en titre" (ibid.: 32), followed by another illegitimate child, this time a daughter, by one of Rochfort's friends, Frederick Acclom Milbank, in 1861 (ibid.: 48-9, 54).

It was Milbank that presented her with the lease of the Saint James's Theatre in 1863 (her other lover, Rochfort, bought her a suburban villa, Sidmouth Lodge). The St James's Theatre had always been an elegant venue from its opening under John Braham in December 1835 (Appleton 1974: 99). Thus, in December 1864,

Louisa Herbert, now a wealthy woman, became one of the very few Victorian female theatre managers (Surtees 1997: 62-8). In that capacity she was very successful, and today she is chiefly remembered as the woman under whose management Irving had his first London success, and W.S. Gilbert's first comedy, *Dulcamara*, with Frank Matthews in the title role, was first put on during the 1865 Christmas season (Surtees 1997: 75; Stedman 1996: 35-6; Duncan 1964: 127-8).

Louisa Herbert was considered a first rate actress mainly for her beauty, which was celebrated – and painted – by the Pre-Raphaelites. Ellen Terry said that "She was not a remarkable actress, but her appearance was wonderful indeed",[4] while Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who had seen her at the Strand Theatre, utterly stage-struck and more, called her, memorably, the "stunner number one". After her husband's desertion, Louisa began modelling for the Pre-Raphaelites and attending the social gatherings of the bohemian circle of Little Holland House.[5]

But her troubled personal life never ceased to haunt her. When, two years after the production of *Hunted Down*, the court proceedings for her legal separation from her husband hit the news, the crude drama of her past life – her husband's adultery, but also his cruel and abusive nature – was reported in full detail in the national and local press, and became a Victorian sensation. Extracts from the trial transcript were widely circulated in the press, and

[4] Terry 1909: 63. Even when Herbert played the role of Mary Leigh, the reviewers subtly let it be known that her beauty was more conspicuous than her acting abilities: "Miss Herbert depicts the mental sufferings of the persecuted Mary Leigh in the most forcible and natural manner, and if her attitudes are occasionally so strikingly statuesque that it might be sometimes thought they were prompted rather by the requirements of a sculptor than the demand of the dramatist, it cannot be denied they are always singularly graceful" (*The Era*, 11 November 1866).

[5] "There were several prominent upper Bohemian salons: Little Holland House, for example, in Holland Park in the heart of London, presided over by Sara, Mrs Princep [*sic*], sheltered the Pre-Raphaelite painters and the beautiful Louisa Herbert" (Bratton 2011: 109). The Little Holland House circle was also frequently attended by the Terry sisters in the same years as Miss Herbert (Holroyd 2008: 23-46; Surtees 1997: 35-40).

one of them is worth quoting in full, because the neutral tone of the witnesses to the court proceedings fails to conceal the nightmare quality of Louisa's married life. Those past horrors may also explain that distant, cold gaze, half defiant, half defensive, with which she seems to be looking at the world in all her photos:

> Miss Herbert, The Actress, in the Divorce Court.
> In the London Court of Probate and Divorce, on Thursday, before the Judge Ordinary, the following case was heard: –
>
> Crabb ("Miss Herbert" v. Crabb. – dr Spinks, Q.C., and dr Tristram for the petitioner; Mr Scarle for the respondent). This was the petition of Louisa Crabb (better known as the manager of St James's Theatre) for a divorce on the ground of adultery and desertion. She was married to the respondent in June, 1855, at Holy Trinity Church, Brixton, and they resided at Onslow Terrace and Hans Place, where a child was born in April, 1857. The rest of the case is described in the evidence.
>
> Mrs Helen Polto – I reside at Clifton, and am sister to the petitioner. Her maiden name was Maynard. I visited her after her marriage. Mr Crabb was a stockbroker. He lived with my sister at Hans-Place, Chelsea. They appeared to be living comfortably. I visited them in 1857, shortly after the birth of their son. I stayed with them about a fortnight. There was a dispute about a servant named Jane. The petitioner had not recovered from her confinement at that time. I had found the respondent shut up with Jane in his dressing room one morning. I threw the door open, and said, "Mr Crabb, I will not allow this, if my sister does." They were whispering together. I told my sister, who said the woman must leave the house. She refused to go, and Mr Crabb would not allow her to leave. Mr Crabb then went away, and my sister sent for a policeman to turn Jane out of the house, but he declined to interfere. I remained in the house several days afterwards, but Mr Crabb never returned while I was there. On the 19th of November last I saw the respondent in the presence of other witnesses. Since then my sister has supported herself on the stage.
>
> Mrs Crabb said – I lived with my husband for a year at Onslow Terrace and from thence we removed to Hans Place. I had reason to complain of neglect on the part of my husband. He would be out all night, and his behaviour to me generally was bad. When he stayed out he usually said that he had been playing at whist He did not drink. In 1857 I had words with him respecting a servant.

After my confinement I was very ill for some time. The respondent went away from me on that occasion for two or three days without telling me where he had gone. When he returned he showed me no attention, but he occupied the servants, and would not let them attend me. I often remonstrated with him about Jane. He kept her downstairs and gave her the keys. When the nurse asked for wine she would not let her have it. My husband supported her in that conduct. That went on till my sister came to me. I don't think he slept in the house after the time he left me, as my sister has described. He did, however, come to the house for some of his clothes. We had a dispute before that about some other misconduct of his. He was very angry about it, but I did not know that he was going to leave me. I sent my solicitor to him, and he said that I should have 25 l. a quarter on application at Hoare's bank. It was paid me twice; but on applying for it the third time, I found that the respondent's count was closed. I afterwards received information that he had gone away to India. From that moment I lost all trace of him, and I have never received money or letters from him since. I have, however, met him in the street about three times. I have maintained my child ever since.

By the judge Ordinary – I communicated with him through my attorney within a few days after he left me; for I had no means on which to live, and I was too ill to take an engagement. I wanted my husband to come back to me. I saw no written agreement for the payment of the 100 l. a year. I was content that he should live separate from me so long as that was paid.

Mr Henry H. Murdogh – I am a merchant at Great St Helen's Bishopsgate. From 1858 to 1861 I resided at Calcutta. I knew Mr Crabb, the respondent. I left him in India. He was an indigo planter's assistant. I have seen him since his return to England. That was at his office, 18 Finch Lane, where he is in a stockbroker's firm.

William Wright, clerk to the petitioner's solicitor, served the citation on the respondent in St James's Street. He had been to his office, at 18 Finch Lane.

Maria Hockington – I live in the service of Mrs Julia Prescott. I was with her in 1866 at 29 Stanley Villas, Chelsea. I remember Mr Crabb coming to the house. He remained there all night, and slept with my mistress. That happened more than once. Last year I saw him in the presence of Mrs Polto and Mrs Wright. Mrs Prescott was not with the petitioner.

Mr Wright, the petitioner's attorney (called at the request of

the court) – The petitioner desired me to communicate with her husband's solicitors, Messrs. Lake and Kendal, whose clerk had brought her 5 l. I was directed to arrange terms for the maintenance of her child. She told me that the clerk had informed her that if she had an attorney he was to communicate with Messrs. Lake and Kendal, with a view to an arrangement for the maintenance of the child. I saw Mr George Lake, and my communications were confined to that subject. There was no question of Mr Crabb's return to his wife. A written agreement was drawn out relative to the allowance. This was produced, and it proved to be a regular separation deed, executed by Mrs Crabb as well as the respondent.

The Court – In that state of things, what becomes of the desertion?

Dr Spinks – The deed was void on the ground that her husband had abandoned his right to the child: and it was, moreover, never acted upon.

The Court – It was acted upon by the payment of the allowance twice.

Dr Spinks – The petitioner was only willing to live apart if the money were paid, and that arrangement has not been carried out.

The Court – it occurs to me, that though she has consented to live apart, her consent cannot be held to be binding on her after the failure of the respondent to pay the money.

Dr Spinks – besides, it was a case of Hobson's choice. It was a forced assent, not a willing consent, and was only intended on her part to be a temporary arrangement until the respondent's health was restored.

The Judge Ordinary – I think, however, that it will be better to let the case stand over, and see if you can find any case in point, for I am perfectly clear that it is impossible to say that there was any separation at the time of the execution of the deed. The hearing was accordingly adjourned. (*Freeman's Journal*, 25 January 1868)

At the end of the proceedings, Louisa lost. She was denied a divorce, and what had been in all respects a case of ruthless desertion by an abusive husband was not recognised as such:

The petition of Mrs Crabbe (Miss Herbert), the actress, for divorce from her husband was on Tuesday dismissed by Sir James Wilde, on account of the petitioner's having executed a deed of separation.

The fact that such a deed had been executed, Sir James said,

> argued that the separation had been a voluntary one, and this must be held to invalidate the plea of desertion, on which the petitioner mainly relied. (*Belfast Morning News,* 20 March 1868)

Perhaps it was in the wake of all this publicity and emotional turmoil[6] that Louisa left the stage in 1869-70.[7] It has been reported that for a while she ran a little theatre school at the little Bijou Theatre in Bayswater (Duncan 1964: 134), but the Miss Herbert who directed that company, "The Alexandra Dramatic Company", based in Blenheim Hall, Chalk Farm, was actually Rosina Pennell, who probably changed her name in order to exploit the original Miss Herbert's popularity.[8] What is certain is that Louisa sporadically reappeared at the St James's (Duncan 1964: 181) and other venues, mainly at benefits or charity events, such as the benefit for Arthur Swanborough at the Strand Theatre in 1871 (*The Era*, 11 June 1871), or the amateur performance given "in the aid of the Building Fund of St Mary's Schools, Brompton", where, somewhat touchingly, she read with W.S. Gilbert – her former protégé – one of his *Bab Ballads* (*The Era*, 15 April 1877).

Afterwards she began yachting around the world with Rochfort, settling in Montecarlo with him during the 1880s. Rochfort died in 1885 and Louisa – who had lost her Pre-Raphaelite ethereal beauty and had become rather stout – began to pass herself off as his widow, converted to Roman Catholicism and "settled down to a life of invincible rectitude", publishing in 1894 her own book of recipes, *The St James's Cookery Book*. She moved to Brighton, where

[6] Contrariwise, Surtees relates that the actress on leaving the stage adopted a certain dismissive attitude towards it: "Miss Herbert had no regrets in leaving the theatre, she always maintained that she had never cared for action and had never been able to remember lines" (Surtees 1997: 82).

[7] Louisa Herbert's name is still mentioned in the press as part of the cast of *She Stoops to Conquer* at the St James's as late as 23 October 1869. That is the latest date I have been able to find. The play ran till 16 July 1870, thus she may have been in the cast till then (Duncan 1964: 144-9).

[8] "The Alexandra Dramatic Company. . . . To prevent mistakes, we may mention that the Miss Herbert here referred to is not the actress of that name who was lately Manageress of the St James's Theatre, but the lady who was formerly known in Theatrical circles as Miss Rosina Pennell" (*The Era*, 12 July 1868).

Irving continued to visit her. In her old age she began to lose her memory and she died on 10 April 1921. She was buried in Brompton cemetery with Rochfort.[9]

3.3 *Willie and Maud, His Children – Miss Charlton and Miss Lilli Lee*

> "The two little children of Mary Leigh were most pleasingly represented by Miss Charlton and Miss Lillie Lee, who were almost like children".
>
> ("Drama: St James's", *London Daily News*, 6 November 1866)

According to Victorian custom, Miss Charlton and Miss Lilli Lee must have been in their early teens – very likely even younger, since a reviewer alludes to "two very young children in the piece" ("Drama: St James's", *London Daily News*, 6 November 1866) – when they performed the parts of Willie and Maud:

> The artist's children, Willie and Maud, are very naturally personated by two pretty little girls, named Miss Charlton and Miss Lilli Lee, who have been exceedingly well trained, and whose movements and speeches appear, in consequence, to be quite spontaneous . . . (*The Era*, 11 November 1866)

The children who trod the boards during the Victorian age were very different from their pampered, idealised middle- and upper-class peers. They were, in all respects, underage working-class adults. There were many instances of this phenomenon. The most shocking to our modern sensibilities are probably the reports of the NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) on the large number of children who performed in hazardous or harmful conditions. These can be considered the lowest ranks of performing children, i.e. those that were employed in circuses and on the streets: a late Victorian report announced that the Society had helped "3,897 Little Slaves of Improper and Hurtful Employ-

[9] Surtees observes that her burial with Rochfort aroused "the anger of his remaining family: a Roman Catholic adulteress was not welcome in the tomb of Irish Protestants" (Surtees 1997: 101; see also 79, 80-100).

ment and Dangerous Performances" (qtd in Rattle and Vale 2011: 14).

Equally moving testimonials can be found in the recollections of actors like Irving, who met several performing children during his career, or Marie Bancroft, who, in later life, writing from her glamorous West-End prominence, recalled in her memoirs how once she had been a child performer herself, and described all the miseries and harshness of her early life on the stage. One of the most touching evocations of a Victorian performing teenage girl can be found in W.S. Gilbert's poem *Only a Dancing Girl*, written in the very year, 1866, when both *Hunted Down* and his own first comedy *Dulcamara* ran at the St James's Theatre. All these witnesses insist on the contrast between the poverty of these children and the glittering lives of their stage personae.[10]

Nothing certain is known of Miss Charlton, who neither was nor ever became famous, but, judging by her approximate age, she could well be the Miss Minnie Charlton who played the part of Miss Turby in Augustus Mayhew's farce *Goose with the Golden Eggs* at the Adelphi Theatre in 1875 and was again at the Adelphi in a lesser role in a Christmas pantomime, *Dick Whittington*, more than twenty years later, in 1898 (Adelphi Theatre Project), perhaps getting by with an inglorious provincial career in between.[11]

Lilli Lee, on the other hand, did achieve a little fame, although of a questionable sort, according to Victorian moral standards: after a brief spell at the Adelphi, where she played the small part of Jessie Wollaston in *Eve*, Benjamin Webster Jr's adaptation from Émile Augier (1868) (Adelphi Theatre Project), Lilli Lee became a dancer

[10] Ann Varty writes: "Children's participation in nineteenth-century theatre was widespread, sophisticated and encouraged by adults. Performers on domestic, amateur and professional stages, children assumed roles as diverse as Puck or an oyster-ghost, while as audience members they were deemed to hold strong views on the plot lines of pantomime and to have sufficient stamina to enjoy the full five hours which a mixed bill could entail. . . . And whether star or supernumerary, their work was relatively well paid" (Varty 2008: 1).

[11] Minnie Charlton was at the Lyceum Theatre Sunderland on 8 September 1879 in *Dutch the Diver, or, The Cuban Treasure* by George Manville Fenn (*Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette*, 9 September 1879).

at a definitely risqué venue, the South London Palace, a music hall on the London Road, Lambeth, whose manager at the time was J.J. Poole. She appeared there as the main dancer, together with a Miss Percival, in an entertainment called *The Sea Land*, eleven years after *Hunted Down*, when she must have been in her twenties (*The Era*, 15 April 1877). All trace of her is lost afterwards. Considering the working conditions of Victorian dancers, which entailed an extremely fatiguing routine and an early retirement from the stage, it is very likely that, when her performing days were over, she married or possibly became either a kept woman or a prostitute.

3.4 *Lady Glencarrig, His Sister – Mademoiselle R. Guillon Le Thière*

The role of Lady Glencarrig, Leigh's sister, was allotted to Roma Guillon Le Thière.[12] Very little is known of this actress, who was also one of the very few Victorian women playwrights. She was 29 or 30 when she played Lady Glencarrig, being born in Rome in or around 1837, and she died in 1903.[13]

The journalist Helen C. Black, who was personally acquainted with her, describes her homely pastimes, which centred on wood carving, lacework and charitable deeds.

> Although a strict Churchwoman, she makes no distinctions, and the warm, tender heart is open to all alike; but her aid is given in

[12] One of the very few sources for Miss Le Thière's first name is Donald Mullin. His entry for *Hunted Down* reads: HUNTED DOWN; OR, THE TWO LIVES OF MARY LEIGH // drama in 3 acts // Dion Boucicault // St James's, Nov. 1866, with Walter Lacy as John Leigh, Louisa Herbert as Mary Leigh, [Roma] Guillon Le Thière as Lady Glencarrig, Mrs Frank Matthews as Mrs Jones, Ada Dyas as Clara, Henry Irving as Rawdon Scudamore / Scenery by John Gray / Music by Mr Van Hamme. (Mullin 1987: 160).

[13] "Her [Madame Michau's] eldest daughter, Sophie Bizet, married a son of the celebrated historical painter, Baron Le Thiere [*sic*], who, under the First Empire was Director of the French Academy at Rome; and she had a daughter, who still lives to be admired and respected by the members of that dramatic profession which she has for some years past adorned" (Sala 1895: 1.26. See also Black 1896: 254).

> a methodical and practical manner. She wins the confidence and affection of these humble friends, and speaks with joy of their many proofs of appreciation, such as in the case of habitual drunkards, when several took the pledge on her birthday 'because it was the only present we could give you, miss.' 'And they kept it, too,' says Miss Le Thiere [*sic*] impressively, while the good, earnest face beams with interest 'My visits to my district have often comforted me in my own troubles, but I never let my skeletons dance in public. I keep them to perform their little fandangos in strict privacy at home,' she adds, laughing. (Black 1896: 258)

She lived alone with her two pugs in a little flat near Brook Street, London. Quiet and unassuming as she was off-stage, she had all the same very colourful antecedents:

> Roma Guillon Le Thiere [*sic*] is the daughter of the late Guyon Le Thiere, formerly in the Imperial Guard at Waterloo, afterwards a civil engineer. Her grandfather, Captain Augustus Bizet who was shot in the retreat from Moscow was Member of the Paris Institute and Director of the French Academy at Rome, in which glorious city she was born. His widow one of the Hervé D'Egvilles re-married, and was the celebrated Madame Michau of Brighton, ballet 'master', teacher of dancing, and mistress of the ceremonies to Kings George IV and William. Roma Le Thiere was brought up by her mother from whom she inherits her artistic talents in strict Evangelical doctrines. On the death of her father, pecuniary circumstances made it necessary that the young girl should do something to provide for herself and her beloved mother. Her first step was to write to a valued friend, Mr George Augustus Sala, and ask his advice. He replied, 'Go on the stage,' to which she answered, 'Have you lost your wits? I know nothing about it.' The journalist knew better. 'Go on the stage,' he reiterated; 'if I know you aright, you will make your way'. (Black 1896: 255)

To Helen C. Black she confided that her début had taken place at the Drury Lane Theatre, in F.B. Chatterton's company. She gave a moving account of how the manager had engaged her merely because she was the grand-daughter of Madame Michau, who had assisted his father and uncle when they were young and resourceless, by introducing them to the King, who appointed them as his harpists (Black 1897: 256). Roma then became a pupil of Samuel Phelps.

Contemporary newspaper accounts, however, tell a different story. According to *The Era*, she made her début at the New Royalty Theatre, London, on 8 August 1865, when she made "her first appearance on any Stage in the character of Emilia" in Shakespeare's *Othello* (*The Era*, 6 August 1865).

After performing in *Hunted Down*, she worked with the Drury Lane company, and then wrote a comedy for the Haymarket Theatre, *All for Money*, opening at the Haymarket Theatre on 12 July 1869 (Brereton 1908: 13), in which Irving took a leading role.[14] According to a contemporary reviewer of the piece,

> Le Thière will be remembered as an actress of great intelligence, who, as a member of the St James's, and afterwards of the Drury-Lane company, distinguished herself in characters requiring a commanding presence and a lady-like deportment. So far as we are informed this is the first contribution of Md.lle Le Thière to dramatic literature, and, as the work of a beginner, there can be no hesitation in pronouncing a favourable opinion of the skill with which the writer's knowledge of stage resources has been turned to account. (*The Era*, 18 July 1869)

After her days at the Drury Lane and St James's theatres (where she returned briefly in 1877, in the cast of a revival of Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*) (Duncan 1964: 179), she kept on playing character parts, mainly of old women. Wilkie Collins cast her as Janet Roy in the Standard Theatre production of *The New Magdalen* (Black 1896: 256-7). She also played the Marquise de Rio-Zarès in Sardou's *Diplomacy* at the Prince of Wales's Theatre (1878), and in January 1882 she was Lady Shandryn in the Bancrofts' Haymarket revival of Robertson's *Caste*. Thanks to her "excellent performance" in *Diplomacy*, the Bancrofts cast her again as the Marquise de Rio

[14] According to Laurence Irving, *All for Money* was written by Amy Sedgwick (L. Irving 1989: 157), but my considered view is that in this case he might be inaccurate, probably confusing one woman playwright with another, as the contemporary reviews of the play all state that the author was Le Thière, and Saintsbury quotes Irving himself as writing that Roma Guillon Le Thière "*wrote* the comedy. Miss Amy Sedgwick produced it – and forgot to pay the actors' salaries for the last week – *I* was one of 'em" (Irving, qtd in Saintsbury 1939: 395; emphases in the text. See also Bingham 1978: 74; Brereton 1908: 13).

Zarès – the only one from the 1882 cast – in their new 1884 production of the play at the Haymarket (Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 260-1, 385).

Even after he had become a successful actor, Irving did not forget their former association. In 1873 Le Thière was cast as Marion De Lorme in *Richelieu* (Halladay-Hope 1939: 71) (the Lyceum was still under Bateman at the time, but Irving, as the leading man, might have interfered), and in 1890 Irving cast her as Lady Ashton in the Lyceum production of *Ravenswood* (Black 1896: 257, Crocker 1939: 281). He also cast her as "An Old Lady" in *Henry VIII* in 1892 (Kyle 1939: 287). She then appeared in the original cast of *A Woman of No Importance*, after which she worked with Beerbohm Tree at the Haymarket.[15]

After her promising beginnings, Miss Le Thière's career must have lost élan, or even foundered altogether. Only a few years after her Haymarket and Drury Lane days, Miss Le Thière, evidently feeling hard up, was offering private lessons in acting. One of her many advertisements of the 1870s read: "Miss Guillon Le Thière gives Lessons in Deportment for the Stage, 109, New Bond Street" (*The Era*, 9 February 1873).

Over a century later, ads of this kind sound faintly dejected: they certainly strike us as being very different from the grand plans she had formed of an academy for female debutantes which was to "be in London what the Conservatoire for girls is in Paris" (Black 1896: 259), where dancing, prosody, diction, languages and the different acting styles should have been taught (Black 1896: 258-9). In 1895, when she found herself in serious financial difficulty, it was Irving, by then the acknowledged leader of the British stage, who gave her financial help (L. Irving 1989: 566-7).

In her final years, Le Thière was an eccentric figure living from hand to mouth, playing minor roles in the theatres where she had been for decades. By then those theatres had moved on to hosting new kinds of drama, so she came to seem almost like a ghost belonging to another, outmoded world. Dame Irene Vanbrugh, in her autobiography, recalls Le Thière – giving her the first name

[15] One of her *cartes de visite* can be found on the Victoria and Albert Museum's website: http://collections.vam.ac.uk/name/le-thiere-miss/39133/.

"Rose", not Roma – in her old age. Speaking of her own first leading part in the 1898 Court Theatre production of Pinero's *Trelawny of the Wells*, Vanbrugh recalls "Rose le Thière", who played the part of Mrs Ablett:

> Rose le Thière also had a distinct method of her own. She was proud to tell you she was half French and would insist on the super-excellence of that school of acting over the English. She was very stout and short, with the remains of good looks and having discarded any attempt to keep her figure, she adopted a loose all-in-one garment, with a flowing cloak and bonnet which gave her an original appearance not without charm. Playing a small part she was anxious to uphold her position socially before the younger members of the company. (48)

Occasionally interrupting the rehearsal, she would come down to the footlights and call across to Pinero saying, "I hope I am not late. How are you, Pin, and how is dear Myra?" Receiving a civil but short answer from the preoccupied author she would float majestically to the back of the stage, find as large and comfortable a seat as she could and take out her embroidery from a voluminous satchel which she always carried (Vanbrugh: 48-9).

3.5 *Mrs Bolton Jones, An Acquaintance – Mrs Frank Matthews*

> "Mrs Frank Matthews, as a bustling busy-body, was full of broad humour of a familiar but welcome type"
>
> ("Drama: St James's", *London Daily News*, 6 November 1866)

Mrs Frank Matthews (1807-73), in truly Victorian fashion, was known everywhere by the name of her husband, and not by her first name, Amelia.[16] She was one of the leading comic actresses of her time in her own right, and yet everything in her life – even her death – seems to be inseparable from her husband's. Frank Matthews died on 24 July 1871, and on his death Mrs Frank retired

[16] No contemporary source ever gives her name in full. I only could find it by perusing the records of Brompton Cemetery, where she is buried, at: https://www.deceasedonline.com/servlet/GSDOSearch.

from the stage and went into a steady decline, outliving him only by two years (*The Era*, 31 August 1873).

Mrs Frank Matthews was born on the same year as her husband, 1807, and began her stage career under her unmistakably Welsh name, Miss Apjohn, in the Western provinces. She had her London début at the Adelphi during the golden age of that theatre as a venue for brilliant comedy, under the darkly handsome and grimly humorous Frederick Yates (to whose style and stage personality Dickens thought Irving was the heir) (L. Irving 1989: 161), who was joint manager with his friend Charles Mathews (the father of the Charles Mathews who produced Boucicault's first plays) and availed himself of the masterful comedian John Baldwin Buckstone as official playwright and co-star.[17]

Amelia's first appearance at the Adelphi took place on 29 November 1829, as Kitty Taylor in John Baldwin Buckstone's burlesque of *Billy Taylor*. As was customary at the Adelphi, the bill changed continuously, and Miss Apjohn's roles must have been legion. The Adelphi Theatre Project lists fourteen roles in 1829-30 only, but there are several more parts she played with the same company in the provinces. Nearly all of them were comic roles in John Baldwin Buckstone's farces and comedies, but she also had more serious roles in plays by the major playwrights of the time, like Edward Fitzball and William T. Moncrieff.[18]

[17] On that period of the Adelphi history see Marchesi 2012: xiii-xli.

[18] The Adelphi Theatre Project lists: Kitty Sligo in *Billy Taylor! The Gay Young Fellow*, by Buckstone, Mrs Maggs in *Bricklayer's Arms* (anonymous), Chatter in *Dead Shot* by Buckstone, Mrs Giraffe in *Elephant of Siam and the Fire Fiend* by Samuel Beazley Jr., Christine in *Floating Beacon* by Edward Fitzball, Lucy in *Flying Dutchman*, again by Fitzball, Lucinda in *Love Laughs at Bailiffs* (anonymous), Keziah von Gunnery in *Monsieur Mallet* by Moncrieff, Jessy in *Rose of Ettrick* by Thomas J. Lynch, Tucker in *The Scapegrace* by Buckstone, Lisetta in *Sisters* by Buckstone, Betsey Bungey in *Supper's Over* by Morris Barnett. But she also toured the provinces as Dolly Mayflower in the classic nautical drama *Black Ey'd Susan* (the playbill is in the Victoria and Albert Museum Collections) and as Molly in *Richard Parker, or, The Mutiny at the Nore*, again, with Buckstone in the cast (*Theatrical Observer*, 2742, 28 September 1830.

Her only surviving photos, taken about the time when she starred in *Hunted Down*, show a matronly lady – whose corsets and stays are unable to conceal that undeniable obesity only Victorian women could handle with such grace – with lively blue eyes and a touch of Queen Victoria about her, and with a face which looks puffy and aged, but displays regular features that show how, at the time of her comic roles at the Adelphi, she must have been a buxom piquant brunette with large blue eyes.[19]

After the Adelphi, as Miss Upjohn, she moved to the City Theatre, Milton Street, under John Kemble Chapman, and in 1835, after her marriage, she transferred to the Lyceum as Mrs Frank Matthews (*The Era*, 31 August 1873), while continuing to perform intermittently at the Adelphi, after the death of Frederick Yates and Charles Mathews senior, from 1842 to 1849, appearing in plays by a new generation of writers, like Charles Selby and Mark Lemon, and playing mothers, married ladies, eccentric spinsters – roles that must have been suited to her evolving figure. She appeared, among countless titles, in Tyrone Power's *How to Pay the Rent*, Edward Fitzball's *Mary Melvin*, Mark Lemon and Gilbert à Beckett's adaptation of Dickens's *The Chimes* (1844), Boucicault's *Used Up* (17 September 1846), written with Charles Mathews, Buckstone's *Married Life* (1847), James R. Planché's *Irish Post*, James Kenney's *Sweethearts and Wives* (a piece that was also performed at Windsor Castle before the Royal family in 1849), and, lastly, Mark Lemon's adaptation of Dickens's *The Haunted Man and the Ghost's Bargain* (The Adelphi Theatre Project). The last was produced "by the express permission of the author" (The Adelphi Theatre Project), i.e., it was one of the very few non-pirated stage versions of a Dickens work – but besides being a personal friend of Mark Lemon, the novelist always had a soft spot for the Adelphi, ever since the

[19] Her photos can be found in the National Portrait Gallery collections. She must have been really sexy according to Victorian standards. Her sexual attractiveness in her youth can be inferred by a 1830 letter to the *Theatrical Observer*, where a correspondent styling himself "A Hater of Humbug", while complaining about Frederick Yates's display of an elephant on stage, forcefully observed that Yates would shortly find "a real mermaid if one can be procured; if not, Miss Apjohn, it is said, is to study the character"; see the *Theatrical Observer*, September 28, 1830, 2742.

times when he, as a young reporter, used to watch the risqué antics of Buckstone, later his life-long friend, and idolise Frederick Yates and his beautiful wife. At the Adelphi, besides, the very first Dickensian adaptation, *The Christening*, had been produced in 1835 (Marchesi 2012: xix-xxi).

Before Frank Matthews took over the management of the St James's Theatre in 1862, both he and Mrs Frank worked there under Wigan's management, always in comic roles, as in the farce *A Cosy Couple*, one of their joint successes (*The Era*, 13 October 1861). Mrs Frank had, in fact, appeared at the St James's as early as 1838, under John Hooper (Duncan 1964: 50).

The Matthewses were personally close to Irving, so much so that, in July 1867, the reception for Irving's ill-fated marriage with Florence O'Callaghan was held at their home (L. Irving: 159). And it was Mrs Frank who introduced the younger actor to her husband and to her own "former comrade" (Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 69), the old and influential Charles Mathews, one of the leading actors of the previous generation whom she had known well (Scott 1896: 2.4), and under whose father she had had her London début.

A rare picture of the Matthewses at home, as a truly affectionate couple, can be found in the memoirs of Clement Scott:

> Old Frank Matthews and Mrs Frank owned a delightful little one-story [*sic*] cottage, standing in a pretty garden, in Linden Grove, Bayswater. Mr and Mrs Frank were always pretending to "nag" at one another, as they were, as a rule, compelled to do on the stage – the old lady pretended that Frank was dreadfully extravagant, and he insisted on the other hand that she was outrageously stingy, and did not allow him sufficient pocket money when he went out to dine or play whist at the Garrick. In reality, this childless "cosy couple" were the very dearest friends on earth. (Scott 1896: 2.7-8)

Amelia lived with her husband at 7, Linden Grove, Notting Hill. When she died, on 27 August 1873, she was buried next to him, not far from their home, in Brompton Cemetery (*The Era*, 31 August 1873).

3.6. *Rawdon Scudamore – A Broken-down Gambler… Mr H. Erving* [sic]

The best portrait of Irving at the time of the London run of *Hunted Down* appears to be the brief mention of him in those early days in the memoirs of Squire Bancroft. It is unique in its freshness: far from the iconic Irving, the charismatic thespian of later years, Bancroft has left the portrait of a young man from the provinces in London, who, like all his peers from the Victorian age till now, was strolling – perhaps window-shopping – in that most elegant of shopping venues, the Burlington Arcade. In an act typical of all Victorian courtesy, Bancroft and another young, London-based actor, joined the young provincial in his walk:

> Walking arm-in-arm with Montague[20] one day in the early spring of this year [1867], we turned from Piccadilly into the Burlington Arcade, and there met Henry Irving, to whom I had hardly spoken before. The first time I ever saw him was in the previous summer while we were at Manchester, when I was immensely struck by his rehearsal one morning of the part of Rawdon Scudamore in Dion Boucicault's play, *Hunted Down*, in which shortly afterwards, at the St James's Theatre, he laid the foundation of his fame. Montague he already knew well. We were all young fellows then, Irving some three years our senior. We two turned back with Irving, when he and I began acquaintance, which ripened into friendship . . . (Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 119)

[20] The actor H.J. (Henry James) Montague (1843-78), whose real name was Henry James Mann, was another of Boucicault's protégées. The dramatist had launched him in his own play *The Trial of Effie Deans* in 1862 and later on he wrote for him the part of Captain Molyneux in *The Shaughraun* (1874) (Walsh 1915: 90-91).

Montague, talented, handsome and, according to Laurence Irving, a kind of Victorian matinée idol, was Irving's best man at his marriage in 1869. He died suddenly in America nine years later. See L. Irving 1989: 159, 161, 383, and Knight 1894.

3.7 *Clara (a model) – Miss Ada Dyas*

> The loving, suffering, wife of Rawdon Scudamore was most admirably represented by Miss Ada Dyas, whose quiet manner and freedom from staginess and affectation were most satisfactory.
> ("Drama: St James's", *London Daily News*, 6 November 1866)

Ada Dyas (1844-1908) came from a theatrical family. Her mother, Ann Ada Dyas, also known – confusingly – as Ada, had been an actress of provincial repute, appearing at the Adelphi Theatre, Liverpool, in the 1850s[21] and 1860s.[22] If her death notice is to be trusted, she had "made her first appearance at the City of London Theatre on 29 September 1860 as Gemes the Fortune Teller" (*The Era*, 3 December 1871), that is, she must have moved to London sometime in the early Sixties, and passed from provincial stardom to metropolitan obscurity. She died at the age of forty-eight on 1 December 1871 during the run of Wilkie Collins's *Woman in White*, where her daughter was starring in the title role.[23]

Ada Dyas lived with her parents at 23 Bloomsbury Street, Bedford Square (*The Era*, 12 June 1870). Her father Edward worked at the Queen's Theatre and at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, under Marie Wilton,[24] and was part of the original cast of Boucicault's *How*

[21] She was styled "the most popular actress that ever visited this theatre in the present regime" (*The Era,* 23 May 1852). See also *The Era*, 29 June 1851.

[22] From the *Liverpool Daily Post*, 19 August 1863: "Mrs Ada Dyas's Benefit at the Adelphi Theatre. This evening this able actress takes a benefit and appears in *Hamlet*, a part she has often illustrated with success, and in the recitation of Collins' Ode, which is accompanied at the Adelphi with such charming tableaus. *Robert Macaire* will follow, and in this Mr Josh Clements will play the part of Jacques Strop". She was still in Liverpool, at the New Adelphi Theatre, later the same year (*Liverpool Daily Post*, 29 September 1863).

[23] See *The Era*, 3 December 1871. Her obituary reads: "Dyas, Mrs Ann Ada, Actress, and wife of Edward Dyas of the Lyceum, and mother of Miss Ada Dyas, of the Olympic, aged 48, December 1" (*The Era*, 31 December 1871).

[24] "Fred Dewar and old Dyas, the father of Ada Dyas, also an admirable actress, were safe cards to play, for they brought experience as well as talent" (Scott 1896: 1.484; see also Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 89). At the Prince of Wales's he was at least in the cast of the Farce *A Winning Hazard*, by J.P. Wooler (Bancroft and Bancroft 1891: 89, 116).

She Loves Him! (1867) and of Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *Money* (1872), both under the Bancrofts (Bancroft and Bancroft 1891:113 and 1888: 1.344), and with Irving in James Albery's *Pickwick* at the Lyceum in 1872 (*The Era*, 14 July 1878). He was also part of the St James's company's production of *She Stoops to Conquer* in 1866 (Duncan 1964: 125), and, during the following season, shortly before the opening of *Hunted Down*, he was in the cast of *The Belle's Stratagem*, together with Irving.[25] He must have been really protective and proud of his daughter's career: there survives his letter to *The Era*, sharply correcting the paper's mistake in attributing Ada's role to another actress. It reads:

> Mr Editor. – Sir, in a notice last week in *The Era* referring to Miss Marie Wilton's Company and *Caste* the name of Miss Bessie Harding is mentioned as playing Esther and Polly Eccles, the former being represented by my daughter, Miss Ada Dyas, from the commencement of the tour up to the present time. I am, faithfully yours, Edward Dyas. (*The Era*, 22 March 1868)

He followed his daughter to America some time during the late Seventies,[26] and died "in New York, aged 62, on January 31", 1877 (*The Era*, 13 January 1878).

Ada must have had an enterprising nature and she had a rather adventurous professional – and personal – life for the times, but her obituaries, not too surprisingly, focus on her connections with Irving, as if her youthful appearance in *Hunted Down* and her final success in Irving's *King Lear* were the only relevant events in her lifetime. One reads:

> Miss Ada Dyas, whose death has occurred here, was one of the cast in Dion Boucicault's "Hunted Down" (produced at the St James's Theatre in 1866), when Henry Irving made his first hit in London as Rawdon Scudamore. Miss Dyas went to America in 1874, being the first Englishwoman to run her own company in the United States,

[25] "Mr E. Dyas, an esteemed member of last season's company, is again engaged, and played Villers" ("Reopening of St James's Theatre", *The Era*, 14 October 1866).

[26] He was still in London in August 1875, at the farewell dinner for his colleague George Honey (*The Era*, 15 August 1875).

> an undertaking which proved to be a financial success. Her last important part was at the Lyceum, where she appeared in Irving's revival of *King Lear*, in 1892 (*Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 27 March 1908).

There are no photos of her at the time of *Hunted Down*; the earliest I have been able to trace, judging by the sitter's dress and age, seems to have been taken sometime between the late Sixties and the early Seventies, possibly – given the white dress she is wearing – in 1871, during the run of *The Woman in White*.[27] It shows a fair-haired woman, with large dreamy eyes that may have been blue or green, a large but far from coarse mouth and rounded chin. It is not hard to guess why Dion Boucicault cast her as the working-class heroine, the female second lead in *Hunted Down*.

Later photos show how rapidly she gained weight and, to some degree, lost refinement and grace, and it is easier to connect these later images with the picture of her drawn by Edith Wharton many years later in *The Age of Innocence*: "a tall red-haired woman of monumental build" who had "a pale and pleasantly ugly face" (Wharton 1997: 74).

Some time before being cast in *Hunted Down* she must have moved to London from the provinces and there "she made her debut at Sadler's Wells in 1861" (*Western Gazette*, 27 March 1908). Typically, like other Victorian actresses like Marie Bancroft and Ellen Terry herself, her teenage roles were *en travesti*: her first role, in the company of Samuel Phelps, was that of "Prince John of Lancaster in a revival of Henry IV" (*Aberdeen Journal*, 24 March 1908). Her early London career was divided between the St James's, where she began to appear in 1862 (Duncan 1964: 115), and Sadler's Wells, where in the summer of 1866 she played another working-class heroine, Lizzie Hexam, in *The Golden Dustman*, one of the many – usually pirated – adaptations from Dickens (*The Era*, 24 June 1866).

She remained in London till 1868 – when she took a twelve-month tour of the provinces – and was rather successful, if the contemporary press is to be trusted. An article from *The Era* praises her

[27] Now in the National Portrait Gallery collections; see: http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw126399/Ada-Dyas.

very highly, ironically insisting on her Englishness (Dyas was of Irish descent):

> Miss Ada Dyas is the perfection, the acme of histrionic art. This lady combines the depth of feeling and fervid emphasis of the French school, with the genial nature of a thorough English girl. ("Miss Ada Dyas's Twelve Months' Tour in the Provinces", in *The Era*, 22 November 1868)

She was back in Liverpool in 1869, where she joined Frederick Younge's company, in Tom Robertson's plays *School* and *Caste*.[28] Her greatest personal success in England must have been in 1871, when she was cast as the doubles Laura Fairlie / Anne Catherick in the theatrical version of Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White* at the Olympic Theatre, London.[29] She then went on tour with the Bancrofts, replacing Boucicault's mistress Lydia Foote in the role of Anne Sylvester in another work by Wilkie Collins, *Man and Wife* (1873) (Bancroft and Bancroft 1888: 1.372.). This success in sensation novel roles led naturally to her being cast in the title role of *Lady Audley's Secret* – a play she had appeared in at the St James's in 1863, in a supporting role (Duncan: 118)–in the same year 1873, when she played the lead at the Royal Court Theatre, Sloane Square, with Hermann Vezin (*Morning Post*, 23 January 1873).

The following year, Dyas left for the States. There she worked with Daly and Wallack. Boucicault "stole" her from Daly's company to cast her as the female lead in his own play *The Shaughraun*, which opened at Wallack's Theatre, New York, on 14 November 1874 (Fawkes 2011: 192). Later, Ada Dyas founded her own theatre company. She must have liked the States, even though her professional life there cannot have been easy (in 1878 she is reported as being "without an engagement", *The Era*, 27 October 1878). While there, she led a quiet life, spending part of the year in the small town of Norwalk, Connecticut, making "her home with Miss Peaseley, a former resident of Ponus Avenue, Broad River"

[28] She was in the cast of Tom Robertson's *School* (*Liverpool Daily Post*, 11 September 1869; see also Bancroft and Bancroft 1888: 1.238).

[29] *The Era*, 5 November 1871. On Ada Dyas's performance in *The Woman in White*, see Pedlar 2012.

("Miss Ada Dyas Dead at Seaton, England", *The Norwalk Hour*, 14 March 1908), (alternatively, she is reported as spending the summer of 1879 with "a friend" at Ledgewood Farm, Connecticut, which is now 128 Ponus Avenue, Norwalk, and is still a large and elegant Victorian suburban house) (*The New York Clipper*, 19 July 1879). During her working days she lived at 25 Madison Avenue, New York (*The New York Dramatic Mirror*, 28 May 1892).

After nearly twenty years in America, she returned to England in September 1892. Immediately after her return, Irving cast her as Goneril (Acton-Bond 1939: 295), a role for which she must have been eminently well suited both physically and temperamentally: Irving must have remembered her rendering of the alternating submissiveness and sudden rages of Clara when he thought of his own Goneril, a character for which a similar mixture is required.

Although she retired from the stage after *King Lear* (*Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 March 1908), Dyas remained in London, probably in the Lyceum entourage, at least until 1897, retiring afterwards to a peaceful country life in Seal Chart, near Sevenoaks. Intriguingly, she was accompanied all the way to England by the same Miss Peaseley (also spelt Peaselee) that used to live with her in America. Miss Frances A. Peaselee was a woman of substance, who had her own brougham and coachman, so her role certainly was not that of a lady's companion to an actress.[30] What do all those years of life together in America and England mean? Were Ada and Frances simply two Victorian spinsters who shared a home or was theirs a real love partnership? The answer is lost to time, buried under layers of Victorian reticence. Ada Dyas died in 1908 in the coastal town of Seaton, Devonshire, at the age of sixty-four.[31]

[30] Frances E. Peaselee and Ada Dyas are mentioned together in the reports of a civil action in the summer of 1902. Peaselee was accused by the R.S.P.C.A. of having let her coachman drive a lame mare (she won the lawsuit) and Ada Dyas appeared as a witness, giving "corroborative evidence" for the defence (*The Sussex Courier*, 18 July 1902).

[31] "Return of Miss Ada Dyas to the English Stage. After an absence of some years on a professional career in America Miss Dyas has returned to England, and has been secured by Mr Henry Irving for the part of Goneril

3.8 *Fanny (Nursery maid) – Miss Marion*

> "Miss Marion deserves a word of praise for her performance of a faithful servant"
>
> ("Drama: St James's", *London Daily News*, 6 November 1866)

Miss Marion, whose first name seems to be impossible to trace, was one of the many obscure performers crowding Victorian theatres in London. She was a member of the St James's Company for some years, at least from 1865 to 1868. In 1865 she was one of the suitors of Penelope in a burlesque by Frank Burnand, *Ulysses*, and Susan in John Oxenford's adaptation of Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Eleanor's Victory* (Duncan 1964: 124). Very likely Susan was the housemaid, as no character named "Susan" can be found in the novel. In fact, the rest of Miss Marion's appearances were mainly in chambermaid or ingénue roles, such as Esther Prim the chambermaid in *The Needful*, by H.T. Craven (*London Evening Standard*, 3 January 1868), or "gentle and ingenuous" Grace Emery in *The Chimney Corner*, with H.T. Craven (*Morning Post*, 15 February 1868), and, finally, as Marguerite in *The Woman in Red*, an adaptation from the French by Stirling Coyne, starring Madame Céleste, a part in which she was judged "clever but hard" (*Morning Post*, 14 April 1868).

Afterwards, all records of her are lost Another Miss Marion, a young Australian woman, debuted at the Adelphi Theatre in the early Seventies (*The Era*, 3 November 1872), but nobody felt the need to distinguish her from the St James's Theatre Miss Marion, which probably means that by then the latter had got married and changed her name or, perhaps, was dead.

The London cast of *Hunted Down*, maybe fortuitously, more probably thanks to Boucicault's celebrated eye for casting –[32] was

in his forthcoming revival of *King Lear*" (*Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 23 September 1892). Dyas was among the guests at the annual meeting of the Royal General Theatrical Fund at the Lyceum theatre in 1897. See also her obituary in the *New York Times*, 13 March 1908.

[32] "On the boards of the St James's the drama is most effectively represented by performers who have been aptly chosen for their respective embodiments", as the critic for *The Era* put it (*The Era*, 11 November 1866).

a gathering of some of the most interesting personalities of the Victorian stage. Even setting aside their artistic merits on that eventful night, the Saint James's Theatre company included actors and actresses that are now unjustly forgotten.

Irving never forgot them: some featured in Lyceum productions many years later, some he helped when they were old and out of luck, some he accompanied to their graves when he, famous, influential, almost iconic, took centre stage for the last time as their chief mourner.

3.9 *Music – Van Hamme*

It is true, as DeLong writes, that in the Victorian theatre, at least till 1875, "Much of this music was composed by workaday musicians who made a living in the theatre as composers, conductors and arrangers. Only a few attained a wider reputation" (DeLong 2008: 150). Even so, the sad story of Van Hamme, though it is similar to that of so many humble theatre musicians of that time, deserves to be recorded here.

Andreas Petrus Voitus Van Hamme,[33] a Dutchman by birth, came from an artistic background of some distinction: he was the son of Andries Voitus Van Hamme, Ballet Master at the Schouwburg Theatre in Amsterdam from 1838, where he acquired the fame of being something of an experimenter.[34] Born around 1831 in Holland[35] – perhaps in Amsterdam (where his famous father worked) –by 1866 Van Hamme had become "the Musical Director of the [St James's] Theatre" (See *The Era*, 28 April 1867), and in that capacity he arranged the music not only for *Hunted Down*, but also for W.S. Gilbert's first comedy, *Dulcamara* (Duncan 1964: 128), which opened shortly after *Hunted Down*, so that, in virtual terms, he could be called the humble predecessor of Arthur Sullivan.

[33] The only place where the first names of Van Hamme appear at least as initials – as "A.P. Voitus" – is in an advertisement for some sheet music, in *The Graphic*, 24 January 1885.

[34] On Van Hamme, Senior, see Naerebout and van Schaik 1992.

[35] The only record I could find is in Ancestry.co.uk.

Nevertheless, the music in Gilbert's first comedy was a pastiche of well-known arias, so Van Hamme's intervention could not have had any great impact. He was also responsible for the music for the ill-fated *Idalia* (*The Era*, 28 April 1867).

He must have been at the Saint James's Theatre from the beginning of Louisa Herbert's period as manager, since she had had a serious argument on a copyright issue with one of Van Hamme's predecessors, a Mr Wallerstein, who had been the musical director of the theatre under both Wigan and Frank Matthews (and, briefly, under Miss Herbert, too) (Duncan 1964: 122-3), and was now working in the same capacity at the Haymarket (*The Era*, 9 December 1866). After his years at the Saint James's, Van Hamme's career seems to have steadily gone downhill. He worked for the Globe Theatre – notorious among its contemporaries as one of the "rickety twins" (the other "twin" was the adjoining Opéra Comique) – in 1870-71, where he wrote the incidental music to Palgrave Simpson's *Marco Spada*, a piece where Walter Lacy had taken a part, in the role of Count Pepinelli. It is hard to tell if this was one of Van Hamme's successes, because, as usual, in the very few notices he ever got, the reviewer simply stated that "Mr Van Hamme, has effectively arranged the incidental music" (*The Era*, 9 October 1870). Again for the Globe Theatre, he arranged the music for F.C. Burnand's burlesque *The White Cat, or, The Prince Lardi Dardi and the Radiant Rosetta* during the 1870-71 Christmas season (*The Era*, 1 January 1871). The following year, he lost his first wife, Dorothea Cornelia.

Nothing is known of his professional life for the following ten years, but by January 1881 he had moved to the London Pavilion, where he was still working as a conductor in January 1882. The Pavilion, in the East End, largely catered for Jewish audiences and its reputation at the time was far less distinguished than that of the St James's. According to the records of St Saviour's Church, Southwark, Van Hamme died shortly after his last engagement at the Pavilion, in October 1882. Soon after his death, in July 1883, his posthumous child, a baby girl called Helen Marie Dorothea, died when barely three months old. Late in the 1890s, an ailing Mrs Voitus Van Hamme can intermittently be found on the Isle of Wight, where she led the life of an invalid, secluded with her

nurse in Granville House, Nelson Street, Ryde.[36] The house is still standing: a pretty Victorian building, even if a little gloomy.

3.10 *Scenery – John Gray*

> At the St James's Theatre the drama has been brought out with the greatest care, and the two elaborate scenes of the Laurel Shrubbery and the Bay Room have been very artistically arranged by Mr John Gray, who is now the scene-painter to the Theatre.
>
> (*The Era*, 11 November 1866)

Very little is known of John Gray. Before his engagement at the Saint James's Theatre, he worked at the Britannia Theatre, Hoxton, between 1853 and 1861. "The scenery, by Mr John Gray, is superb", read a 1854 review of a triple bill which included *Ambition, or, Poverty, Competence and Riches*, *The Wood Demon*, and *Mary Blanc* (*The Era*, 16 April 1854; see also *The Era*, 25 December 1853; *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 26 December 1852), indirectly testifying to what must have been Gray's impressive versatility.

Again at the Britannia, he designed the scenery for Dibdin Pitt's *The Great Fire of London* (*The Era*, 18 August 1861). He then moved to the Olympic Theatre (Anonymous 1912). He was for some time the principal of the firm Grieve & Son, till some time before 1870 (the change was probably due to the fact that the stores of the Grieve & Son firm were completely destroyed by fire in December 1868, with a loss of scenery worth between £10,000 and £15,000) (*Aberdeen Journal*, 2 December 1868), when he became a partner of Thomas Rogers, who had been the principal at the Britannia Theatre (*The Era*, 12 June 1870).

Grieve & Son was the firm employed by Miss Herbert at the St James's Theatre from 1865 (Duncan 1964: 123), but they had also worked for Drury Lane and Covent Garden, and had been famous designers of panoramas and dioramas, which were celebrated for their accuracy of detail and the beauty of composition in their landscapes (Boase). Gray worked at the Saint James's Theatre through-

[36] See the Visitors' List in the *Isle of Wight Observer*, from June 1895 to September 1899.

out the year 1867, designing the scenery both for *Hunted Down* and W.S. Gilbert's first play, *Dulcamara* (Duncan 1964: 128). There is no mention of his works for the stage after 1867, except for a self-advertisement, where he and Thomas Rogers offered their services to managers of theatres and music halls "for large or small contracts". Ominously, the advertisement implied that provincial theatre managers were very welcome (*The Era*, 12 June 1870).

Thus, it was perhaps at that time that he began to work at less renowned theatres, probably even in the provinces, ending up at Cremorne Gardens, certainly a far less stylish venue than the St James's Theatre, and, with its pagodas and curiosities, more similar to our present notion of a theme park than a theatre. "The decorations, which have been entrusted to Mr John Gray, promise to be of the most *recherché* and costly character", read an article from *The Era* of 11 May 1873, which announced the imminent revamping of Cremorne.

But only a few weeks later, overworked and in rather awkward circumstances, Gray died at just over fifty-six, of lead poisoning, killed by the paint he had been using all his working life. The account of his death sounds even more pathetic in its plainness, and is worth quoting in full:

> Sudden Death of a Scenic Artist
>
> Yesterday (Saturday) Mr Humphreys, the Coroner for the Eastern Division of Middlesex, held an inquest, at the Sir Robert Peel Tavern, Shrubland-Road, Dalston, respecting the death of John Gray, aged fifty-six years.
>
> The deceased was well-known in the theatrical world as a scene painter of some ability, and he has for some years past been engaged in that capacity at various places of amusement in the Metropolis.
>
> Maria Gray, residing at 11, Shrubland-road, Dalston, said she was the daughter of deceased. He was a scenic artist, and up to last Friday was engaged at Cremorne Gardens. His health had been failing him, and he attributed his illness to the white lead which was extensively used in his business. On Monday afternoon last, about half-past three o'clock, he was in his bedroom when he suddenly fell backwards to the bed. Witness immediately sent for dr Daly, who pronounced life extinct. The deceased repeatedly said that the white lead affected him.

> Dr Frederick H. Daly, of 101, Queen's-road, Dalston, said that, upon being called to the deceased on Monday last, life was extinct. The deceased had suffered from three attacks of rheumatic fever, and that would cause heart disease, from which he died. The use of white lead in the profession the deceased followed would be detrimental to his health and cause a general depression of the system.
>
> The Coroner observed that he had ordered that no post-mortem examination should be made in these cases, as the facts were very simple. White lead was, doubtless, much used in scene painting, and in the condition that the deceased was it would have an injurious effect.
>
> The Jury returned a verdict of Death from Natural Causes.
>
> (*The Era*, 1 June 1873)

It is hard to tell now what was the style of John Gray, as the reviews are invariably enthusiastic, but lacking in detail, and I was unable to find any pictorial representation of his work, apart from the print of the confrontation scene from *Hunted Down*, which shows an extremely realistic setting for the time. His background in the firm of Grieve & Son, the panorama and diorama designers, would lead to hypothesise an extreme accuracy of detail and an artistically balanced composition: an extremely lyrical idea of realism, a kind of 'magic realism', as it were. Thus, it is very likely that John Gray was one of the men that pioneered realistic scenery and stage effects, but aiming for a kind of lyrical realism, similar to what Boucicault claimed was his own style, as opposed to the cruder realism of some of his contemporaries, like Tom Robertson. This hypothesis is reinforced by the achievements of Gray's celebrated pupil, Hawes Craven, supposing he had in fact been influenced by Gray, which is probably the case. In fact, if little or nothing survives by John Gray, who died in humble obscurity, killed by overwork, there are countless witnesses of the art of one of his apprentices, who later became one of the leading artists of the late Victorian age, and perhaps the leading influence on the idea of realism – more specifically, a highly poetic form of realism – in theatre design.

In 1853, a young man fresh from the Marlborough House School of Design had been apprenticed to John Gray: Henry Hawes Craven Green (Anonymous 1912). Years later, under the pseudonym "Hawes

Craven", he was to become the most important scene designer of his time, and the man that created the legendary scenery for Irving's Lyceum productions, with its unique mixture of extreme realism and highly evocative lyricism, which proved so powerfully influential on the theatre that was to follow.

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Despite the awakening of critical interest in recent years, Victorian theatre before Wilde and Shaw is still a virtually undiscovered country. The world of Victorian theatres, with their complicated personal interconnections and astonishing feats of professionalism, and Victorian drama itself, often skillfully written and controversial, are worth investigating. Henry Irving, the icon and later the bogeyman of a whole theatrical era, has been the object of several scholarly works and essays, inevitably focusing on his Lyceum years. What was Irving before the Lyceum? Or, in other words, how did Irving become Irving? The present book reconstructs the event that made Irving famous overnight and, as it were, made the Lyceum years possible: the London première of Dion Boucicault's *Hunted Down, or, The Two Lives of Mary Leigh*. It investigates the circumstances of the composition of the play and of its first London production, also presenting the first edition of the text of Boucicault's play in 150 years.
The reconstruction presents 21-first-century readers with a strange world of irascible playwrights, all-powerful stage managers, long-forgotten Pre-Raphaelite beauties and humble theatre folk in which the young Irving moved, a world whose traces remained visible and whose influence remained palpable in the years of Irving's later fame.

M. Serena Marchesi teaches English literature at the University of Messina, Italy. Her main fields of interest are Victorian poetry and drama and Modernist drama. Her books include *Temi cristiani nell'opera poetica di Alfred Tennyson* (Congedo, 2007), *Eliot's Perpetual Struggle: The Language of Evil in Murder in the Cathedral* (Olschki, 2009), the critical edition of John Baldwin Buckstone's *Robert Macaire, or, The Exploits of a Gentleman at Large* (Olschki, 2012), the first Italian edition of R.L. Stevenson and W.E. Henley's *Macaire* (ETS, 2014).

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"Scene from *Hunted Down* at the St James's Theatre: Act 3, The Bay Room: Miss Herbert and Mr Irving", *The Illustrated Sporting News*, 17 November 1866 (author's collection).

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