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ENGLISH-CANADIAN DRAMA OF THE  
POST-CONFEDERATION PERIOD

ENGLISH-CANADIAN DRAMA  
OF THE  
POST-CONFEDERATION PERIOD:  
A TRADITION IDENTIFIED

By

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## ABSTRACT

English-Canadian drama of the post-Confederation period has suffered at the hands of criticism. The large amount of popular drama was ignored by criticism which sought "high art". Such criticism has served to dissociate twentieth century drama from its tradition. That this tradition is popular rather than esoteric makes this body of work more rather than less rewarding on close inspection. Three divisions based on form are noted: Literary, Nationalistic, and Popular drama. All three yield illuminating uses of language and form. Of especial interest is the development of social and domestic realism as a response to social changes, particularly to the militancy of women.

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TO ELAINE ELIZABETH OTIS

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## INTRODUCTION: The Critical Context

The examination of any aspect of nineteenth century Canada inevitably involves a confrontation with the issue of nationalism. Far from providing an impoverished, backward, or isolated exception to the rule<sup>1</sup>, published English-Canadian dramatic writing of the Macdonald years (1867-1896) is a uniquely illuminating and provocative product of peculiarly Canadian cultural forces. Although ignored in the literary criticism of the day, nineteenth century English-Canadian dramatic writing is inextricably connected to the "national literature" debate. Playwriting is essentially a literary process. Since acting editions of scripts appeared in periodicals and in book form, along with "closet" drama, for the use of the public, bibliographically speaking dramatic writing is acknowledged to be a product of the literary community. As such, it reflects current trends in critical thought including the "national literature" debate, which dominated the Canadian literary scene. The specific elements of this debate, therefore, must be examined in detail with a view to determining their impact on dramatic writing.

A central problem in nineteenth century nationalist criticism was the confusion of Political and cultural terminology. Political identity consisted of a melange mixing



constitutional realities with abstract, amorphous nationalist sentiment. Cultural identity was a blend of anthropological criteria, consistent with the development of realism, with a paternalistic moral hierarchy. As a result of this lack of clarity, Goldwin Smith, writing in 1894, produced this paradoxical statement:

Without any disparagement of our native genius, we must answer that no such thing as a literature Canadian in the local sense exists or is likely ever to exist. 'Canada' is a political expression. (Ballstadt,86)

Clearly Smith undermined his argument that Canada was a cultural vacuum when he identified a "native" cultural element within the political framework. An anonymous respondent to Smith's comments clarified somewhat the differentiation between cultural and political identities within the Canadian context:

Perhaps it is not strictly accurate to say that there is a national feeling in Canada, for a Colony is not a nation; but there is a Canadian sentiment...and this sentiment must and will find expression. (Ballstadt,91)

This additional element, the basic and necessary separation of political Colonial reality from the devastating myth of cultural colonialism, was made explicit too rarely in the literary theory and criticism of the period.

The process of political consolidation, highlighted by Confederation, gave impetus to the cultural consolidation

of English-Canada. The literary community perceived the development of a "national literature" as both an essential tool and an inevitable product of political and cultural growth. However, an anglicized educational background inhibited the fostering of readers who could either produce or consume the new literature. One of the problems of establishing a Canadian literary identity was a reaction to the force of a strong extrinsic literary heritage. L. O'Loane, writing in 1890, observed that "in inheriting the richest literature in the world [Canada] is bound in golden fetters. ...The masters of English prose and verse have weighted us" (Ballstadt,83). The mythic weight of this legacy added to the struggle of writers to transform a misfitting literary language to a new and uncertain inspiration. This cultural duality was reinforced rather than alleviated by the educational system. Robert Barr noted the wealth of historical and natural details unique to Canada which could have been used by educators to encourage an early, empathetic sense of cultural identity:

Never was I told that I lived in a country containing the grandest scenery the world has to show. Never once was the information given to me that the history of the deeds which won an empire from the wilderness was more absorbingly interesting than the most thrilling romance ever penned.  
(Ballstadt,66)

Barr's emphasis on the appreciation of the ruggedness as well as the beauty of the Canadian landscape and on the importance

of the hardships and heroism of ordinary people in the daily life of early settlement provided a useful contrast to the development of a sense of political identity advocated by K. Seymour MacLean:

...our countrymen need to recognise and to prize their relation to the country as Canadians;...the change to be wrought must begin in the school.  
(Ballstadt,106)

While MacLean emphasized the "training of the young citizens of the Dominion" (Ballstadt,106), Barr hoped to increase "the chances of Canada producing a Sir Walter Scott or a Jane Austen from among the present boys and girls" (Ballstadt, 76). However, both were concerned with attempting to establish an ideological path in the schools along which students might develop wholly within a Canadian identity.

The cultural duality which was present in school texts was extended to include textuality in general. The English-language heritage of early settlers created an impression, on the old home side, of a textual abundance of seemingly infinite scope. On the new home side, the impression was of a textual vacuum. However, that the new home in fact did possess and had inspired a rich, oral, narrative tradition, with its potential cultural impact on Canadian literature, was not lost on some observers. John E. Logan, observing that the devastating effects of cultural imperialism on North American tribes had impoverished conquerors and

and conquered alike, in 1884 stated that:

We have not amalgamated with the native and woven the woof of our refinement in the strong sinuous web of an aboriginal tradition and religion. In our civilized arrogance we swept away that coarser fabric...we will produce a great writer, or even great writers; but will they be founders of a 'distinctive literature?' I think not, unless they write in Anglo-Ojibbeway. (Ballstadt, 116-117)

A still more paternalistic, assimilationist point of view was developed by J.D. Robins in 1915:

...the mythology of our Celtic ancestors, for instance, was profoundly modified and enriched by the Neolithic man whom they displaced. ...an excellent precedent for embodying in this background the weird and fascinating legends of the soil that are to be found in Canada among our Indians. ...Of these we are the sole heirs, and the necessity of preserving them is urgent. (Ballstadt, 141)

A link forged between the English textual heritage and the native oral narrative tradition could have accelerated literary affinity for the Canadian wilderness and forestalled the development of a "garrison" viewpoint. Without this link, the statements above appear to foretell a future culture and literature characterized by chronic maladjustment.

Interest in these "legends of the soil" reflected the need to find criteria with which to identify the typical in Canadian national literature. Attempts to identify and define the typical features were influenced by the development of an evolutionary literary theory combined with the concern of realist literary critics to find "Truth" and

"true to life" content and style in literature. In 1897, John A Cooper stated:

Education, history, natural conditions and mode of life have made the Canadians a peculiar people,... literature is but a reflection and a criticism of the life of the people by whom it is produced. (Ballstadt,109)

By identifying generic elements of the terms "Canadian" and "literature", Cooper appeared to establish a potentially broad definition of "Canadian literature" along anthropological grounds only. However, paradoxically, Cooper continued:

It is doubtful whether we have a Canadian literature as yet. We have a number of [works]...which could not have been written outside of Canada; but we have a still greater number of [works]...that might have been written anywhere...the literature produced in this country will grow less and less like that of any other country, though still resembling all of them.

We will then have a Canadian literature. . . . No writing...must be called Canadian literature unless in quality it is equal to the writings of the world's best authors. (Ballstadt,109-110)

Here, implicitly, Cooper broached the problem of identification and evaluation of Canadian content. In the second statement Canadian authorship does not guarantee Canadian literature, contrary to the implications of the first statement: citizenship does not equal acculturation. If the extrinsic identifying elements of the text are intrinsic to the heritage of the author, then the text must reflect this heritage. If any Canadian text is subject to international standards of evaluation, only the formal aspects of the text may

be judged since the content is "peculiarly" Canadian. The separation of the writer and the content of a work would appear, then, to be impossible for the identification of Canadian literature, but necessary for its evaluation as part of world literature.

The importance of critical practice as a major force in shaping "national literature" was acknowledged. However, the quality and method of existing criticism was attacked from various viewpoints. Honest, learned, responsible, and dutiful criticism was desired as appropriate to the author, the work, the citizen, and the state, respectively. Anonymous criticism was a major offender of these ideals. I. Cyrus Doull, writing in 1898, condemned the temptations of anonymous newspaper criticism and looked forward to seeing "the gentle, dispassionate, scientific student of current literature in place of the arrogant, bullying, blundering pedant" (Ballstadt,53). Overpraise was recognised as equally dangerous (Ballstadt,49), leading John B. Logan, in 1884, to note that "flattering and fulsome praise is so recklessly bestowed upon very common-place people and their works...and merit receives no adequate reward" (Ballstadt,45). However, Sara Jeannette Duncan favourably noted in critics in 1886:

...an inclination to judge a book by its independent merits, and not by comparison with another book...written a century or two ago. We are beginning to adjust the work of to-day to the requirements and opportunities of to-day, and to cease insisting that it shall be adjusted to the

requirements and opportunities of yesterday.  
(Ballstadt,56)

These observations of and developments in critical practice were of an especially vital importance to those concerned with fostering a young and vulnerable literary community (Ballstadt,49).

The heritage of English literary criticism proved onerous in that it presupposed the existence of a fully developed social hierarchy in Canada. Writing in 1901, J. Gordon Mowat issued this mandate for a national magazine:

Its mission is to stimulate and afford expression to the higher thought and tastes of a people, to bring the country's best thought...before the best classes of the country's readers--the classes upon whom the shaping of the political, social, intellectual and even industrial future of the nation most largely depend. (Ballstadt,77)

Here culture is a moral hierarchy determined by social criteria. Reference to "higher" and "best thought" in literature, combining moral and literary standards, was compatible with a puritanical and conservative society which favoured authority (Ballstadt,55). Thus literary criticism was to be morally responsible and was intended to function "in the interest of the reading public" (Ballstadt,53). However, Doull stated that critics should be turned "from the arrogant assumption of authority to a realization of their true function in the civilized state" (Ballstadt,53); that is, that critics were highly trained middle men ensuring the

passage of the "best thought" of authors to the "best classes" of readers. Thus "culture" was to be the product and prerogative of a Canadian upper class which only marginally existed. Andrew Ramsay observed the effects of criticism on writers in Canada:

"I can't get out, said the starling," and the critics instead of helping out fasten the cage with wire-drawn definitions of "high art"--so high that you cannot see (being among the cloudmists) a single flower below nor star above.

We sometimes think it would be as well if the critics would let authors alone for the ensuing three or four hundred years. Then the timid would have a gorgeous time, for it often happens that the profoundest thinkers are the most diffident. For the untimely extinction of how many such are the critics responsible? (Ramsay, 32)

Doull and Ramsay viewed moral and social criteria advocated by critics for the evaluation of literature as misdirected and counter-productive to the development of a "national literature" in Canada.

In earlier criticism, the puritanical element surfaced in pragmatic directives for the new literature. David Chisholme, in his introduction to The Canadian Magazine and Literary Repository, July 1823, stated "that we shall always respect the labours of the moralist, the historian and the traveller before the super-structures of fancy or the brilliant meteors of wit" (Ballstadt, 3). This need for pragmatic justification in Canadian literature was satisfied, in the latter half of the century, through the mandate for national and nationalist content.



The impact of trends in literary criticism on nineteenth century English-Canadian dramatic writing was augmented by the influence of theatre-going trends. While regularly attending the opera houses, the "best classes" of society in England did not attend the theatres until the last quarter of the century:

The Opera was respectable and Shakespeare...might become so, but melodrama was not Polite. ...For this distrust the behaviour of the mid-Victorian audience often gave grounds. ...The Music Hall... began to draw off the violent element...[and] the way was thus cleared in the 1860's for the building of new, smaller playhouses for a smaller, more discriminating audience. (Rowell, 83)

This audience was encouraged by the Savoy Operas of Gilbert and Sullivan and by the development of the social drama of Tom Robertson and the intellectual drama of Shaw. To this moral and class based discrimination between worthy (upper class) and unworthy (popular) playwrighting a righteous twist was added in North America:

This was the time when the main street of every sizable town in Ontario boasted a theatre called The Grand. ...It flaunted its extravagant and enticing invitations...before the very eyes of the parson and the superior ladies and gentlemen of his congregation. The theatre was tolerated even if it was condemned. ...It persisted under the euphemistic name of "opera" and was well patronised. (Klinck, 121-122)

In Canada, in the second half of the nineteenth century, "culture" and patronage by an élite class were extrinsically

imposed ideals. The culture of the middle class dominated in both production and consumption of Canadian dramatic writing. However, the power of criticism was held by this self-appointed élite which effectively marginalised any consideration of dramatic writing as a literary activity or of drama as a literary product.

This conflict between élitist, literary factions and popular theatre advocates was well developed in the English-language dramatic context itself, however. In the United States, two major contrasting writers were David Belasco (1853-1931) and James A. Herne (1839-1901). Belasco stated that:

The literary drama is very beautiful...but it is not actable. ...I am not literary, because my target is the emotions. ...The province of literature is entirely outside the province of the theatre.  
(Vaughn,167)

Belasco preferred to be known as a "playwright" to emphasize that he considered himself to be a "workman" (Vaughn,167). His plays "were written to be acted, not to be read" and standards of judgement were to be adjusted accordingly (Vaughn,167).

Herne, an exponent of realism in the medium of social drama, wrote that melodrama was "useless" and "false to almost every aspect and color of life" (Vaughn,172). In his own work he adhered to the dictum: "Art for truth's sake is serious" (Vaughn,2). Although he preferred to discuss "Art"

rather than a theory of playwrighting, Herne differentiated plays qualitatively:

During the first twenty years of my career as an actor the literature of the stage was limited. We had any quantity of plays, but not much literature. (1896) (Downer,3)

He owed the literary tone of his own plays to an emphasis on theme and characterization largely the result of a debt of inspiration to Charles Dickens (Downer,3,5). His literary and serious tone had a moral purpose:

It is generally held that the province of the drama is to amuse. I claim that it has a higher purpose--that its mission is to interest and to instruct. ... it should teach subjectively. (1896) (Downer,9)

Both Herne and Belasco had a highly developed appreciation of the script as only one unit in the theatrical experience of a play. However, Belasco remained closer to the medium of melodrama while Herne moved toward a form of intellectual drama.

This difference was emphasized in their use of the techniques of realism. For Belasco this term referred to stagecraft more than to writing. The play Chums, written in collaboration with Herne, apparently "included a live cat that stretched itself and drank milk on cue [and]...the consumption of a full dinner of real food by the dramatis personae" (Vaughn,171). For Herne, realism referred not only to more natural acting technique and naturalistic language, but to theme as well:

...it perpetuates the everyday life of its time, because it develops the latent beauty of the so-called commonplaces of life, because it dignifies labor and reveals the divinity of the common man. (1886) (Downer,9)

As major proponents in different directions of avant-garde changes affecting late nineteenth century English-language dramatic writing, Belasco and Herne must be considered to be among the didactic élite. Both provided contributions to a period of transition in dramatic writing which connected nineteenth century Romaniticism with post-World War I realism and the intellectual drama.

Another aspect of this legacy of the dichotomy between practical playwright and literary dramatist is that the former practice is aligned with the development of the popular film industry, while the latter practice is aligned with modern theatre and literary and art cinema:

The clichés of the modern film differ from the commonplaces of the Victorian melodrama only in their phrasing--the responses at which they aim do not change. Standard characters, strong passions, and vigorous action were the essence of melodrama then and film-making now. (Rowell,60)

Melodrama, which provided the bulk of latter nineteenth century theatre entertainment, and modern popular films share a mandate geared to the taste and amusement of a broad segment of the population as well as a sense of enterprise. Dion Boucicault, in the United States from 1853-1860 and from 1875-1890, stated that:

I can spin out these rough-and-tumble dramas as a hen lays eggs. It's a degrading occupation, but more money has been made out of guano than out of poetry. (Vaughn,117)

Although the cinema of ideas developed and existed in parallel to the drama of ideas of Ibsen and Shaw, popular theatre was virtually replaced by popular film (Rowell,149). Due to élitist literary criticism which marginalised popular drama, the materials comprising the tradition of dramatic writing in Canada have been hitherto ridiculed or ignored (Plant and Wagner,5).

The published materials of this tradition comprise a fraction of the probable amount of dramatic writing in English Canada in the nineteenth century (Plant and Wagner,15). These plays reveal the impact of the "national literature" debate through style and content. Through the identification of common characteristics in style and content these plays are divided usefully into three categories: Literary drama, Propaganda or Nationalist drama, and Popular drama. Each of these groups reveals a separate response to cultural and political pressures within the literary community. They are as much specific documentations of these pressures as they are reflections of the trends in dramatic writing of the period.

## NOTE

The theses of both Tait and Plant tend to treat the English-Canadian drama of this period as an exotic beast which is best left buried, according to Tait, or pitied as "colonial" and evincing homesickness, according to Plant. I intend to demonstrate conclusively that a clearer picture emerges if Canadian drama is placed in an international context. It is clearly entirely in step with developments in other English-language drama including the pre-occupation with national identity. Comparison strengthens the sense of tradition in Canadian drama rather than weakens it.

## CHAPTER 1: Literary Drama

The English-Canadian literary drama of the post-Confederation period reflects an interest in investigating poetically philosophical, religious, and societal abstractions indicative of the "human condition". Literary drama focuses on the "universals" of "life" in its moral and didactic functions. Thus, Canadian literary drama accomplishes the goals of a "national literature" by providing a vehicle which contains the "best thought" intended for the "best classes" of Canadian audiences and readers. The scope of the literary drama encompasses concerns common to English-language literature of this period generally as well as being characteristic in dramatic style and content.

Shakespearean tragedies and histories are important influences on five of the eight dramas under consideration: Prince Pedro (1877), The Enamorado (1879), Ravlan (1876), Hildebrand (1895), and Mordred (1895). The Mad Philosopher (1892), and Jassoket and Anemon (1896) are extended philosophical "closet" dramas reflecting contemporary influences in style and content. One Hundred Years Ago (1876) exhibits a style, synonymous with the Shavian canon, in which relatively static ideological discussions take place within a stageable drama. Each of these dramatic works is "serious" in tone and tends to move away from the excesses of melodrama and Roman-

ticism. The blend of melodramatic plot and Elizabethan style is developed into a unique dramatic product through the effect of Victorian anti-heroes who are alienated from society and assert values that are ultimately personal (Houghton, xxiii). To these general characteristics is added political philosophy in One Hundred Years Ago, scientific theory in The Mad Philosopher, and religious debate in Jassoket and Anemon. These various characteristics of the dramas are especially significant and merit detailed examination.

In five of the six stageable dramas, exotic times and places are used as settings. The Enamorado takes place in the Spain of the early 1400's. Prince Pedro is set in Portugal in the late 1400's. Hildebrand is placed in Germany and Italy during the tenure of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085. Ravlan takes place in pre-Christian Britain. Mordred is set in the last years of legendary Arthur's reign as the first Christian English king. The remoteness of time and place in the settings of these dramas demonstrates an interest in antiquarianism prevalent in the theatre of the period (Rowell, 17). Scholarly work is evident particularly in John Hunter-Duvar's The Enamorado which is a dramatisation of the life of an historical character: Mazias el Enamorado (Enamorado, Preface):

The main incidents dramatised in the text occurred in the reign of Henry III, of Castille, and during the incumbency of Henry de Vellena as Grand Master of the Order of St. James, of Calatrava. ...Tellez



di Mendoza was the betrothed of Clara de Lope as sketched in the drama. Mazias was buried in the Church of St. Catherine of Arjonilla, where his grave...was seen by Martin de Ximena, as late as the year 1648. (Enamorado, Preface)

Unlike a previous dramatisation by Lope de Vega which indulged in classical references, Hunter-Duvar's "allusions are to the illusions and incidents that might have interested the learned of [the Grand Master's] time" (Enamorado, Preface). Thus, the Grand Master speaks "Of martyred Cecco's Cosmic Commentaries/...And of an optic instrument, of use/In tracing out the orbit of the stars" (Enamorado, 17). Similar attention to historical detail is demonstrated by Hunter-Duvar in De Roberval discussed in the next chapter.

In Prince Pedro, John Garnier uses Court and wilderness settings in medieval Portugal. These settings complement the plot through the development of symbolic patterns. The wilderness imagery connotes an Eden to Matteo and the Moor Xara, but a wasteland to Inez. Inez and Pedro marry, moving to an urban setting from the wilderness where they met; the movement is parallel to Adam and Eve's entry into the world of knowledge. Years later, the murderers of their children seek refuge in the same wilderness area. Pedro revisits the area, unaware of their presence, to hunt with Matteo, discovers the murderers and achieves revenge. Thus the wilderness setting is, in turn, an Edenic refuge, a place of trial, and a seat of justice. The urban setting, in contrast, is uniformly a place of corruption.

Wilfred Campbell's Hildebrand, "an historical tragedy", similarly uses urban and garden settings (Campbell, 251). Most of the play takes place in a small German town or the Papal Court at Rome. The final scenes are in a garden, to which Hildebrand retires, and where he perceives the inhumanity of his policies, but is incapable of changing them. The urban settings are evocative of vice and ambition. The garden, however, is a spiritual refuge, the testing ground of conscience, and a place of judgement.

These three plays use the settings of Catholic countries as romantic locations, but also tend to vilify the priesthood. In The Enamorado, the evil genius behind the forced engagement of Clara and Tellez is Clara's mother's Confessor who plays on Maria's greed and fear of the Church to confiscate Clara and Tellez' lands:

But I shall pray our blessed sire the pope  
 To give thee some special mark of grace,  
 Say, a toe-nail of San Geronimo, ...  
 For thy great zeal towards poor straitened church.

...  
 Though we poor priests be harmless as the dove  
 We must be wise as serpents; therefore, daughter,

...  
 Ends sanctify the means. My daughter, know  
 A shadow lies upon thy husband's fame;  
 The church is sore displeased; her ire will fall,  
 And when the bolt strikes him it leaves for thee  
 A home as abbess upon Tellez' lands. (II, i, 28-29)

The unscrupulous methods of the Confessor are linked to the serpent, archetypal symbol of evil, as are the cults of saints and relics. This behaviour, the use of others for

evil deeds, are traits present in the character of Ludro, the murderous Abbot of Prince Pedro. Ludro forges a will which deprives Inez and Matteo of their inheritance of rich ancestral lands. His misuse of law and inappropriate involvement in secular affairs are signified throughout the play by the will. Similarly, Ludro's dagger signifies murder and his bag of gold, greed and worldliness. The conventional symbols are woven into the plot structure as an insidious, serpentine influence. Ludro dies of torture on the rack, unrepentant and consistent with an early speech which reveals his character and foreshadows his end:

This property belongeth not to me;  
 But an it did, I'd sooner have it burnt,  
 Yea rather see it sunken in the sea  
 Than give one tittle to De Castro's house. ...  
 Nay, sooner let each quivering limb be torn,  
 And life's last drop crimson my mangled flesh,  
 Than I return these Castro's e'en one re.  
 He says I forged this will! ...  
 Calls me a villain monk, and blackens me,  
 As if I were a devil, fresh from hell.  
 Although I am a monk, am I to bear  
 Each insult that he heaps upon my head!  
 No my lord judge,--no--never! (I,vi,20-21)

His unchristian behaviour and obsessive hatred reflect the singleness of purpose which initiates and complicates the plot throughout the play. Similarly, Hildebrand's singleness of purpose and authoritarian methods provide the impetus in the plot of Hildebrand. His Bull "unwiving" the priests, in order to separate them from worldly life, is the initiating act. It has unforeseen repercussions on his own life when

his wife Catherine, whom he left years ago and presumed dead, informs him of the misery the Bull has caused his daughter, Margaret, and grandson, the wife and child of a priest. The priest, forced to leave a happy marriage to the virtuous Margaret, is prevented from seeing them or supporting them financially. Margaret and the infant become ill. When her son dies she loses her reason, and, in this state, she meets her father not knowing who he is. Hildebrand, later seeing their graves in the garden, begins to regret, not his decision, but only its consequences. He remains dogmatic to his death:

Lord cardinals and prelates, to your knees!  
 Take you my blessing, 'Tis my latest hour! [All kneel.  
 All ye who have been true to Holy Church,  
 Take my last blessing. All who have been false.  
 Take ye my--Catherine! Catherine! O my God! [Dies.

The suffering of Margaret's priest-husband is clearly represented as well, reinforcing the idea that the Bull is an inhumane act, the mistake of a man, not of one privileged above all others by God.

In Ravlan, by Samuel Watson, Britomart, the Chief Druidess, is similarly portrayed. Her "Master", Satan, gives her her powers directly and, as with Ludro, her malice, even before the action of the play begins, is the moving force of the plot. Her three witch assistants, Wormwood, Catsclaw, and Toadstool, recall the three weird sisters of Macbeth: their scene begins with chanting and they relate the details of their latest evil deeds (II,ii,109-117). Brito-

mart misuses her sacred calling for political purposes as do Ludro, the Confessor, and Hildebrand. She wrongly accuses the Dane Saxo of spying and uses her position to force a decision in her favour:

He who says nay against the Northman's death,  
On that man's wife I'll stamp a dreadful curse,  
And make her a hideous, walking plague. (I,ii,72)

Ravlan manages to save the innocent man at the last moment. Unlike Ludro and Hildebrand, Britomart does not die. She, like the Confessor, while essential to the plot, is removed to allow audience attention to focus on the final fate of the sympathetic lead characters.

In four plays a plot reversal hinging on revenge is a structural key. Here, the influence of Jacobean and Restoration drama is a greater factor than that of Elizabethan drama. In The Enamorado, Isabella seeks revenge on Mazias for rejecting her love in favour of Clara, who is already engaged to Tellez:

My love despised, myself abashed, abased.--  
Look to thy self, proud man! love turns to hate,...  
Hell rages in my bosom. Throb! wild heart!  
Throb out the last drop of rejected love  
And fill with woman's hatred and revenge!  
(III,v,63-64)

She later attempts to murder Mazias. D'Ercilla, in love with Isabella, seeks revenge on Mazias because of jealousy. Both of these attempts fail. Mazias is finally killed honourably by Tellez, now married to Clara, who avenges his honour since

Mazias refuses to discontinue his attentions to Clara:

Thou villain, Mazias! Make thy peace with God.  
 Thy crimes have found thee out. Thy time hath come.  
 The lady thou hast wronged can bear no more,  
 And for her wrongs thou diest by my hand.  
 (V,vi,118)

Here, the lines of revenge convention are adapted considerably since the crime committed is only obsessive, chivalric love, and the two men, D'Ercilla and Tellez, confront Mazias as a rival according to accepted code.

In Prince Pedro, convention is also adapted since the principal revenger is the sympathetic lead who is justified in hunting down the murderers of his wife and children. This is the second act of revenge, however. The first act is the killing of Pedro's two sons by Pechico, the lover Inez rejects after meeting Pedro:

'Tis better thus to part, as if in hate,  
 Than filled with sighs and sweet remembrances.  
 But now a change steals o'er my inmost mind,  
 Knowing she loves me not; and such a change! ...  
 I'll love no more.--Revenge! be thou my friend,  
 And fill the hollow where my love had dwelt!  
 (I,iii,44)

Pedro has Ludro put to death for stabbing Inez. The final tableau is of Pechico and his wife Pauline who are about to die a horrible death. Here, the idea of revenge is complex. Pechico is not portrayed as inherently evil or as driven by an inexorable fate. Indeed, Pedro's mother, the Queen, is responsible for scheming with Ludro to have her daughter-in-

law and grandsons killed. Although she does not strike a blow, she gives the orders to strike. Ludro tells this to Pedro:

Then know,--thy mother bid me strike the blow;  
 She was more fierce in her revengefulness  
 Than all the rest. I did but do her bidding--  
 Thy mother's bidding--if I murdered Inez.  
 Seek her, and torture her, and tear her limbs,  
 And sear her tender flesh, and do but justice.  
 I crave not pity. Thou art like thy mother.  
 (V,vi,144-145)

In the final action of the play Pedro sentences Pechico's wife Pauline, who he knows is innocent, to death thus validating Ludro's observations. Sympathy is gained by Pechico, in this last scene, as he pleads for his wife's life while Pedro is inhumanely adamant.

In Ravlan and Mordred, the revenge convention is used in a more conservative manner. The Chief Druidess gives orders for Ravlan's father, King Ravlan, to be killed after her husband loses a competition for the throne. Britomart reveals her reasons for desiring revenge to her son Varth:

Ere thy birth,  
 Old Evilrath was monarch of the island,  
 And, at his death, old Ravlan and thy sire  
 Contended for the crown. Fate baffled us,  
 For Ravlan had the trick of winning men,  
 A cursed gift, the which his son inherits;  
 And so thy sire, rejected by the people,  
 Died, by his own wild hand, the self-same day.  
 ...It is true  
 My cup of vengeance has been long in filling.  
 (I,v,95)

The goal of Britomart's revenge is to place Varth on the throne. Mordred's revenge is similarly developed in that he is also an innocent victim. However, the element of fate, missing in Ravlan, is important here although once determined on revenge through circumstances, both Britomart and Mordred act consciously. Both characters pursue political ambition, but the cause of the revenge reaction is the withdrawal of expected love and personal honour. Britomart is deprived of her husband and the position of Queen, while Mordred loses his mother's love only to have his father, Arthur, reject him because of his ugliness. Although knighthood is not Mordred's initial hope, honour as a prince of the realm is.

Although Prince Pedro, Hildebrand, and Mordred are labelled "tragedies", only Mordred approaches the requirements of the genre. Even so, Mordred is more closely identifiable with Richard III than Hamlet. None of the lead characters in these plays achieves the status of hero. In Prince Pedro, the character of Pedro does not take significant action until V,iii. His refusal to marry a princess of Navarre (III,vi) is significant only in that it spurs his mother to her own vengeful actions. At this point Pedro is already married to Inez. Action is taken by the antagonists: the Queen, Ludro, and Pechico. On the protagonists' side, Sebastian and Xara, two servants, defend their masters' lives and interests repeatedly throughout the drama. In The Enamo-



rado, the servants Nugne, Yola, and Bertola perform most of the action in the interest of the protagonists. D'Ercilla, Maria, wife of the Grand Master, and the Confessor, take action as antagonists. Mordred takes action only reluctantly. His heroic qualities, which exist in potential when he first meets Arthur, are perverted and this perversion enables him to enact revenge. He is both hero and villain. In Ravlan, Prince Ravlan takes action only once and is manipulated completely by action taken by Britomart, Saxo, Thorwolf, and his father, King Ravlan. Ravlan's one action is the last of the play: he commits suicide because his bride, Aidnai, has just died intercepting a blow from Britomart meant for him. In Hildebrand, Hildebrand is consistent in character and action throughout the play. He eventually suffers and recognises the suffering he has caused by his actions, but no reversal or repentance takes place. He is also both protagonist and antagonist although, once again, audience interest is mainly engaged by the action and suffering of the minor characters.

Although the attempt at tragedy is made in literary drama, the influences of the drama and poetry of this period are too strong and undermine tragic structures. Here, the two most important elements of these influences are the emancipation of women and, its complement, the rise of realism. The strong-willed characters who take action in these five dramas are women. The Queen in Prince Pedro is actively

vindictive while the King, Alphonso, is passively diplomatic and conciliatory. His main tactic is to feign deafness:

When her Grace asks unreasonable things,  
I will turn deaf, ask what 'tis of the clock,  
Or it she breakfasted. She leaves in a rage  
Nor bothers for a time, just as we wish.  
(IV,i,101)

This "womanly" wife of passive resistance in the King is contrasted with the "manly" attitude of the Queen:

Were I a king  
I'd make my children do as I command. ...  
I'd act decidedly, nor brook delay. (III,iii,71)

She strategically issues commands for the murders, but does not involve herself. Similarly, in Ravlan, the Druidess, Britomart, uses weak men in her attempt to rule:

VARTH.  
Thou hast done wonders, but I fear me much,  
I'm not the man to rule the land with vigour.

DRUIDESS.  
I know it well, but ease thy mind on that,  
For I shall rule the land from o'er your shoulder,  
And also be your guide in every thing,  
Even to the way in which you set your crown,  
The way you wear your cloak or cut your hair,  
The mode you wage a war or make a peace.  
(III,iii,133)

In a speech to Thorwolf she echoes Lady Macbeth:

Speak not of crime! oh, has it come to this,  
That I, a woman, must remind of manhood  
One who wears sword, and styles himself a soldier?  
(I,iii,79)

Britomart begs forgiveness for her crimes and receives a pardon from King Ravlan. However, her aim is to kill Prince Ravlan and she attempts to stab him almost immediately after the King finishes speaking. By killing Aidnai by mistake, she causes Ravlan's suicide and therefore achieves her revenge indirectly. She is not brought to justice within the scope of the play.

In Hildebrand, the Pope's Bull "unwiving" the priests is presented as over-correction, cruel, and foolish. The suffering of his wife Catherine, daughter Margaret, and grandson engage the audience. The parallel plot, the excommunication of Henry IV, is controlled by Henry's wife who instructs him in ways to gain Gregory's favour and thus regain his power:

Kneel! kneel! or all is lost. ...  
 (aside) Henry, for the love of Germany,  
 Me, and thy child, keep but thy patience now.  
 (to HILDEBRAND) O Holy Father, curb thine awful  
     anger,  
 Remove this curse that weighteth Henry down,  
 Makes him a fearful leper to his kind.  
 Restore his people's favor, thou hast the power,  
 And thou wilt do it. (III,ii,301-302)

Through her mediation, the excommunication is lifted.

In Mordred, Arthur, Lancelot, and Mordred are all debased through their obsession with Guinevere. Mordred is instructed and encouraged in revenge by Vivien. Neither of the actions of the women is punished, but all of the men are destroyed by reaction.

In The Enamorado, Clara gives the following pragmatic reason for choosing Tellez rather than Mazias:

Yet am I plighted to a gallant spouse  
 Who loves with moderation, yet with all  
 The manliness that speaks a noble soul.  
 Weak Clara! is there room to pick and choose  
 Between a love that keeps me in a fear  
 And one the heart can safely rest upon  
 Until old age creeps on to close the scene.  
 No; 'tis decided; Tellez' I must be,  
 And this wild lover I no more must see.  
 (III,v,60)

To Mazias she says:

Pray thee be less poetic and more true--...  
 This much professed love of thee for me,  
 That asks for nothing yet demands so much,  
 Is but a sickly megrim, a disease  
 Of fancy, not affection. What I have  
 Of sisterly affection give I thee  
 But cannot share such vague and shadowy love.  
 (IV,i,70-71)

Mazias' character is representative of the new "hero": sensitive, learned, philosophical, artistic, and reflective. These passive elements work against the heroic concept of the man of action and, therefore, the tragic form. The female characters must take the burden of action and hence a male/female sex role reversal is effected. However, the form of drama is bound by social laws as well as poetic laws which prevent the women antagonists from being punished and also prevent the action of the women from directly affecting the men: Britomart's curse is on the wives of the counsellors, not on the men themselves. Although Pauline, in Prince Pedro,

is wrongly sentenced to death, the execution takes place after the play is over. The horror of such an occurrence leaves the audience reflecting on Pedro's increasing depravity to which his vengeance has led. The purging of the element of evil is not accomplished in these plays.

This sublimation of fear of the "New Woman" is the complement of the glorification of the usual, long-suffering women in dramas of domestic realism. Although ambitious women are portrayed as unnatural, "unsexed", and mannish, clearly the women's source of frustration lies not with their sexuality intrinsically but with a self-perpetuating paternalistic society which denies power to women because they are women.

In contrast, One Hundred Years Ago develops both male and female characters who are intellectually engaged by and in the political issues presented by the American War of Independence. Eva and Nelly Parker are intelligent, articulate women. They take action when necessary, although only the appropriate male characters actually participate in battle. The play contains two interweaving plots. The historical plot is didactic and centers around the treason of Benedict Arnold which culminates in the execution of Major André. The dénouement of this plot consists of the final battle and the surrender of the British. The fictional plot is melodramatic in content and traces the fortunes of the father of Eva and Nelly, a New York industrialist. Mr. Parker is fi-

nancially ruined as the war progresses and is heavily in debt to the villain, Chambers, who will foreclose unless Nelly agrees to marry him. Nelly is in love with Madison, a Rebel, but agrees in order to save her father. The war ends in favour of the Rebels, Madison returns, reparations are awarded for Mr. Parker's losses, Chambers is accidentally shot, Eva's murder solved, and the promise of Nelly and Madison's wedding constitute the happy ending.

This conciliatory play advocates understanding and appreciation of the history and ideals of the United States. It attempts to remove any basis for viewing the American war as an example of hatred or treason against the British by showing the move to independence to be a natural, political evolution. Although Republican ideals are extolled, no anti-monarchist statements occur. Lafayette and Washington are the central figures whose nobility and humanity are consistently put forward. The final stage direction reads: "Apoteosis of WASHINGTON or a tableau representing LAFAYETTE offering his sword to Washington" (Lespérance, 108).

Unlike the previous five dramas, One Hundred Years Ago is written in prose, using current diction. The rhetoric of the many major speeches on liberty, freedom, and democracy gives a literary and oratorical tone to the play. These speeches occur in static situations where seated characters discuss a philosophical or political point in a manner similar to that which Shaw uses later in the century.

The "New Woman" is supported in a limited sense:

NELLY.

And why should women remain strangers to what is going on around them? Why should they not have patriotism as well as men? Is the noblest of all feelings out of place in a woman's heart? The women of South Carolina, at this moment defending their hearthstones with arms in their hands, set examples of heroism which do honour to our sex, and whoever does not appreciate these acts of devotion is much to be pitied indeed.

...

PARKER.

This is what happens when women meddle in matters which do not concern them. What do you say, Major?

ANDRÉ

I think that Miss Nelly has nothing to reproach herself with. She was provoked by Mr. Chambers, and had a right to reply as she did. (I,iii,18-19)

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Here, Nelly echoes the language and sentiment of Laura Secord in Laura Secord, the Heroine of 1812:

Guard them and me, O Heaven. ...  
 And Brock! McDonnell! Dennis!  
 All ye hero band, who fell on yonder Heights!  
 If I should fall, give me a place among ye,  
 And a name will be children's pride,  
 For all--my all--I risk, as ye, to save  
 My country. (I,v,109)

The "New Woman" is seen as a modern phenomenon and finds a positive place in a drama with a modern subject. The escapism of the first five plays is one reaction to the increasing momentum of the women's movement. A more significant reaction among male dramatists resulted in the realism of social and domestic drama.

The influence of evolutionary theory on the philoso-

phy of political practice is explored in greater detail in

The Mad Philosopher by John Henry Brown:

There in the West

Is Jefferson, Buonaparte in the East.  
 St.J. But will they take it up?  
 Corot. We can but try.  
 Yet have I faith when they do hear my plan  
 They will attempt it gladly. This the plan is,--  
 These men, emancipated from the thrall  
 Of self and superstition, must embrace it.  
 America most readily will accept  
 A teaching that is level with the time.  
 Still young, and with youth's free and daring heart,  
 She can ideals realize:  
 'Tis but to change the system, pour new wine  
 Into new bottles, for all there is new.  
 Where now are churches, schools, for inculcation  
 Of musty doctrines, long since proven void,  
 The churches, schools, will stand; but there, in lieu  
 Of superstitious, stale observances,  
 Life will be taught; the beautiful, the true, ...  
The life of man,  
 The wonders of our earth, the starry scheme.  
 Shall have due recognition, due account.  
 'Tis but to change the teachers in the schools,  
 To change the preachers in the tabernacles,  
 To study Nature where they study--mist.  
 Science to teach, and not theology,  
 Humanity to know, and not divinity: ...  
 France will not lag behind--she never will.  
 More difficult for her 'twill be to wrest  
 The power, so long misused, from sychophants  
 That fatten on the people, whom they claim  
 Their office is to guide to saintly life.  
 But this too may be done. A mighty hand  
 Is his who now leads France. Let him but see  
 A richer civilization, happier state  
 For man, waits at the door and lists his voice.  
 And he will cry, Come in, and fling it wide.  
 Then will the sun of Science shine for France.  
 Then will America and she advance  
 Even to the consummation of our hopes,  
 And soon will England follow.  
 (Brown, 138-141)

The advocacy of liberal humanism as the new religion and policy fails for the same reason the old systems fail: the po-



wer structure which both forms and is formed by the cult of individualism:

Jefferson. Why, Corot, you are mad! What should you do?  
 Point out the way, then force him on before you,  
 And, if the struggle, kick him all the harder,  
 Crying, Wisdom dwells up yonder,---forward man!  
 Call you this liberty? You surely jest. ...  
 Dear friend, this is mere folly. See you not  
 I lack the power to do the thing you wish?  
 I am no autocrat, no master here.  
 I stand here solely by the people's will,  
 And carry out their wishes. Should I try  
 To act on your suggestion, I should fail  
 In loyal service to the sovereign head.  
 However, personally, I incline  
 To certain of your views, 'tis not for me  
 To impose these views on men who care not for them.  
 Friend, we must wait in hope the Almighty will;  
 When time is ripe for that majestic birth,  
 A perfect state, 'twill not be you, nor I,  
 Nor any man need usher it to being.  
 (Brown, 172-173)

Jefferson's self-effacement in favour of the process of democratic liberty is a rationalized moral abnegation of responsibility. Spiritual abnegation of leadership is inherent in his faith in "the Almighty" and man's powerlessness to improve the state. Buonaparte is the opposite of this position since his vanity molds the will of the "people" into his own image:

Scientists...would teach men truths;  
 Matters of interest touching life and death;  
 Communicate to them the modern views  
 Of cause and consequence, and all that proves  
 So fascinating to the modern mind--  
 They'd soon forget that they had worn chains  
 And even loved their bondage.  
 BUON. We have talked enough.  
 One side of me leans to this scheme of yours,

The other drags me from it. I have doubt  
 Whether I long for perfect human lives.  
 Were France this state ideal you describe,  
 She would not want her emperor. ...  
The Presence-Chamber. The EMPEROR pacing to and  
fro. The ENGLISH AMABASSADOR standing near.  
Officers and gentlemen in the background.  
 BUON. 'Tis not to be endured, sir; 'tis insufferable,  
 These scurrilous attacks upon our person.  
 Your press has too great freedom. Tell the king  
 Restraint must be put on this too free press.  
 Do they want war? ...  
 My people will not brook these shameful insults  
 Flung at their Emperor.  
 (Brown, 196-197)

His concerns centre on the maintenance of power with which to support this vanity to the point where he considers declaring war on England because of its critical press. The spiritual element is missing in Buonaparte since he is absorbed in self-worship.

Corot's idealism relies on the existence of tangible universals of "human nature" and "Truth" which can be identified and taught. His humanist, pantheist, utopia presupposes a "natural" evolution in humanity toward the sublime. Disillusioned, disheartened, isolated, and raving, Corot dies (Brown, 202-203).

Cornelia, St. John's secretary, is both example and advocate of the "New Woman":

How well to be a man!  
 He on life's various stage may play his part.  
 And, with a part to play, may fearlessly  
 Climb to the topmost level of his act.  
 Not so a woman. Fate hath wall'd her in,  
 And chain'd her down to common household cares.  
 Her duties are marked out, nor may she dare

Attempt a loftier part than that which falls  
 Within her lot's small circle. No seven acts,  
 Nor seven ages, her's--she hath but two,  
 The married and unmarried.

ED. (Rousing himself.) Pardon me.

But in these two grand acts what various scenes  
 Of maidenhood and sweet maternal ways.

What power, enchantment, glory. What fair spheres,  
 Wide as the heaven's champaign, to o'ersway,  
 And, like the heaven's white queen, as crescent first,  
 To draw men's eyes with nameless maiden charm,  
 And then to reign, in beauty's rounded orb,  
 Controller and bright empress of their fate.

COR. You use the language of mere courtesy.

And, when I cry that women suffer wrong,  
 Would stop my mouth with phrase of compliment;  
 Smooth tinkling sounds, with wreaths of vapor ring'd,  
 The wonted offerings to a flattered sex,  
 Who pay the expected smile, and change the subject,  
 Foreseeing disaster should they longer dwell  
 On themes so unfamiliar.

ED.

Wrong me not

By thinking that I hold in slight esteem  
 The woman's cause, or speak in idle jest.  
 I ever would look on the sunny side;

And, with this optimistic bias, see  
 Women with men the walls of darkness storming,  
 And, side by side, advancing to one end. ...

COR. The end, I hope, is happiness to all, ...

In happiness,

In adaptation to environment,  
 In happy movement with according law,  
 Man finds at last solution and repose,  
 The riddle's working out and 'scape from pain.

(Brown, 133-134)

Corot's attempts to reform and enlighten the world from the top and proceeding downward within the power structure is contrasted with his son Edmond's more diffuse vision beginning with the domestic setting of male/female relationships. With the death of Corot manifesting the intellectual, moral, and spiritual collapse of male power structures, the impending marriage of Edmond and Cornelia signifies the rise of a new order, stemming from not only shared vision but also shared

power.

In Jassoket and Anemon, by George Arthur Hammond, the discussion of science versus religion is developed not for social or political use, but for its own sake in converging two separate approaches to "Truth". As in the first five plays, a Catholic/Protestant dogmatic split is apparent:

...And yet you believe The Bible;  
 Interpreting its record to your taste:  
 Eliminating its language most direct,  
 And substituting the apology  
 Of metaphoric glosses. ...  
 When we abandon the direct account,  
 And enter some domain of fond conjecture,  
 Are we not quite astray? (Scene viii,74)

The incompatibility of religious faith and scientific theory is also presented, providing an interesting contrast with The Mad Philosopher:

...Do you not  
 Perceive that this is doing violence  
 To the plain record and dishonoring  
 The prophet and the prophecy of truth,  
 By theories, impossible, absurd?  
 (Scene viii,74)

The two poles of argument are mainly aligned along the axis of the idea of Creation:

Chipper.

...I watch the heavens;  
 And lost in rapture and amazement, ask,  
 Can there be one so stupid, as to think,  
 Those objects self created. Or existant  
 Eternally as thus. ...

Jassoket.

Cousin! how blind how false is limping science. ...  
 The sacred Record, simply and most plainly

Explodes all vain and hobbling theories.  
Yes! by a single declaration dashes  
Forever into fragments the false gods  
Of human effort. God created all,  
From nothing--by a word. Yes, by a word.  
Commanded--they arose in life and beauty  
And permanence. (Scene viii, 76-77)

The existential dilemma overtly posed by the arguments in the "closet" dramas The Mad Philosopher and Jassoket and Anemon is covertly reflected in the stageable nineteenth century English-Canadian dramas. In Mordred, Hildebrand, Ravlan, Prince Pedro, and The Enamorado an escape into a form of drama which asserts universal and permanent truths is attempted. One Hundred Years Ago is a combination of such assertions modernized and realistic presentation. Realism is a response to uncertainty in the areas of religion and philosophy. Here, the tangible world of domestic commonplaces and devotion to the truisms of observable behaviour provide relatively stable means of reassurance.

## CHAPTER 2: Nationalist Drama

Sara Jeannette Duncan noted that "we are conscious of not having been born in time to produce an epic poet or a dramatist" (Ballstadt,31). Nevertheless, a number of dramas were written and in avowed support of the national literature mandate. John Hunter-Duvar referred to his volume containing De Roverval (1888) and two long poems as a "slight contribution to Canadian literature" (De Roberval, n.p.). Sarah Anne Curzon viewed Laura Secord, the Heroine of 1812 (written 1876, published 1887) as Canadian literature (Wagner,95) Charles Mair's Canada First affiliations and their influence on the writing of Tecumseh (1886) are well documented in Norman Shrive's definitive work. The development of a national dramatic literature was specifically a concern in England, Ireland, and the United States, however. The fervent nationalist activity of the Abbey Theatre supporters and playwrights has been clearly acknowledged. The English, Canadian, and American struggles for separate identities were less dogmatically expressed and, therefore, less easily traced. These individual struggles were all characterized by a tension between a fear of influence and a fear that the home product was inferior. This dialectical conflict was resolved by the end of the century, in each case,

by the implicit acceptance of the universality of influence within a particular art form and the adaptation of influence into a culturally local product.

In England, in the early and mid-nineteenth century influence arrived in the form of the pièce bien faite as developed in France principally by Eugène Scribe and, later, Victorien Sardou (Taylor, 17). Their prolific output was imported in "adaptations" from the French which ranged from verbatim translations to generalized plot motifs. German influence was less direct in terms of drama. However, German conventions in the Gothic novel genre were mainstays of English melodrama (Rowell, 39, 40). While still working within melodramatic conventions, English playwrights, such as Tom Robertson, began to explore the possibilities of social drama (Taylor, 18). Dramatic realism, which probed middle class experience, along with society drama which criticized upper class hypocrisy, emerged as part of a reaction to Romanticism (Taylor, 19). Another important reaction was to the influence of Italian Grand Opera. Gilbert and Sullivan's "Savoy Operas" contained parodic elements in both their libretti and scores. These operettas gained their typically English character mainly from the re-introduction to respectable theatrical entertainment of political satire (Rowell, 93). In their turn, these operettas became foreign influences and were of importance in the development of political satire on stage in nineteenth century English-Canada. Also, their importance

in influencing the development of musical theatre, a modern remnant of Victorian popular theatre, cannot be overemphasized (Rowell,144). The influence of Ibsen, particularly as a foil for Shaw, on English playwrighting and the general development of dramatic realism was considerable. Ibsen's work demonstrated the need for an alternative environment in which to present plays for the "discriminating playgoer" (Rowell,128). The Independent Theatre was established in 1891 "To give special performances of plays which have a literary and artistic rather than a commercial value" (Rowell,129). This élitist international trend emerged at the close of the century newly stimulating the English playwrighting community.

In the United States the absence of a national dramatic literature was lamented and the inferiority of the home product was acknowledged. Writing in 1908, Walter Prichard Eaton spoke of "that struggling little provincial, the American drama" and that this "attitude of some of us toward American plays...is not the attitude to foster a native art" (Downer,18). Despite James A. Herne's reputation as "the American Ibsen" (Vaughn,182), largely founded on the domestic drama Margaret Fleming, Eaton stated that Herne's most successful and respected work, Shore Acres, was far from "the ideal goal of literature":

For surely a domestic pantomime, depending for its effect absolutely on a stage and actors, cannot be



considered as literature, for it cannot be printed.  
(Downer,21)

English influence was acknowledged to be a powerful force on native American drama. Stark Young observed:

How far our turning in the theater to England is profitable or cramping, a profound need or a mere hangover of colonialism, is a question to think upon. ...[This influence is] a parental accident. We have leaned on English theater more because we chanced to be an English colony. (Downer,70)

To this effect of colonialism was added European influences exemplified by the New York repertory of Augustin Daly in the 1870's to 1890's:

For twenty years the stage at his theater continued to show the same endless list of adaptations from the French or German, the classic comedies, Shakespeare (rudely mutilated in text and clumsily encumbered with scenery), with now and then a new play from London. (Downer,19)

However disastrous such policies were on the "serious" American drama of the time, Eaton remarked that continental influence, particularly that of Ibsen, on the English-speaking stage had given American writers

an increasing desire to comment on contemporary life as well as to reflect it; we [were] beginning to find ideas in our drama. And ideas breed style, for they cannot be expressed without language and form. ...American writers began to seize hold of American subjects with more than an infantile grip. (Downer,20)

The adaptive process, which culminated at the end of the

century, led to the preferment of literary, intellectual drama by élitist criticism. Criticism used literary qualities as a measure of value. Eaton stated that two authors, Percy MacKaye and William Vaughn Moody, were

creating [in] American drama the largest amount of dramatic skill, truthful observation, intelligent reflection, and passion for reality [and]...keeping our drama connected with life. ...They alone have the sense of literary style to strike out beautiful language. ...The mere scenic fidelity of Belasco seems tame, old-fashioned. ...They will work out their own dramatic salvation--and ours.  
(Downer, 28)

The American struggle to develop a national dramatic literature was never connected to the fostering of nationalism itself, nor was the English struggle. Rather, both were ultimately more concerned with the achievement of an internationally competitive self-reflecting literary and intellectual dramatic product. The application of progressive forms and ideas to local materials was intended to produce "Truth" appropriate to all "life" not just national "life".

In Canada, the dialectic of influence and home product in the context of dramatic literature was complicated by the lack of a recognised cultural tradition. Any resemblance to the Irish drama is superficial since Irish dramatists were glorifying an ancient, established culture. The establishment of tradition by fostering an awareness of the local political and cultural past was the nationalistic purpose of English-Canadian propaganda drama. In this way, the

newly self-conscious didactic reaction to, but also benignly inclusive of, influence, was unique in English-language drama of the period. In this type of nineteenth century English-Canadian drama, international "Truth" was sacrificed to the necessity of portraying national themes "truly".

As in the United States, most dramatic influences came from England. American influences were negligible since the American product itself was heavily influenced and in transition at this time. Adaptive processes used in the writing of English-Canadian nationalist propaganda drama reflected the current enthusiasm for Elizabethan, particularly Shakespearean, style and language, and the popularity of the verse drama form. Both were especially appropriate to the exalted themes and extended subjects of Canadian historical drama. Prominent among these historical verse dramas were Laura Secord, the Heroine of 1812, De Roberval, and Tecumseh.

De Roberval and Tecumseh both deal with great deeds of great men in Canadian history. John Hunter-Duvar's De Roberval (1888) is a rigorously formal verse drama extolling the Christian nobility and other virtues of Sieur de Roberval. The Preface, notes, and text exhibit painstaking research and historical accuracy. Although de Roberval's speeches are structurally prominent, the characterization of many fictitious personalities dominates the content of the drama. These speeches are heavily laced with period detail and historical references, which give the iambic pentameter

blank verse a balance of literary and dramatic elements. The drama opens with a scene depicting the frivolous pastimes of the Lords and Ladies of the French Court. This extended opening in such a locale creates an effective contrast to later scenes in the settlement in which the characters are usually soldiers, servant class comic relief types, or Jesuits speaking with de Roberval about the business of extending Christianity. The groups of soldiers and servants are empathetic characters with whom the reader identifies, vicariously experiencing the vagaries of life of the first European Canadians.

More significant, in terms of nationalism than the contrast between upper classes and lower classes, are the differences between Indian and European, and the new land and the old. The Indian and European elements in the drama clash on the subject of religion. The colonization effort of France is for national aggrandizement in terms of wealth, if the passage to China is discovered, and in terms of power, especially in competition with England and Spain. The human exponents of the nationalist ambition for wealth and power are noble, principled, and conscious of the best interests of the nation. They are men of courage and responsibility and act accordingly. However, colonization as a means of cultural imperialism, especially evangelism, is a negative quantity personified in the irrational, personally ambitious, cruel, and corrupt characters of the priests. Of the heroine

Ohnáwa when she enters de Roberval's quarters, a priest exclaims:

High sir, we are astonished, hurt and shocked  
 To see this piece of pagan wantonness  
 Intrude upon our sacred conference  
 And gain admittance to your sickbed's side.  
 Avoid the scandal! Out! Dismiss her strait,  
 And have her scourged by drumboys through the camp.  
 (III,vi,104)

Ohnáwa's simple, yet noble, nature and her love for de Roberval have already been developed and the unchristian remarks of the priest show unfavourably. Later, she is responsible for bringing an herbal restorative to the camp which cures de Roberval when the priests' rites and rituals, designed to "turn His heavy hand from us", fail (III,vi,103). Here the contrast between Catholic, European "superstition" and untutored, "true" spirituality is developed.

The love between Ohnáwa and de Roberval achieves many dramatic purposes. Conventionally, a love interest, preferably doomed, is de rigeuer. Accordingly, Ohnáwa expediently dies saving de Roberval just before he is to return to France (IV,vii,134). In addition, the contrast between the nature of love in the two societies is developed. Ohnáwa intends to kill a personal foe (Cartier) of de Roberval:

...because I love thee,  
 Therefore will I remove thine enemy,  
 And thou shalt never know how it hath happed.  
 (IV,i,120)

De Roberval observes that:

Love in my land is a fantastic thing,  
 A thing of frothy verbiage and conceits;  
 Smiles are won by false oaths, and paid in gold;  
 Hearts, now days, are incapable of love.  
 (IV,i,121)

These passages, recalling the language of the Old Testament God, late in the drama, reflect images of love developed in the opening scene at Court. The contrast is emphasized when de Roberval, musing whether to take Ohnáwa to France, decides:

No, no! I will not pluck this forest flower  
 To see it gaud out in the air of Court.  
 (IV,i,120)

However, an insidiously seductive, subversive, element is connected with Ohnáwa which extends to the Indian race and to the forest itself as a deceptively innocent Old Testament-like Eden:

If girl I am, my blood is Iroquoise;  
 I can be serpent, too, as well as girl, ...  
 Hide in the bush, and creep among the fern...  
 (IV,i,121)

Although only contrasts are possible between the two societies, de Roberval observes that

These men are gentlemen. Did you observe  
 Their dignity in all they said and did?  
 Even when they thought we had them in the toils  
 No muscle quivered and no brown cheek blanched,  
 Nor black eye dimmed with sign of craven fear.  
 They are a stalwart race and soldierly.  
 (IV,iii,126)

Aside from the ritualistic posturing of the corresponding

European and Indian males, Hunter-Duvar avoids moralising parallels. The two worlds are kept apart in the drama and when they approach each other the contrasts between them are only heightened.

An interesting pattern of imagery is presented in two extended speeches. The first is given by de Roberval as he views Niagara Falls. The second, by Pont Briant, is in a descriptive account of the exploration of the Great Lakes of Ontario and Erie. Contrasts between the land of Canada and that of France emphasize two possible types of impact of the Canadian experience on the European mind. De Roberval exclaims of Niagara:

The beauty and the terror of it! ...Mystery  
 That the Creator should this marvel make,  
 And shut it in with dreadest solitude.  
 How few the eyes that ere have looked on this,  
 How far transcendent beyond painter's dream,  
 Or the most vivid fancy ever poet,  
 Wrapt in the world of f aerie, ever had;  
 More wondrous even than the visions seen  
 By the Beloved in the apocalypse,  
 This wonder of the world--Niagara.  
 (II,v,56-57)

This speech recalls Blake's Tyger/Lamb::Experience/Innocence pairing and the implications here are similarly complex. The displacement of "man" in this world, in the sense that God's earth was made only for appreciation by "man", is accomplished here by the presentation of a world existing of and for itself. European, perhaps any human, senses and intellect are incapable of encompassing the reality of Niagara.

At best, they can only attempt to interpret a fragmentary experience. Spiritual, apocalyptic fear is de Roberval's response.

From a telescopic view of the landscape to a microscopic view is the movement in imagery from Niagara to a portage between Lakes Ontario and Erie. A noble man silently contemplating a thunderous and nobler site is replaced by ordinary soldiers noisily intruding on a silent forest of familiar plants and small animals:

Not as the silent Indian warriors walk,  
 But with loose strides and gay bravaderie,  
 In single file, ten paces man from man,  
 In front the tambours and the buglement  
 Performing Adam Hale his operas.  
 We made a new sensation in the woods.  
 The squirrels asked the blue-jays what it meant;  
 The sable crow gazed with a puzzled look,  
 Wise, yet astray, like prefect of the Seine;  
 The mystified wood-rabbit sat on end  
 And wiped his silly face with furry paws  
 In dire astonishment whom we might be;  
 (III,viii,111-112)

Awe gives way to "bravaderié", humility to aggression, and a scene beyond human comprehension is transformed into a landscape of anthropomorphic animals and birds inspiring easy comparisons with France. The roar of the natural Falls is replaced by the noise of man-made drums and bugles. The silence of Man in the face of Nature is replaced by the "astonishment" of nature at the onslaught of Europeans. The ancient lesson of the "silent Indian warrior" is ignored. Hunter-Duvar's subtlety in developing these dualities of the



France/New World encounter provides an interesting contrast to the didactic portrayal of the hero, de Roberval. The hero structure is essentially a dramatic convention. However, the poetic elements both contradict and support this structure. The reader is challenged to acknowledge and interpret the paradox presented by the combined elements of plot and imagery.

Charles Mair's verse drama Tecumseh (1886) shares many characteristics with De Roberval. Especially interesting at the level of plot is the love relationship between Iena and Lefroy. The de Roberval/Ohn'awa pair is essentially a sympathetic demonstration of contrast whereas the Lefroy/Iena pair is a romanticized presentation of assimilation. This pair provides a structural middle ground between the cultural extremes represented by Brock, on one hand, and Tecumseh, on the other. Brock's officer, Colonel Procter, represents a still honourable, but passive attitude by Britain to the emergent Canadian colonies. Tecumseh's brother, The Prophet, is ultimately well-meaning in his attitudes against inter-marriage, alcohol, inter-tribal warfare, and his desire to renew native culture (I,i,13). However, his methods against the whites indicate a pre-occupation with the past, differing from the future-oriented actions of Tecumseh. The Lefroy/Iena pair represents the assimilation of the European with the Indian. Lefroy seeks the quiet and beauty of the Indian's co-existence with the land. He resents

European encroachment with the inevitable establishment of the "sordid town" (I,ii,24). The tragic outcome of this attempt at assimilation adds to the pathos of the ending both in terms of plot and theme. Iena dies, according to convention, defending Lefroy, and her death is quickly followed by that of Tecumseh at the end of the drama.

Tecumseh is interesting as a nationalist statement. On one level, the main characters reveal noble traits on both sides of the border. General Harrison is presented as fair and courageous in his conversations with Tecumseh, particularly at Vincennes (II,iv,59). Harrison also delivers the brief eulogy for Tecumseh which is the drama's closing speech. Harrison is the American equivalent of Brock and represents the new power replacing British authority on the continent. On another level, however, a different tone is introduced in a comparison of American and Canadian attitudes to "life" as well as to the Indians. The American citizens of Vincennes speak in broad, prose dialect and reveal themselves to be ignorant, bigotted, dishonest, and unjust. They speak with relish of incidents of brutal cruelty such as the burning of a Moravian church while it was filled with worshipping Indians, and of the killing of an Indian family after which the bodies were made into scarecrows (II, ii,49,50). They believe that they are capable of applying pressure successfully, through the officers, on General Harrison. Through such anarchistic tactics the slaughter of

Tecumseh and his company is desired.

The citizens of York, labelled as United Empire Loyalists and Old Men, speak respectfully, in Shakespearean language, of prudence and the law, and have reverence for both Brock and Tecumseh. They support both "Imperial doctrine and Canadian rights" (IV,ii,104). Canadian respect for the Indians is acknowledged. In the contrasting scenes of Canadian and American citizenry, the fostering of hate for the latter group is centered on revulsion at the accommodation of violence and racial atrocities in the United States. The Canadians are characterized and praised for passive qualities and are "silent" and "stubborn" in the defense of their land in the face of overwhelming odds. Even Brock's speech of Canada's future role in the world emphasizes these qualities:

For I believe in Britain's Empire, and  
 In Canada, its true and loyal son,  
 Who yet shall rise to greatness, and shall stand  
 At England's shoulder helping her to guard  
 True liberty throughout a faithless world.  
 (IV,i,101)

Brock further remarks:

Impute not guilty war to kings alone,  
 Since 'tis the pastime of Republics, too!  
 (IV,ix,146)

The changeability of the Americans is exemplified by the war for independence from England. Their "false" liberty and "faithlessness" will deprive them of "greatness". The sur-

render of Fort Detroit (IV,vii,viii) without bloodshed emphasizes the Canadian pacifist theme and is the structural peak of the drama. The increasing pre-occupation with Brock as the drama progresses leaves the death and defeat of Tecumseh in the position of dénouement (Shrive,178). This loss of focus accentuates the problems created by attempting to adapt historical material to the demands of the dramatic form.

Sarah Anne Curzon states in her Preface to Laura Secord, the Heroine of 1812 that the neglect of Canadian history in favour of English history was a major factor contributing to the pervasive sense of national inferiority:

On every hand stories were current of the achievement of the pioneers, and the hardships endured and overcome by the United Empire Loyalists. ... It seemed to the writer that there was something lacking in a course of teaching that could leave Canadians to think that their country had no historical past. (Wagner,94)

Curzon perceived that a double neglect contributed to the loss of the story of Laura Secord:

while the heroism of the men of that date was dwelt upon with warm appreciation and much urgency as to their desserts, Mrs. Secord, as being a woman, shared in nothing more tangible than an approving record. (Wagner,95)

The inspiration of the deed itself, as well as an interest in history and in the equality of recognition, provided the impetus for the writing of the drama. Laura Secord, the Heroine of 1812 and Other Poems, written in 1876 and published

in 1887, was "very favourably received" and the

interest aroused in the War of 1812 through [its] publication...led to the formation of several historical societies with the aim of promoting historical research and Canadian literature. (Wagner,9)

Thus the mythic dimensions of Laura Secord's journey, with or without the cow, were well established.

Although the drama was not intended for performance, its structure is dramatically effective, particularly in developing suspense (Wagner,93). The structure of suspense is initiated by the introduction of a time limit, the following night, at which point catastrophe may be averted or activated. Continual references to the passage of time through the movement of the sun build tension throughout the play. Time imagery reinforces the idea of an impending crisis:

MRS. SECORD:                               ...Little help  
Just in the nick of time oft turns the scale  
Of fortune. (II,i,118)

The play opens with a Quaker telling of his role as spy during the battle of Stoney Creek. During this narrative several themes of the larger drama are introduced. The pacifist Quaker's reluctant but brave and effective actions are parallel to Laura's inappropriateness for her successful role as information giver. Both are spiritually unfit for their roles in war. However, both place patriotism for Bri-

tain, heightened by hate of the Americans, above personal considerations. The Quaker is admitted to the enemy camp ostensibly to sell potatoes and Laura overhears the plan of surprise attack while the soldiers eat fried potatoes in her kitchen. Later, mention of decreasing food supplies and hunger increase empathy and tension as the play develops. The Quaker's information leads to a successful battle by the colonial forces for a vital and strategic area, thus foreshadowing the result of Laura's mission. The Quaker's pride in his role and Laura's self-confidence elicit the empathy which engages the reader in the heroine's, and the country's, struggle.

Empathy for Laura as an ordinary woman is essential and many devices of the drama and other literary sources are utilized to establish an archetypical womanliness. The opening scene of the play is an effectively arranged tableau in which Laura is seen as an interested yet passive auditor and hostess, a nurse to her wounded husband, a fertile bearer of three children, and as a madonna figure with her young son on her lap. Occupied in winding wool, she is also a personification of the Fates. Later in the scene, she is depicted more literally as an authoritative manager of her servants, and as a gracious hostess under pressure when the American soldiers demand a meal.

Although her husband is physically incapacitated, his authority over Laura is intact. She implores him to



Role reversal is used to establish the theme of peace as the normal and desirable state of life, not war. Laura's sister-in-law observes:

'Tis pitiful to see one's land go waste  
 For want of labour, and the summer days,  
 So rich in blessing, spend their fruitful force  
 On barren furrows. And then to think  
 That over both Provinces it is the same,--  
 No men to till the land, because the war  
 Needs every one. God knows how we shall feed  
 Next year: small crop, small grist...(II,i,110)

This focus on barrenness provides the opposite of the imagery of fecundity in the opening scene of the first Act. This contrast also reinforces the image of Laura as a positive and life-giving force both as a woman having borne children and as a bearer of a vital message.

The sentry's soliloquy at the end of I,iv also presents fertility imagery. The sentry expresses his wish to be home with his wife fulfilling his proper role. He can see with "cool sense" that in war "We let the animal within remain/Unbroke" (I,iv,108). American energy, a masculine force, would have been better spent in creative activity:

If honour's what we want, there's room enough  
 For that, and wild adventure, too, in the West,  
 At half the cost of war, in opening up  
 A road shall reach the great Pacific. (I,iv,109)

The sentry's speech serves to humanize the enemy, giving pathos by emphasizing that war is the killing of others like ourselves.



The inevitable correlation of Laura and Eve is denied. Although the dramatic conventions of the period are useful in developing a characterization, literary conventions are destructive to the feminist potential in the actions of Laura Secord. Therefore, in two central scenes of the play, when Laura is deep in the woods, an active rejection of archetypal Eve symbolism takes place. In two lengthy soliloquies Laura reveals a mystic Christian affinity for the natural landscape. The first speech, which comprises II,ii, is typical of Edenic imagery throughout Christian literature: playful breezes, sweet rills, Flora, lambs, brides, robes of blue, rose-buds, dreaming, and references to Christ and Heaven. This is not Canadian garden imagery, for Canadian empathy is not captured with realism, but with Romantic, idyllic allusion. But national interest is reintroduced sharply:

And shall this land  
That breathes of poesy from every sod,  
Indignant throb beneath the heavy foot  
Of jeering renegade?...No! No!

...  
Yes, Canada, thy sons, at least, maintain  
The ancient honour of their British blood,  
In that their loyalty contracts no stain  
From proffered gifts or gold. (II,ii,120)

Here patriotism to England is inextricably connected to spiritual loyalty to the land itself. At this point the stage directions indicate that "a rattlesnake rears up at her...She recoils in fear, but remembering the cowardly na-

ture of the creatures, throws a stick at it, and it glides swiftly away" (II,ii,120). Although identified with the serpent image in her "recoiling" attitude, Laura overcomes her fear and banishes both the snake and its symbolic influence. She does not fall, but continues on her ultimately successful mission to save the Eden which is Canada. Fertility imagery emerges in terms of power: "Aye, Eve, our mother-tongue avenges thee" (II,ii,120). The heightened language, which combines poetic diction and archaisms, and the structural position establish this scene as the focal point of imagery in the play.

The second soliloquy, which comprises II,iii, is in plainer language and signals the beginning of dénouement in terms of imagery and symbolism. It reinforces the themes and images of both the previous soliloquy and the previous scenes. The images are developed in parallels: "callow nestling", then "sleeping babe on mother's breast", then "gliding snake" (II,iii,120-121). The next sequence is: "peaceful lies Fitzgibbon at his post", then "the foe/Glides from his hole", then "a woman holds/The power to draw his fangs" (II,iii,121). This patterning is repeated throughout the passages which lament war and then develop an argument for physical as well as spiritual resurrection. The physical action of Laura's trek and the war gives way, bridged by imagery of death, to a calm, spiritual awakening and rest. The contemplation of future spiritual rest leads back to

Laura's awareness of present physical weariness and the urgency of the task at hand. These two brief scenes comprise an intense, dense poetic interlude at the halfway point of the play. To the previously established hierarchy of nation, and self, is added God.

At this point Laura leaves the feminine realm of spiritual and intellectual reflection for the masculine realm of action. Act III opens in Decau's parlour occupied by Lieutenant Fitzgibbon. Fitzgibbon's ironical remarks reinforce previously established themes. Although speaking of Buonaparte, the allusion is to Madison: "Sad waste of precious lives for one man's will" (III,i,127). Speaking of Nelson at Copenhagen, the allusion is to the Canadian military situation: "The fewer men the greater glory" (III, i,128). Fitzgibbon comments ironically on the relationship between bravery and bravado: "Success never saw a scaffold" (III,i,128). Nelson, Buonaparte, and Wellington are characterized with "These little uns has lots o' spunk" by the Second Militiaman thus creating a link in imagery with Laura (III,i,128). The connection is emphasized in a speech by Fitzgibbon on greatness:

Yet I yield  
 That men of lesser mould in outward form  
 Have been as great in deeds of rich renown.  
 But then, I take it, greatness lies not in  
 The flesh, but in the spirit. He is great  
 Who from the quick occasion of the time  
 Strikes out a name. (III,i,129)

This speech echoes the remarks of Laura's sister-in-law:

Oh, bravery, good girl, is born of noble hearts,  
And calls the world its country, and its sex  
Humanity. (II,i,110)

The conventions of melodrama are observed by the introduction of two ballads. They effectively reinforce, through sentimental means, the main theme of nationalism and the main image of fertility.

After entering and delivering her information, Laura, according to conventional plot, physical, and symbolic necessity, faints. The ensuing tableau is the reverse of that of the opening of the play. The men nurse and feed Laura. She is compared to a "faintin' comrade" and a "babby" (III,i,135). These terms are similar to those used to describe Laura's wounded husband (I,i,100). Laura is carried out in a hammock after Fitzgibbon swaddles her in a blanket (III,i,136). The masculine role exhausts her mentally and physically. She completes a conventionally satisfying cycle by returning to an infantile state, protected by men, in order to re-emerge as an ordinary woman at the end of the play.

In terms of plot structure, the delivery of the information is the apex. The action of the men: the battle, the victory, the surrender of the American troops, forms a relatively brief dénouement. De Haren's praise of Fitzgibbon ("A glorious day for you, Fitzgibbon;/For this fair Canada,

and British arms' ) is secondary, both structurally and thematically, to Fitzgibbon's curtain line: "Yes, thanks to a brave woman's glorious deed" (III,iii,139). A feminist as well as a nationalist purpose is achieved in Laura Secord, the Heroine of 1812. The loss of Canadian history, where women have played a prominent role, is, more significantly, the loss of the history of Canadian women.

A reaction to the extreme manifestations of a nationalistic cultural platform was inevitable. Ptarmigan; or, A Canadian Carnival, a brief operetta written by Jean Newton McIlwraith and composed by J.E.P. Aldous, was produced at Hamilton's Grand Opera House in 1895 (Plant and Wagner,15). Ptarmigan is a satire of a number of elements of the nationalist movement. The noble, aloof Indian of the verse dramas is represented by Whiskey Jack who, deciding in favour of European clothes, becomes a "dude" (II,223). The "New Woman" is an overbearing reporter. French Canadians, exemplified by Curzon's Babette, are described as being "in love with British rule" (D.P.,195). The Lieutenant of Volunteers (the garrisons were centers of cultural activity) is in love with Blue Belle, a "Wealthy Widow of literary tastes" (D.P., 195). The protagonist, P. Tarmigan, is "an Unconscious Villain" who left Ottawa for the United States and has signed citizenship papers there (D.P.,195). The plot is initiated by the return of Ptarmigan who discovers that he still loves Maple Leaf. The reaction of Maple Leaf and her friends is

to sentence him to freeze to death in the Ice Palace as punishment for his turn-coat behaviour. However, Hepatica, the "New Woman" declares him not guilty by reason of insanity:

Is it possible to conceive of any one, man or woman, in full possession of his or her senses, deliberately renouncing his or her birthright and electing to become amalgamated with the mobocracy upon our southern boundary? (II,220)

Nevertheless, Maple Leaf refuses to marry him, preferring the steadfastness of Bob O'Link, a clerk with the Bank of Montreal. Although the plot of Ptarmigan is light-hearted, the satiric message dominates.

Particularly attacked in the operetta is the trend toward cultural and artistic isolationism. The opposite of this dangerous corollary of nationalism is a mainly derivative culture. The unquestioning and sycophantic acceptance of Ptarmigan, in disguise as a great Canadian painter Purple Martin, exemplifies the tendency among cultural nationalists to commend anything and everything Canadian without critical discrimination:

Our citizen who paints  
We place among the saints,  
He never has complaints  
Of any local strictures.  
Before his canvas dries,  
One with the other vies  
To seize the honoured prize.  
We buy up all his pictures! (II,211)

Although Blue Belle exclaims that "We wouldn't give space on our walls to any man who was not a Canadian", she also para-

doxically states that "Canada is now synonymous with culture. Beethoven will soon be studied in all our kindergartens and Browning used as a first reader" (II,211-212). Ptarmigan points out that both extreme positions are undermined by activity in reality:

Who are these men, Browning and Beethoven, you seem to worship? Are they Canadians? ...Do you never read anything nor play anything that isn't written by a Canadian? Do you never borrow ideas from the States; nor wear anything that is made there? Do you never smuggle boots from Buffalo? (II,219)

While Ptarmigan's speech refers to everyday practicalities, Maple Leaf's song, the highlight of the operetta, refers ironically to the facets of ideal literary nationalism:

The only love that's worthy of my heart  
Is one in which man has no part,  
No rival need she fear,  
My country dear.

Here, Laura Secord's position is echoed ironically through an extreme interpretation of the patriotism which she considers more noble a love than that given to her husband. The use of Canadian nature imagery is also parodied:

When travelling far my weary spirit yearns  
For these broad lakes, my soul returns  
To seek for Nature's land--  
My country grand!  
  
Her rolling prairies, Rocky Mountains tall,  
Her woods, Niagara's thundering fall,  
Her rivers--all declare  
My country fair!

Ironically, not one of these images is unique to Canada and

all are shared with the United States. Canada's political identity is mentioned:

No President she needs, nor any Czar,  
Her own brave sons so loyal are,  
She ever more will be  
My country free!

Although nationalistic literature praises Canada's "sons'" loyalty, the loyalty is to Britain the seat of the constitutional head of government. Also, Ptarmigan's emigration contradicts the blind patriotic view. The resurrection of Canadian history is parodied:

My fancy fondly rests on bygone days,  
Her record past I proudly praise;  
'Tis borne on high by fame  
My country's name!

There's naught in history we'd fain forget,  
Our future shall be brighter yet;  
Then on your way, I'm to  
My country true! (II,218)

The literary treatment of Canadian history is recognised as propaganda. The idea of a completely flawless history can only be considered a fiction borne of blind nationalism. While the verse dramas emphasize the British heritage of the country, Ptarmigan closes significantly with a multi-cultural sense of the Canadian national identity:

You may come from the land of the heather and cakes,  
You may be a native of Chile,  
Your parents may live beside Italy's lakes,  
Per daventure you've even been silly  
Enough to be born  
In the country we scorn,



If now you will join in our party.  
We'll make you a friend. To you we extend  
A Canadian greeting most hearty.  
(II,223)

Ptarmigan is a satire of aesthetic and popular cultural elements which had become stereotypically Canadian by the end of the century. As such, it is a useful reflection of the reaction to the long-promoted presence of nationalism in the English-Canadian literary community. In Canada, as in England and the United States, the reaction to nationalism in drama was the development of an international perspective.

### CHAPTER 3: Popular Drama

The identification of popular drama relies upon the definition of the ephemeral form. Since the plays under consideration are published, then some degree of aesthetic and literary ambition must be presumed:

the popular drama does not bar qualities we term 'literary'. Poetry is often found in popular pieces; so are settings and costumes of exceptional quality and effect. But what matters is the emphasis placed upon these devices. Poetry is employed because it is found to be the language appropriate to the occasion, because rhyme is an effective means of presenting doctrine. ...In depicting action that asserts society's norms,... [popular drama] depends upon conclusions that are compatible with popular taste; the conclusion of the dramatic action must support existing values. (Mayer, 266-267)

Another distinguishing characteristic is a greater emphasis on entertainment values rather than on insight. Although the English-Canadian popular drama of the post-Confederation period contains both literary and nationalistic elements, they are adapted to the requirements of the popular form.

The plays selected for consideration here are written in prose, with the exception of Eithne; or, The Seige of Armagh which is written in blank verse. As in the literary drama, archaic and poetic language here is consistent with ancient time periods and romantic settings. Similarly,

this language identifies aristocratic characters or those with noble characteristics. Literary language is used by those engaged in the "serious" plot, while idiomatic language styles are used by the comical characters in the subplot(s). The assignment of certain language styles to certain characters is part of the conventions of stock characterization such as the brogue of Irish or Scottish stage types.

The content of all speech in the popular drama is narrative rather than decriptive or allusory as in literary and nationalistic drama. The speeches serve to advance the plot rather than embellish ideas or characters. Pace and excitement through rapid plot development are of primary importance in the popular drama, and where literary language and "serious" plot elements exist, allusion to Shakespearean tradition usually gives way to current trends in staging and to current events (Plant and Wagner,3). These trends include the conventions of the melodramatic plot such as adaptations of popular songs, dances, the use of tableaux, and sensational stage effects. Such elements, while incidental in literary and nationalistic drama, are the highlights of the popular drama (Mayer,265).

The settings of the popular drama are as varied as those of the literary drama. Eithne; or, The Seige of Armagh (1872) takes place in Ireland in the time of Elizabeth I. More Sinned Against Than Sinning (1883) takes place in mo-

dern Ireland. Leo and Venetia (1895) is a "Roman Drama" set in Benevento, Italy, and Against the World; or, Life in London (1889) is set in modern London, England. Although melodramatic, the plays share a certain didacticism with the literary drama, the exotic setting being used to emphasize the moral overtones.

Those having a Canadian settings tend to be dominated in all aspects by elements related to that setting. Minnie Trail; or, The Woman of Wentworth (1871) is densely constructed out of local detail but mainly in an unself-conscious technique which distinguishes it from proclaimed nationalist or national drama. It also demonstrates the adaptability of the melodramatic form. However, The Fair Grit; or, The Advantages of Coalition (1876) and H.M.S. Parliament; or, The Lady Who Loved a Government Clerk (1880) are self-conscious satires composed of elements which are intrinsic and unique to the setting itself. All three of these plays are set in time periods contemporary with their production. Minnie Trail is similar to the native dramas produced in England and the United States which blend international melodramatic conventions and local settings to form an intrinsically unique product designed to entertain a local audience and readership (Rowell, 47). The Fair Grit and H.M.S. Parliament are local in a national rather than a regional sense. They are satires of Canadian government and rely heavily on the identification of the fictional characters with their

"real life" models for their comic effectiveness. Thus, the scope of their appreciative audience is potentially less than that of the melodramas.

In the Preface to Eithne, John Lanigan states that he wishes "to raise the Irish character from the low burlesque" and that the:

generality of so called dramatists, are merely sensational and venal scribblers, without any shadow of a claim to literary merit, who, in their eagerness to paint Irish wit and humor, fall into grievous sin against truth. ...They have them walking as none others walk, using a language that might as easily be taken for Chinese as for English. They swear and blasphem(e)sic) as of by a necessity of their natures; get into difficulties and out of them with astonishing facility, perform feats that are certainly above the known faculties of man; and at the same moment ask questions or make remarks, from which we should judge that they belong to that class of existing beings generally known as irrational animals. (Lanigan,7)

This reaction to exaggerated stock characterizations is indicative of the growing influences of realism and naturalism on all types of nineteenth century drama. However, Lanigan cannot escape convention and must use an adapted version of the stock Irish character to achieve his comic effects and to perform the action of the sub-plot which involves the imprisonment and subsequent rescue attempt of a priest.

Lanigan presents a defence:

lest the reader may be tempted to take exception to Ted O'Hare, who figures so prominently in this drama, I have this to say: I do not attribute to him any greater fund of wit than a knowledge of the Irish character will justify. Ted is an uneduca-

ted, but, ingenuous Irishman, devoted to the cause of his country. If he indulge at time in strong language, it is only in the excitement of the moment, and it is not calculated to bring a blush to the cheek of the most modest female. As to his actions, we think that he might walk the streets of our city without attracting any marked attention. (Lanigan,8)

Thus, Teddy O'Hare is given both credibility as a fully developed character and freedom to perform in conventional fashion the plot duties assigned to the type.

The emphatic pro-Irish stand of Eithne is complemented by an equally vehement pro-Catholic and anti-English and -Protestant stand. English/Protestant brutality is epitomized in the arrest of the priest who is about to give the last rites to a dying man, Patrick Ryan. Sergeant Sea-grave relates his orders:

Sea    Then we are ordered to seize every priest  
       We find within our walls; so in the name  
       Of our most gracious Queen, we take thee  
       prisoner.  
 Pr    Of what am I accused?  
 Sea                                    Of all that's vile;  
       Thy very name denotes thou art a knave,  
       Therefore thou are an enemy of good,  
       And hence we deem thee rebel. Wilt give in?  
 Pat    No! never! I would rather see him die  
       Before my eyes, a free and honored death,  
       Than live a slave to any cursed queen. ...  
 Sea    Don't heed the fellow, he's an Irish fool,  
       Nor hath of brains enough to spell his name.  
       Go, seize the Papist! why thus lose our time  
       In idle talk? the fish is worth the bait.  
       (Lanigan,19)

The closing scene of the drama is the peak point of the plot:

[EITHNE seizes English flag tears it down, and

tramples on it.

Eith There! so will I do with every flag I see,  
That bears that hated color. Down! Down!

I would it were her Majesty, the Queen.

[Gen NORRIS rushes at EITHNE with drawn sword and thrusts at her; FITZ springs before him fends off the blow and strikes sword out of his hand. Enter over the battlements, amid the booming of cannon, O'NEIL and soldiers; they fight. English are subdued, as curtain falls. If curtain rises a second time, it reveals EITHNE and O'NEIL, on ramparts holding the Irish flag; and SIR JOHN NORRIS a prisoner, LADY NORRIS kneeling by his side. Also, Gen. NORRIS in a similar position with LOUISE; the English soldiers lying on the floor, Irish above them. Red fire TABLEAU. (Lanigan,49)

This scene recalls the staple of melodrama in the Boucicault tradition: the "sensation scene". It also emphasizes the prominent place of spectacle and its emotional appeal to the popular audience.

More Sinned Against Than Sinning presents a mild contrast in terms of the presentation of the Irish/English relationship. John Carleton develops his plot along the lines of domestic, rather than sensational, melodrama. While Eithne is based on a large single historical event and surcharged feeling, More Sinned Against Than Sinning is a restrained and idealized treatment of the atrocities perpetrated on the Irish peasantry by absentee landlords and land agents allied with the English. Marmaduke "Duke" Hilton observes:

beneath that glorious sky, there lives a people weighed down with misery and poverty,...and groaning under the weight of burdens laid upon them by rapacious landlords, burdens made heavier by the

brutal tyranny of black-hearted land agents, vested with the authority of the absent owner.  
(Prologue,8)

Duke's faithful servant is a mild form of the stock Irishman, Teddy O'Neil. This melodrama never questions the validity of the English presence in Ireland. Instead, it advocates more humane treatment of the Irish by the English which would remove the incitement to violence and usher in peace. The play closes with Duke's lines to this effect:

My dear father, the past shall be retrieved.  
Would that all who hold my country in thrall  
might, like you, come to see and acknowledge her  
wrongs, and accord her the rights for which she  
has so long waited. Then she could assume her  
proper position and sit a queen among the other  
nations, with just pride; and of her, too, it  
might be truly said, "She was more sinned against  
than sinning." (III,26)

Certain parallels are evident to the Canadian/English colonial relationship with regard to constitutional sovereignty. C.F. Newcomb and J.M Hanks' drama Dermot McMurrugh also illustrates a parallel in terms of imagery. In all three plays Ireland is characterized as a natural land through forest and animal imagery. The beauty and freedom of nature is set in opposition to England which is bound by the demands of a "higher", and artificial civilization. This contrast between the naturally just laws of the forest, the land and its people, on one hand, and the corruption of urban civilization on the other, is common to the English-Canadian nationalistic drama of the period.



Against the World is ostensibly set in London, England but could actually take place anywhere in the English-speaking world. The plot hinges on the attempt of a con-artist, posing as a Lord Ainsley, an absentee landlord of estates in Ireland, to marry a ward for her money. It contains a number of parallels with More Sinned Against Than Sinning. In Against the World the young man, Herbert Walston, is a poor office clerk who was stolen as an infant from his father, John Harking, who is guardian of Pauline Braddon, Herbert's beloved. Harking forbids their relationship on financial and social grounds in favour of the suit of Lord Ainsley, who is rumoured to be wealthy, but who is actually James Haywood, a "Counterfeiter, Forger, and Bank Robber" (D.P., 2) in league with Parsnips, who stole Herbert from Harking's house twenty-five years ago. Comical scenes are provided by Harking's spinster sister, Ophelia, and an absent-minded older gentleman, Sir Joseph Fitzarmbrough. Also in this category are Crumpet, a stock Cockney drunk, and Adam Jones, an old family servant. A modern element is present in the character of Sharp, the detective, who is on Haywood's trail. His reputation ruined by Haywood and Parsnips, and presumed dead in a fire set in Harking's factory, Herbert leaves for America with his "invention". America is described as a place where fortunes are made (II,iii,21), and where the criminals of other lands will turn "honest" (IV,i,50). Herbert returns two years later, rich, and in disguise as

Donal Greenwich, of New York City (III,i,27). He is just in time to save Harking from ruin and pays his debts. Herbert responds to Harking's expressions of gratitude:

It is only a little American kindness, which is a common occurrence in "the land of liberty". When a man, through misfortune, falls, a hand is always ready to help him. (III,i,28)

In More Sinned Against Than Sinning, America, specifically California, is seen as a land of liberty and fortune (I,ii,14). Teddy O'Neil describes "Ameriky" in the following terms:

the haythins an' black men, all the Turks an' I don't know what, thim that's away out in the western part of that western wurruld, they calls it Californy. Och, but that's the place where ye'll see life in all its sameness an' all its conundrums;... they have the "noble red man," an' the "Injun," an' the "redskin" an' the ab-or-ridge-i-igan-ese;... Why, one o' thim wud shoot yer as quick an' as asy as another, an' have the hair off yer head in a jiffy. (I,ii,13)

Duke Hilton returns after a five-years absence as a wealthy man, also. Both Hilton and Walston take over the patrimony once denied them, and get the girl. In More Sinned Against Than Sinning, the girl, Mary O'Connor, is so incidental as never to appear on stage or even in the Dramatis Personae. In both plays the villains are captured alive by the law. In Against the World, another modern aspect is that Harking is a self-made man, who rose through the ranks of the cotton industry eventually to run his own factory. In both plays,

the fathers are threatened with ruin because of their own greed. In this way they are similar to Mr. Parker, a cotton manufacturer, in One Hundred Years Ago, in that he recklessly invests his money relying on a British victory. In both Against the World and More Sinned Against Than Sinning, the falsely accused sons of deluded fathers go to America, make a fortune, and return to correct the injustices at home. America is treated as an urban entity where youth and opportunity unfailingly prove to be a lucrative combination. Nevertheless, this land of promise is not equated with "home".

Leo and Venetia is a costume drama which is dominated by the machinations of Ronolo who attempts to poison the Duke of Benevento in order to force his suit on Venetia, already in love with and promised to Leo, who saved her life. The plot is discovered and Leo kills Ronolo during gladiatorial combat in the final scene. This drama by William Anderson, published in an edition of fifty copies, shows an interesting blend of a pseudo-literary style with melodramatic content and the combination of period references with modern speech (t.p.). Ronolo warns Venetia:

Be that as it may, fair lady, do not reject my suit. Exchange that cloud which obliterates the sun's sweet radiance for one fleeting glance of love and I'll be satisfied. Think of all that this means to you and what it means to me. By the heavens above, this love is no boy play. 'Tis as irrevocable as the doom of judgement. Come give me some return for that which you have robbed me of. ...O heavy day! But, by Hades! you will never marry such a knave as knave as he! (II,i,9)

Leo's old family servant, Servantus, dies saving Leo from a last effort by Ronolo at the end of the combat. The sensation of the combat and the pathos of the fatal bravery of the old servant are a typical combination of melodrama.

Of the dramas with Canadian settings, Minnie Trail; or, The Woman of Wentworth is the least ambitious and the most typical of the melodramatic form. It uses the idea of vengeance as motivation for the villain, Ned Grailing, to undermine the life of Mungo Trail, Minnie, Mungo's wife, is persuaded that Mungo has been unfaithful and leaves on the train with several trunks including one containing Mungo's valuables. It is stolen by Ned's accomplice, Mugley, who is "the blackest ruffian in existence; bloodthirsty as the wolf that's prowling in the forest" (I,iv,7). Brunow and Jeanie provide a romantic sub-plot. However, Brunow is entangled in the main plot when he is arrested for the robbery of the trunk after helping Minnie haul her luggage to the train station. Oglethorn, a shoemaker, once an accomplice of Grailing's, ensures the arrest of the proper parties in an attempt to clear his name. The shoemaker's shop provides an opportunity for imagery and foreshadowing. Mugley asks:

Ho! Master Oglethorn, how speeds the awl, the last, the end?

Oglethorn. Does Master Mugley deal double meanings in a single question, and expect that I will prophesy the future of some design too foul to mention, and relieve thy conscience; or make thee coward withal? (I,ii,4)

Brunow, in his courtship of Jeanie, tells her how much he enjoys the simple songs she sings:

I love them for their simplicity. They are the evergreens of man's genius, that blossom when others are decayed; they are the lillies among thorns, the Jeanie of my heart when all others have forsaken me. (I,iii,5)

Jeanie does not forsake Brunow when he is falsely accused and jailed later in the play. She helps him to escape so that he is able to find and turn in Ned Grailing. The imagery is closely related to the plot structure and is both utilitarian and decorative according to dramatic conventions.

Minnie Trail opens with a nationalistic scene which emphasizes the Canadian setting:

First Shantyman, (with a glass of grog in his hand.)  
Hurrah! boys. Here's "that God may clothe and feed  
those who hunger and thirst after the Ruin of  
Canada."  
(All the men rising to their feet.) Never! Never!  
First Shantyman. Wait till I'm through, boys;  
"that he may feed and clothe them with the coals  
of his wrath."  
(All cheer and drink to the Toast.) (I,i,3)

Seeing Joe Mugley pass by, "2nd Man" labels him "the hardest case in Wentworth" reinforcing the local setting (I,i,4).

In the stage directions, the language indicates the assumption of a local audience and readership:

In the Bar Room of the Royal Hotel. (I,i,3)  
 A deep Pass in Wentworth, near the Sulphur  
 Springs. (II,ii,10)  
 At the Royal. (III,ii,12)

General locations are indicated in the abstract:

A Spring. (I,iii,5)  
 A large Prison with heavy iron door. (II,iii,11)  
 A deep ravine. (III,i,11)

Social or moral didacticism is absent in Minnie Trail. No aristocratic or wealthy characters are presented who might be vehicles for such themes. All of the characters are working class and the sole purpose of the plot is to bring to justice a villain who has harmed innocent people. Sensational elements such as Brunow and Grailing's fight, and subsequent fall over a precipice (III,i,12), and Minnie's stabbing suicide (III,ii,12) are the highlights of the drama. Minnie's death in the final moments and Mugley's repentance add the necessary complement of pathos (III,iv,14). Thus, the drama is constructed for the entertainment of the audience or readership closely adhering to the popular conventions of melodrama.

The Fair Grit and H.M.S. Parliament are political satires which are constructed on essentially melodramatic principles. Nicholas Flood Davin's The Fair Grit is satirical of the divisions in society caused by the extremes of partisan party politics. Angelina, the daughter of a Grit, and George St. Clair, the son of a Family Compact Tory, fall in love but are prevented from marrying because of the opposing party affiliations of their fathers. The dilemma is finally resolved when George's father accepts a lucrative

"place" in the Grit organization (VI,155). This melodramatic plot of thwarted young love is secondary to the satire itself. George's friend, Ronald, foils George's ingenuousness throughout the play by his insightful, though cynical, comments, especially when exposing the shams of Canadian politics and pretentious upper class society:

We have ministers talking like children about political economy--a science they never studied, and, if they had, they couldn't have mastered it. We have persons who don't know its rudiments thoroughly, dogmatizing about free trade, as if any man of mark ever held that free trade was applicable to the condition of every country. We talk about constitutionalism. But we are at present ruled by a personage responsible to no one. If taxation without representation is tyranny, still more is power without responsibility. ...Let us here in Canada make no mistake; to have a real society, that shall have good form, you must have a real head of society, and that head should find his or her inspiration not in the brackish waters and moral poverty of imitation, but at the springs and fountains of principle and nature, and in elevating companionship with the ideal heights of human character. (I,142)

Gilbert and Sullivan's operetta H.M.S. Pinafore provides the plot outline, character types and most of the score for H.M.S. Parliament. Although Gilbert's political satire is evident throughout H.M.S. Pinafore, Fuller's satire is still more dominant in H.M.S. Parliament. The elements of melodrama in the plot are carried by the young lovers Angelina and Sam Snifter, a government clerk. However, the weight of the satire falls on three older characters: Captain McA (John A, Macdonald), Alexander MacDeadeye (Alexander

Mackenzie), and Sir Samuel Sillery KMG (Sir Samuel Leonard Tilley KCMG) (Day,93). In The Fair Grit, George and Angelina are naive in their confidence that their love will triumph over party politics. In H.M.S. Parliament, Angelina and Sam Snifter are considerably more worldly (Day,93-94). They are participants in the corruption. Sam Snifter is discovered to be Sir Samuel's stolen nephew and

of course, as a near relation of mine, and a Lower Province man, he must be provided for comfortably. (II,189)

The Fair Grit ends on a sober note: "The sad suspicion will force itself unbidden/That by both parties country's over-ridden" (VI,157). However, H.M.S. Parliament ends on a strong patriotic note with "Rule Britannia" and stage directions to "Wave flags, Union Jack and Canadian Ensign" (II, 193). Thus the light-hearted tone of the satire, as in the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, is consistently maintained. In The Fair Grit, Davin's satiric edge over-rides entertainment. In both works, the outline of melodrama is an important structural convention, one with which audiences are familiar, therefore leaving them free to concentrate on the new element of political satire.

George Broughall's "Tearful and Tragical Tale", The Tricky Troubadour; or, The Truant Tracked, described as "a Topical and Tuneful Tradition Told in Travesty," is a loose parody of Verdi's Il Trovatore (t.p.). It was performed in



1886 in Winnipeg's Princess Opera House exclusively by the men of the 90th Regiment (t.p.). Broughall satirizes many of the elements of melodrama as well as Grand Opera. His satire of Opera includes a parody of a Playbill of a touring company and its various items: costumes, press reviews, hyperbolic descriptions, and Act synopses. The specific elements of the Playbill are too extensive and numerous to examine in detail. However, one particular item is of importance here. The relationship between Opera and cultured society is satirized:

The only company at present enjoying the honored consideration of Winnipeg's cultured society--a company individually strong, appearing at their united best to unfold a tale replete with local hits and comic songs. (Playbill,4)

The plot of the operetta includes a stolen brother, Manrico, who is sentenced to death by the evil Count di Luna, the other brother. Manrico is described by the heroine, Leonora, who met him at a masquerade skating carnival:

He wore no air  
Of the dreamy Italian school, that go  
Twanging guitars, 'neath latticed bars,  
To Spanish belles. Nor wore he tights,  
Nor dagger, nor feather'd hat, nor silver lute,...  
But draped in more modern style,  
With hand-organ and ape attached,...  
In this guise, he won the prize  
At the masquerading carnival. (I,i,11)

When Leonora begs Count di Luna to free Manrico he gives her two conditions: the first is that she agree to be his, the

second "is that you are to arrange that Manrico and the monkey are to vote for me in the coming election". The Count is "the Reform candidate for Winnipeg West" (IV,i,31). Leonora takes poison to escape her fate after agreeing to di Luna's first option in order to save Manrico. After Leonora is ostensibly lying dead, she bemoans the slowness of the drug:

Oh, cruel poison, why don't I die? I wish I had blown out the gas--it would be quicker.  
Inez (advancing.)--The druggist made a mistake. They sometimes do;  
 And what he gave me has not poisoned you.  
Leo.--Are you sure it was not poison?  
Inez.--Quite sure, mam.  
Leo. (getting up.)--Then I will go on with the play.  
 (IV,ii,34)

A happy ending follows immediately instead of the usual pathetic death scene finale.

Some of the extremes of melodramatic plots are parodied. Manrico, imprisoned by di Luna, tells Leonora:

With the aid of my diamond pin I cut my way through fifteen feet of solid stone, but it is worn out, and now there is only these bars between me and freedom. I would give whole hecatombs of fortunes for even the bent pin with which I played youthful pranks on the master at school.  
Leo.--And you dug your way through fifteen feet of stone!  
Man.--Do you marble at it? Why they do that every-day in the French novels of Dumas--and I can do ma' than they. (IV,i,30)

Using idiomatic language, Broughall also parodies the relentless punning popular in the burlesque of the period (Rowell,

68):

Inez.--It does not look as if he would be here to-night so shall we go in and finish our game of progressive euchre?

Leo.--Whist, girl, that is all you care for. I am too flushed with expectation to stay here. I must discard thoughts of him, for I think a deal too much.

Inez.--You are a trump, besides if he comes in and finds you are out, it will be a bluff and he--

Leo.--I'll do it, but perhaps he will neither rue it nor call again.

Inez.--You can cut him straight then, but come to our bower.

Leo.--Well, I ca'see no objection to a game.  
(I,i,11-12)

Manrico is saved from the firing squad at the last moment by Ruiz, "An English dude masquerading as an Indian chief," and his band of Indians (Play bill,5). The Indians, led by Ruiz and their queen Azucena, are included in the satire:

CHORUS.--INDIANS. ...

Who makes the Indians a life with trouble laden,...  
The Indian Agent. ...

Ruiz.--How have the collections been of late for our Indian league fund?

H.U. Sam.--We have fund them very poor. The Chicago people say the Irish Home Rule fund requires all their attention, besides they think we have too much rule now.

Ruiz.--Yes, we have been quite unruly, but our cause has dwindled since our old Chief "Too Late in the Day", shuffled off his mortal coil.

H.U. Sam.--You mean he died.

Ruiz.--Yes, he died. He died very suddenly, before an awestruck audience of deputy sheriffs and newspaper reporters. 'Twas only for a petty theft, a few paltry thousand cattle,...But enough! Let us go somewhere--where farmers let their cattle roam.  
(II,i,15)

Several references are made to the theatrical life

and profession. Leonora, believing Manrico to have been killed in a boxing match with the Count, runs away to join a ballet chorus:

Leo.--Listen, we will go on the stage--and act!

Inez.--And act!

Leo.--Yes, that has always been my ambition. It is the same old story we have often heard in various forms from Barratt, Booth, and other third-rate actors of a played out generation. Years ago, when a little child, I stood in the gray dawn of an early morning on the principal street of a small village in the back woods of Ontario, and watched the heavy wagons of a circus company roll into town. That afternoon, from the outside, I gazed beneath the canvas tent and drank in the sight of gay prancing hoofs of Arabian steeds pacing around the circus ring, and listened to the plaudits of thousands. Inspired by a wild ambition, I then raised my eyes aloft to where the flags floated on the tent poles and to where a gay giddy creature in tights balanced herself on a rope, and I vowed some day I would make the stage boards thrill to the beautiful accents of my voice, and the audiences, responsive to my magnetic acting, would rise--

Inez.-- And go out! When do you start the new career?

Leo.--To-day. I have had an offer to join a ballet. But we will first see what it is like. They will be here soon to practice, and we will wait on the steps. (II,ii,21)

For this, Manrico vows revenge on Count di Luna, a parody of another melodramatic convention.

The frequent casting of the lead actor-manager of a company in the hero's part is recalled in Manrico's exchange with Ruiz (Rowell, 104-107):

Man. (turning angrily.)--Speak, sir! What have I hired you for? Speak!

Ruiz.--A supe, sir! at two dollars a week.  
(III,ii,27)

References to diverging dramatic influences such as Gilbert and Sullivan, Mikado (III,i,16) and H.M.S. Pinafore (III,i,23-23), and Tennyson, "Come Maud into the yard" (I,i,12), demonstrate Broughall's scope and the dense texture of parody and satire in The Tricky Troubadour.

The examination of satires and parodies, particularly parodies of theatre and drama such as The Tricky Troubadour, is helpful in assembling an idea of the typical elements of popular drama and theatre practices of a given period. A close study of a parody as sophisticated as The Tricky Troubadour would yield valuable material toward the understanding of popular drama in Canada.

## CONCLUSION: Re-assessment

Clearly, English-Canadian drama of the post-Confederation period is not a collection of "astonishing curiosities...[in] a variety of bizarre shapes" (Tait, Can. Lit., 18). Tait's remarks are representative of the damaging critical attitude to nineteenth century drama formerly prevalent in both England and the United States. However, Rowell asserts a new critical perspective. Those

other playwrights who shaped the course of English drama the playgoer sees and learns little. These forgotten men and the times in which they lived and worked are part of the pattern of the English theatre. To ignore them is to neglect the whole pattern as well as its parts.  
(Rowell, 150)

Vaughn concurs and observes that

there are those who maintain that no drama of any worth was written in America before the appearance of Eugene O'Neill (1888-1953). ...Few readers--even habitual theatergoers--consider that America has a heritage in dramatic literature as well as in poetry and fiction. ...Viewed as a body of work, however, the early American drama says much about the nation's founders and early citizens--about their political and social concerns and their attitudes toward their new nation as it struggled to emerge and prosper. ...Moreover, there are... plays that can hold their own in comparison with the mainstream of the British and European drama that was produced at the same time.  
(Vaughn, 5-6)

The time has come for a similar resurrection and re-assessment of English-Canadian nineteenth-century drama. Although republication of these plays is vital for both research opportunities and public accessibility, it is not sufficient to re-establish the plays as part of a popular tradition. Public performance is essential and no more appropriate a popular venue is available than television.

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